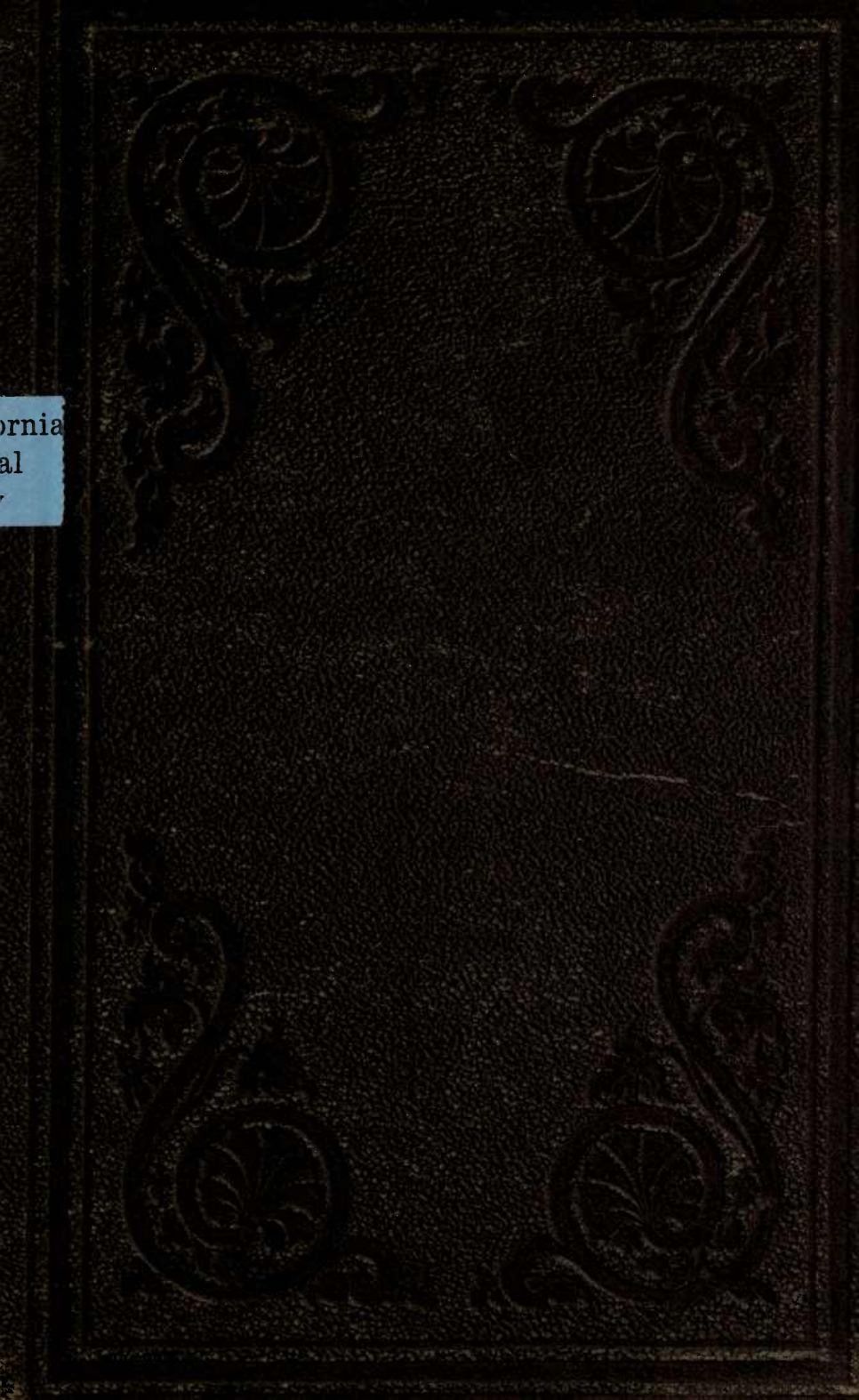



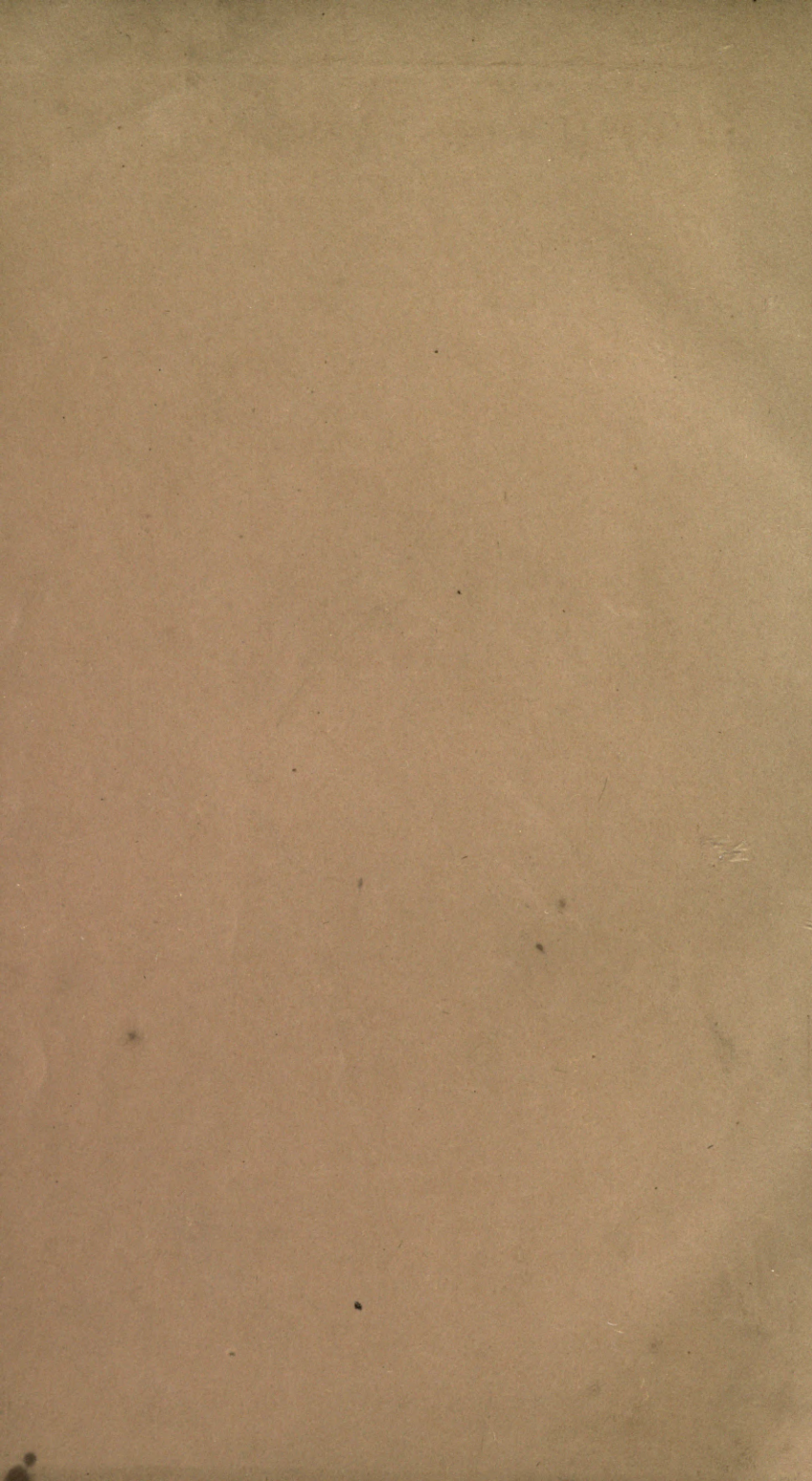
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JEWISH PERSEVERANCE,

OR

The Jew, at Home and Abroad :

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY

M. LISSACK.

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מבקש לחם

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THIRD EDITION.

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credit, and a cheque from the Bank of England.' The fault lies most in the weakness of those who count baptism of any moment apart from ascertained character. The anecdotes here given may warn those who have not by personal experience known the tricks referred to. We should like to see some of them appended to the reports of Jewish Missionary Societies, by way of caution to the well-meaning ladies who, for lack of due inquiry, encourage religious imposture. . . . He had the satisfaction of obtaining, after correspondence with the trustees, the benefit of the Harpur Charity education for his own family, and for the children of any Jewish parents who may avail themselves of it, without compromise of their religious belief."

FROM THE CRITIC.

"Fixity of purpose, self-reliance, and strength of will, are eminent characteristics of the Jewish mind. Exile and isolation only serve to intensify these qualities, and wherever the Israelite plants his foot, or whatsoever may be the undertaking in which he embarks, he is certain, in the majority of instances, to achieve success. The autobiography of Mr. Lissack proves him to be largely endowed with the qualities we have indicated, and to possess the additional recommendations of a cultivated intellect, high moral principle, and strong religious sentiments. The extraneous and, so to speak, impersonal portion of the narrative is worthy of perusal for the insight we obtain into the modern Hebrew mind and character, and for the Talmudical extracts and illustrations introduced. The work is rather a record of the writer's own mental operations and their results, than a history of his life and acts; and as he is a man whose individuality is strongly marked, he deserves a patient audience, and will often reward the reader by communicating some striking observations, or by throwing some new light upon an old subject. The Rabbinical stories introduced are probably new to many of our readers, . . . and, for our own part, we think Rabbi Hillel might profitably undertake to teach a good many Christians Christianity."

FROM THE NORTHAMPTON MERCURY.

"This volume possesses an interest of a very peculiar character.—Mr. Lissack's purpose is two-fold—to shew that in the main, success in life depends upon a man's own energies and perseverance; and that the tenets and usages of the Jewish religion are calculated to stimulate those virtues, and to inculcate principles beneficial to society at large as well as to the individual. It is this latter branch of his subject although not ostensibly foremost, which he has evidently had most at heart. A strong religious feeling pervades the book; but with a deep attachment to the belief and the religious ceremonies of his forefathers, he manifests throughout an absence of bigotry and a large hearted brotherhood towards the professors of other creeds. One rises indeed from the book with a sincere respect for the writer as an earnest, an upright, and conscientious man.

His intimate acquaintance with Jewish Literature has enabled him to intersperse his text with extracts from writers with whom the English public are not familiar, many of which are striking and beautiful, and altogether his book is not only interesting as a contribution to literature, but will be of service in helping to clear away some of the prejudices under which the Jew even at the present day is regarded by many."

FROM THE BEDFORD TIMES.

"Illustrating the simple story of his life by quotations from the Rabbins and selections from the Talmud, Mr. Lissack has laboured as we think not unsuccessfully, and with a zeal which is most commendable, to defend the sons of Israel from many aspersions and prejudices under which they have too long unjustly suffered. That there are points in the work on which we cannot agree with Mr. Lissack it is almost superfluous to say, the unfortunate difference of our faith compels the avowal; still we willingly acknowledge the honest sincerity which pervades it, and the charitable feelings towards those of a different faith, which we in common with many of our readers are gratified to find inculcated by the Rabbins.—The beautiful Talmudical stories and allegories with which the work abounds must be a novelty to the English reader, and its genuine and unsophisticated tone lend interest to the perusal. Whether the author's object of gaining admission for Jews into the legislature will be speedily attained we cannot foresee, but the anecdotes of Jewish benevolence to Christian distress which he adduces are a most graceful support to their claims; his heart is evidently in the cause. The list of subscribers, including the leading nobility of our county, is a good voucher for the respect in which he is personally entertained. As an interesting and agreeable work we heartily wish 'Jewish Perseverance' an extensive sale."

FROM THE JEWISH CHRONICLE.

"Jewish literary works in England, unfortunately from lack of encouragement, so seldom make their appearance, that right glad are we, when—the ice of apathy being partially broken—we have it in our power to announce an addition to our library on a Jewish subject. The volume now before us, is not the history of a man who from a humble position in society raises himself to one of wealth and station, dazzling the morbid worship of the world for mammon, which treats with sneers and contempt the scholar and philanthropist. Mr. Lissack in 'Jewish Perseverance,' successfully shews how a man, and he a Jew, although comparatively humble in life, can by strict attention to probity, be respected by the Christian community among whom he resides, and that he, though not possessed of wealth, can still be of service to his brethren in the faith.

Mr. Lissack has done our cause much service in Bedford. With a zeal which does the author credit, he makes the work a medium of defending the Talmud, etc., as well as the Jewish faith generally, from the unjust and uncharitable attacks of ignorant and prejudiced assailants. We give in this number an extract, shewing the religious spirit running through the work; and we shall on other occasions give further portions of this interesting publication, which we can recommend to the support of our brethren and the public. In the list of the subscribers are individuals of high rank in the country, among whom are the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, Earl de Grey, Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart, M.P., Mr. Frederick Peel, M.P., the Rev. the Chief Rabbi, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, M.P., Sir Moses Montefiore, Bart., F.R.S., etc."

FROM THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

"A narrative written in a quaint unusual style—the book is valuable as affording an insight into Jewish literature, and also into the character of the Jewish mind when modified by long residence in England."

FROM THE MORNING ADVERTISER.

"In the course of the narrative many instances are related of the piety, justice, and sincerity which we, in common with the author, believe to distinguish the general character of the Jewish people."

FROM THE BEDFORD MERCURY.

"Mr. Lissack's book, which we briefly noticed previous to its publication, is now before the public. The record of his own life is interesting and adapted for usefulness, if read by the youthful of his own people; while the extracts from the Talmud and other Rabbinical writings will be equally so to the Gentile reader. The author earnestly contends for the rights of his brethren to legislative honours, and as Sir Robert Inglis and Mr. Newdegate in their speeches on this question in Parliament have spoken so disparagingly of the Talmud, we can only conclude that those gentlemen obtained their 'notions' on the subject second-hand, or they could never have overlooked the beautiful and instructive passages from that ancient book, which enrich the pages of the volume before us."

FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE.

"The purpose of this book is two-fold; to remove the prejudices entertained by the Christians toward Jews, and to convince the latter that the best way to deserve well of the former is to adhere strictly to their ancient faith, and to act honestly and uprightly as citizens of the state and in all their dealings with their fellow men. The author develops his purpose in his own auto-biography, which is well written, interesting, and full of information respecting Jewish customs and sentiments, interspersed with beautiful passages and illustrations from the Talmud.

The incidents of the author's life are sufficiently various and curious to enlist the reader's attention throughout. As considerable prejudice yet exists (unfounded, we think) against the admission of Jews to a full equality of political privileges with the Christians, the general circulation of this book would do much to abate, if not to destroy that prejudice. For many years (as we learn from our contemporary, the Bedford Times) M. Lissack has been a respectable inhabitant of that town, following the profession of a teacher of the Hebrew and German languages, engaged by Christian families. Numerous instances of liberality on the part of Jew to Christian prove that a warm heart and charitable feeling are found in the breast of the Jew. The munificent donations of the Rothschilds and Montefiores, even to the erection of Christian edifices, and the recent gift of a com-

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PREFACE.

THE tendency of our age is decidedly cosmopolitan. Both in the material as well as in the intellectual and moral worlds, the desire and the effort to approximate what has hitherto been separated, to unite what has hitherto been divided, must be apparent even to superficial observers of passing events. In the material world, the achievements in drawing near to one another far distant countries,—countries divided by the vast ocean,—almost surpass belief. The consequences of this success have been increased intercourse and commerce between the different nations of the world, and a better understanding between people who, in past ages, considered it a patriotic duty to entertain national animosities against each another.

As man draws nearer to man, and looks his fellow-creature in the face with lessened and abated prejudices, he discovers in him, notwithstanding some more or less serious differences, a likeness of himself. Though his complexion, his features, the colour of his hair be somewhat different, still there is the human countenance with the stamp of intellect impressed on it; though he may speak a different language, his ideas and moral sentiments are those of humanity. And here we already stand on intellectual and moral ground.

The great material movements of the age are accompanied by parallel intellectual movements. The two supply and complete each other; while nations exchange their commodities, they also exchange their intellectual products, and the philosopher looks upon them as emanations of the one great human intellect.

I shall have occasion, in the course of this work, to speak of the effect which this general tendency of our age has produced upon the relation of the different religions and their respective possessors to one another. Judaism and the Jews, have, praise be to God, reaped a goodly share of the benefits and advantages which this moral revolution has conferred, and is still conferring, upon mankind.

But it is hardly to be expected that scarcely half-a-century of progressing enlightenment should have effaced all the traces which centuries of darkness and oppression have left behind them. The Jews still suffer from the wounds inflicted by the bigotry and barbarity of a bygone age, in more than one respect. Not only have their potent agencies somewhat influenced the social character of the Jew in a manner not very advantageous; not only has the degraded rank he formerly occupied socially and politically impaired, though only transiently, the qualifications of the less educated, as useful members of society, but, in addition to these, he is still smarting under the evil prejudices which many of his Christian fellow-men have not yet been able to discard. And, what is most revolting to justice, these prejudices are either totally unfounded, or the result of the former social position of the Jew forced upon him by his oppressors. This is not the place to enter into a detailed examination of the nature of these prejudices, or of the miserable sophistries to which those who hold them are obliged to fly, in order to cloak their case with a semblance of reason. Suffice it to say that, during the recent debates about the Oath Bill, the Jew was still denominated "an infidel and an unbeliever."* This really needs no comment. If the Jews, the acknowledged bearers and propagators of revelation are considered unbelievers, it is somewhat difficult to say who are the believers.

* In one of the petitions against the admission of the Jews into Parliament, presented by Sir R. Inglis to the House of Commons, the petitioners pray "That the House may not admit the Jew, or *any other unbeliever or infidel.*"

I have considered it necessary to premise these brief considerations, in order to make the twofold purpose of this book more intelligible to the reader. It is addressed to the Christian, and it is addressed to my co-religionists.

A large number of Christians, especially in the country, entertain anything but favourable views of Jews and Judaism. Their notions are the traditionary ones of times gone by. With many, the very name of Jew conveys implicitly the ideas of fraud, deception, and superstition. A Jew, in their opinion, can be nothing else than an individual whose efforts and energies are all concentrated in the desire of making money, lawfully or unlawfully. As to honesty, sincerity, piety, generosity, these virtues, in their estimation, are out of the question in a Jew. To crown all, many of these people really believe that all the vicious propensities which they thus associate with the Jew, are inherent in him, and are sanctioned, if not commanded, by his religion. Alas! prejudices generally strike a deep root in the human heart, and are but slowly, and with difficulty, eradicated. And, unfortunately, there are men who indeed fill the sacred office of ministers of religion, and whose duty it would therefore be to enlighten those whom they are appointed to guide; but who make it their purpose to go from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, confirming the preconceived notions of the people, and preaching those opinions which they must know, or at least could easily know, to be erroneous. Oh! that such would ponder the sentiment, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

It is true there have not been wanting enlightened Christians who have endeavoured to clear the Jewish character of these false accusations; the Jews have found powerful advocates in the press, who have tried to uproot, by reason and by argument the preconceived opinions entertained against them. But, on the other hand, bigotry and intolerance, mistaken Christianity and ungodly zeal, have also been

busy to counteract the efforts of the defenders of my co-religionists, and have striven, with might and main, to perpetuate all those false notions which are calculated to injure the Jew in society. Thus the action of Christian writers friendly to the Jews is partly paralysed by those of the opposite party, while, among the sons of Israel, whose number, compared with the population of Great Britain, and with their brethren on the Continent, is but small, there is seldom a champion stepping forward to answer the challenge of their enemies, "In the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel."

I am well aware that I am not endowed with those capacities that would enable me successfully to perform the part of a David against the Goliath of prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance, but, during my lengthened abode in a country town, I have been so frequently assailed by anti-Jewish combatants, I have so often had occasion to hear and to read opinions hostile to my brethren in faith, that I thought I might contribute, though perhaps but slightly, to dispel the mists of darkness hanging over my sacred religion and its followers, and to diffuse among my Christian fellow-men notions and views more in accordance with truth and humanity. I shall endeavour to show the groundlessness of the prejudices that are in vogue against my religion; I shall endeavour to prove that the Jewish religion, far from incapacitating its followers from being good men and useful members of society, tends to enlighten the mind, to ennoble the feelings, in fact, is calculated to advance our moral and intellectual welfare.

As to my Jewish brethren, I indulge in the hope that to them the perusal of this volume will not prove altogether fruitless. I have indicated above, that the traces of past suffering and injustice are still visible in their social position. There are still many difficulties the Jew has to struggle with in his pilgrimage through life—many influences at work calculated to seduce him from his holy faith.

Thanks to the progress of toleration and the increasing influence of milder sentiments, the emancipation of the Jews will, it is to be hoped, soon be complete, at least in the more civilized nations of Europe. The question of Jewish emancipation in this country has ceased to be a question of principle; it is now a mere matter of form. The energetic steps taken by Baron Rothschild during the last session of Parliament, have driven the opponents of our emancipation back into their last stronghold, if a mere formula in an oath can be called by that name. But even after the last disqualification of the Jews shall have disappeared, much will remain to be done to eradicate the ill feelings which still linger in the minds of many Christians, and great efforts will have to be made by my brethren to raise themselves in the community to a perfect social equality with their Christian brethren.

With a view to these considerations I have felt it my duty to urge upon my co-religionists that moral excellence is the surest means of convincing the world of the shallowness of the prejudices entertained against us; that, by a strict adherence to our holy faith, by honesty and integrity, by industry and perseverance in our pursuits and occupations, we shall best be enabled to inspire our fellow-citizens with esteem for the Jewish character. According to the measure with which God has enabled me to act up to these principles myself, I have not failed to win the good opinion of my neighbours; and it is, perhaps, with pardonable pride, that I gratefully refer to the list of subscribers to this book, in illustration of the remark. The moral emancipation, as I should call it, in contradistinction to the political emancipation, entirely depends on ourselves. Education and religion are the means to this end. The lessons which the latter conveys, both by precept and by example, are so instructive and so necessary that I have interwoven many of them in my narrative, convinced that their influence on the mind is of the most salutary kind.

I sincerely wish that difference of religious opinions may soon cease to keep up a barrier between man and man, and that all may be pervaded by the liberal sentiment expressed in the following beautiful allegory, which I have translated from the German of Lessing, and inserted here, being fully convinced that the reader will excuse the digression:—

“There once lived a man in the east who possessed a ring of great and peculiar value. The stone of the ring was an opal, reflecting a great many most beautiful colours, and it possessed the mysterious power of making him who wore it beloved by God and man, provided the wearer had full confidence in its effect. Need we be surprised to hear that the man in the east never took the ring off his finger, and made arrangements that it should ever remain hereditary in his family. He left the ring to the dearest of his sons, on the condition that the son, in his turn, should bequeath it to his most beloved son, and that the heir, solely by force of the ring, should always be the head of the house. Thus the ring descended from father to son, through many generations, till it happened at last to come into the possession of a father of three sons, who were all equally obedient and dear to their parent. Only now and then, when he was alone with the one or the other of them, each in his turn seemed the most deserving of the ring, and the good father had the weakness to promise it to each. At last the hour of his death drew near. It grieved him to think that he must disappoint two of his beloved sons; but what was to be done? He sent secretly for a jeweller, whom he ordered to make two rings exactly like the pattern, and he was told to spare neither expense nor trouble in executing this work. The jeweller succeeded so well that the father himself could not distinguish the model from the imitations. Full of joy he called to him each of his sons separately, gave him his blessing and his ring, and then—died. Scarcely was the father dead when each produced his ring, and, in virtue of it, claimed to be the chief of the house. They examine, investigate, dispute—all in vain; the true ring could not be proved! At last they went before the judge. Each of the brothers affirmed upon an oath, that he had received the ring directly from his father's hand, having had the promise long before to enjoy, one day, the privilege of possessing it. ‘It was impossible,’ said each, ‘the father could have intended to deceive him, and, rather than believe that, he would accuse his brothers of false play, however unwilling to think ill of them. He would try to prove them traitors, and would know how to take his revenge.’ The judge replied, that, if they were unable to bring their father before the tribunal, he should be obliged to dismiss them, as it was not his function to solve riddles, and it was not likely that the true ring would open its mouth and decide the question. ‘But stop,’ the judge continued, after a little meditation, ‘Did you not tell me that the genuine ring had the miraculous power of rendering its wearer beloved by God and man? Now, the false rings cannot have this effect. Which of you, then, is most beloved

by his two brothers? Well, speak! You hesitate—you are silent. Oh, I see, the rings have only exercised an influence upon your own selves, and not upon others. You are all three deceived deceivers. The true ring very probably was lost, and, in order to conceal the loss, your father ordered three to be made instead of one. Now, if you will take my advice, let each of you believe his ring to be the genuine one. Your father loved you all, and would not favour one to the disadvantage of the two others. Let each of you rival his brothers with unprejudiced love, to manifest the power of the stone in his ring, using gentleness and beneficence towards each other, and confidence in God, as the means to this end. And if the powers of those precious stones become manifest in your children's children, then, after thousands of years, let them appear again before this tribunal, when one wiser than I am, will preside here, and give judgment."

Before concluding these prefatory remarks, I think it necessary briefly to state the reasons why I have chosen the form of an autobiography. From the preceding observations it may easily be inferred that the autobiographical part is merely secondary—that it has principally been used as a means to the primary and chief object of this volume. I thought the reflections and meditations on Judaism and religion in general, on humanity and toleration, on the practical virtues of honesty, industry, and perseverance, would convey greater force if they were brought out in connexion with the realities of life. Being anxious to avoid the form of a treatise or dissertation, I considered it advisable to clothe the substance of the book in the form of an autobiography. The events of my past life have not been sufficiently varying or adventurous to afford me gratification and self-complacency in relating them. Pride and vanity cannot, therefore, have had any share in inducing me to choose that form.

But mature reflection on the subject has convinced me that the very fact of the actions and movements of my life lying within a humble sphere of society, might increase and enhance the practical influence of the volume, and, on the other hand, might go some way to convince many of my Christian fellow-men that the sentiments of the Jews, in humbler ranks of life, towards their Christian brethren, and

their notions of honesty and morality, are not of that kind so generally imputed to them.

In addition to these considerations there was another point which confirmed me in my intention of using the autobiographical form as the medium to convey my sentiments and opinions, in preference to a fictitious or real biography of another personage. The more we reflect on the knowledge of mankind, the greater its difficulties appear to be. To enter fully and truly into the motives and sentiments by which others are actuated, is a task, as it appears to me, requiring the endowments of uncommon genius. We are but too apt to substitute our own motives and feelings for those of others, and judge them accordingly. It is quite certain that he who pretends to a knowledge of mankind, must have closely watched and examined his own heart first, and, however difficult self-knowledge may be, the knowledge of others is certainly much more so. The difficulties, therefore, I should have had to encounter in giving a true biographical narrative of another person, determined me to give an account of my own life.

To those who know me, I confidently feel that I need not apologize, but I would beg those to whom I am not known personally, to receive the facts here related, in the spirit in which they are offered, viz. : with sincerity and impartiality. In one point particularly—with respect to the remarks I have so frequently made about baptized Jews, I would wish to eradicate from the minds of my readers the idea that I am actuated by bad feeling towards them. The truth is, that I was anxious to lay before the public a true picture of the Jew as he is, because I know that many receive all the information they possess about my co-religionists from what I cannot but regard as an impure and troubled source. To illustrate these views I will give an extract from a letter by a baptized Jew, a missionary, addressed to a clergyman in Northamptonshire, shortly after the Revolution in Prussia in 1849.

“ O happy England ! If England did but know and rightly appreciated the privileges and blessings which God has bestowed on her ! And though the Commons are going headlong with the revolution, I was rejoiced to find that the Lords had wisdom, courage, and Christian principle enough left to throw out that infidel measure, at least for a season, (for I fear they will be inundated at last,) which would have levelled England with the ungodly Continent. Are our people in England so blind as not to perceive the bitter fruits this anti-Christian policy has already borne on the Continent ? Do they not know that to wedge the Jews in, where God will not have them to be, is a revolt against Him ? Making them legislators for a Christian land is bare-faced infidelity, the spirit of the age, the child and offspring and fruit of the revolution, wherever it has taken place !! And what would the rulers of this land not give could they retrograde their steps, and make undone what is pregnant with so much and so serious mischief, to both Jews and Christians ! But, alas ! alas ! I fear dear England will finally suffer herself to be beguiled by the enemy, and thereby fall from that elevation on which God has placed her, *because* she has hitherto acknowledged Him in her national and commercial institutions, however much imperfection and sin may have been mixed up with it. I fear England has already imbibed too much of the bitter infidelity of the Continent. If our rulers would but be wise ! ! ” *

Now, it is not difficult to perceive here a spirit of the most *unchristian intolerance* in the mind of the writer. In this happy country such sentiments have little influence, but in countries where the Jew is still labouring under the yoke of oppression—in countries where the treatment of our race is such as we have read in the pages of Scott and others, where the dark days of the feudal system are not a mere subject for legend, and the son of Israel maintains his religion at the peril of his life, his home, and his happiness—my readers will not be surprised when I tell them that they are very mischievous to the Jew, inasmuch as the despotic rulers of such countries are thereby furnished with arguments from the lips of Jewish proselytes for the continued degradation of their own brethren in the flesh.

And now I lay this volume before the public, with the fervent hope that it may be productive of some good, both among my Christian and Jewish brethren. May it be judged leniently ! It would be sadly over-estimating my

* *Vide* Northampton Herald, July, 28, 1849.

feeble powers were I to expect great results from it. But, if there should be here and there a Christian brother who, after the perusal of this work, should lay aside a prejudice against the wronged sons of Israel, if here and there feelings hostile to my co-religionists should give way to kindlier sentiments, if, among the brethren of my own sacred faith, there should only be one stimulated to honest exertions, and to steady perseverance, then I shall consider my labours crowned with a joyful success, and shall feel compensated by the pleasing consciousness of having effected some real good among my fellow-creatures.

BEDFORD, April, 1851.

JEWISH PERSEVERANCE.



CHAPTER I.

חֲזַק לַפַּעַר עַל־פִּי וְדַרְכּוֹ נִם כִּי יִזְקֶיךָ לֹא־יִסּוּר מִמֶּנָּה :

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it.”—Prov. xxii. 6.

AMONG the manifold created beings which people this globe, man stands aloft singled out as it were to give soul and meaning to all around him, and to pursue an end to which all other productions seem but subservient means. For this great purpose, the Creator of the universe has, in His unerring wisdom, graciously fitted his favourite, and has set him so much over the rest of the animal creation that he is, indeed, only “a little lower than the angels.”

It is one of the great distinctions of man, that he is essentially a reflecting being. The brute lives and works without consciousness. The ox that is yoked to the plough plods along the gleby furrows without considering that he is employed to prepare food for hundreds. But man can feel in his heart what his hands are doing. At every act of his life, at every occurrence in his days, he can stand still to reflect, to derive lessons, and to

teach them to others. In this respect the life of an individual, however humble that individual be, may become a source of information for his fellow-beings; and it is with such a view that I have penned the following outline of my career.

I was born in the town of Shwerin-on-the-Wartha, in the grand duchy of Posen, on the 24th of May, 1814. My father, a corn merchant, who had been trained in, and ever scrupulously adhered to, the principles of orthodox Judaism, had earned his fortune by the indefatigable labour of his hands; and it was his most anxious desire that his children should imbibe, as early as the mind was capable of receiving any lasting impression, those maxims of immutable integrity and unceasing industry which had been his own guides through the vicissitudes of life, and which are so distinctly and powerfully enjoined by the sacred religion he professed. All that I recollect of my mother is the reputation which long survived her, that "she stretched out her hand to the poor, and reached forth her hands to the needy." No one ever entered our house hungry but that he left it satisfied. Her attentions, however, knew no bounds, when they were bestowed upon individuals who, besides their indigence, had the additional recommendation of remarkable piety or distinguished learning. Like the good Shunamite in the Bible, when she perceived in any one that "he was an holy man of God," she had ever "a bed, and a table, and a stool" ready for him.

Every one who is only a somewhat close observer of life, must have observed that common occurrences which have in themselves nothing extraordinary whatever, strike us with a peculiar force, and become significant and momentous when they happen at a time when

our mind is more than usually excited. It was natural then, that it could not pass altogether unnoticed when, at the very instant of my birth, my father received a letter from his agent at Berlin, informing him of the loss of several thousand dollars which had attended one of his speculations. The singularity of this coincidence became, however, more remarkable when, a week after, on the day on which, according to the Jewish rite, the ceremony of circumcision was performed, another letter arrived apprising my father of the success of some other speculation, the profit of which more than compensated for the loss sustained. These incidents, indeed, resulted from very natural causes, but my father "observed the saying;" and, during my boyhood, I often heard him remark, "I think the life of my son Moses," this being my name, "will be fraught with a great many changes and vicissitudes." And then he would speak about the two letters that arrived in so rapid a succession, and brought such different tidings.

The first week of my earthly existence had thus exhibited the picture of the various and ever-changing fortunes of life—of profit and loss, success and failure, pleasure and disappointment, prosperity and adversity—changes exemplified by our daily experience and to which the career of most men, and mine in particular, bears ample testimony.

The most active industry and the most rigorous probity of a father, and the gentle and benevolent disposition of a mother, were well calculated to impress my mind with a deep sense of these virtues, which I continually saw practised around me, and the theory of which I was taught in the precepts of my holy faith. But not long was I to look on this fair union of what was right and good; soon the crown of glory which

encircled the paternal house was to be robbed of one of its brightest gems. I had not yet exceeded the days of cheerful boyhood, I numbered but ten years when the arm of death carried off my beloved mother. It was my first misfortune, and I was just old enough to feel the extent of the loss which I sustained. Hitherto I had sported heedlessly on the flowery paths of childhood, favoured by the smiles of an unclouded heaven. Suddenly that sky darkened, I heard the rolling of the thunder, saw the flash of the lightning, and I stood awed and amazed. The aspect of a dying mother, the announcement that she had expired, the funeral with all its heart-rending and impressive ceremonies, it is true, had too much of novelty for the boy to make me feel very distinctly the sad affliction of the son who sees his parent sink into the grave. But a few days after the funeral, when I awoke to the calm perception that my mother really was no more, when every hour of the day, every corner of the house, reminded me that I had lost her for ever, and that that loss was irreparable; then my grief broke forth with all its keenness, and verified the words of the Psalmist: "All the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears."

From this period my education, properly so called, commenced. With the generality of the Jews the overruling feature of education then was, and now, for the most part, is, the *religious* principle. And justly so; for the Jewish religion is one which, more than any other, perhaps, stretches its veins through all the actions of life. The religious system followed by the descendants of Abraham is a most perfect and almost literal realization of the divine words, "My statutes and my judgments, which a man shall do, and live in them." The Jew can truly be said to live *in* his

religion. From his rising in the morning to his going to rest at night he can not perform a single act, whether relating to the cleanliness of his body or to the nourishing of the same by refreshments, but that some religious ceremony—some short prayer—is connected with it.

But the first requisite towards the right fulfilment of these religious duties, most undeniably is to know them and to understand their meaning and purport. Hence the high estimation in which the study of the law is held by the Jews. “An ignorant man cannot be a pious man,” is an observation used in the Mishna, signifying that a sound inquiry into the right meaning of the divine precepts must, of necessity, precede the accurate practice of these precepts. The Talmud abounds in passages recommending the study of the law, and “to meditate therein day and night,” as a meritorious action, well pleasing in the sight of the Lord, and one which is sure to lead us to the conscientious fulfilment of our duties as men and Israelites. It was this idea, and not a depreciation of good moral actions, which led the rabbis of the Talmud to set so high a value on the researches of holy writ; because they were convinced that the natural and inevitable consequence of such an occupation would be the practical application of the commandments contained in those sacred writings. This reflection is beautifully illustrated in the allegorical saying of our sages: “A good action, compared to the study of the law, is like a single lamp compared to the sun.” It would be very erroneous to imagine that these wise men valued the theory more than the practice: but they valued the theory as being naturally conducive to the practice; and, as the sun is the source of all light, and, therefore, infinitely superior to a single effluence of its substance,

so did they consider, and justly consider, the study of the law, pursued with prayer and humility, as the source of all good actions which could not but result from it.

The first instruction, therefore, which a Jewish child received was the instruction in the Hebrew language, in order to enable him to read the books of Moses in the original holy tongue; and it has ever been the pride of Jewish parents to have children deeply read in biblical and talmudical lore.

To receive this first instruction I was sent to a school conducted by Rabbi L—, in a neighbouring town. In the whole neighbourhood the rabbi was renowned for great learning and irreproachable piety. Every one approached him with the deepest respect—met him with undivided veneration. Even now I can fancy him standing before me, with his venerable white beard, his large expressive eyes, his calm countenance, the deep furrows in his forehead, and the small round velvet cap on his head.

He was a man admirably calculated to prepare youths for their pilgrimage through life, and to imbue their tender minds with indelible lessons of religion and morality. With the experience of a long life before him, animated for the cause of the religion of his fathers, deeply convinced of the immutable truth of the tenets which he taught and himself practised, capable of illustrating many a truth by instances from his own eventful life, he bestowed an uninterrupted attention to the pupils entrusted to his care, and felt the warmest interest in their progress.

As the lessons which we receive in the early days of

our lives cleave most firmly to us, and will never be quite forgotten, so are the moral principles which my revered teacher instilled into my mind, to this day, most distinctly engraven on the tablets of my heart. He never allowed any opportunity to escape but that he exhorted me and the rest of his pupils, in strains of the most powerful eloquence, to adhere for ever, truly and faithfully, to the law of God as taught by His chosen servant Moses ; to love and honour our parents, and pay them the strictest obedience ; to render homage and preserve loyal faith to the king and authorities of the land in which it would be our destiny to spend our lives ; to deal with our fellow-creatures on principles of purest integrity and incorruptible honesty ; to love our neighbours as ourselves ; and to be ever ready to assist our poorer fellow-creatures, without regarding their country or their creed.

Never shall I forget his salutary instructions ; never shall I cease to feel the most inward gratitude to the man who thus taught me to love God and men, and to be loved by them. And, indeed, this is again a peculiar feature of, I will not say Jewish religion, but of Jewish feeling, to esteem highly and pay the most unbounded reverence to their instructor in holy learning. The Talmud enjoins this reverence to our teachers in the most unexceptionable terms, so far even as to place the honour due to our masters on a level with that due to our parents, and sometimes even requiring the former to be greater than the latter. These passages express the same sentiment as was expressed by Alexander the Great when he observed that he was more indebted to Aristotle than to Philip, the latter being merely the author of his life, but the former having instructed him how to use it rightly.

Three years did I thus spend in the school of Rabbi L—. During this time my occupation consisted almost exclusively in the study of the Sacred Volume, together with several of the numerous rabbinical commentaries written on the different books of the old covenant. In this pursuit I felt the truth of the inspired words of the royal philosopher: "The words of the wise are as goads and as nails;" for, not only did the perusal of the divergent opinions on the same passage act as "goads," inciting me to deeper research and a more accurate inquiry into the words of holy writ, but these commentaries acted likewise "as nails" — they contributed greatly to imprint the precepts of divine wisdom upon my memory, and preserve it there.

I now attained to my thirteenth year, the period fixed for the confirmation of the Jew. The confirmation is a kind of religious majority. By the civil laws of every country, an individual is legally considered of age when he attains to the age of twenty, or a year or two more or less. This epoch forms a sort of transition from youth to manhood; it is a landing-place where we are expected to abandon all the giddiness and frivolity which are usually supposed to be the attendants of youth, and whence we enter into the field of life, responsible for all the acts we are going to commit. But civilly we have no such transition from boyhood to youth, though no one will hesitate to confess that there is almost as great a change of character going forward at this latter period, as at entering into manhood. This link is, in the Jewish religion, supplied by the confirmation. Before the child is thirteen years of age, the father is religiously held responsible for all his acts and misdeeds; but, from that day, the burden is removed from the father's shoulders and laid on the son himself.

With his thirteenth year the Jew becomes a member of the religious society of his brethren—he takes upon himself all the duties incumbent on the followers of the Mosaic faith, and henceforth partakes in all its ceremonies. The feeling which attends this ceremony, at least the feeling which animated me at that time, was one divided between pride and a certain timidity. I felt the pride natural to any one who is going to be raised to any peculiar dignity. Not until now, I considered myself worthy of bearing the name of Israelite, a name of which the instruction of my beloved teacher had taught me to be proud. Now, after this initiation, I might constitute one of the number requisite for the reciting of certain prayers, I might perform any religious ceremony, in short, I was to obtain religious citizenship. I can well recollect how elevating it was for me to feel my superiority over several of my companions who were a few years, or perhaps only a few months, younger than myself.

But as there is never a dignity with which persons are invested without undertaking, at the same time, certain duties and obligations: so I felt, likewise, the whole weight of the numerous ordinances which I had now to observe, and for the neglect of any of which I was now personally responsible to my Maker. The education which I had received had imbued my mind with a clear idea of the laws and statutes relating to Judaism, and thus placed the plea of ignorance out of my reach. Thus when the holy sabbath had arrived on which the ceremony took place, I felt myself seized with a certain awe and anxiety which contributed not a little to the solemnity of the act.

I had always been of a somewhat pensive nature, given to inward reflection, and keeping a watchful

guard not only upon all my actions but upon all the feelings and emotions which agitated my heart. On the day of my confirmation I formed the firmest resolutions; I made, within myself, the most solemn vows that I would never, under any circumstances, swerve one iota from the religion of which I was now an initiated professor; that, so far from ever being ashamed of the name of Jew, I would endeavour to do credit to my nation; that I would contribute, as much as it should be in my power, to raise the estimation of that nation among its neighbours, and, then, for the most part, oppressors; and that I would strive, by strictly adhering to the principles of honesty and uprightness, to become a useful member of human society.

It was, however, not very long before I made the sad experience how feeble human nature is, how little fit to withstand the attacks of adversity, unless the soul and heart be fortified by the unshakeable wall of faith, and continually supplied by the inexhaustible fountain of the divine word. When I made the above resolves I would not have believed that I should ever be capable of conceiving such a thought as, a very few days afterwards, I was on the point of carrying into effect. This happened in the following manner:—

My father's partner in business was at that time travelling in the provinces for the purchase of corn. Now my father wished to convey to him some money—a sum of about 1500 dollars—and in order that this money should be dispatched more speedily and at the same time more safely, it was to be posted at a town about eighteen English miles distant from our residence. My father being obliged to stop at home on that day on account of some important business, and my elder brother being also otherwise engaged, it was determined

that I should take the money to the town where it was to be posted. Consequently my father's horse and chaise were got ready, and our coachman was to drive me there. Before we set out, my father most emphatically and repeatedly enjoined me to be very careful in whose hands I should give the money, to see it regularly registered, and to ask for a receipt from the post office.

I felt quite delighted at the idea of making myself useful, and on the whole of the way meditated how I would execute my commission punctually, and how pleased my father would be at my return when I should have done all according to his wish. On our arrival in the town, we put up at our usual hotel, and to my great surprise, I met there an uncle of mine with his son, who was of about the same age as myself. As we had not seen each other for several years, and met quite unexpectedly, my cousin and I were highly rejoiced at this *rencontre*, and there was no end of questions and answers about what we had done, and seen, and learned, since we had last met. My uncle asked me what had brought me to town, and I told him my business there. My cousin at once offered to accompany me to the post office, and we set out together. On our way thither, our attention was attracted by a regiment of soldiers on parade, accompanied by their band which was playing merrily. This was altogether a novel sight to us. Neither of us had ever seen a regiment of soldiers together; the various exercises and evolutions through which they went, the occasional firing, and the powerful strains of martial music, were no ordinary points of attraction for boys of our age. However, as I did not like to stand there long with the money about me, and was likewise afraid of being too late for the post, I proposed to my cousin to go to the post office first, and then to return to look at the soldiers as long as we should like.

Off we ran accordingly at full speed in the direction of the post office. We arrived there in good time. I gave the money to the first clerk I saw there, and as quick as I possibly could rejoined my cousin who was waiting outside. As for seeing the money registered, or asking for a receipt, that was entirely out of the question, my thoughts were with the soldiers, my eyes were yet dazzled with their variegated uniforms and glittering arms, my ears yet stunned with the martial beatings of the drums. We hastened back to the spot which our thoughts had not left, and there we stopped hour after hour, until the soldiers withdrew.

At my return to the hotel, I found two gentlemen there of my native town, who, having recognised our chaise, had come to ride home with me. The reader must not be surprised at this, which might in this country be called presumption; for among small communities, and especially among communities of Jews, there is a sort of fraternity established, so that no one would ever think of refusing such a favour, nor would any one ever scruple to ask it.

While proceeding on our way, the gentlemen asked me what business I had to attend to in the town, and having no reason to make a secret of the same, I told them all about it. They then asked me whether I had taken care to get a correct receipt. I was thunder-struck—no thought of it had till then entered my mind. When I told them I had quite forgotten to ask for one, they represented to me the consequences that might ensue from my carelessness, and made me feel in its whole extent the fault of which I was guilty. The most agonizing feelings rushed upon me, I loaded myself with the most bitter reproaches for having, through my giddiness, endangered the property of my father, and disobeyed his express commands.

But what was to be done? The gentlemen advised me to drive back immediately to the town, and see what I could do in the matter. But I knew that my father was anxiously waiting for my return, and if I delayed too long he would imagine that some mishap had befallen me, or that I had been robbed of the money, or something of the sort. I therefore begged of my companions to proceed home with our coachman, and to inform my father of what had happened, and I would return to the town on foot and endeavour to obtain the receipt; I immediately alighted and followed the direction whence we had just come.

Night had meanwhile set in. It was a fine moonlight night, and the stars twinkled cheerfully. My way led me through a forest. Every thing around me presented the invigorating aspect of spring, and to every other wanderer the objects of nature must have breathed that calm, unruffled joy which that season ever spreads, and which the stillness of night rather heightens than diminishes. But the vehement agitations of my heart, the fear and anxiety which haunted my imagination, did not permit me to observe the beauties of the surrounding objects, or to partake in the universal joy. To me the night was more gloomy than ever it had seemed in December, though tempestuous winds might have roared, and flakes of snow filled the atmosphere. Nature was to me but the reflection of my troubled conscience; I felt what the prophet so eloquently expressed in the words: "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languishes; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men." As I walked on, I pictured to myself the anxiety of my father of which I was the cause, and accused myself more and more gravely of having thus turned my own

joy into sorrow and treated so slightly the first responsibility that had been imposed upon me.

While absorbed in these dismal thoughts I approached the bridge which leads over the river Wartha. Inexperience naturally magnifies every peril; thus when we are not yet inured to adversity, every disaster seems incurable and insupportable. My situation was really sad, but my reflections had made it appear to me a thousand times sadder, and as I beheld the river before me, the thought suddenly seized me that I would there terminate my troubles at once and leave the hardships of life.

On the bridge, I stood still for some moments, uncertain what I should do. Now it so happened that a few days before I had left the house of Rabbi L— in order to go home for my confirmation, we had read the following talmudical allegory, inserted in some comment on a verse of holy writ.

“ A wise rabbi once said to his disciples: ‘ Esteem your lives as highly as you would value a single piece of silver.’ The disciples seemed surprised, and, supposing this to be an allegorical expression, asked their teacher to explain the meaning of his words. ‘ He who possesses only a single piece of silver,’ replied the sage, ‘ will consider much before he spends it, and will not deprive himself of it frivolously; thus, you should prize life as a good which, when once lost, can never be restored.’ ”

Rabbi L— had taken that opportunity of warning us in terms most impressive, against the crime of self-destruction. He had told us that, being stationed on this earth by the wise design of Providence, in order to

fulfil certain duties and obtain a certain perfection, we could not be justified in thus dispensing ourselves from these duties, and destroying the means of arriving at that perfection; that however afflicting the circumstances might be in which we were placed, it was cowardly to avoid difficulties by an illegal flight rather than brave them courageously; and that men would be showing little trust in their Maker who had so benignly provided for them, if they would despair of His protection and guidance, as often as their short-sighted views should leave them without an immediate remedy in any perilous situation. He remarked how unnatural it was in man to rush into the arms of death, which his whole being teaches him to shun, and he showed us how erroneous had been the opinion of the ancients, who could admire suicide as an heroic action.

All these words suddenly occurred to my mind, and, with a shudder, I became aware of the enormity of the crime that I was on the point of committing. And then I thought of my beloved father. I reflected how ungrateful it would be of me—now that I had reached the age when I might begin to be useful to him, when, for the innumerable benefits which he had showered upon me, an opportunity might be afforded me of showing a grateful mind, and relieving him from a part of his burden, when I was just entering into life, where it might be my good fortune to procure for him many an hour of gladness and consolation—now to destroy all these hopes and prospects by a rash act, and heap grief and sorrow upon his hoary head!

These thoughts made me appear a monster in my own eyes, and, as if to fly from myself and my impious intentions, I hurried away at a quick pace in order to lose sight, as soon as possible, of the river which had

called forth this criminal idea within me. I looked up to heaven and most devoutly thanked the Lord for having saved me from committing this iniquitous deed ; and then within my heart thanked my wise teacher for the instruction he had imparted to me, and whereby he had now saved my life.

Being thus a little more pacified, I hastened on to the town, and ran to my uncle who, as he had told me, intended to stay that night in the hotel. I found him there and told him my sad story. He advised me to go directly to the post office, and speak to the postmaster himself. When I arrived there, I inquired where I had to go to see the postmaster, but was told that I could not see him now, but must wait till he should be disengaged. But the uneasy state of my mind did not permit me to wait long. As soon as I found an opportunity, I rushed into the office, and being stopped there by the postmaster himself, and asked what I wanted, I related in such words as my tears and my timidity allowed me to utter, the negligence that I had committed. Fortunately, the clerk, to whom I had given the money, came at that moment to speak to the postmaster, and hearing my sorrowful tale, he said that he recognized me very well, that he had received the money from me, and that it had been already dispatched. The postmaster then directed the clerk to write out a receipt and give it to me, and I well recollect how I received the paper with tremblings of joy, and looked upon it as if it really contained the certificate of my happiness.

Holding the paper triumphantly in my hand, I returned to my uncle to inform him of my success, and he promised to drive me home the next morning. But I begged of him not to wait till the morning, but to set out at once, in order to relieve my father of the suspense,

as soon as I should be able, and so urgently did I intreat him that he could not refuse, but had his chaise got ready immediately and set out with me. We had not proceeded very far when we met a carriage, and, coming near, saw that it contained some friends of my father, who came in search of me.

When my father had been informed of what had happened, he was very much grieved. The money he gave up for lost, and so it was, in fact, considered by every body else; no one had the courage to offer even 500 dols. for the 1500. But he began to be very uneasy about my safety; he knew my disposition, that I would now feel the remorse of conscience, and that my inexperience might lead me to take any inconsiderate step. He therefore wished to set out immediately in quest of me, but these friends offered their services, as it might have been injurious to my father's health.

As soon as we met, I told them that I was in possession of the receipt, they consequently took me in their carriage, and my uncle returned to the town. The reception with which I met from my father may be better imagined than described. I had to tell my story in detail, and I openly confessed my fault in all its grossness; my father overwhelmed me with reproaches, the more severely felt, as they were well deserved, and added to them admonitions which I have never forgotten.

That day was perhaps the most momentous day in my early life. It gave me a terrible, but important lesson. It had taught me how important it was to shun every evil, however insignificant it might appear; for the vices are linked together in a strong league against man, and whoever once allows himself to slide from the right path is liable to be drawn into a labyrinth of crimes from

which there is no escape, and which lead to inevitable ruin. Truly has the German Schiller said:—

“It is the curse of evil deed,
That it will ever evil breed.”*

From carelessness, from an act of boyish giddiness, I had on that day been led to the brink of an unfathomable abyss, I had been almost induced to commit a crime, the enormity of which seizes me even now with a shudder.

But it had also taught me that to contend victoriously against the attacks of vice, to avoid the snares of evil, there is but one remedy—and that an infallible one—a mind trained in religious principles. “When fear cometh as desolation, and destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon us;” when, in our troubles, all human remedies fail, and earth itself appears a barren wilderness:—then heaven opens its bright portals; religion descends to shelter her devout votaries, and, with the gentle hand of a guardian angel, conducts them untouched through the thorny ways of adversity.

* Note 1.



CHAPTER II.

כִּי־אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי וַיַּרְחֵק יְאֻסָּפְנִי:

“When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.”—Psalm xxvii. 10.

The day on which I was to return to school drew near with greater rapidity than I desired. For although I had always been treated by my venerable and pious teacher with that kind indulgence which is calculated to endear a master to his pupil; although during my long stay with that truly religious man, I had not once occasion to complain of unnecessary harshness or uncalled for rigour; and although I was alive to the advantages which I might still derive from the instruction of the venerable rabbi: still the idea of leaving again the parental roof, of bidding again adieu to the place of my birth and childhood presented itself to my youthful mind with anything but cheering associations. No love equals that of parents for their children, no love is so disinterested, and we might almost say, so spiritual. My dear mother, her whose image stands, and ever will stand life-like before my mind, whose tender cares had watched my early days, her I had lost when I was ten years old. And now all my filial affection centred in the love I bore to my father.

My brother and sisters had, during the few weeks that I had spent among them, bestowed upon me all that attention which is so lovingly shown to a member of the family that has been absent for some length of

time from the domestic circle. Innumerable were their acts of kindness to me.

And all these dear ones I was to leave again to return to strangers—kind and hospitable strangers, it is true, but strangers still.

At last the day of my departure arrived. I awoke in the morning with a beating heart, confused thoughts and feelings agitated me; I recited my prayers on that morning with concentrated devotion and fervour. The voice of my father, and the voices of my brother and sisters seemed to have in them, on that day, a peculiar tone of affection, like sweet music that makes tears start into our eyes. After having, for some time, tried to suppress my emotion, I could at last “not refrain myself any longer before all that stood by me,” and withdrawing into a retired corner of the house, I gave full vent to my feelings and wept aloud.

The rattling of the coach that was to convey me back to W— awakened me from a deep reverie into which I had sunk. I felt my heart now eased of a heavy load, and, with an air of cheerfulness which was partly affected, I took leave of my brother and sisters and received the blessing of my father. As he laid his hands on my head and pronounced, with a subdued voice, the words of the patriarch “God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh!” simple words with which Jewish parents from the time of Jacob unto this day have been wont to bless their sons:* I imagined that an angel was whispering into my ears sweet and consoling words, that he was encouraging me to walk in the paths of religion and of virtue, that he was admonishing me never to swerve from the precepts of that sacred faith

* Note 2.

which, thousands of years ago, had been revealed to the assembled Israelites on Sinai's mount, that sacred faith for which so many Jewish martyrs had cheerfully shed their blood—that faith which no storm could shake, nor any persecution extinguish.

The year which I then passed at W—, was principally devoted to the study of the Talmud* and its commentaries. The study of that great work which contains treasures of wisdom and morality, a work which for its mines of spiritual wealth, deserves to be better known, is peculiarly adapted to strengthen the reasoning faculties. The casuistic details into which it descends on points of the law, the comments and opinions of the rabbis, their discussions and controversies respecting the interpretation of holy writ and the maxims of the oral law which, according to the orthodox Jewish doctrine, was received by Moses on Mount Sinai, and handed down by an uninterrupted chain of tradition;—all these require, in order to be understood, a close study and undivided attention, and afford to the mind an intellectual exercise hardly to be obtained by any other mental pursuit.

In these and other studies passed the time at W—, in a useful manner, and I was much pleased to hear from my father, who occasionally came to see me and to inquire about the progress I was making, that my teachers gave a favourable account of my attention and industry. No important incidents, worthy of being recorded, occurred during this period. My Hebrew education might then be considered as completed. Indeed I had devoted more of my time and attention to Hebrew, as a branch of Jewish education, than was the practice with the majority of Prussian Jews at the time of which I am speaking.

* Note 3.

Their altered position in the state had necessitated a different education from that which Jewish parents were wont to give to their children. A sound knowledge of the vernacular tongue and the acquisition of what is generally termed "useful knowledge," had already become a necessity for the young of Israel, as well as for Christians.

I returned home to the town of Shwerin, in order to pursue my secular studies under the guidance of an excellent teacher—a certain Dr. M—. Dr. M— was a man of considerable talent and learning; he had successfully attended several of the German universities, and afterwards distinguished himself as a sound philological author.

German literature formed one of my principal studies. One of my favourite authors was Lessing. Whether we look to the clearness of Lessing's richly stored mind so beautifully reflected in his perspicuous and lucid style; whether we consider his independent and manly character; or whether, more particularly, we notice his enlightened views of toleration which, in his time, was yet so little practised:—we shall always find him worthy of his exalted position among the princes of German literature.

And for me, as a Jew, Lessing had a peculiar charm. In his "Nathan der Weise" he had the moral courage to portray a Jew whose noble sentiments, whose pious heart, whose spotless and humane character might well serve as an example to all good men of whatever religious denomination they may be. "Nathan der Weise" was a justification not of the Jews only, but of their religion also, inasmuch as it was Lessing's object to show that the good Jew may practise an exalted piety, pure and divine virtues, which his Christian contemporaries, for

the most part, had considered to be incompatible with the profession of the Jewish faith.

How much that great man knew how to appreciate talent and virtue, wherever they were to be found, is beautifully manifested by his intimate friendship with the immortal Jewish philosopher—Moses Mendelssohn. And this was another feature in Lessing's life which made me read his works with peculiar interest. His connection with Mendelssohn, whose gentle and pious disposition, whose sublime intellect made him the idol of all who knew him, contributed not a little to raise my esteem for Lessing. Their correspondence breathes the warmest friendship—the most intimate attachment. It was Lessing who introduced the modest Jew into the literary world, who encouraged him in his religious and metaphysical disquisitions, while, on the other hand, Mendelssohn reciprocated Lessing's friendship by numerous acts of kindness with all the warmth of a true and devoted friend. When, after Lessing's death, a writer of the name of Jacobi had ventured to accuse him of leaning towards the principles of Spinoza;* Mendelssohn, who was at that time suffering from a severe illness, collected all his physical and mental powers and published a pamphlet entitled "to the friends of Lessing;" in which he fully succeeded in proving the groundlessness of Jacobi's assertion; but the exertions made in this act of friendship so shook the weak frame of the Jewish philosopher, that his death, which soon followed, was no doubt accelerated by this incident.

From the preceding remarks, it may be easily inferred that the writings of Mendelssohn formed a portion of my reading during that period. Mendelssohn was the

* Note 4.

first who translated the Pentateuch for the Jews into the pure German idiom, and thus became, in some manner, the Luther of the German Jews. It was he who, in his philosophical treatises, demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that the doctrines of Judaism were in harmony with the teachings of reason, that the law communicated on Sinai was binding on the descendants of those who had witnessed that great revelation. Is it then to be wondered at that the Jewish community should have been envied for possessing such a genius at a time when intolerance ruled paramount in the land? is it surprising that many attempts should have been made, even by men eminent for learning and high in rank to convert the Jew to Christianity? But he stood his ground firmly. No prospects of worldly advancement could allure him to forsake a religion, to the tenets of which he was warmly attached, not from mere habit or inherited prejudice, but from the innermost conviction of his soul.

Even a prince, the heir apparent of Brunswick, did not think it beneath him to try his powers of persuasion upon the Jewish philosopher; whereupon Mendelssohn, in a letter addressed to the prince, explained in the most unequivocal manner his reason for declining the conversion. One friend of Mendelssohn, in his zeal to convert him, produced among other arguments this, that Christianity was founded upon Judaism, but that Judaism was obsolete and decaying. "Would you then," replied the Jewish sage, "would you advise me to remove to an upper story of a building the foundation of which is crumbling away?"

That the works of such a Jew as Mendelssohn exercised a lasting influence on my mind may be easily imagined. I procured his portrait and hung it up in

my study. Many a time did I stand looking at it, filled with admiration for the man whose life had been in such beautiful harmony with his writings, and who by his genius and perseverance had overcome all the difficulties which poverty, in its most heart-rending form, had thrown in his way.

After having attained the age of seventeen my father resolved to take me away from the school of Dr. M—. I was now to enter on a course of studies of a different kind, such as the study of the classical languages and natural philosophy, a knowledge of these being considered necessary, previously to my embracing the profession of physician, to which I was to be brought up.

Among the learned professions, that of medicine was the only one in which a Jew might then, in that country, practise. Neither as lawyers nor as professors at public schools were the Jews allowed to distinguish themselves ; and, as in the healing art many of my co-religionists had attained to honour and wealth, my father perceiving in me an inclination for study, naturally intended me for that profession. It is a remarkable fact that, even during the dark ages, when the name of Jew was synonymous with every thing that is base and odious, when the chosen people were hunted, like wild beasts, from one country to another, when crimes such as poisoning the wells and kidnapping Christian children were imputed to them, I say, it is a remarkable fact that, even then, many Jews were distinguished as eminent physicians, not only among their co-religionists but even at Christian and Turkish courts.

When informed by my father of his intention

respecting my future course of life, I was highly delighted, having entertained, for some time past, a predilection for the study of physic.

Before, however, any steps were taken to place me at an institution where the preparatory knowledge was to be obtained, an incident occurred which marks an epoch in the history of my life and which gave it a different turn from that which I had anticipated.

My father being a corn merchant was connected in business with a nobleman in the neighbourhood, the proprietor of a large and magnificent estate. It was on a beautiful day, in the month of May, that my father proposed to take me with him to that delightful abode in the country, as he was desirous that I should make the acquaintance of that excellent nobleman. I accepted the offer with thankfulness, anticipating great pleasure from the visit to the gardens for which the estate was renowned. How I enjoyed the drive in the open carriage on that day! How delightful to inhale the fresh balmy air! Nature was dressed in her loveliest spring garb; her children the trees and flowers were sending forth an exquisite fragrance; the birds were warbling their thanksgivings to Him who "knows all the fowls of the mountains and the wild beasts of the fields;" the labourers about seemed so cheerful and merry and were doing their work so joyfully! A heart of stone, indeed, must he possess who in the presence of such a scene, does not feel his bosom heave with emotions of gratitude towards our all-bountiful Creator; and he must be deaf, indeed, to the "small still voice" within us, who surrounded by the visible emanations of a kind and loving God, can hate his brother in his heart and harbour in his bosom evil designs against his neighbour.

The objects around me had so engrossed my attention, had taken such exclusive possession of my heart that I sat silent by my father's side, indulging in meditation and resolving to evince my grateful feeling by some acts of charity towards my poorer brethren. I was suddenly aroused from these dreams by the stopping of our carriage.

We had arrived at the nobleman's mansion which, in its grand and magnificent style, seemed to look down with pride on the humble dwellings of the adjoining little village. The interior gave full proof of the wealth and taste of the owner who received us with that kindness which operates so encouragingly upon an inferior in station, when in the presence of one placed above him. My father and the nobleman transacted their business, the former giving the latter a cheque for 500 dollars, the receipt for which my father put into his portfolio. As the nobleman, however was in want of some ready money, he requested my father to have the cheque cashed and to send him the money the following day. We then partook^d of some refreshment; which done, the nobleman invited me to remain a few days at the castle, an invitation which I was but too happy to accept with the permission of my father, who now took his leave, and returned home.

As I had expressed a great curiosity to see the far-famed gardens and pleasure grounds, I was shown into them, and although I had always heard their beauty and richness spoken of in terms of the highest admiration, still I found that the reality surpassed the idea I had formed of them. On my way to the estate I had admired nature in her charming simplicity and, I might almost say, in her childlike innocence; but here in these delightful gardens I saw nature wedded to art, the two

blended so harmoniously that it is impossible to render in words the effect of that beautiful union. I ran about in the manifold and fantastic walks, examined the outlandish trees and shrubberies, revelled in looking at the flowerbeds and inhaling their sweet scent, listened to the melodious music of the fountains, according wonderfully with the sweet voices of the birds which seemed to have chosen, in great numbers, this delightful abode for their dwelling places. The most delicious fruit was growing there in abundance. All my senses felt a gratification. If there is a paradise on earth, I thought to myself, this is it.

Of the kindness and attention of my noble host I cannot speak too highly. When, in the afternoon, the hour for dinner came, I found prepared for me such food as I might partake of without acting contrary to the Jewish laws, and my meal was besides seasoned by an interesting conversation, the nobleman speaking to me on such important topics as religion and education, and encouraging me to devote myself heart and soul to the study of medicine. "I shall be very happy," added he, "if after you shall have passed successfully through the necessary examinations, and taken your degree, I should be able to advance your career by the influence I enjoy in the neighbourhood and with the minister."

But my stay at the castle was to be only of very short duration. Having after dinner again repaired to the gardens, and having sat down on a bench by the side of one of those delightful fountains with which the place was ornamented, I felt myself all of a sudden seized by an undescrivable shudder. My limbs began to tremble, a cold sweat stood on my forehead, and the scene before me which, but a few minutes ago had appeared to me the loveliest spot on God's earth,

seemed as by magic to be changed into a dreary, desolate wilderness. The fountain by my side murmured a melancholy tune, the birds had ceased to warble, even the very flowers seemed to have lost their glowing colours and their delightful fragrance. What the reason of this sudden change was I could not tell. I left the gardens and returned to the house, where the people looked aghast in perceiving my pale countenance and my strange fright. As I was unable to account, in any way, for my extraordinary appearance and my depressed mood, they naturally thought that I would soon recover, and tried, good-naturedly, to cheer me up, by directing my attention to novel objects in which I was likely to take an interest. But their kind endeavours were of no avail. A feeling of unspeakable sadness still possessed me. I felt as if I were in a far distant country—among a foreign nation, and the desire of returning home immediately grew stronger and stronger every moment. The nobleman, thinking it too late for me to return that day, tried to sooth me, promising me that, in case I should not feel better the next morning, his carriage should convey me home to my father. What increased the painfulness of my situation was the thought of giving pain and uneasiness to that kind man who had intended to entertain me so hospitably at his mansion ; but in spite of all considerations of propriety—in spite of every exertion to collect the powers of my mind and will, in order to overcome those feelings of sadness and depression, I felt them rush upon me with increased violence and fresh intensity.

My request to return home on that evening was acceded to ; the nobleman had his carriage got ready for me, and with heart-felt expressions of thankfulness, and many apologies for the trouble I had caused, I took my departure.

At home, they were not a little surprised at my unexpected arrival. They asked me whether I felt ill, but I had not the least sensation of physical pain. They laughed at me, and attributed my oppressive feelings to a sort of childish fear. It is true, now that I was near my father, my brother, and sisters, I was not in that state of nervousness and excitement which had so suddenly befallen me a few hours before, but miserable I felt still. Was it the presentiment of some near calamity? Was it a dark foreboding of some dire misfortune that terrified me? Were those feelings of depression, those gloomy apprehensions that crossed my mind confusedly, like the black clouds gathering on the sky before the discharge of the thunder-storm? Were the agitations of my heart like those winds which sometimes whirl up the dust and the leaves, before the thunder roars, and the rain descends in torrents?

The night I passed in feverish dreams of the wildest fancy. I frequently started up from my sleep, feeling as if a heavy load were pressing on my heart. I fell asleep again—the same feelings—the same dreams. My sleeping room being next to that of my father, I heard him, about five o'clock, approach the window, open it, and address a poor Jew pedlar, who was in the habit of leaving his uncomfortable home very early to visit the neighbouring villages, with a heavy load of merchandise in a large bag, hanging down in front and behind. "To what part of the country are you going to-day, Samuel?" my father asked the industrious pedlar. "I am going to W—," was the reply. "You have a heavy load, I see, and I think we shall have a burning hot day. If you like to wait till seven o'clock you can go with me in my chaise. I shall start about that time, and, as I am going the same way, you may as well save yourself the trouble of carrying your bag that distance, and you will not be the later for it."

The pedlar accepted my father's offer thankfully, and returned home again. Here I have to observe again that there prevails, especially in villages and small towns, a feeling of brotherhood among the Jewish communities to an extent which I have never observed in communities of any other religious denomination. Wealth and poverty interpose there no barrier between one man and his neighbour; the free intercourse between the members of the community is there not restricted by the imaginary distinctions of a more refined society. The Jews have for centuries past been held together by the common bond of persecution, and the Jew saw in his co-religionist only a fellow-sufferer.

But to return to my narrative. After the short conversation with the pedlar my father returned to his bed again; whilst I continued to be haunted by dark, melancholy visions, which I in vain tried to dispel, by directing my thoughts to my studies, or to some indifferent matter.

In this excited state of mind I remained for about another hour, when I suddenly fancied that I heard some noise in the adjoining room. The words "send for the doctor" repeatedly struck my ear—words which, as may be easily supposed, did not suffer me to lie in bed any longer. I started up, put on some parts of my dress, and, what was my astonishment when, on entering my father's apartment, I found him sitting on his bed, half dressed, his face pale like death, his limbs trembling, his breath heavy and frequently interrupted.

"How glad I am, my boy," said he, addressing me with a feeble and faltering voice, "how glad I am that you returned last night. Had you stopped away one day longer, I fear you would not have seen your father

again in this world. I feel, my dear son, my life is drawing rapidly to a close, to an unexpected close. A few minutes more, and I shall be at the end of my earthly pilgrimage." Here he stopped; he sunk back on his bed.—"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."* —These words, pronounced in Hebrew with intense religious fervour, and a firm resignation, were the last I heard distinctly uttered by my beloved parent.

My sisters had already dispatched a servant for the physician. He arrived in all haste, but his services were no more required, the soul had taken its flight heaven-ward—life was extinct. Who can describe the feelings that agitate men in such moments?

When I heard the above mentioned words uttered, the sound of which even now, after the lapse of so many years, still rings in my ears, I had fallen backwards on a chair in mute despondency. The presence of my brother and sisters, their crying and sobbing, mingled with the monotonous and mournful recital of prayers by some members of the Hebrew congregation who had meanwhile assembled in the next room, imparted to the scene a religious, and one might say, poetical colouring.

Two days afterwards, a doleful procession moved slowly and solemnly along the narrow streets of Shwerin. It was the funeral procession of him whom I had loved most dearly on this earth. All the members of the Jewish congregation, and a great number of Christian friends attended on that melancholy occasion.

Death makes us all equal. The thought of the

* Note 5.

common lot that awaits us all, will often make us forget, for some moments at least, the differences of rank and religion which separate the members of the human family. The idea that all of us will have to give an account of our lives before the throne of the Supreme Being who "judges the world in righteousness, and ministers judgment to the people in uprightness," inspires us with a feeling of brotherhood which, alas! influences but too little the common intercourse of men.

The seven days which follow the death of a parent are, according to the Jewish custom, spent by the children of the deceased in prayers and religious meditations. They do not leave the house of mourning except on the eve of sabbath and on the morning of that holy day, when they repair to the synagogue. The appearance of the mourners in the house of prayer, which they do not enter until invited with some words of consolation from the rabbi or the reader, produces one of those deep and heart-stirring effects which attend so many of the Jewish ceremonies.

During that week of exclusive mourning the strange connexion between the occurrence that had compelled me to leave the nobleman's mansion and the tragic event of the following day, frequently occurred to my mind. Those feelings of depression and anxiety which had so suddenly befallen me, while contemplating the beauties of nature and art, were, no doubt, the dark forerunners of the bereavement I was to suffer on the next day. That mine is not a solitary instance of presentiment of some approaching evil, my readers are undoubtedly aware. Science itself must be content to acknowledge that such is the fact without being able to assign any reason for so extraordinary and wonderful

a phenomenon. Who can fathom the depth of the human mind? Who can reveal its mysteries?

The irreparable loss I had sustained occupied my thoughts during that period. The books of Job and Jeremiah, which I had read in those seven days, strengthened my faith in God, and taught me to bear misfortune with humble submission to the decrees of Providence. The saying of one of our sages, "that we are bound to pronounce a blessing when hearing of a calamity as well as when receiving the intelligence of a fortunate event," a maxim which my venerable teacher had so often inculcated on my mind, has since that time remained deeply impressed on my memory, and supported me under many a severe trial.

Indeed, among the moral and religious precepts in which the Talmud and the rabbinical writings abound, none is more frequently repeated, more earnestly urged on the attention of the Jew, than the precept of implicit resignation to the will of the Most High. Rabbi Akiba figures in those writings as a model of humble submission to the decrees of Providence. Whenever bad tidings of any kind were reported to him he was wont to exclaim, "Blessed be the righteous Judge!" or, "Whatever is decreed by Heaven is for our good." This submissive piety he never ceased to inculcate on his pupils who came from distant countries to be instructed by the humble and wise rabbi.

A beautiful illustration of the same idea will be found in the following talmudical tale, which just occurs to my memory, and which my readers, I trust, will pardon me for introducing in this place:—

Rabbi Meir, a renowned teacher in Israel, was on

the day of the holy sabbath engaged instructing the people in the house of God, and in the academy. Meanwhile his two sons, both of them of goodly appearance and illustrious in the knowledge of the law, were carried off by a sudden death. His pious wife took the corpses, laid them on a couch, and covered them with a white cloth.

“Where are my sons?” asked Rabbi Meir, as he returned from the academy in the evening, “why are they not here to receive my blessing?”

“Have you not seen them at the academy?” said his wife.

“I have looked about for them, but nowhere could I discover them.”

She handed him the cup of wine, and he pronounced the prayers and blessings prescribed for the termination of the sabbath. The ceremony ended, the rabbi again inquired after his sons.

“They will not be far,” answered his wife, “but permit me, rabbi, to ask you a question.” “Speak, my beloved,” said the sage.

“Some days ago,” spoke the wife, “a friend deposited with me some precious jewels, and now he comes to demand them back. Shall I return them?”

“Strange,” said the rabbi, “that Rabbi Meir’s wife should ask such a question; could you hesitate to return to any one what is his?”

“Not so,” rejoined his wife, “but I would not return

them without your knowledge." Hereupon she conducted the rabbi to the couch and removed the covering.

"Alas, my sons, my beloved sons!" exclaimed Rabbi Meir, and a flood of tears burst from his eyes. His wife turned aside and wept also. At last she seized his hand and said, "rabbi, have you not taught me to return what has been entrusted to our keeping. Behold 'the Lord has given, the Lord has taken, the name of the Lord be praised!'"

"The name of the Lord be praised!" reiterated Rabbi Meir with pious resignation.

But, to return to my narrative. A few days of the most poignant grief and unspeakable sadness had now passed. The news of my father's death had rapidly spread in the neighbourhood, and had also reached the ears of the nobleman who, as the reader will remember, had returned a cheque for 500 dollars to my father, in order to get it cashed. He came to our house and asked my elder brother for the money. But my brother said he knew nothing of the matter, indeed it seemed rather improbable to him, knowing, as he did, that my father always made his purchases for ready money. I happened to be in the room, and hearing the conversation that passed between the nobleman and my brother, I stepped forward and said that I had been present at the transaction, and that the cheque as well as the receipt would, in all probability, be found in my father's portfolio. My brother looked, found it there, and handed the cheque over to the nobleman. Looking at the receipt, we observed that my father had written on the back of it some words which led me to suppose that he must have had some indistinct presentiment of what was about to happen.

The nobleman was much pleased with the candid and honest manner with which I had come forward to clear up the affair; he offered me a reward of fifty dollars for my conduct, but I refused to take anything, observing that I knew I had only fulfilled my duty, and that I should have considered it not only dishonest, but ungrateful to him, and highly disrespectful to the memory of my deceased parent, to commit an act of improbity, against which vice he had so often and so emphatically warned me. "Honesty is the main road to riches," say our sages, and indeed, daily experience confirms this maxim with manifold examples.

In this, my behaviour, there was nothing extraordinary, nothing but what every man's duty would lead him to do, nothing but what we all must do, if we do not wish to overturn the whole structure of human society by breaking the main-spring of human intercourse—honesty. Indeed, so little ought any one to boast of being honest that I should not have mentioned the affair at all, were it not for the opportunity it gives me of noticing an aspersion cast upon the Jew.—Many persons have thought and said, and many persons, perhaps, think and say yet—for prejudices are often as stubborn, and sometimes even more stubborn, than facts themselves—many persons, I say, have thought and said that the Jew is, by his laws, not bound to honesty in his dealings with non-Israelites. Several passages from the Holy Scriptures, either misunderstood or wilfully misinterpreted, have been employed to support a doctrine as opposed to Judaism as it ever has been, and ever must be, to any religious or moral system. I can not undertake to defend the conduct of *all* my fellow-believers at *all* times; the Jews are not so much distinguished from the other races of the earth that they should not number among their

body individuals who swerve from the path of virtue. But I would impress upon my readers how erroneous it would be to suppose that dishonesty of any kind could be countenanced by Judaism. No, surely "the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;" the purity of our holy law is so self-evident, that I am at a loss to conceive how its meaning could ever have been mistaken.

But I feel that I am a feeble champion for so holy a cause. Instead of any further defence, therefore, I will give a few extracts from rabbinical writings which have all been composed between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries. Let them speak for themselves.

"Do not deceive any one wilfully by your actions—a non-Israelite no more than an Israelite. Do not enter into strife with your neighbour, of whatever creed he may be. In your intercourse with non-Israelites follow the same principles of honesty as in your dealings with Israelites. If a non-Israelite make a mistake to your advantage, tell him of it—it is better you should live on charity than that you should wrong others, and put a stain on Judaism and the name of Jew. If you see a non-Israelite on the point of committing a sinful act, prevent it, if you have the power."

"Those that are untrue to non-Israelites, and those that rob them, are to be classed among the profaners of the holy name of God; for they are the cause, if it should be said of the Jews, 'They are a people without a law.' We are not allowed to defraud or deceive, by words, any one, without regard to his religion."

"Be compassionate towards your non-Israelitish slaves; do not aggravate their labour by words of contempt or cruel chastisement; even when you have to reprove your servant, speak to him patiently, and permit him to plead his cause."*

* Note 6.

Be it remembered that these passages are extracted from works written in centuries when the Jew had little cause to love his Christian neighbours—when persecution of the Jews—persecution the most merciless, was the watch-word throughout almost the whole of the Christian world—when the slaughter of thousands of Jewish victims was thought a fit and meritorious prelude to what were then called “holy wars.” I will refrain from drawing any inferences; I will merely say—Read and judge for yourselves!



CHAPTER III.

יָגִיעַ בְּפִיךָ כִּי תֹאכַל אֶשְׂרֵיךָ וְטוֹב לָךְ :

“For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.”—
Psalm cxxviii. 2.

When, as spring spreads its enlivening charms over fields and meads, and the trees and hedges are budding and blossoming, in one rough night, a blight descends and nips the blossoms and blasts the buds, our heart is saddened at the melancholy sight, and, with trembling resignation, we bow down to Him whose ways are unsearchable.

Such was the desolation of my mourning heart after the death of my beloved father. All my bright prospects lay shattered before me. All the wide ranges of my imagination in which I had of late indulged, and in which I had loved to fancy myself a celebrated physician, had vanished like a dream never to return.

My guardians would not hear of my following up that study. “It was too expensive,” they said. This expression was well calculated to make me feel keenly how forsaken I now was in the world. My guardians were very good men; I firmly believe that, as far as they could judge, they had my interests at heart, they always were very kind to me. But they were my guardians, not my parents. The great difference between a guardian and a father is, the want in the one, and the

abundance in the other, of that heavenly sentiment planted by nature and nurtured by a thousand different circumstances—the sentiment called parental love. The vital essence of any kind of love is sacrifice; with every particle of love which we bestow upon a fellow-being we renounce a particle of egotism—of self-interest. Now, where the guidance of the child, and the administration of his affairs, require merely the prudence and experience of one superior in years and in knowledge, the conduct of the guardian and the parent will oftentimes coincide; for they follow the same rules, are guided by the same maxims. But where a certain end can only be obtained by laborious exertions, or by the sacrifice of some comfort, the guardian will naturally shrink from the undertaking while the parent will readily undergo any hardships for the happiness of his child. Truly, indeed, says the commandment: “Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long.” Honour your parents, exert yourselves to preserve their precious days; for in prolonging their lives you will prolong your own, in so far as the days which you live under the eyes of your fathers and mothers, are worth double those which you pass, after having been deprived of their loving guidance.

My brother undertook my father's business. I feel that I am by no means doing him justice by merely stating that he undertook my father's business, no, he undertook at the same time my father's duties; by the labour of his hands he maintained me and my two sisters. My guardians having not as yet come to any decision about what they should make of me, I was allowed, or rather I was obliged to go about in idleness. This is one of the greatest perils to which persons in early age can be exposed. Youth has such ample germs of activity in it, the vigour that penetrates the

constitution of the young is so much in want of some employment that it really seems unnatural to pass those days in sluggishness. If we are to pass through life safely and happily, if we are to come off victoriously from the numerous struggles and difficulties which spring up, like nettles, on the path of our earthly career, there is need, there is much need that our energies should be awakened at an early age; that from childhood we should have been habituated to use our powers, and to contribute our share, however little it be, towards the maintenance of the great human family. To him who has imbibed habits of industry in tender years, work will ever be a pleasure, it will be inseparable from his nature; he cannot live without following some occupation for the benefit of his fellow-beings who provide him with the necessaries of life. To him, on the contrary, who has passed his youthful days in slothful inactivity, if the circumstances of his after life should compel him to maintain himself by his handiwork, labour will be a sore pain.

Besides, what a train of errors and vices are generally the followers of idleness! The human mind is such that an entire inaction is unimaginable, and when its energies are not directed to some good object it is but too apt to occupy itself with designs of evil and wicked projects. The Spirit of Evil is ever active to allure us into his deceptive snares; our lives ought to be an unceasing struggle to keep that evil spirit in check, and to suppress the impious passions that are continually rising within us. As soon as we fold our hands in idleness, as soon as we relent in our watchfulness, that spirit overpowers us, and leads us in his own pernicious path.

Such were the reflections into which I occasionally

fell, and which added to the melancholy state of my mind, naturally produced by the want of employment, and by the disastrous event which had immediately preceded this period of my life. One day I opened my Bible, ever a faithful companion and an instructive guide to me, and read for a little while in my favourite book—the Book of Proverbs. It was not mere chance that drew my attention to the following passage :

“ I went by the field of the slothful and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well : I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.”

These words were decisive. Was I any longer to indulge in the “little slumber,” the “folding of the hands,” and patiently to await poverty and want, or to allow the thorns and nettles to cover the face of my field? No, said I to myself, I will no longer be the sluggard—I will receive instruction ; and I rose, firmly resolved upon seeking some occupation.

It just happened to be the time of the Frankfort fair.* I knew several merchants who were in the habit of repairing to that fair, to sell their merchandise, and who generally engaged a youth to keep their books during the few weeks, as they could not take away their own clerks from their business at home. To one of these merchants I went and applied for such a situation. The merchant was a man who had known my father well, and who knew me likewise by sight. He

* Note 7.

was rather surprised to hear that I applied for a situation of that kind, but, thinking that I should suit him, he at once engaged me, and, I believe, I was to receive fifteen dollars for the time of the fair.

When my brother heard what I had done he was very angry. My brother was one of those persons—their number is not small in any country—who think a great deal of what is commonly termed “keeping up their dignity.” He thought that it was a disgrace upon the name of our family—which was known all around to be among the most respectable—for me to enter the service of one below the rank of our own sphere.

As for me, I thought quite differently on the matter. I surely was aware of the dignity which I possessed, and which we all possess—the dignity of man. No one could ever conceive a more elevated idea of man’s dignity than was impressed on my mind. The course of studies which I had pursued was well calculated to urge upon me the consideration of my double dignity as man and Israelite; and several works of German literature just then came under my notice, which confirmed me in this idea. From these works I will merely make one extract, for the benefit of my readers.

Zollikofer, in an essay on the dignity of man, observes:—

“The dignity of man is greatly enhanced, nay, it appears in its full radiance by the consideration that man is the image of God—he is of divine origin, of divine race, and he bears upon him the distinct marks of his origin from, and his connexion with, the Divine Being. His reason is an effluence of the divine reason, his power an offspring of the divine power; his activity resembles, in a manner, the in-

cessant workings of the Deity ; his capacity of becoming more and more perfect, is a capacity of bringing him nearer to his Maker ; his immortality is a reflection of the unending existence of the Eternal, and is, at the same time, a means of being ever in communion with Him. Whenever he thinks truth ; when he wills and doth what is good ; when he perceives and advances order and beauty ; when he spreads around him love, and joy, and happiness ; in all these cases, he thinks, feels, and acts in a god-like manner ; he doth the work of his Creator, he advances the views of the Supreme Being ; he tastes a pure divine felicity ; and the more, the oftener he doth these, the greater is his resemblance to Divinity ; the brighter the radiance of the Deity illumines him, the more clearly his divine origin and dignity will be acknowledged."

This and similar passages could not but inspire me with a high sense of my dignity and my inner worth as man. But I knew nothing, I would know nothing, of an artificial would-be dignity, founded upon nothing greater than the possession of earthly wealth, which I had always learned to value only as a necessary means of maintenance, and as an appropriate means of doing good. "This occupation below my dignity !" said I to my brother, "and is it not much more below my dignity to go about idle, and to be unable to contribute anything towards the earning of the bread which I am eating?"

Indeed, our rabbis of the Talmud bear the most unquestionable testimony that they did not consider any honest occupation, however menial it may seem, below the dignity of even an intellectual celebrity. Among the names which figure in that learned work, we read of a R. Jochanan, the shoemaker, R. Isaac, the smith, and many others. Even R. Hillel, almost unrivalled among the rabbis, is known to have earned his liveli-

hood by working as a day labourer. One rabbi gives the advice that, rather than indulge in idleness, and depend on others, "we should skin carcasses in the market-place for wages,"* and, he adds, "you shall not say I am a priest, or I am a great man; this occupation disgraces my dignity." Can there be any phrase more expressive of what their opinions were in this respect than the passage just quoted? Not the circumstance of being a priest—and the priests were always considered to be invested with a very high dignity—not that of being a great man should induce us to refuse earning an honest maintenance by an occupation, the most degrading it would seem, that could be imagined. Having imbibed such principles from childhood, what was that dignity to me of which my brother appeared so proud?

When my brother saw that I was firmly determined not to continue the life I was then leading, and in fact had no very strong arguments to oppose to my resolution, he yielded, and I accordingly went to Frankfort to fulfil my engagement. While I stayed there, my brother made arrangements with one of my guardians to the effect that, on my return, I should enter his office as clerk. Their intention in this arrangement was not so much to find fit employment for me as to prevent me from entering the service of others, to which my brother's pride could not very easily reconcile itself.

My guardian, whose clerk I now was, happened to be the president of the Jewish community, and as such he had to give testimonials of character to all those persons who applied to the authorities for passports.†

* Note 8.

† Note 9.

I feel that this must be almost unintelligible to an English reader, and now, having for some years enjoyed the benefit of living in this free enlightened country, I myself look back on these matters with a feeling of surprise. That a man, a man in the full enjoyment of his natural senses, and with the full power of controlling his own actions, should yet not be allowed to leave his residence and travel to any other part of his own country, or to any foreign country on the habitable earth, without having first asked the permission of a magistrate and being enabled to shew, black on white, to every fellow man whom he may pass on his journey, that he is neither a highwayman nor a ruffian, seems, to a certain degree, an absurdity. It seems odd that the human mind should have striven so successfully and does continually strive to overcome the difficulties which the natural barrier of mountains, forests, rivers, and seas throw in the way of his intercourse with his brethren, and that he yet should be fettered by human laws, and not permitted to move freely on this globe of ours which the Lord "has given to the children of man."

I have not the least doubt that the high rank which England holds as a commercial country is to a great degree owing to her free constitutions, to the wisdom of her legislators, who have long since seen that a man's liberty of action, in this respect, must be unrestricted; that it would be a destructive policy thus to arrest the progress of his movements. But what a check must it be upon commercial freedom, what a check upon expediency—so essential in all mercantile transactions, if a person cannot travel from town to town without losing hours, nay, sometimes entire days about his passport?

Besides this great disadvantage of the passport system in a worldly view of the matter, this system is likewise attended by grievous consequences in a moral point of view. For it must inevitably lower a man's self-esteem, it must make him distrustful in his own moral worth, if he is continually called upon to prove that he is not a bad man, that his intentions of visiting different countries and towns are not of a sinister nature.

Yet enough of a system which we can fairly hope will soon be abolished throughout Europe, and which has long ceased to prevail in these islands. I said that my guardian had to give testimonials of character to persons who wished to obtain passports. As my guardian was very often from home, I, as his clerk, had to write these testimonials, and was likewise authorised to sign them in his name. One day, a gentleman came to ask for such a testimonial, in order to obtain a passport for England. The sound of the name of England had a peculiar effect upon me. The Romans and Grecians of old believed in fatal, or, I should rather say, ominous words. They believed that words heard in remarkable moments—at a time when our mind is in a certain state of excitement—that such words were of a prophetic character. Our more enlightened views of religion have taught us not to put any faith in such omens or mysterious indications; but even the most unprejudiced of us will be obliged to confess, that a certain word, or certain words, spoken at a certain time, can make a far deeper impression upon a man than these same words heard at other times. I will not enquire further into this subject; certain it is that the sound of "England" had a peculiar effect upon me, and as it afterwards proved, changed the whole aspect of my life.

I called to my mind that I had often heard my father say that an uncle of ours had lived in England, that he had died there, and left a fortune of about £40,000, to which my father was thought to be the nearest heir. I do not know how it was that my father never made any inquiries about it;—he never *did* make any. But now, on hearing some one speak of England, the thought suddenly struck me that I ought to go thither, and see if I could establish our claim, and obtain possession of the property. Besides, I was tired of my situation and anxious to try my fortune somewhere else. My resolution was therefore quickly taken. I wrote a testimonial for myself, signed it with my guardian's name, and applied for a passport to England, which I had not much difficulty in obtaining.

My conduct on this occasion was wrong—I will not extenuate my fault; I blush to relate it. Although I did not, properly speaking, do any thing that I was not authorized to do; for why might I not write a testimonial for myself as well as I did for others? Although I never would have thought of leaving home, if my guardian had flatly refused to give his assent; yet I was, in a manner, abusing the confidence that had been placed in me, because I knew that my guardian would not easily have been persuaded to give the testimonial, had he been at home. In my own mind I was perfectly justified in what I did; for I only thought of the end I wished to gain, and that certainly had nothing wrong in it; but now, in calmer years, I can clearly perceive that I acted wrongly, and I warn all my young readers to be ever on their guard not to be led away by a youthful enthusiasm, and not to imagine that a thing must be good because their hearts ardently desire it.

The commandment of making fringes to their garments was given to the children of Israel, in order to remind them, at all hours, "not to seek after their own hearts and their own eyes;"* and, truly, it seems of the utmost importance that we should never lose sight of this. Not what corresponds with the most fervent wishes of our hearts, not what seems right and plausible in our eyes—not that is always good and just—it is sometimes very far from it; the only true guide of what is good is the law of God, the fountain of truth and virtue.

I have said that I procured for myself a passport for England. As soon as I was in possession of it I went to my brother and my guardian—who had returned in the meantime—told them what I had done, and explained to them that I was resolved to go to England, provided they would give me permission. At first they both very strongly objected to my departure, but I was not so easily induced to give up the point; whatever reasons they assigned for disapproving of my plan I refuted with all the fervour of one who is bent upon his resolution, and I made them understand that, though I would not go without their leave, yet I would never rest until I should have obtained that leave.

When they perceived such firmness in my determination they began to consider that really there was nothing so very objectionable in the plan: I was still young, and, if I should fail to do well in England, I might return, after a few years, and try my fortune at home; besides, they hoped that my going to England would undoubtedly be instrumental in securing for the family that property to which we thought we had an undeniable claim, and so they came to the conclusion that I should go.

* Note 9.

It is impossible for me to give the reader an idea of the joy I felt, when I heard that they would not object to my going to England. The days which I had to wait, in order to make the necessary preparations, seemed like so many years to me. At last the wished-for day arrived. My brother had taken care to look out for me all the papers and documents which I might require to establish my claim to the property; I was, besides, provided with a good equipment of clothes, and with 100 dollars, which sum was thought sufficient for me, because we believed that before I had been long in England I should have recovered, at least, part of the property owing to us.

That day for which I had longed with so much anxiety, which I considered to be the birthday of my future happiness, was yet a day of no common grief and sorrow. Coming and going, arriving and parting, are, as it were, the two poles on which the sphere of our whole life turns. A day comes and goes, a season begins and ends, pleasures come and depart, troubles befall and leave us, man himself comes and parts. And yet, though parting is not an unwonted occurrence in a man's life, yet there is always a painful feeling attached to it,—a feeling, it seems to me, which takes its rise from the uncertainty of human affairs, from the impenetrable obscurity in which the events of even the next hour are veiled and concealed from the human eye, and from the feeling of our powerlessness to withstand or to delay, for one minute, any misfortune that may befall us.

But my parting, on that day, from my brother and sisters was of a peculiarly painful nature; it was painful when I looked on the beloved beings from whose endearing circle I was now to be removed, and it

was painful when I reflected upon the wild chaos that lay before me. Was I ever to see them again? This question, with all the sorrowful bearings and heart-stirring solutions of which it was capable, stood continually in the foreground of my thoughts, and I vainly endeavoured to divest myself of such melancholy meditations. And then so many scenes from my early childhood would recur to my mind, scenes which in themselves were childish and perhaps laughable, but which tended to render those whom I was now to leave dearer and dearer to my heart. All these scenes kept crowding together in my mind, till they became one united mass of affecting recollections; for it is with distance in time as it is with that in space; when the objects are near, we can easily discern their relative position, but, when we recede far from them, the distances become more and more indistinct, and at last vanish entirely.

But nothing can equal the poignant grief which I felt when leaving the paternal roof. The house in which he was born is, for every man, of very high importance. Whatever situation a person may occupy in the society of his fellow-beings, of however little import his life may be to mankind at large, to him individually his own existence is of the greatest consequence, and the year, the month, the day, the hour when, and the locality where, that existence began, will ever crave his attention. How much more importance then must be attached to the house which was, not only the place of his nativity, but, at the same time, the locality of his childhood. There was not a room in the house, there was not a chair in any of the rooms, there was not a picture on any of the walls, which would not tell me of some occurrence or other in the early dawn of my life.

As I was to travel by a coach which started from a neighbouring town, I begged of my brother to let me walk the short distance by myself; for I felt that I had great need of being alone. Under floods of tears, which stifled the short but touching words of "adieu," that I attempted to exchange with my brother and sisters, I left the house that was so dear to me, and the town which my memory will ever cherish. I had not gone many yards when I passed another place which contained dear, very dear, remnants—the burial ground where my beloved parents lay interred. I reproached myself bitterly that I did not think of visiting their graves before,* and forthwith entered.

There is a certain solemn calm which generally takes possession of a man when he enters the peaceful realm of those that sleep the sleep of death. The brevity of the span of life measured out to us, the equality of all the inhabitants of the globe, after they have departed this earthly career, are lessons which we read from every tomb-stone. However, I was too much overwhelmed by the individual feelings of my situation to make any reflections of that kind, and, without stopping, I proceeded to the tombs of my beloved parents. Here they lay, side by side; they had been "lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

It is impossible for me to describe the depth of grief which I then felt. The day on which I removed from the spot which enclosed their earthly remains, it seemed as if, on that day, I had lost them again. I sat down by the side of their tombs, and entreated their beloved shades to pardon me for all the acts of disobedience that I might have committed during their lives, and for all the duties that I might have left

* Note 10.

unfulfilled. I prayed that their souls might look down from the blissful region where they now were, upon their forsaken son, who was to go forth to live among strangers, utterly bereft even of the shadow of a love which they had so abundantly shown to him. I made the most solemn vows that all the days of my life should be devoted to carrying out those principles of probity and God-fearing religion which it had been their perpetual care to instil in me, and that I would never commit an act that could render me unworthy of being their son.

Somewhat strengthened by this prayer, I set out a little more cheerfully. It is true I stood entirely alone in the world which lay before me—an unintelligible labyrinth. But I had a guiding star whose light would never be eclipsed, but would ever send its beaming rays upon the intricate paths of my life. This was the holy faith of my fathers, of which the royal sage has so emphatically said, that “the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.”



CHAPTER IV.

כָּכֹל־יְדַרְכֶּיךָ דָעָהוּ וְהוּא יַנְשִׁיר אֶרְדֹּתֶיךָ :

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”—Prov. iii. 6.

The life of an individual, like the existence of nations, has its several eras; and a new era may surely be dated in a man's life from the time when he is transplanted from his native soil into a foreign land, there to flourish and thrive or fade and wither, as Providence may smile or frown, may shower abundant blessings upon him, or visit him with sad reverses.

After a few days' journey I safely arrived at Ham-
burgh, whence I intended to proceed by sea to England. I had scarcely been there a few hours when I happened to pass in the street a young man whose countenance struck me at once as that of an old acquaintance, although I could not distinctly recollect where and when I had seen him. I turned round to look after him, and perceived that my person must have produced the same impression upon him as his had made upon me. We approached each other, and after having exchanged a few questions and answers, we recognised each other as old schoolfellows. As I was quite a stranger in that town, I was much pleased with what I then considered to be a fortunate meeting, but which shortly afterwards I had but too much cause to regret. He invited me to repair with him to a neighbouring

coffec-house, where we sat down, in a retired corner of the room, to talk over the events which had happened to us since our separation at W—.

Now this young man had past six months at the school where I had received my education, and had, already, as a boy, evinced a certain laxity of moral principles which increased with his advancing age, and which, as I heard at a later period of my life, actually proved his ruin. Although our friendship had not been very intimate at school, our dispositions and inclinations being of too different a nature to admit of such a union, yet I rejoiced at having met an old companion who, besides, might give me useful information respecting some business which I had to transact at Hamburgh.

With much good humour he recounted some of the tricks he played to our master at school, and I was good-natured, or rather inexperienced enough, to ascribe his misdemeanours to boyish playfulness. He told me that, soon after he had left school, his father, who wished to bring him up to some mercantile pursuit, had succeeded in placing him in a merchant's office at Hamburgh, and that he at present filled the situation of clerk in the same establishment.

“Close work,” said he, “and little time left for recreation or pleasures. Hamburgh is a capital town for pleasure!” and forthwith he commenced, with some eloquence, to give a description of the principal places of amusement, as theatres, public gardens, and others. I was little in the humour for amusements at that time, being most anxious to reach my destination as soon as possible; but he excited my curiosity to such a degree, and produced such plausible arguments, that

I was persuaded by him to stop a few days at Hamburg.

During these few days he borrowed money of me with the assurance of repayment before my departure, and I, unsuspecting and inexperienced as I was, did not hesitate to advance him the sums he demanded. But, before a couple of days had passed, I perceived that this unprincipled young man was attempting to entrap me in his snares—that he was trying to draw from me the sum I had taken with me from home, and which was little more than was required to pay the expenses of my voyage, and a few weeks' living in London. I had, for a moment, disregarded the dictates of prudence, lost sight of the commandments which my parents had so diligently instilled in me, and already I was suffering from that neglect. "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee, and when thou awakest, it shall walk with thee." These are the impressive words in which the wisest of kings warns the young against the fault I then heedlessly committed.

The sum my friend had borrowed of me amounted to fifty dollars, a very considerable sum for any one circumstanced as I then was. A few more days passed—the money was not forthcoming. "You may rely on it," he would say, "to-morrow you shall have it for certain. The fact is, my salary has been due for some time past, and I expect to have it paid to me every moment." Alas! I knew already what weight to attach to the words of this evil-minded young man, who seemed to have been thrown in my way,

to tempt me. All my remonstrances were of no avail. I reproached him with his abominable conduct towards me, I rebuked him for his loose and, as I had found, his intemperate habits, I attempted to divert him from the evil path he had chosen; but he only laughed at me, called me an old-young-man, who did not know how to enjoy himself, called me a fool for not being like him, and, in short, employed all the shallow and enticing phraseology he had at his command to extirpate from my mind every principle of morality. Never had virtue appeared to me in a light more heavenly than when this tempter tried the work of Satan upon me. Never did I feel the necessity of acting upon the laws of religion and virtue more deeply than when I beheld wickedness, in all its repulsive deformity, represented in this my former schoolfellow. The ancient Spartans knew full well the force of example, when they exhibited the Helots in a state of drunkenness before their children, in order to deter their offspring from ever falling into that brutalizing vice. An impression, similar to that which the intoxicated slaves must have produced upon the youthful Spartans, was produced upon me when I saw this slave of sensual enjoyment displaying before me his moral degradation.

I felt that my moral ruin would be inevitable were I, even for a short time longer, to remain in any connexion with this degenerate son. I saw the abyss open before me into which I should be plunged, if I could not extricate myself from the venomous coils of the seducer. Thanks to my better feelings, thanks, above all, to the holy precepts of religion which a guardian angel seems to have whispered in my ears, for the rousing of my moral courage. I was firmly resolved to flee from this base companion, and rather lose the sum

had lent him than allow myself to be hurried into destruction; for I had ever learned not "to make gold my hope, nor to say to the fine gold, thou art my confidence." With the little money that was left left me I then secured a place in an English vessel, and on the following day I was on my way to London.

During the voyage I had ample time to reflect on the events of the preceding days. I felt ashamed at having allowed myself to be duped, I reproached myself with having shown so much want of experience, and having profited so little by the wise and practical precepts which both my parents and my instructor had ever set before me. Yet I was young, and had not seen much of the world, and it is but too true that the less experience we have the more confidence do we place in our own hasty judgment. It will not be deemed out of place if I illustrate this truth by the following narration:—

"The wise Kung-Tsee one day took his disciples to walk in the fields, and they came to the spot where a fowler was wont to set his nets. He was just engaged in distributing into different cages the birds that he had caught. They were all young birds, and their pitiful note seemed to indicate that they were not quite unconscious of their fate, and lamented the loss of freedom which their folly had brought upon them.

"Your prisoners are all of them very young,' said Kung-Tsee to the fowler, 'where are the old ones.'

"The old ones!" replied the fowler, 'they are too prudent and cautious to allow themselves to be caught. They look around in all directions, and never approach a place where they discover a net or a cage. Those young ones, who keep to them, do the same, and escape from danger. We only catch the forward ones who leave their parents, and sometimes an old one that follows the young.'

"Kung-Tsee looked at his disciples: 'Have you heard

what this man has said? As it is with birds, so it is with men. An assuming boldness, an unbounded confidence in themselves, pride, on account of the little knowledge they have acquired, and the small merit they have obtained—these drive inexperienced youth into ruin. They imagine that they understand every thing, nothing embarrasses them. They never consult one older than themselves, for they know better than the aged. Thus they go their own way, but fall into the net that is spread for them.'

"Some of the old admire the sparkling fire of youth, trust in them, follow them, speak and act like them, and are caught in one net with them—foolish old age by the side of foolish youth. My friends, remember what this fowler has told us."*

I had been the young bird, I had not looked round, had not discovered the net, and heedlessly flown into it. But it had been a lesson to me, and it might be a lesson to others, that we should not place too hasty a confidence in persons of whose integrity we are not assured. On this ground I consoled myself on account of what had happened; for, thought I, who knows of what advantage this warning may be to me in after life?

With these and other reflections I tried to efface from my mind the unpleasant impressions that had been left from my stay at Hamburgh; and, as to my loss, I hoped to be soon in possession of a few thousand pounds, a sum, in comparison with which the money lost could not appear very considerable.

It was a beautiful day in August, of the year 1835, when our vessel sailed, with a fair wind, up the Thames. The nearer we approached London, the more I became struck with the multitude of vessels stationed in the river, with the activity and bustle

* Note 11.

that prevailed wherever the eye turned. There can be no sight grander to a foreigner than that which he beholds on entering England by the Thames, as far as London. He perceives at once that it must be a great and industrious people—these Britons who inhabit these islands; he feels convinced that it can only be a great and free nation that has obtained that commercial and maritime superiority, manifested so strikingly by that endless forest of masts, by those immense docks, those gigantic wharfs and warehouses.

As the physiognomist may read in the countenance of a man that man's character and capacities, so the traveller may trace, perhaps even with a greater degree of certainty, the characteristic of a country in the features of its capital.

My first visit, after my arrival in London, was to the Rev. Dr. Herschel, the then chief rabbi of the Jewish communities in Great Britain, who had been entrusted with the management of the money left by my deceased relative. I explained to him the purpose of my visit to him, and produced the papers and documents which, as I thought, established my claim to the bequeathed property. But I was doomed to a most painful disappointment. All my hopes and anticipations, all my plans and projects vanished into air in one moment. The chief rabbi told me, without circumlocution, that the property in question was in the possession of several persons, whose title, as lawful heirs, had been acknowledged by a court of equity, and that all that was left for the German relatives consisted of the paltry sum of two pounds.

These words of the rev. doctor fell upon me like a thunderbolt—it was indeed a dreadful moment for me!

I could hardly produce any words; I felt as if the ground were sinking under my feet. The chief rabbi, perceiving my painful position, kindly encouraged me—spoke to me sweet words of consolation—advised me to lose no time in taking the earliest opportunity to return to my country, as the difficulties of my situation would increase with every day I should remain in London. He handed me the two pounds—a poor substitute indeed, for the fortune I had expected—and, with a heart full of sorrow, I withdrew from the rev. pastor.

Having gained the street, the whole painfulness of my wretched condition rushed upon me with awful distinctness. There I stood in a foreign land, the language of which I could not speak, without friends to whom I could communicate my grief, and almost without a home where I might lay my weary head. Nothing, I thought, remained now for me but to return, at all hazards, and by all means, to my native country. But a feeling of shame came over me as I represented to myself the position in which I should appear again before my brother and sisters. And what would my friends and acquaintances say, if they saw me returning from a foreign country, without having at all bettered my circumstances, but rather, in a manner, deteriorated them? My re-appearance, under these conditions, would be very much like an avowal of incapacity to make my way in the world. Besides, the consciousness of having failed in my first attempt to gain a living through my own unaided exertions, would act discouragingly upon future undertakings. But the other alternative—to remain in England—held out prospects not less disheartening. What was I to undertake in the midst of a strange world, without any means of securing my subsistence, even for a short period, without one sympathising soul, without any knowledge of

English, without the slightest knowledge of the locality? Were I to speak, no one would understand me; were I spoken to, I should be unable to comprehend the meaning of the words addressed to me.

Such were my thoughts when I found myself in one of those crowded thoroughfares of the city of London. Strange to say, the very multitude of people in the streets produced in me a feeling of loneliness and solitude. Amidst those thousands of human creatures, I felt myself forsaken and forlorn. They all passed me without deigning to look at me, without asking after the cause of my grief, without offering assistance. They were hurrying by me, one after another, they all seemed absorbed in their own affairs, every one seemed to have a certain object in view. Oh, how I envied them! they knew whither to direct their steps, they were engaged in some business—they were merchants, or tradesmen, or clerks, or workmen, they all had an occupation, a calling—I alone, I had none. The only countenances in which I could discover something sympathetic with myself were those of some poor and wretched persons. But, alas! they could not help me, they stood in need of assistance themselves. Every thing around bore a dull and sombre aspect. The great capital of England, and, we may say, of the world, of the grandeur and beauty of which I had heard and read so much, had lost every attraction for me. So true is it that external objects appear to us in a different light according to the different mental medium through which we view them.

In this depressed state of mind I repaired to my lodging. A small Hebrew Bible, which I had made my inseparable companion, lay on the table. I opened it, and turning to the Book of Psalms, which the

great Luther called "a portrait of all the different situations and affections of the human heart and soul," I read the following verses:—

"A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.

"Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily."

As I was reading on, as I was muttering many a psalm written in a depressed state of mind analagous to my own, a calmness came over me, soothing my wounded heart. The effect was wonderful: I blamed myself for the despondency into which I had allowed myself to fall, my confidence in my Maker was revived, and perceiving that to face boldly the difficulties of my position, was the first and most necessary step towards overcoming them, I summoned up all my moral courage, heightened by an implicit reliance on the decrees of the Almighty. With the King of Israel I exclaimed, "Why art thou cast down, my soul, and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God, for I shall praise Him for the help of His countenance?"

There is, indeed, no book that carries with it so much consolation to the afflicted, that inspires man with such unshakeable confidence in the Ruler of our destinies, as the Psalter. "As the heart that has been panting after the water brooks" is refreshed by the waters with which he has quenched his thirst; as a man who has been breathing an oppressive atmosphere feels recreated and strengthened by a fresh balmy breeze; so may we, in misfortune, draw strength and consolation from the humbly devout, yet grand and magnificent, compositions of David. To a pious and

religious mind there can be no greater spiritual enjoyment than to read that unrivalled poetry in the original: I say advisedly in the original, because no translation can approach, much less do full justice to that powerful beauty, that poetic fervour, that lofty, yet simple diction, in which the Psalms are composed.* Hebrew is the language of prayer.

Strengthened and somewhat pacified by these meditations, I sat down to write to my brother. My first idea was to ask him for money, which would either convey me home again, or enable me to undertake something in England. But I had not yet finished the letter when I was seized by a feeling of shame and confusion. To ask for money is, under all circumstances, in a manner, humiliating. It is true, the situation in which I was was not my own work, but might not my own energies better it? As yet I had done nothing to try my powers, and I thought it was unmanly thus to depend on others, though relatives, rather than strive to labour through the difficulties in my way. I tore up the letter I had written, and wrote another, simply relating the disappointment with which I had met, without adverting to the embarrassment in which I was. After having dispatched this letter, I thought seriously to do the first step towards securing a maintenance.

Near the place where I lodged there was a boarding house kept by a Polish Jew. This house was a place of rendezvous for many foreigners, mostly Germans. In the hope of meeting with a countryman to whom I might apply for advice in my unenviable position, I went there, and soon made the acquaintance of a man, a native of my own country. He had all the appear-

* Note 12.

ance of an honest and good-natured person ; and, although I had but lately paid so dearly for placing confidence in persons whom I did not know thoroughly, yet the upright, unassuming countenance of this man so convinced me of his sincerity that I disclosed to him all my secrets.

His first idea was that I should apply for some situation or other. But there were two almost insurmountable objections to that proposal. Firstly, I knew how my brother thought on that subject, and how grieved he would be to hear that I had entered anybody's services in a foreign land ; and, secondly, I had no knowledge of English, so that I was not very likely to succeed in an application of that kind, though my letters of recommendation might have been of some service to me in this respect. After some little consultation, it seemed that the only way for me to choose was to begin some business for myself, and this, my adviser said, without losing a moment.

He instanced several cases of destitution which had been brought about through want of resolution and energy. "Do not wait for opportunities," he added, with the air of one who had had much experience. "Every hour you pass in inactivity brings you nearer to poverty. People here have no time for looking after other people's affairs. 'Help yourself' must be your motto, if you do not wish to live upon charity."

The sound of the word charity shook me to the innermost soul ; indeed, the picture of destitution which he had drawn of men who, but for their want of energy, might have kept themselves from indigence, and possibly could have risen to a decent and respectable station in life, suddenly animated me to exert all my powers.

“No one,” I said, “can be more ready and willing to work than I, but what do you advise me to do: tell me how to make a beginning.” He considered for a short time, and then advised me to pawn my gold watch and some of my clothes, of which I had a good stock—more than were absolutely wanted—and, with the money, to obtain some goods for sale.

I confess, I did not relish much the suggestion. The idea of pawning clothes has in it something from which a respectable man shrinks. But it was my last resource. There was no dishonesty in doing it, and it might be the means of keeping me independent of charity in a strange land.

It is peculiar in charity, that while we are enjoined to exercise it, yet it is especially our duty to avoid, if possible, accepting it. Sympathy with the sufferings of others is a feeling innate in every human being. Providence, in order to alleviate human misery, implanted in man's heart a feeling which should arise at the sight of a suffering fellow being, and prompt him to assistance. Scripture expresses it in these words: “Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poorer brother.”* The first part of the sentence implies that the human heart is naturally inclined to commiseration. Happy those who are in a condition to manifest this truly divine feeling toward their poorer neighbours by deeds of charity and beneficence. But charity ought always to be given in a manner so as to wound, as little as possible, the moral dignity of the receiver. How beautiful, in this respect, are some of the divine precepts of the sacred lawgiver. The repeated injunctions, not wholly to reap the corners of the fields, not to gather

* Note 13.

the gleanings of the harvest and the vineyards, not to fetch a forgotten sheaf, but to leave all those to the poor, to the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, teach us to bestow our charity in a gracious and unostentatious manner.

On the other hand, it is natural that a man should avoid living upon the gifts of others. Receiving charity lowers a man in his self-esteem, it hurts the feeling of independence which every man ought to possess, and classes him among those unable to maintain themselves through their own exertions, and incapable of making a proper use of their physical or mental powers. We ought, therefore, to put forth all our energy, we ought to exert ourselves to the utmost, and be satisfied with little rather than to live upon the good will of others. "He that hateth gifts shall live."

Acting upon the advice of my new acquaintance I purchased, with his assistance, a few articles, such as pencils, pens, and other writing materials. On the following day I took up my position near London Bridge—it was any thing but an enviable position. To the incessant noise and bustle around me, produced by the interminable passing of innumerable vehicles and passengers, corresponded an agitation within me, occasioned by an internal struggle of opposite elements, such as pride and helplessness, ambition and humility. I compared my present situation with the time when I lived under the parental roof. If, at that time, I had been told that I should find myself one day placed in a thoroughfare of the capital of England, without means, without friends, without a home, imploring, through my pitiful appearance—for not a word in English could I utter—the kindness of some passers by, I could not possibly have believed it. But I endeavoured to become reconciled to my new employ-

ment as well as possible. Did not God watch over me in this as well as in my native country? "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion."

I had the consciousness of having acted hitherto in accordance with the precepts of religion and morality, and this consciousness of my moral worth elevated me above my actual position. I strengthened myself with the conviction, that to remain virtuous under adverse circumstances, must be more meritorious than to be honest when there is no temptation, and I consoled myself that the ordeal I had to pass through would fortify and encourage me to grapple with the various difficulties and dangers with which the path of human life is beset.

While thus engaged in meditation, and while looking vacantly at what was passing around me, now and then a gentleman or lady would stand still before me. They seemed struck by my strange and foreign appearance, and, on finding that I could not understand their language, would kindly buy some articles of me. I will not recount my innumerable disappointments, my vain expectations, the thousand hardships I had to endure. O, it is hard to stand all day long in the street anxious to sell some trifles, fearful, in case of disappointment, of being without the necessary means of maintenance, and to be exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather. There beats many a good heart, worthy of a better fate, under the guise of poverty that meets you in the street. O that it were possible to distinguish the deserving from the undeserving, and withdraw them from a life full of grief and sorrow. In the evening I generally remained at my humble lodgings, and tried to read an English book with the

assistance of a dictionary, or to compare the English version of the Bible with the original. I had succeeded in getting a few books lent to me from a person I met in the above-mentioned boarding house, and those few books were the companions of my solitude in the evening. I blessed the memory of my father who had given me a good education, and thus imparted to me a desire for reading and study. While others were at public houses or gaming tables I was reading in my dear books, and thus forgot, for a few hours in the night, the troubles of the day.

Sometimes I found that I had made some progress; I had gained a few shillings, and might hope, with strict economy, soon to increase my earnings. As it may easily be supposed, from the sort of business with which I commenced, I was obliged to live in a nowise profuse manner. For more than two months I tasted no animal food, and, thanks to my healthy constitution, I felt very little the effect of this abstinence. Those days were not marked by much cheerfulness, it is true, but I gained an honest living, and this I deemed paramount to every other consideration. The little I had obtained, through my own exertions, was a source of happiness to me, and I thought "better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasures and trouble therewith," or, as the Psalmist expresses it: "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." My improvement in English was also some satisfaction to me, as it would facilitate my intercourse with English people, and otherwise be of advantage to me in my petty business transactions.

After some time, when I had learned sufficient to make myself understood, and had begun to comprehend what was addressed to me, I ventured to travel in the

country, to sell my goods. In about a year and a half I found myself in possession of fifteen pounds, a considerable sum for me at that time. Through industry, perseverance, and economy, I had managed to save it, and I need not say, it was of great use to me afterwards.

I think it will not be out of place to add here a few remarks on emigration. To this country, in particular, emigration has of late become of the greatest importance, and has, not without reason, attracted the attention of the statesman, and become the object of frequent deliberation.

England, a densely populated country, the boundaries of which, from her geographical position, admit of no extension, naturally looks to emigration as the only means of providing a sphere of activity for her superabundant population. These sea-girt islands do not afford sufficient scope for a race so active and enterprising as that of the English, and, by a natural instinct, as it were, thousands of people annually leave these shores for distant countries. From these reasons emigration has become a necessary element in the life of the English nation. Not only is this country relieved thereby from her surplus population, but as the wants of the settlers, in those distant lands, are in a great measure supplied from the mother country, industry at home receives an additional stimulus.

It would lead me too far away from the purpose of this book were I to dwell on the manifold advantages which civilisation derives from this all-important movement. To whatever quarter of the globe we turn our eyes, there we behold civilisation and humanity following in the wake of the settlers from the civilised

portions of Europe, and particularly from this empire. It seems as if the Anglo-Saxon race had a mission to carry knowledge and civilisation to the rude and barbarous tribes that live scattered over the earth. Man is the unconscious instrument by which Providence carries out His designs.

There are, no doubt, many influences at work to prevent people from leaving their native country for a new and unknown land. All of us have a natural attachment to the country of our birth. All our ideas, our feelings, our desires, our fancies, bear the impress of our native soil and atmosphere. The notions we have imbibed from our childhood are all, more or less, connected with the prevailing habits and customs, and they again exercise so powerful an influence upon us, that it requires an effort to part from them, and exchange them for new ones, foreign to our wonted mode of life. To leave all those who are dear to us—those whom we love, and by whom we are loved in return—those in whose society we have been so happy,—to leave them, and perhaps for ever, is not at all a matter of indifference. I do not know of a deeper emotion than that which attends our bidding adieu to a beloved father, a tender mother, an affectionate brother or sister, when we are about to leave them never to see them again. To this we must add, that at the mere idea of parting, parents, relations, and friends, become at once much dearer to us than they appeared to be before.

But not only from these do we find it difficult to part, but all the objects, familiar to us from long habit, seem to dissuade us from emigrating. The streets and the houses, the walks and the lanes, the very stones and trees, to the sight of which we have

been accustomed, seem to tell us: O do not go away; and it is not only sentimental persons, not only persons peculiarly susceptible of deep feeling, that experience those impressions—all, from the poetical and sensitive to the most prosy and matter-of-fact individuals, are, more or less influenced by them.

But, apart from all the attractions that seem to chain us to our homes, there is the uncertainty of what our fate will be in the new land. Shall we be more prosperous there than we were at home? Will fortune smile more upon us? and, if we are unfortunate, will our misfortune not be aggravated by the absence of those who might render us assistance?

Such and similar considerations are very natural, and I shall recur to them presently. But there is another objection to emigration, which I have heard sometimes urged by timidly inclined persons, or such as have formed an erroneous idea of Providence. "If," they say, "I am to be prosperous and happy I shall, with God's assistance, be prosperous and happy in my native land; if, on the contrary, by the decrees of Heaven, I am doomed to a life of poverty and want, it will not avail me to take refuge in a foreign land."

Such a doctrine as this is at once immoral and implies a totally mistaken view of the Supreme Ruler. It is immoral because it teaches man to neglect the development of his faculties, and the display of his energies; it encourages idleness, it undermines all habits of self-reliance and activity. If such a doctrine had a shadow of truth in it, we might infer that, even at home, in our native country, we need not exert ourselves, we need not work; for, if the Almighty wishes us to be happy and prosperous, He can effect

this by virtue of his omnipotence, without any exertions on our part. But Scripture says, "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."

On the other hand, a notion as that above stated amounts almost to blasphemy, inasmuch as it ascribes to the Most Just an equal regard to the slothful and the industrious—to the idle and the active. A life of idleness and slothfulness can not possibly find favour in the sight of Him who endowed man with faculties which he is to develop, and with powers which he is to exercise. Such a notion, therefore, is contrary to the dictates of reason and of religion.

God does not work wonders in our days; He does not interrupt the course of His universal laws in favour of individuals. If we look around us in the creation we everywhere perceive activity and movements, and if we turn to human society we observe that activity generally meets with its reward, and idleness with its punishment; and, there can be no doubt that activity is a law in the physical, as well as in the moral world—a law which cannot be transgressed with impunity.

If we find that there is little chance for turning our capabilities to account in our native country, why should we not try our fortune in another land? If at home our occupation is ill rewarded, why not remove to a country where there may be a demand for our labour? If we cannot thrive in the land of our birth, be it from competition or from other causes, why not proceed to a part where competition is not ruinous, and where those other causes are not at work? It is true, as I have remarked above, there are many attractions in our native country that operate like a

charm upon us; it is true, to part from all those that are dear to us is painful in the extreme. But we should not allow ourselves to be influenced too much by those considerations. Practical life is frequently in antagonism with the softer sentiments, and as long as we do not act wrongly in a moral view, we ought to choose the practical course—that course which is conducive to our welfare, however it may hurt those sentiments. Besides, the painful feelings of separation are of a temporary nature, and time soon softens them. Moreover, we may have the sweet consolation that our emigration may not only prove useful to ourselves, but it may also confer great benefits upon those we leave behind. Many a good son has found it difficult to leave his kind, though poor parents, long before his departure, he has not been able to think of it without experiencing the deepest emotions. But what were those emotions, what was even the sad hour of separation in comparison with the substantial good which he has been able to effect for his beloved parents from a far distant country?

As to the uncertainty of our fate in our new abode, we must leave that point to God, in whose presence we shall be whithersoever we go; as he who crosses the ocean will find, on the other side of the great sea, the same sun shining by day which he has seen at home, and the same moon illumining the night which shone at home: so will the Creator of these luminaries be always over us and with us. We must, however, not be too sanguine in our expectations, we must not expect to pick up fortunes in a day, or in a year; we must not anticipate an El Dorado in the new country to which we intend to direct our steps, we must not entertain the erroneous and dangerous idea, that our exertions—our labours, will be less

required in our new home. He who emigrates with such ideas is sure to meet with bitter and severe disappointments. Work man must, wherever he is, and and it is good it should be so; it is one of the great characteristics of the age we live in, that labour is no longer considered as degrading, and idleness as an enviable privilege of the rich. It is proper that next to God we should trust to our own exertions and energies, considering that we can never hope to succeed without having laboured first.

Nor must we be frightened or discouraged if, on our arrival at the place of our destination, we only see strange faces, and wish that we had stayed in the land where we were surrounded by friends and familiar companions. Man bears the image of God everywhere, and there are in all countries good and kind-hearted people. If we are but good and honest ourselves, we shall soon meet with companions whose sentiments and opinions respond to our own, and who will not entirely forsake us in times of trouble and misfortune.

Difficulties which we are sure to encounter, hardships which are necessarily to be endured, we must not call misfortunes. The obstinate and stiff-necked Israelites in the wilderness, who fell to murmuring whenever they could not satisfy their desires, and who remembered with regret the flesh pots of Egypt, we must not imitate, but rather the heaven-inspired Moses, of whom Scripture says: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." The former had forgotten the many years of oppression, the lashes of their task-masters, their slavery, and were disheartened at the difficulties and hardships of the wilderness, though they had the holy land, "flowing

with milk and honey," before them. Not so the great law-giver: he had only the great good in view to which he was to lead his people, and the prospect of securing to them all the blessings of a beautiful and fertile country—of which, however, he was not to participate—made to disappear, in his eyes, all the impediments in his way. In a similar manner, the stranger in a foreign land must boldly steer his course to gain a prosperous lot, regardless of the difficulties he may have to overcome, or the enjoyments from which he may have to abstain. For it is not sufficient to work hard, to be industrious and persevering; in order to succeed we must likewise husband carefully the means at our disposal, and arrange our manner of living suitably to our circumstances. Do not murmur if your allowance is but short—if your meals must be frugal. Thank the Almighty for what He gives you, and bear your lot with patience and humble submission to the will of your God. Try to limit your wants as much as is compatible with your health, and do not expend the saving gained through long labour in enjoyments which are transitory, and which do not profit you either physically or morally. Above all, beware of wicked companions. They allure you like the Sirenes of which mythology tells us; but, like the prudent Ulysses, whom Homer celebrates, endeavour to escape from their enticing seductions.

Honesty, industry, patience, economy, and perseverance are necessary qualities for those who wish to succeed in a foreign land, but even with these our lot can never be a pleasant one, we can never be truly happy unless we are thoroughly penetrated by a true faith in God, unless we have the conviction that the final success of all our exertions rests with Him alone. How can we work with pleasure unless we may hope that He

will bless our labours? How can we bear hardships and privations with equanimity unless we are confident that they are intended for our good—that they are calculated to purify our hearts? How can we feel comfort in a foreign land, far away from our relations and friends, unless we feel that He is with us, that He watches over us, that He protects us, He whose protection is infinitely above that of mortal man. Happy, thrice happy is the man who may call God his guide, who, at every step he takes, feels the rule of a higher power. Fortunately, that blessing of all blessings: to know ourselves under the immediate protection of God, in whatever climate or zone we may be, appertains to all those who, with a pure conscience, may look up to the presence of the Most High, to those who take the precepts of religion and virtue as their guides in all their actions, and who accept fortune with gratitude, and adversity with humility. Those who truly love God, and confide in Him, need not fear wherever they are, need not be afraid wherever they go. “Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.”



CHAPTER V.

וְתַנְיֵ-לִי מְקוֹם בְּאַחַת עָרֵי הַשְּׂדֵדָה וְאַשְׁכָּה לָשֵׁם

“Let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there.”—1 Sam. xxvii. 5.

The law of concentration holds good in small things as well as in great. When a mighty king has to wield the sceptre over far extended dominions, his energies must be divided, the greater part of the administration he must leave to others, and, even with the greatest care, numerous neglects and omissions will happen. But when all his attention is devoted to a limited extent of land, he will be enabled to know that small country thoroughly, to be acquainted with all its resources and its wants, and he can effectively strive to make the best use of the former, and to supply the latter most satisfactorily. Thus, when an individual applies his faculties to many different occupations at the same time, it is not of common occurrence that he succeeds in any one of his pursuits; but when he gives his mind to one thing only, aims at one end, and leads all his actions in that one direction, the probability is that, if he be but honest and persevering, his exertions will ultimately be crowned with success. We should therefore endeavour to arrange our affairs so that all our employments are concentrated, as much as possible, in one and the same locality. I remember having read in the Talmud of a sage who prayed to God that He might not divide his mind. Some bystanders, who had heard that singular prayer, asked the

philosopher for an explanation of his words. "When I prayed that God might not divide my mind," replied he, "I meant to entreat the Lord that He would not give me estates, or any possessions, in two or more different localities, because the various attentions which such riches would require I should deem equivalent to a division of mind."

It was some such idea which, after I had travelled about for two years from county to county and from city to city, awakened in me the desire of choosing one particular locality, and confining my labours to a fixed place. It was not chance, it was by an especial guidance of Providence, that once, when I felt very much the want of a place which I might call my home, I came to the town of Bedford. Several attempts which I made there to sell goods proved successful; I seemed to like the persons with whom I came in contact, and I was kindly received by all; and having likewise heard that there were some Jews living in the town I determined to make this town, as it were, my central settlement, and to limit my travels to its immediate neighbourhood. I have said that it was not by chance that I decided for Bedford, and I have often since blessed the kind Providence that directed my steps to that town.

As yet my situation was any thing but enviable—my days were toilsome, my nights cheerless. Few indeed were the comforts of life that I could procure for myself; and often would the days of my youth stand before my mind with all their peaceful happiness and abundance of pleasures, and that contrast would then thrust the dagger of pain deeper and deeper into my sorrowing heart. The only joy that would sometimes smile on my dismal hours and, for a moment, clear up

their monotonous gloom, was, when I observed that I was progressing both in my knowledge of the English language and in the success of my commercial pursuits. Yet a progress of this kind is naturally slow and very far from keeping pace with the sanguine hopes and expectations of a young man.

In these troubles I would not give myself up entirely to despondency, much less to despair. I say this advisedly; for I know that many in my situation would have wished to die—would have welcomed death as a desirable relief from their sufferings. But I am of opinion that, to wish for death to come, is ungodly and cowardly. It is ungrateful to our Creator thus to refuse His benign benefits and to ask Him to take away from us that boon which His lovingkindness has bestowed upon us, and which is capable of producing so much happiness. It is cowardly to allow ourselves to be weighed down by the appearance of clouds of disaster; for how know we, but that behind those clouds the sun of prosperity is brightly shining, though we, short-sighted mortals, see it not? “Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth,” is significantly said, and how should we presume to imagine that there is no more remedy—no outlet to our troubles? To all those who, in misfortune, despair of better days and have no other prayer than that their existence may be speedily terminated—to all those I would say, “Is the Lord’s hand waxed short?”

And, independently of the consideration that the course of our lives may soon bring us happier days, have we not duties to fulfil on earth which make it incumbent upon us to prolong our existence as much as it is in our power? Is it right, is it just, is it good to wish to die, as long as there yet remains a good

action to be done, a benefit to be bestowed, a poor brother to be assisted, a sufferer to be relieved by us? Let my readers take instruction from the following allegory, if they ever should be tempted to hate life:—

“There lived a man in the Holy Land of the name of Eliab, and God had blessed the man with earthly riches, and he was learned in the wisdom of the East. But all this could not give peace to his heart, nor calmness to his soul; he often mourned in sadness, and wished to die. For he said: ‘What is life but an everlasting circle of inconstancies, and yet ever the same? man ever lives in strife, and his days are those of a day-labourer.’

“While Eliab was thus reflecting one day, a divine man came to him and showed him a plant of a wonderfully healing power. But Eliab said, ‘What avails this plant: My body is in good health, but my soul is ailing; it would be better for me to die than to live.’

“‘This plant is to cure thine heart,’ replied the holy man, ‘take it, and heal seven poor sufferers with it, and then, if you desire it, you may die.’

“Eliab did as the divine man had commanded him. He saw the misery in the huts of the poor, healed seven sick persons, and distributed of his riches among the needy.

“Thereupon the holy man again came to him and spoke: ‘Here I bring a plant of death; now you may die.’ But Eliab exclaimed: ‘No, God forbid, I do not now desire to die, for I have learned to appreciate the value of life.’ Then the holy man smiled and said: ‘I thought so; now you have, by deeds, become aware of the divinity that dwells within you, how could you possess such an excess of self-love as to think any longer of the monotony of earthly life and its inconstancies?’ ”

The reproof which the holy man, in this allegory, gave to Eliab, should ever be present to our mind when reverses threaten to overwhelm us, and we should learn how to bear up patiently with what befalls us, and to accept it with resignation.

Indeed, disasters and misfortunes with which the Lord visits mortals are much like the rod applied to chastise a child for his errors. The child that has not the conviction that he who punishes him is, in fact, one who loves him dearly, will look on that rod with fear and trembling, and consider it a most cruel torture. But men who have the assurances that all that befalls them is guided by an all-loving Father, the chastening of whose rod is calculated to improve them—men should consider these wounds inflicted by the hand of God, as trials which must be borne with manly courage, trials from which the faithful will go forth triumphantly, and through which their trust in the Lord will be justified. If men could but think this—if they would but accept their visitations with submission and reconciliation, and with an unshakeable confidence that the Hand which smote them will be the Hand that shall relieve them again; then despair would not be known on earth, and men would cease to be wretched on the planet which was created and adorned for their happiness.

For several months I travelled about the neighbourhood of Bedford, and began to like the country and its inhabitants. There are, in the character of the English and in the peculiarities of their customs, several features which must attract the attention of the stranger, especially the German immigrant, and make him love to reside in these isles, and among these people. The whole of this empire breathes the healthful atmosphere of liberty. Liberty—that element of life which is as necessary for the welfare of nations as sunshine is for the thriving of plants—liberty pervades all the thoughts and actions of an Englishman, and it is that privilege of which he is most proud and most tenacious, and to which he is ready to sacrifice every other

consideration. The German, coming from a country where despotism is paraded under the semblance of liberty, is at first dazzled by the pure rays emanating from the presence of that goddess, but soon feels her beneficial influence, and becomes a different being under her transforming guidance. Personal liberty is an essential ingredient in man's dignity; if his foot is impeded—not to walk where he chooses; if his arm is fettered—not to act as he wills; nay, if his mind is caged—not to take its flight where he is bent; then, indeed, we may say with truth, “a man has no pre-eminence over a beast.”

Another national feature of the English is their unrivalled industry. Wherever we turn our eyes there is life, work, business, occupation, bustle, stirring, and activity—no hand is unemployed, no spot unoccupied, no room empty, no hour idle. The stranger cannot but admire this multitude of human beings, of whom some labour hard for the necessities of the day, and others, like provident ants, are laying in stock for the winter of their lives. The Germans are likewise industrious, but their industry is of a lighter, less grave, and less persevering nature. The German works as if it were his amusement to work, the Englishman shows, by his toil, that he considers it the grave question of life and death.

There is yet another characteristic in the English people, more prominent, if possible, than the two former, and with which the German, in his native land, is less familiar—that is, patriotism. With the German patriotism is a sound, an idea, a beautiful fiction: with the Englishman it is a tangible reality. An Englishman's happiness is bound up with the glory of his country, her valiant armies, her proud victories,

her rich colonies, her manifold dependencies — they are all *his*; he feels his own importance in constituting a part of that nation which has the justest claim to the honourable title of “Mistress of the Sea.” The German, on the contrary, feels himself little in all these respects. His is but a miniature country, a miniature monarch, a miniature history. He is, in fact, not a German, he is a Prussian, or an Austrian, or an Hanoverian, or even of a smaller race and country; he loves not his native land—there is nothing loveable in it.

Whilst the foreigner contemplates, with wonder and admiration, these three tutelary deities of Great Britain—Liberty, Industry, and Patriotism; whilst he esteems this nation for their high sense of freedom, their adherence to habits of activity, and their warm attachment to the soil that gave them birth, he is, at the same time, charmed by those celebrated home-comforts which every British fireside affords, and the very name of which is unknown to the citizen of Germany. After the labours of the day, the German tradesman or merchant seeks diversion in public places, in tea gardens, coffee houses, or other *reunions*; the Englishman retires to his parlour, however humble it may be, and enjoys the sweeter and more tender pleasures offered by a family circle. These noiseless but delightful home pleasures are not at first appreciated, and therefore not relished, by the German; but, after a time, their spell becomes quite irresistible, and I firmly believe that most of my countrymen, who have lived a few years in England, would be sorry to exchange the newly adopted, livelike fire-place for their old-accustomed, black-faced, unfeeling, stove.

In the mercantile transactions of the English another feature of the national character is remarkable—

rigorous integrity. There is, we may say it with confidence, no country on earth where bargains of such magnitude are struck with so much sincerity, and the conditions fulfilled with so much punctuality. A fraud is not only punished by the law, but it is held in utter contempt by the people; cheating is below the dignity of an Englishman; a sense of fairness, and an aversion to take advantage of a neighbour's inferiority in any respect, are sacredly cherished by the great majority of the inhabitants of these islands. This is not the place to show how much of her actual greatness England owes to this virtue of her sons, but we may remark that this solidity of dealings will for ever ensure to this country a high rank—perhaps, the highest rank—among commercial states.

The short sketch which I have drawn of the English national character, or, rather, those features of the English character which prominently engage the attention of the German observer—this short sketch will be sufficient to account for the fact that so many individuals who come to England from Germany soon learn to regard, and to love this country, make it their second fatherland, and, in the enjoyments of the manifold advantages which it affords them, entirely forget the value of the social pleasures in which Germany undeniably takes precedence. The Germans altogether, for want of an innate national feeling, become very easily habituated to any country which they have chosen for their abode—and their manners, almost as pliable as their language, accommodate themselves, with facility, to the customs of any nation among which they reside, and are often entirely lost in them.

However much this is the case with the Germans in general, it is particularly so with the Jews. It

seems as if the God of Jacob, who pronounced against the reprobate children of Israel the severe curse that he would "scatter them among all the nations, from the one end of the earth even unto the other," implanted in them, as a healing balm for the deep wound, the facility of adapting their conduct to the customs and habits of those among whom it was their doom to live. It is surprising to observe how isolated the Jew stands from all his neighbours in regard to religious bearing and ceremonies, and, on the other hand, how his manners bear the distinct marks of the country to which he owes his birth, and of the race who inhabit that country. It is a rabbinical principle, that, when we come to a foreign city, we should endeavour to assimilate our manners to those of the people who live therein, and that we should not deviate from the prevailing institutions. This principle is substantiated—quite in keeping with the usual mode of reasoning current in rabbinical writings—by two instances from Holy Writ. When the angels descended to visit Abraham they assumed with the human shape, likewise human practices, for we read :

"And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them ; and they did eat."

On the contrary, when the Lord called his faithful servant Moses, to go up to heaven and receive the two tablets of stone upon which the commandments were written, Moses, who then stayed forty days and forty nights among the celestial beings, quitted so far his human nature that, during all this period, "he did neither eat bread, nor drink water."

Almost every page of Jewish history bears testimony to what I have stated. Ever since the descendants of Abraham have ceased to form a nation, since the

destruction of their sanctuary and the downfall of Zion, the Jews have been chased from land to land throughout almost all the habitable parts of the globe. No where were they received hospitably; all that they could obtain was to be tolerated, and yet, though they were considered aliens in the different countries, they gradually assumed the customs, together with the language, of the land of their abode, so that the Jew of the present day is, in his habits, not distinctly a Jew, but an Englishman, a Frenchman, a German, an Italian, &c. The nationality of the Jews as such, in the present time, only consists in the uniformity of their religious tenets, and in their using, for holy purposes, the Hebrew language, which is their common inheritance from their great ancestors.*

As a Jew and a German, therefore, I was soon reconciled to the English customs, and I began to prefer them even to those of my native country. The Jew, in particular, has great reason to prefer living in England to residing on the Continent—that is to say, the greater part of the Continent. For, though as yet the Jews in England are not in possession of all the civil privileges which their Christian neighbours enjoy, yet they feel no actual restrictions impeding their mercantile pursuits or the exercise of their religious worship. It is true there exists in England a religion connected with the state, as well as in the countries on the Continent, but, it is fair to say that, in reality, liberty of conscience prevails in England. And I, as a Jew, felt myself much more free in this country than I had been in Prussia, and this circumstance, together with the other advantages of English life, which I have briefly mentioned, determined me to cast away every idea of ever leaving England again.

* Note 14.

There was, however, one essential comfort yet wanting to me—a comfort which is almost as essential to a man as the air which he breathes and the food with which he maintains himself—that comfort is sympathy. As yet I had not found a kindred being that would take any interest in my successes or disappointments—would share my pleasures and participate in my woes. I had a home, but that home was comfortless; I had friends, but those friends were strangers; I met with a great deal of kindness, but that kindness was a voluntary offering and could be withdrawn at any time. I therefore resolved to seek for a partner through life, one that would wander with me through the paths of earthly existence, whose every thought and interest should become my own, and who would, in return, have all my interests at heart, in short, one who should be “a help meet” for me. “He who dwells without a wife,” say our sages, “dwells without joy, without blessing, without happiness.” There is much meaning and truth in this saying, and I shall soon have an opportunity of recurring to this subject. For the present, I will only state that I soon made the acquaintance of a Jewish young lady in Bedford, and, after having been known to each other for some time, we were betrothed.*

At this period of my life a circumstance occurred which put me to a very severe trial, and it required all the soundness of principle in which I had been trained, to preserve me from doing a dishonourable action, and fortify me against the temptation that was held out to me. It was not long after I had entered on the above engagement, when I received a letter, sent to me by a gentleman from Manchester, and which came from my brother, who had resided at New York. I forgot to mention, in any former part of this work, that a brother

* Note 15.

of mine had emigrated to the United States and settled in New York, when I was yet a boy. For many years we had not heard of him at all, nor had we been able to convey to him any information about ourselves. Now, it appeared that this brother of mine had succeeded in establishing himself at New York as a merchant of some importance, and he had a thriving business. He had heard that I had gone to England, and was now most anxious to employ me in his own business. He therefore enclosed a letter to me in a communication which he had to make to his correspondent at Manchester, whom he begged to inquire after me, and send me his letter. My brother stated to me how successful he had been in America, how anxious he was to have my co-operation in his business, and that my fortune would be made if I would only consent to cross the sea and join him. He had given orders to his Manchester correspondent to provide me, if I should need it, with every thing that could be required, in order to make the voyage with as much ease and speed as possible. By the tone of the letter I could see that my brother had not the most distant idea of my hesitating to accept his offer, but that he was fully convinced I would embrace it with eagerness.

I must confess it was not an easy struggle for me. My prospects in England were not of the most encouraging nature, for although I had no reason to complain, and I was earning a livelihood, yet I was very far from making a fortune, and my petty savings could not be brought into comparison with the profits arising from such a business as my brother had established. Besides, in England I had to make exertions to establish a business, in America I should have found one already established for me, and I need not dwell here upon the various difficulties which a

beginner has to encounter. To this must be added that there I should live with a brother, whilst here I was separated from all my relatives, and could not hope ever to be with them again for any length of time. On the other hand, I had given my word to the lady to whom I was betrothed, and my whole nature revolted at the idea of quitting her now, to whom I had pledged my vows.

The struggle, I said, was a violent one, yet it was but short. A temptation might have the power of confounding me for some moments, but my early training had been of so sound a description, the principles of probity and uprightness had taken such deep root in my heart, that they were sure of overruling any unworthy thought that entered my mind, as soon as I began to consider calmly on the subject. After a very short consideration I perceived the whole extent of the wrong that I should be committing, were I to accept my brother's invitation, and evade the fulfilment of the word that I had given—and I did not hesitate for a moment longer. I showed the letter that I had received to several of my friends, but told them at once that all the fine promises held out to me would not be able to induce me to go, since the engagement that I had lately formed with the young lady alluded to would regulate my conduct. For I considered the word which a man speaks in any promise is sacred, and it is as ungodly to violate that word, as it is to violate an oath or a vow.

Indeed, I would impress here upon my readers, the high importance which Holy Writ and rabbinical Judaism have attached to the keeping of promises. I do not think that there is any law on which the

sacred Scriptures are so explicit and impressive as on this of keeping one's faith. "That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform all." Such is the golden rule in which Moses emphatically enjoins the duty of keeping our word whether it be given merely as a promise to a fellow-being, or uttered in the form of a vow to the Most High. To the truly pious man, indeed there can be no difference between the obligation of keeping a promise to man, and that of keeping a vow to God, for he knows that the Lord will punish the transgressions committed against men quite as severely—tradition says, more severely*—as those committed against Himself. "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord," said the wise author of Proverbs, and David, when drawing the picture of the godly man in the fifteenth of his sublime hymns, declares that "he that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not, shall abide in the tabernacle of the Lord."† Man is not only bound to fulfil his promises when the performance is attended with little sacrifice, but even if a great hurt to himself should accrue from his acting up to a word which he has given, it is the duty of man to incur that hurt, and not to fail in his faith.

Although this conviction that I was bound, by the laws of God and man, to keep my word, left no room for the least hesitation in my mind, there was yet another circumstance which confirmed me in my resolution not to go to my brother in America, but to try my fortune in England, and, by my own and sole exertions, to obtain a position in society. From several parts of this outline, the reader may have perceived that I ever had a strong aversion to dependence on any human being. To go to America,

* Note 16.

† Note 17.

to avail myself of all the advantages which my brother's labours had procured, seemed to me to be an act that would betray a great want of self-reliance and an inclination to abstain from work, because my brother had worked for me. I reasoned thus with myself: It is true, my brother is a rich merchant, and lives in affluence; but, how has he come by his possessions? He worked honestly and indefatigably, and the Lord prospered his undertakings. And was not the same road open for me? Was I not in possession of the same means which had led him to wealth? Had I not hands to work? Had I not strength to bear up with misfortunes and reverses which never fail to be mingled with even the happiest of human lots? And did not the same God watch over me who had granted success to my brother's labours? Would it not show a littleness in faith if I were, on a sudden, to quit the career on which I had just entered to commence another, for every successful step of which I should, in a manner, be a debtor to my brother?

These considerations not only rendered my determination immoveable, but likewise made me deem little the advantages I gave up, since they were to be purchased at the expense of independence, and that unalloyed satisfaction which we derive from any success brought about by our own powers. I, therefore, wrote to the gentleman in Manchester who had forwarded the letter to me, thanked him for the kindness he had evinced, and the trouble he had taken in the matter, and begged of him to inclose a letter which I sent him to my brother. In this letter to my brother I openly stated my reasons for declining his offer, adding that I fully appreciated his fraternal affection in making it.

Thus the affair passed over, having no other effect upon me but that it spurred me on to work and unrelenting toil. I had now before me the example of a brother, who had gone to a foreign land without any very bright prospects, and who had, by perseverance, surmounted all difficulties, and attained to an honourable position in society. This example fired me on to imitation, and encouraged me to pursue the course that I had begun with more intense ardour. My brother's letter had given me a new proof that the unwearied and honest efforts of a man rarely remain altogether unrewarded, and I steered on more cheerfully, for the brilliant star of hope twinkled in the distance, and its shining rays broke through the darkened sky under which the barge of my life at present moved.

It was, however, not the mere accumulation of wealth which I considered the sole object of my toils. Though it is true that a certain amount of property, a certain ease of circumstances, is an indispensable requisite for ensuring the esteem of our fellow-citizens; I felt that I should never attain to that position which I so much desired, as long as I remained a single man. My daily life showed the truth of the divine words, that "it is not good for man to be alone," and I strove to effect my union with the lady I have before mentioned as soon as possible. It is with great truth that our sages have said, "he that has no wife dwells without joy, without blessing, without happiness." To him who looks on human society with a reflecting mind it must at once appear self-evident that, when the Almighty had created man, when He had provided him with a helpmate, and then gave the first pair the commandment, "be fruitful and multiply," the Divine

Being instituted marriage as an inalienable privilege of mankind, by which that favoured race of beings was to be propagated through a series of generations, the number of which is hidden from human vision. There were, it is true, a class of men—and they have not entirely disappeared from the face of the earth—who maintained that celibacy was a mode of life pleasing in the eyes of the Lord, and that, in order to serve our Creator in the most acceptable manner, we should devote every minute of our lives to His worship solely, and not allow any worldly regards to occupy our attention. Thus, by a mistaken zeal, they disobeyed the very first commandment of our Heavenly Father, that commandment without the performance of which all others would have been objectless, and which was the first and most important condition of human life. God cannot approve, at least, He cannot desire, a service which tends to destroy his servants.

While the institution of marriage thus supplies the most essential want of the human family, the married state affords us such numerous and refined pleasures as render it desirable to almost every man. God alone is perfection, and because he is perfection he does not feel the want of an equal, but man and the manifold created beings downwards, in their imperfections, have an innate desire to associate with creatures of a similar description to themselves. Man in particular, is eminently a social being, and his joys lose half their brightness, his sufferings are tinged with double their gloom, if they be not reflected in the mirror of a human soul that thinks and feels like himself. There is, surely, a degree of responsibility in being the protector, the guardian, as it were, of a human being, but there is likewise an

unspeakable pleasure in the thought that, besides our own soul, there is another in which all the sounds produced on our heart-strings find an echo.

I need not here dwell upon the domestic comforts of the married state. A simple comparison of family enjoyments with the cheerlessness of single life will speak better than words could express it. But I cannot omit adverting to those joys which are the inheritance of wedlock, and are counted among the greatest, if not *the* greatest of earthly joys — the blessings of offspring. When thus blessed, a new page of the human heart is unfolded—that of paternal affection, on which are inscribed cares so tender, feelings so sweet, pleasures so exquisite, as are sought in vain elsewhere. In almost all the other joys of life man has himself a certain share in procuring them; the pleasure of having good children is one purely divine, it is one in which the munificent hand of Providence is most openly manifested, it is a boon vouchsafed to us by the mercy of our Heavenly Father. A rabbinical writer has illustrated this idea in the following allegorical manner:—

“A man was journeying in the desert;—above him the scorching sun, under his feet the burning sand. He had lost his way, and strayed about for several days without finding any food or drink: his eyes were hollow with hunger, his lips were parched with thirst, and his foot could hardly drag his weary frame along. The love of life alone, and the hope of finding some dates or a rivulet, did not permit his steps to rest. At length he met with a goodly tree spreading its branches to form a cooling shade; it was covered with sweet fruit, and on the side of it murmured a silvery brook. The man drank of the water of the brook, ate of the dates, and reposed for a long time under the pleasant shade. Strengthened and refreshed, he then rose to continue his journey, and, as he looked up with a grateful eye to the

tree that had saved his life, a voice called from the top of the tree, 'Bless me before thou goest.'

"But the man replied: 'With what shall I bless thee? Shall I pray that thy shade may be pleasant? Behold, thy shade *is* most pleasant. That thy fruit may be sweet? Thy fruit *is* most sweet and refreshing. That a brook of clear water may run at thy side? Surely a brook of the clearest water kisses thy roots. May God then give, that all the branches which any man may take away from thee, to plant elsewhere, may become trees as rich and goodly as thyself.'"

This tree is the image of a pious sage. Though he may cast a cooling shade, a refreshing atmosphere, around him, though he may practise numerous good deeds, which are the fruit of human life, and though his wisdom may be as a fountain of clear water to quench the thirst of every inquirer, yet there is one blessing wanting to complete his happiness, and that blessing can only be bestowed by the love of the Heavenly Father—namely, that his children may be godly and wise like himself.

But, not only the prospects of pleasures, held out by the married life, made me anxious to enter that state, I knew likewise that, in a moral point of view, marriage has a beneficial effect upon man. While it makes him look more accurately at the stern earnest of life, it checks all the wild passions of youth, and directs all his energies, all his ardour, into a calmer, smoother channel. Finding enjoyments—and enjoyments of a pure, elevating nature—at his own fireside, man is not induced to seek diversion abroad among the giddy multitude, where there is no pleasure without its alloy.

Stimulated by these reasons, and cheered on by the successful progress of my business, I made the lady

before alluded to, my wife, in the year 1839, and finally settled at Bedford. Thus I had safely arrived at one landing-place of my earthly course; I had a home, endeared to me by one being whom I loved, and by whom I was beloved. It is true that I often felt sad when I considered how I was separated from all my family, and that now there was little probability of my ever seeing any of them again; but then I compared my present state with what my circumstances had been a few years before, and I had ample reason to be comforted and content. I was like the shipwrecked mariner, the recollection of whose past privations, when once delivered from the threatened death, naturally enhances his present comforts. I had set out from home with fair prospects and expectations, my first adventure in England was a cruel disappointment; years of trouble and uncommon hardships followed, and now, though I was any thing but satisfied with my situation and occupation, yet I fully appreciated the little I had gained, and hoped, with a firm confidence, that something better was still preserved for me. Whenever my heart was sorrowful, by pondering over the dark side of my condition, I thought of former days that were darker than the present, I thought of the thousands more unfortunate than myself, and I reproached myself with ingratitude, and said to myself: "Despair not, murmur not, less the Lord afflict thee worse."



CHAPTER VI.

תְּלוֹא יִהְיוּ הַרְשֵׁי רָע וְהַקָּדוֹן וְהַאֱמֶת הַרְשֵׁי טוֹב :

“ *Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.*”—Prov. xiv. 22.

The innumerable forms of misfortune under which mankind suffers are of a twofold nature; those which are caused by our own faults—by intemperance, imprudence, and dishonesty, in short, by any immoral action, and those which are not of our own making—which no prudence or precaution can prevent—no morality or religion avert.

If man were to conform strictly to the laws of nature and morality, I venture to maintain that the greater part of calamities to be met with in human society, would disappear, and men would pass brighter and more cheerful days. But I wish here particularly to advert to those misfortunes for which human reason cannot account, but which it seems good to Divine Wisdom to inflict upon us. It is in these that religion comes to us, like an angel sent from heaven, to offer us sweet consolation; it is in these that true piety supplies us with the best means for bearing up against the decrees from Above. Is there a nobler sight in the moral world than a man suffering under afflictions but enduring them with a severe calmness, with an unshakeable reliance on the wisdom and goodness of Him who chastises us for our own good. “Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth, therefore, despise not thou the

chastening of the Almighty; for he maketh sore and bindeth up; he woundeth and his hands make whole." Those who deny the power and influence of religion should go to the sick-bed of a truly religious man, there to witness how his soul, enlightened by the precepts of religion, loses not in brightness during the sufferings of the body—how his pious mind alleviates the most acute pains, by patient resignation and by implicit confidence in God. Indeed, it is this confidence alone which can deprive misfortune of its sting—which sustains us amidst the storms howling around us; misfortune purifies our mind, inasmuch as it has a tendency to turn our attention from external things and direct it to the inner man, inasmuch as it induces us to reflect on our past life—on the principles by which we have been guided—on the vanities after which we have striven—on the duties we have neglected. If we look around us we shall generally find those to be the most experienced, the most prudent, the most circumspect, and the wisest, who have passed through the severe school of adversity. As the gold becomes cleared of its dross by being purified in the fire, so our virtues appear the more shining after having been tried in the fire of adversity. And when we consider that, without misfortune, we should not know how to appreciate its opposite—that without illness we never should value health, as without darkness we should not know light, we come to the conclusion that, in the moral government of the world, that which human short-sightedness terms misfortune is needful and salutary for our earthly happiness.

I had hardly enjoyed a few months the long-missed comforts of domestic life when it pleased the Almighty to afflict me with a severe illness. Fever and inflammation kept me confined to my bed for a considerable time, and four months elapsed before I could resume

any of my occupations: like a captain who, being already in sight of the shore, is suddenly thrust back by contrary winds on the open sea, there to steer again his vessel through the high-rolling waves; so was I thrown back, through this illness, on a sea of troubles, without the prospect of reaching a safe harbour for some time. Imagine the wretchedness of my situation: I had recently engaged myself to provide for another being—to support her whom I had made my partner—and now I was at once disabled from doing any thing even towards my own maintenance. Though I was not at that time in actual want, yet I was by no means provided for any length of time; and should my illness be protracted, should I, for any considerable period, be prevented from pursuing my ordinary occupations, I knew that poverty must inevitably follow. At no time is man more apt to indulge in such melancholy meditations than when lying on a sick bed. Besides my bodily sufferings I was ever haunted by the horrors of my condition, and, had not my confidence in the Lord stood on so firm a foundation, I must have fallen into agonizing despair.

But, to my Heavenly Father I now turned with all the fervour of which my languid spirits were capable, imploring the aid of Him who, in His holy writings, is called “The Hearer of Israel.” The example of the King Hezekiah was before my mind. As he had, by his prayers, removed from himself the decree of the Lord which pronounced his death; so, thought I, would I beseech the God of my fathers with sincere devotion, and, perhaps, He would have compassion. And, truly, “The God which fed me all my life long, unto this day, the angel who redeemed me from evil,” did not forsake me in these circumstances. The Lord heard my fervent prayers, and restored me to health and activity.

The manner in which I had gained my living hitherto had become somewhat irksome to me, and I would have gladly exchanged it for an occupation insuring a more respectable position in life, but I was at a loss to what I should turn my attention. The necessity of supporting my wife and myself did not allow me to remain long in this state of uncertainty. My responsibilities had increased, and, with them, the anxiety of advancing my interests.

While matters stood thus, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of the Rev. J. W—, a gentleman of whose kind and sympathising disposition I cannot speak too highly. I stated to him my position, and he kindly promised to assist me as far as it lay in his power. This he did with the good will so well becoming a man whose business it is to instruct others in the precepts and duties of religion. He not only engaged me as German teacher for his son and daughter, but he also gave me a recommendation to another excellent gentleman, Mr. G—, who himself became my pupil. To these two gentlemen I owe a heavy debt of gratitude; it is to them that, under Providence, I am indebted for my present position in life. They kindly permitted me to mention their names as references, and advised me to send circulars round the town and neighbourhood, offering my services as German and Hebrew teacher. With pleasure and gratitude I accepted their offer and advice, the more so as the course held out a prospect of gaining my livelihood in a way more in accordance with the education I had received, and more suitable to the manner in which I had been brought up. Thanks to the benevolent services of these gentlemen! I succeeded in the object I had in view at the time: for a whole twelvemonth teaching was my sole occupation; but I found that the gain I derived from

teaching was not sufficient to maintain a family in a respectable, though humble way ; I therefore purchased some jewellery by the advice, and through the generous assistance of, these friends, and, aided by their kind recommendations, I managed to do some profitable business.

Man never shows himself more worthy of his Creator than by assisting his fellow men in time of trouble. As God is compassionate so man ought to be merciful. Happy indeed are those whose position and circumstances enable them to lend a helping hand to their less-favoured brothers. Station, riches, talent, cannot merely be bestowed upon man to use them exclusively for his own selfish ends—for his own aggrandizement, and he proves himself unworthy of the kindness of his Father in heaven who does not profit by these gifts to discharge, to some degree at least, the most sacred duty imposed by religion—to love our neighbours like ourselves. Besides, every good action has its reward in itself. The consciousness of having fulfilled a sacred obligation is more elevating—contributes more to our happiness than any pleasure which we may derive from employing God's blessings to our own worldly advantages only. If we reflect on life—its pleasures and troubles, its sweet and bitter elements, its lights and its shades, we come to the conclusion that all is vain and transitory—without real intrinsic value, except the good we have done to others. This, and this alone, imparts to life a higher and, as it were, a sacred importance. In vain are our endeavours to penetrate into the designs of the supreme and infinite Being—into His intentions respecting our earthly existence. Whatever these may be, we do not live in vain if we alleviate the sufferings of our fellow-creatures—if we assist our brother in his

struggles—if we smooth the rugged path of life which it is the lot of many to tread. Our good actions are the beneficent genii that accompany us through life, and, if they shall have proceeded from that motive which alone God can approve, may we not humbly hope they will plead in our favour before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge?

In the course of my instruction in the above-named languages, an incident happened which I would have omitted to record, but for the good sense and love of justice it exhibits, as contrasted with sentiments of an opposite character, under the influence of which I have been made to feel many a pang. Among other families in which I was exercising my vocation, as a teacher of languages, was that of a Mr. H—, whose daughter was my pupil. After I had attended this young lady for some weeks, an attempt was made to induce Mrs. H— to have my engagement cancelled, on the ground that, being a Jew, I could not have a correct pronounciation, and that consequently her daughter must acquire a faulty mode of speaking the German language. The person, who offered this advice to the lady, was a clergyman, now no longer connected with Bedford, who had already expostulated with the gentleman who had recommended me to Mr. H—, and endeavoured to point out to him the impropriety of his having given a Jew an introduction to a Christian family. The lady, therefore, suspected that, whilst the ostensive ground of objection to me was the possibility of my imparting to her child an incorrect mode of pronounciation, the real ground was that of religious prejudice. This suspicion was confirmed when, on inquiry, the rev. gentleman admitted that he knew nothing of the German language himself.

The lady, in the true spirit of religious benevolence, declined to dismiss me on a charge so trivial as that alleged against me, but, at the same time, felt it due to her child that my real competency should be tested. Without informing me of what had happened, therefore, she requested two ladies, perfectly acquainted with the German language, to be present at one of her daughter's lessons. These I had, one day, the pleasure of meeting in the room where Miss H— was in the habit of taking her lesson. I proceeded with my instruction as usual, without the least idea of the purpose for which the ladies attended. In the course of the lesson, Miss H— addressed to me some questions respecting certain terms in the language, at which I was surprised, as they supposed a greater knowledge of the idiom than could be expected from so recent a beginner. I answered the questions, but, at the same time, expressed my astonishment, and inquired how she came to ask these questions. The ladies smiled. From this, as well as from the interest they seemed to take in the proceedings, I concluded that they must understand German; I asked them whether this was the case, and they answered in the affirmative. We then began to converse in German, and so great a proficiency did these two ladies manifest in that language, that I felt as if I had been suddenly transported into my native country; indeed, I had not met with any English ladies or gentlemen who were so thoroughly acquainted with the terms and peculiarities of that rich and profound Teutonic language.*

The following week when I again visited this family, I found Mrs. H— in the room. I expressed to her my delight at having made at her house the acquaintance

* Note 18.

of two ladies, who spoke German so fluently, and, at the same time, so correctly. "I am much pleased at the result," replied the good lady, frankly, "and I feel now quite satisfied as to your competency for teaching German." She then told me that a "friend" had repeatedly urged upon her the impropriety of having engaged me; that he had tried to persuade her, though without success, to discharge me, asserting for his reason, that I, as a Jew, could not but have a faulty pronunciation. As, however, she had been unwilling to act upon the unkind and ungenerous advice of that party, and felt little inclined to have her daughter's instruction discontinued, until she had obtained satisfactory evidence of my deficiency, she had requested the presence of those two ladies, who were fully capable of forming an opinion on the subject. And the opinion expressed by them had been entirely in my favour; they entertained not the slightest doubt as to my competency, and, moreover, my method of teaching seemed to them well calculated to facilitate the study of the German language. I told Mrs. H—that I felt much flattered by the high opinion those ladies had formed of my capacity as a teacher, and expressed my gratification to find that I was not to be discarded as a teacher of languages, merely because I did not profess the same religion with themselves.

It is useless to dwell on the many exhibitions of a worse than exclusive spirit under which I have been made to bow down sorrowfully in the land of the stranger. The expostulations of the persecuted, however plaintive, the complainings of the oppressed, however founded on the holy principles of that religion which breathes the spirit of universal love, will never move a heart tethered with bigotry—such a heart must be left to the dealings of our common God

and Father. But I desire gratefully to acknowledge that the sentiments exhibited by the lady, to whose conduct I have now adverted, have shed their refreshing influence on my downcast heart more than once, and cheered and comforted me amidst much of a contrary spirit that I might detail.

It is, indeed, difficult to comprehend how, in our enlightened age, there can still exist people with whom hatred and persecution of those professing a faith different from their own is considered as a laudable and meritorious zeal for their own religion. What idea must he entertain of a God, in whose sight the tormenting of one of his creatures is to be a pleasing action? "God created man in His own image." This verse, say the Jewish sages, is the basis of all religion; and, in truth, it requires but little ingenuity to derive from those words every maxim of morality acknowledged among civilised nations.

But though there be some who really think to serve the cause of their creed by oppressing and persecuting the followers of another, there are many who, merely following the impulses of a hateful and vicious disposition, try to cover their base actions with the divine name of religion. In favour of the former, ignorance and a mistaken notion of religion may be pleaded, but the latter are not merely tainted with vice, but corrupted also by hypocrisy. What makes such conduct still more odious are the repeated warnings and admonitions concerning the relation of one man to another, contained both in the Old and in the New Testament. Need I remind my readers of the passages where it is said: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." — "Thou shalt not abhor an

Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land."

Now if the prohibition was directed against oppressing or hating the inveterate enemies of the Israelites, how much greater must the sin be considered to oppress persons who have never done us any harm or injury? The founder of the Christian religion inculcated the doctrine: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you," and in another passage it is said: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

That this fundamental law of human society was fully appreciated by the rabbis, the following anecdote from the Talmud will illustrate:—

"Under Herod the Great lived Rabbi Hillel and Rabbi Shamai, two celebrated sages, both the eminent founders of renowned academies in Israel. One day a heathen approached Rabbi Shamai as he was walking in the street, and addressed him thus: 'I am desirous of becoming a Jew on the condition of your teaching me the whole law during the space of time that I can stand on one leg.' Shamai indignant at such derision, drove the scorner away with his staff. The heathen then went to Hillel, and accosted him with the same words. Hillel at once declared his readiness to comply with the request, and said to him: 'Do not forget this: That which does not please yourself, do not unto thy neighbour. This is the whole law, all the rest serves merely as commentary to this fundamental principle.' The heathen thanked him, went away, and became a good and pious man."

The prejudices still existing in the minds of some of my Christian fellow-men against the Jews, are of the

remnants of the dark ages, which the light of reason and civilisation has not yet been able entirely to efface. Those prejudices date from a time when the minds of men were in a state of ignorance and barbarity, when the words education, science, humanity, civilisation, were all but totally unknown. Mankind was little prepared to reflect the benign rays of a spiritual religion. The rays of the sun are not reflected by the stagnant waters of a pool. In fact, if we look at the history of the Jews in that period—at the persecutions, the massacres, in short, at all the manifold sufferings they were made to endure, we are almost compelled to think that the cruel practice of human sacrifices belongs to a much later period of European history than is generally acknowledged. When, at the beginning of the Crusades, thousands of Jews were massacred in the Rhenish towns, and when, after those many hecatombs of human lives, the valiant knights of Christendom felt the inward satisfaction consequent upon the performance of a religious duty, I ask by what other name can we call such proceedings but by that of human sacrifices being offered in honour of the Deity? True, the Jews were reproached with hating Christians and Christianity. But are persecutions and massacres calculated to inspire love towards the perpetrators, and regard for the principles of a religion, in honour of which those enormities were said to be committed? Does not hatred beget hatred as love engenders love?

But, the Lord be praised! the age of such persecution is now matter of history. And no Jew of any education and intellect will bear a grudge against his Christian brother on account of the bygone sufferings of his forefathers. Religious intolerance was one of the characteristics of that period, and was practised among the

different sects even of the same religion. I need not remind my readers of the reign of Queen Mary.

Science and civilisation have, fortunately for mankind, spread purer and more enlightened notions of religion. Religion, humanity, virtue, are about to become terms almost synonymous. Where is the zealot to be found in civilised Europe that dares publicly to recommend, or only to defend, an act of religion openly militating against the principle of virtue or humanity?

The Jew has every reason to be satisfied with the change that civilisation and progress has wrought in his situation. Especially in this free and great country, under the influence of an enlightened public opinion, barrier after barrier has fallen down that kept the followers of the Mosaic creed out of the pale of the rest of society. And the day is not distant, I trust, when the last trace of oppression and exclusion will be effaced from the Statute Book of England. Prejudices, however, are obstinate. And, with all the progress we have made, there still exist numbers of persons who look upon the Jew as an inferior being, who consider the faults, which centuries of oppression have engendered in the Jewish character, (but which are fast diminishing under the mild rule of freedom,) as inherent in, and originally connected with, the very nature of the Jew.

When the enemies of my co-religionists reproach them with an indelible inclination to petty traffic and usury, they ought to bear in mind that, for centuries the Jew had been excluded from practising agriculture, trades, and professions, and that nothing else was left to him but to pursue a less respectable line of business.

How was it possible for the Jew to distinguish himself as a useful member of society, or to excel in the various departments of science and letters, as long as the means which further the development of the human faculties were withheld, and the road leading to distinction was closed against him? Surely he could not distinguish himself at the bar so long as he had no access to it; he could not excel as a teacher in a public school, when an opportunity was never afforded him of displaying his talents in that capacity; when even his children were not allowed to receive instruction in those educational establishments. That there are yet traces of this latter evil I shall have occasion to show in the course of this narrative. Even now-a-days a Jew cannot take his degree at Oxford or Cambridge, nay more, he is even excluded from certain colleges at these old seats of learning, on account of his religion.

He who does not voluntarily shut his eyes against facts and against truth, must have observed the great social improvement amongst my co-religionists, dating from the time when liberty of conscience began to dawn over Europe. Science, literature, the fine arts, count numerous Jews among their devotees, especially in my native country, where public institutions and universities have been open to them for a considerable time past. That the Jewish mind has a natural inclination to study and literature is sufficiently proved by the fact that, under the most cruel oppressions and persecutions during the middle ages, while the Jews were driven from town to town, from land to land, they still created a theological and philosophical Hebrew literature well deserving the attention of the historian and the literary student.*

* Note 19.

And, in this country, pre-eminent for its time-honoured and free institutions, Jews now occupy honourable positions as merchants, lawyers, and magistrates, and, as a body, they make vast strides in advance, with respect to education.

There is another class of opponents who object to the Jew, not merely from prejudice, but on a so-called "religious" ground. The utmost concession they would make to the Jew, if he were so unfortunate as to be governed by them exclusively, would be—to tolerate him; for, unluckily for them, public opinion is no longer favourable to open persecution and unmitigated oppression. They consider it incompatible with their character as Christians, to admit the Jew to the rights they enjoy, as long as he perseveres in the faith of his ancestors; they wish to let him feel a continual punishment for his fidelity to his religion. They are of opinion that he has no right to claim equality with the inhabitants of a Christian country, as they formerly denied the Roman Catholic equality with the Protestant. I have shown already that such and similar arguments are not only contrary to every principle of reason and humanity, but also to the spirit of Christianity. In fact, that exclusive and intolerant party holds the practice of the principles of Christianity inconsistent with their character as Christians. This may seem paradoxical, but it is the natural conclusion at which we arrive on comparing the sublime doctrines of the New Testament with the theory put forth by these exclusionists. It has frequently occurred to me, when I have witnessed the manifold vexations and injuries to which Jews have been exposed, for the simple reason of their being Jews, or, when I have heard or read of the

erying injustice they have to suffer, even at the present time, in some continental countries, that those who are so zealous for the diffusion of Christianity among the Jews should first, or at least, at the same time, exert themselves to propagate Christian feelings among Christians.

This indeed would be a task worthy of pious men, and more pleasing to God than the attempts to baptize—for we cannot well call it to convert—a few straggling Jews. These attempts at “converting the Jews to Christianity,” must necessarily prove a grand failure. The Jew, who knows his religion, will find in it as much consolation as Christians find in theirs. As to the moral principles enjoined in the New Testament, they are all to be found, with a mere formal difference, in the Bible acknowledged by the Jews, and repeated, in various shapes, in the writings of the rabbis. And, concerning the fundamental principle—the basis of Judaism, namely, the belief in the ONE INDIVISIBLE GOD, the followers of that ancient religion have only to appeal to reason, and to the rational soul, to be confirmed in that supreme, revealed truth.

Those who are so anxious for our eternal salvation, who take so deep an interest in our spiritual welfare, ought, by their actions, to convince us of the superiority of their creed. But, while they declare themselves to be most earnestly concerned about us, they will deny the Jew favours he may have occasion to ask from them, will show, by their deeds, that their professions are false, that religion dwells more on their lips than in their hearts. Such are not the men to shake the Jew in his adherence to a religion that stood firm like a rock, while others were scattered

to the winds by the more enlightened and rational views which began to dawn on the human mind.

My co-religionists I cannot forbear admonishing to keep steadfast in a faith, hallowed by thousands of years, and supported by reason. Our ancestors adhered to it with a convulsive grasp, while they were persecuted and driven about like wild beasts; our fathers bled and died for it. And, should we, to whose lot it has fallen to live in a more humane and enlightened age, should we, especially who have the good fortune to live in a free country like this—should we prove faithless to “the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob?”

Good and virtuous Christians will esteem the Jew all the more, the more strictly he observes his religion. A sincere and not merely hypocritical attachment to our ancient faith evinces a moral strength which necessarily commands respect. The experience of every day shows that Jews, far from being thought of more highly for disobeying the dictates of their religion, stand lower in the estimation of worthy and conscientious Christians, than those who are not ashamed of the name of a Jew, and follow the precepts of the law with a sincere and warm devotion.

It is natural that we should prefer the religion in which we have been born and educated. All our habits, our early recollections, the impressions of our childhood, our parents, our relations, our families—all these are more or less associated with our religion. It is a thankless task to dispute about the superiority of one religion over another. But if I were asked which religion in general I believed to be the best, I would answer, that which is the most rational, and

which counts among its followers the comparatively greatest amount of honesty, temperance, love, charity, and virtue.

Let us try then, Jews as well as Christians, by our actions to do credit to our respective religions. Let us live together in peace and unity, let us assist one another with a kind and brotherly love, and let us say, with the prophet: "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?"



CHAPTER VII.

וּמְתוֹק הָאוֹר וְטוֹב לְעֵינַיִם לְרִאוֹת אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ :

“Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.”—Eccles. xi. 7.

There is something majestically beautiful in light. Some persons are little sensible to the gorgeous beauties of nature; some souls are impenetrable even to the sweetest harmonies of the most exquisite music; for some men, the inspired pencil of Raphael and the ingenious chisel of Thorwaldsen, have worked in vain; there are those, to whom the sublime verses of Milton afford no attraction; but there are none, save perhaps,—and only *perhaps*—the blind, who are not charmed by the dazzling and pure beauty of light. Observe the countenance of a child when a light is brought into a dark room—how it beams with joy! how the expression of delight seems to be blended, in the tender features, with the reflection cast on them by the shining rays! Mark your own sensations when you go through a long dark passage, or when you are carried through an extensive railway tunnel; when, then, the first ray of light appears in the distance like a remote star—how cheering it shines, how you feel yourself relieved as it were from a heavy load, how you begin to breathe freely, as if you had been received under the protection of a kind, tutelar, deity!

A similar effect is observable in the mind when it chances to look on a peculiar brightness of intellect.

As it is painful to note the dismal gloom overhanging the pool of ignorance and barbarity, and the disorder and confusion which darkness must of necessity engender; so is it, on the other hand, delightful to gaze on the brilliancy of reason and knowledge, when they stream in to penetrate the barriers of superstition and prejudice, and bring order and brotherly love in the ways of mortals. As it is sorrowful to read the history of the dark ages, where every page is stained with the foul excrescences of ignorance and the gory blood of persecution, so is it elevating to a feeling soul to witness the dawn of enlightenment, to count the charitable and humane acts which mark its bright progress, and to see its beneficent effects diffused over this "valley of tears." The material light was produced by the creative word of the Omnipotent, but the intellectual light He, in His wisdom, has hidden from man, but implanted in him an unquenchable desire to seek it.

While, in the last chapter, I had to record an act of unkindness and even persecution, I have now to fulfil the more cheerful task of laying before my readers the recital of an occurrence which will show that a mild spirit of toleration pervades many, I may confidently say, most, of my Christian neighbours.

The excellence and great advantages of the Harpur Charity, in Bedford, is a matter of notoriety. It is one of the numerous educational establishments in England which bear testimony to the pious liberality of the English, and to the high value which they set on education. From the advantages of this school the Jews had always been excluded; how this happened I am at a loss to conceive. By the will of the

benevolent founder, the school was established for "any town-born children." Nothing, indeed, could be found in this expression which might be construed into an exclusion of Jewish children, natives of the town, and yet it was the practice not to admit the children of the Jews of Bedford into that establishment. At this exclusion the Jews had felt most grieved. I have had occasion several times, in the course of this work, to allude to the fact that the Jews have, at all times, and in all countries, set a high value on education. Scarcely had permission been granted to the Jews of Germany to send their sons to the public schools, when numbers of my co-religionists hastened to avail themselves of the advantages offered. Even in the smallest Jewish community, in any village of Germany, you will find a schoolmaster. Among the lowest classes of Jews education is much more general than it is in the corresponding classes of Christian society. I firmly believe that if we had before us the numbers of uneducated Jews and Christians, in any country, the result would, in proportion, be highly creditable to the Jews.

It has often been observed that, proportionately, the number of criminals among the Jews is exceedingly small. I will not here discuss the causes of this phenomenon, which must, for the greater part, be sought in the nature of the Mosaic religion itself, in as far as it is eminently calculated to keep in check all the grosser passions of man. But I venture to assert that a great agent in bringing about this higher state of morality among the Jews, is the more general education of their children. In fact, education and morality, want of education and immorality, stand respectively in so close a connexion as

cause and effect, that if it be once proved—and, I think, every accurate statistic must prove it—that the number of uneducated persons is, proportionately, smaller among the Jews than among their Christian neighbours, the fact is at the same time established, that the number of Jewish criminals must be equally smaller.

With such a high sense of the value of education, the Jews of Bedford could not but feel anxious to remove that bar which shut out their offspring from the paths of knowledge. They consequently addressed a petition to the Lord Chancellor, founding their request upon the words of Sir William Harpur's will, which opened the school for "any town-born children." The prayer of their petition was not granted, and several years passed away without there being any thing done in the matter. After these the Jewish inhabitants of Bedford again petitioned for the admission of their children to the advantages of the Harpur Charity, and so far succeeded as to obtain permission to send their children to that school, provided that the rules of the school were not interfered with. This implied a declaration that the Jewish children should be obliged to attend every day at which the school is open, including, of course, the Jewish sabbaths and holidays. To my sorrow I am obliged to state that some of my Jewish townsmen accepted this condition, and thus purchased for their sons the advantages of knowledge at the expense of their religious duties. Others, however, adopted a more conscientious course, and solicited, as a favour from the masters, that they would allow their children to stay at home on those days on which it was not reconcileable with their religious feelings to attend. In many cases, this favour was granted—an evident proof that they respected the sentiments which induced the parents to make the application.

Thus matters stood when I came to Bedford. As a new comer to the town, and as a foreigner, I did not think that it would be of any use for me to interfere in this affair, and all my brother Jews felt sure that nothing more could be done. After a number of years, however, when the Lord had blessed me with children, and when these children began to grow up, I felt most desirous to give them an education which would prepare for them the way to become useful members of the human family. What, indeed, can parents bestow upon their children that is of a more intrinsic value than a good education? If they leave them large fortunes—a reverse can take them away; if they bequeath to them a great illustrious name—it would become their reproach if they should not themselves be worthy of it. But the knowledge which children acquire—the moral principles which are instilled into their hearts—these are treasures inestimable and imperishable. I had myself experienced that a sound education in early age is the best safeguard for a man during life. Had not the precepts of my holy faith—a prominent ingredient in my education—ever afforded solace and support to me in the hours of trouble? Had not the principles of integrity, industry, and perseverance, with the importance of which my instructors had taken care to impress me, become to me the means of attaining to that station in society which I now occupied? And was not the knowledge of German literature, which I had acquired in my youth, a source which contributed much towards the maintenance of my family?

The Harpur Charity was the establishment which would afford all the benefits of a liberal education, if I could only succeed in rendering these advantages available to my children. But to send them there on sabbaths and holidays was altogether out of the question. I know the worth of religion too well—I am too deeply

convinced that a strict adherence to a man's faith is indispensably necessary to his happiness, ever to be capable of sacrificing it to any temporal advantage. The other alternative, of soliciting the permission of non-attendance on days of rest, as an especial favour from the masters, I did not think proper to choose, because it seemed to me that we should not try to obtain as a favour that which we felt to be a right. Meanwhile the icy crust of prejudice upon many Christian hearts manifested indubitable indications of dissolution, and I began to entertain hopes that my Christian neighbours of Bedford would be better disposed to acknowledge the claims and admit the rights of the Bedford Jews with regard to the Harpur Charity. I therefore resolved upon what most of my neighbours designated "a bold step;" I memorialised the board of the trustees of the Harpur Charity, praying that the Jewish children might be excused from attendance at school during the observance of their sabbath. Most of my Jewish friends not only despaired of the possibility of success, but disapproved altogether of the step which I had taken, saying that it would have been better to leave the matter alone, as this might lead to their being deprived of the advantages which they actually enjoyed. But I entertained much better hopes; I had a much higher, and, as the result proved, a much more correct opinion of the liberal feelings prevalent among my Christian fellow-citizens. I knew that they would be ready to give due consideration to a petition dictated by a sense of true religion, though the system of that religion differed from their own creed, and, even if they should not feel disposed to grant the request contained in my memorial, they would not visit my offence on others, by depriving them of privileges already enjoyed.

However, to the great surprise and astonishment of my brother Jews at Bedford, and to my own great satisfaction, I received, a few days afterwards, a communication from the chairman of the board, in which he informed me, in the most polite and liberal terms, "that the trustees had granted my request, and that their decision would forthwith be communicated to the masters." This was a double triumph to me: first, because it facilitated the opportunity of giving my children an education such as I desired it, and, secondly, because it implied the confirmation of a principle which I had upheld during the whole course of my life—that a faithful attachment to religion will never fail to be acknowledged and appreciated by enlightened men, whether Christians or Jews. It was a promise which Moses vouchsafed to his people when he exhorted them to obey the dictates of the Lord their God, "For," added he, "this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

This occurrence gave a most convincing proof to all the Jews resident in Bedford, that their Christian neighbours, at least the majority of them, cherished a liberal and tolerant spirit, and, if prejudices against the descendants of Abraham were yet lurking in some places, it was in the strongholds of bigoted superstition or wilful blindness—where every care had been taken to shut out any ray of the light of civilization, which now not only gilded a few mountain tops—prominent personages—of human society, but had already descended into the plains, was beginning to diffuse itself among all classes of men—even those that are generally accounted lowest.

When I contrasted this liberal conduct of the trustees of the Harpur Charity with the illiberal conduct of which I spoke in the last chapter, I could not but be rejoiced at the indications thus afforded of a better mind; nor was I less delighted at the result in each case. It seemed to me that, in a manner, the same cause which led the board of trustees to give a decision in my favour, had likewise frustrated the iniquitous counsel of my enemy—the simple circumstance that I was a sincere Jew. In the eyes of the enlightened persons who had the management of the above mentioned school, this had been my best recommendation, in the other case, it was my only crime. And it was fortunate for me that it was so; had my adversary been able to cast any plausible suspicion on my general conduct, I have no doubt that he might have succeeded in depriving me of the favour of some of my patrons and friends; had he been able to find any flaw in my moral character, the parties who had engaged me to instruct their children might have been less scrupulous to investigate the matter, because the very suspicion would have sufficed to render me unfit for the tuition of youth. For such is the influence that a master has over his pupils, that parents should, at all times, be careful to select, for their instructors, men whose moral conduct should bear the strictest examination. Thanks be to my parents, who were solicitous that my earliest impressions should be those of probity and integrity; thanks to my masters, the formers of my mind and cultivators of my heart, who fortified my soul with sound principles; thanks, above all, to the Lord, who gave that blessing, without which all instruction would have been vain, and who imparted that strength, by which alone man is enabled to walk uprightly. To His strength I felt that I owed it, if in any measure I was free from the vices of society; for the temptations held out to me had not been small.

And here I may be allowed to draw the attention of my readers to those vices which are most prevalent in society, and which I would exhort all persons studiously to avoid.

Among them I would name first that of intemperance. When the tabernacle of the Lord of Hosts had been reared up in the wilderness by the children of Israel, and when God had instituted Aaron and his sons as priests to minister in His sacred habitation, He gave Aaron this express command: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations." The Lord thus communicated his dislike to be served by men whose senses should be troubled by the use of strong drink, He intimated His will that the priest, standing in the divine presence, should be in the full possession of all his mental faculties, and truly represent the image of God, in which man is created. The manner in which the priest was to appear before the Deity may surely be taken as a prototype for man to appear in his most dignified position. God calls the Israelites "a kingdom of priests," He wills that He should be worshipped, not only by those whom He especially appointed to offer sacrifices and burn incense, but all should be priests worshipping their Creator, in the temple of the universe, all the days of their lives. Where then is the place, I ask, when is the time that we may consider ourselves dispensed from the duty of divine service? Should we not strive, therefore, at all times to be worthy of standing in the presence of our Creator? Should we ever allow ourselves to be carried away so far as to disavow the stamp of divinity which the Almighty has set upon us, and to degrade ourselves below the brute creation?

But, it may be urged, there can be no harm in a man occasionally indulging in liquors, if he does not make a usual practice of it. To this I would reply that we can never be too careful in these matters; that we should not place too firm a confidence in our power of controlling our actions; that occasional indulgences are too often apt to grow into habitual usages, and that any vicious habit, when it has once taken possession of us, is as difficult to eradicate as it is to suppress nature. In fact, our habits become as it were, a part of our nature, they consolidate into essential ingredients of our existence, and you will frequently hear a man say, "this is my nature, I cannot help it," when, in reality, it is but a habit which might easily have been stifled in its rise. How severely the rabbis ever inveighed against the immorality of drunkenness, and how solicitous they were to warn the people from falling into that vice because of the difficulty, we might almost say, the impossibility of its being cured, the following extract from the Midrash will illustrate:—

"'The drunkard,' says a learned rabbi, 'first parts with his money, and then his silver vessels.' 'Copper vessels will do me the same service,' says he. Then he exchanges his copper utensils for earthen ones, saying, 'these, no doubt, will do as well.' Indeed, he would even deprive himself of these last, if he could procure drink for them. Like other vices, drunkenness endures with a man throughout his life-time, and does not even leave him at the verge of the grave."

The Midrash then introduces an anecdote in corroboration of the words just quoted:—

"There was once a man, so much given to drink, that he sold all his furniture in order to procure wherewith to

satisfy his pernicious thirst. His sons had long seen, with the deepest sorrow, the evil to which their father abandoned himself, and they said to one another, 'if we allow our father to continue much longer in this manner, he will leave us nothing to inherit.' All the gentle means which they could imagine they employed to induce him to desert such a ruinous and disgraceful habit, but it was all in vain; he went on drinking to excess as he had done heretofore. Resolved to leave nothing untried, in order to cure their father of this vice, the sons carried him one day, when he was in a senseless state of inebriation, to a cemetery, and laid him down in a cave where the dead bodies were usually placed. They flattered themselves that when he should awake from his profound sleep, the pictures of terror, by which he would be surrounded, would lead him to reflect seriously on his past life, and he might then renounce a habit which was attended by such evil consequences; he would gladly forgive an act which, however disrespectful in itself, would so greatly benefit him in the result.

"With these thoughts they left him. On the following morning they hastened to the cave, expecting to find their father weak from the want of food and drink, and cured from his vicious habit of drinking. But what was their surprise when they entered the cave, and discovered their father with a bottle in his hand, which he held to his lips with great delight, in order to draw from it whatever was left of its contents. A number of bottles, some empty, some full, lay around. The sons spoke to him, and asked him what had happened, but his senses were drowned in the wine, and he could not answer.

"It had thus come to pass: Some persons were carrying a quantity of wine, with the intention of introducing it into the city clandestinely, in order to defraud the revenue. But perceiving the king's servants at a distance, and fearful of being discovered, they had concealed the forbidden goods in this cave, which appeared to be a place not likely to be searched, and left them there, intending to bring them into the city at a more favourable opportunity. While this took place, the man was fast asleep, and did not dream of what was going on near him. When he awoke in the morning,

and found himself in so dark a place, surrounded by corpses which filled the cave with the stench of putrefaction, he was very much afraid. But the faint glimmer of light, which made him perceive the horrors of the abode in which he was, disclosed to him likewise the rich stores deposited at his side. The sight of so unexpected a treasure filled him with joy. All ideas of death and the grave vanished from his mind; he began to open one bottle after another, drank to his heart's delight, and became as drunk as ever.

“In this state his sons found him. Overwhelmed with vexation and grief, they exclaimed: ‘Woe to us! all our trouble is in vain. We can do nothing to cure him of his weakness, and it becomes our duty to conceal it from the world, for it really proves incurable. Let us carry him home, and put in his chamber all he can require, in order that he be no longer exposed to public scorn.’

“And they did so, convinced that bad habits are seldom to be eradicated, and inveterate vice does not leave the unfortunate person given to it, even at the verge of the grave.”

This narrative exemplifies most lucidly the difficulty of curing vicious inclinations, and shows that though we might even succeed in suppressing such an inclination for a short time, yet we are but too apt to relapse into the same fault as soon as any opportunity offers. The terrors of death may occasion temporary alarm, but let temptation be removed, and such fears soon vanish, the inveteracy of habit is too strong, and the man falls back a helpless captive to his depraved appetite.

But besides the hideousness of the vice itself, there is yet another consideration which I would urge upon the attention of my readers, in order to warn them against falling into the snares of intemperance. Persons who are in the habit of indulging in strong drink will naturally frequent, for that purpose, public

houses. Now it strikes me that many who visit those places, to spend their evenings there, would be satisfied with a moderate portion of drink, but, stimulated by the example of others, they habituate themselves to an expenditure considerably beyond their means. For, though they may only spend a very trifling sum each evening—say a shilling or two—it will amount to a heavy expenditure, when it is computed how much this will make in a year; and many a man who has been cast into disgrace and ignominy might yet have carried on a respectable trade, and been esteemed by his fellow-citizens, if he had known how to save such single shillings. When I first came to Bedford, I was told that I ought to visit smoking rooms, because it would be an opportunity for me to form acquaintance, it might be as it was termed, “an introduction.” I did so for a short time, but I soon perceived that this would indeed be “an introduction” to—ruin and destruction.

There is an old English proverb which says: “It is worth a Jew’s eye.” The Jew’s eye most decidedly seems to see much clearer and much farther than that of many of his Christian brethren. It is very rare indeed that the Jew will permit himself to continue any thing for a length of time without putting to himself the question: What will this lead me to? And when he finds that he is in a wrong path, he will exert himself to his utmost to get away from it, and turn to a better road. I believe that I can state, with perfect truth, that caution is one of the many characteristic virtues of the Jew. The Jewish religion, at least rabbinical Judaism, bears testimony to it in a vast number of its precepts. The rabbis considered it their duty to establish what they denominated “fences” round the law, viz.: they gave additional precepts to the law of the

Jews, as cautions that the divine injunctions should not be transgressed. One example will be sufficient to show the value of such rabbinical "fences."

It is well known to all who read the books of Moses, how strictly the celebration of the sabbath was prescribed by our lawgiver, and that he prohibited all servile work to be done on that day. Now the rabbis made the law that the Jew should be forbidden to play upon any musical instrument on his sabbath, because, say they, the instrument might accidentally break, and the player be led to profane the holy day by repairing it. Of this nature are a great many rabbinical commandments, and they have, no doubt, been greatly instrumental in preserving the purity of the religion vouchsafed by God through His servant Moses.

Intemperance, as I have shown before, is a heinous vice, but there is one more heinous still, and more ruinous, against which I would warn the readers of this narrative, I mean gambling. The gambler deserves our pity more than our wrath, for it seems that this monster vice clasps its victims so fast that there is no possibility of escape. But the more dangerous it is to fall into the snares of a vice, the less chance there is of being delivered from them—the more cautious ought men to be not to approach its entrapping circle. The law of Moses contains no injunction in that respect, because the vice of gambling is of a more modern invention. But in the time of the rabbis, the character of the gambler was already so despised that the Mishna distinctly points out a person who is accustomed to play at dice, as unfit to be a witness in a court of justice. They thus excluded him, as it were, from the pale of respectable society, and stigmatised his occupation as

debasing and immoral. It is, indeed, impossible to look upon a gambler as an honest man.

As for me, it affords me great satisfaction that I ever abstained from playing at any game of chance. I will not here denounce, as immoral characters, all those who take an occasional recreation in a game of cards or some other similar game, but I would exhort all persons, who have to maintain themselves by the labour of their hands, not to run the risk of losing, in a few minutes, the earnings of a day, perhaps a week, or a month. Servants in particular, persons who are in the employ of others, should strongly guard against the two vices that I have pointed out, for, not only would they have for them the same fatal consequences as for other men, but they would bring upon such persons the additional injury of casting a slur on their character, and thus depriving them of employment altogether.

A current expression in England is, "as rich as a Jew." And, indeed, the Jew is rich. He is rich by possessing, as a peculiar inheritance, those wise laws and ordinances which are "an ornament of grace to his head, and chains about his neck;" he is rich, because he is impressed, through the principles of his faith, with the high value of integrity and probity which are the safest guides to wealth; he is rich, by his industrious habits and inexhaustible perseverance, which cannot fail ultimately to insure success; he is rich, finally, by his ways of sobriety and temperance, which are a safeguard against the inroads of destructive vices, by which so many of our fellow-men are infested. These are, surely, inestimable and imperishable treasures, the preservation of which does not depend upon the chances of speculation, nor is

it subject to the uncertainty of events ; but, like the unchanging principles of right and wrong, based on the throne of the Eternal, so are the happiness and welfare of him, who is upright of heart, founded upon the firm base of truth and righteousness.

And such were my safeguards against the attacks of my enemies ; these were the weapons by which I warded off the blow that was directed against me, and these were my aids in all my undertakings. Fortified with such arms I was not dismayed at the approach of an enemy ; for I knew who was " my Shade in my right hand," and every morning I recited in my early prayer the encouraging words : " The Lord is for me, I will not fear."



CHAPTER VIII.

גְּאוֹת אָדָם תִּשְׁפִּילֵנּוּ וְיִשְׁפַּלְרוּתָם יִתְמַךְ כְּבוֹד :

"A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit."—Prov. xxix. 23.

The road which leads to success runs over hills and mountains, over rugged tracts, over a dreary and fatiguing ground. If the traveller have patience and perseverance, if he have physical and moral strength to surmount the difficulties and obstacles with which his way is beset, he may at last arrive at the desired goal, and thence look back with complacency upon a long and wearisome journey.

Success in life is not to be obtained without overcoming many and various difficulties; whatever calling a man may choose for himself, he must, in the outset of his career, arm himself with patience and firmness. The tradesman, the physician, the lawyer, the teacher, all have to pass through severe trials, all will meet with innumerable disappointments, before they arrive at that stage of their journey where the road becomes more level, and even where their onward march is not impeded by mountains and rivers.

Among professional men the lot of the teacher, and especially the private teacher, is the least enviable. Not only has he to struggle with peculiar difficulties, but the prospect he has before him is not very bright nor very cheering. He cannot expect to arrive at

distinction or wealth, which, in other professions, frequently operate as powerful stimulants to activity and exertion. His pretensions are naturally of a modest nature, and he may well congratulate himself if he succeed in deriving from his occupations a moderate income, wherewithal to maintain himself in a comfortable and respectable manner. The private teacher, if his employment is to be remunerative, must have an extensive connexion. Without this, he will frequently find his time unemployed, lessons being liable to so many interruptions. It may be taken, as a general rule, that private instruction is only given during a part of the year. Add to this the frequent interruptions, owing to the indisposition or illness of the pupils, to their change of residence, to their travels, or to their disinclination to continue their studies. These are considerable drawbacks, sufficient to prevent many a person from making private instruction his business. Greater still are the difficulties for a teacher of languages in a country town, where the number of those who are learning languages is naturally limited. Unless he be patronised by a portion of the nobility or gentry in the neighbourhood, he will find it extremely difficult to gain, by teaching, sufficient for a maintenance. What, I ask my readers, is a man to do who has a family to maintain, and whose most earnest wish is to do so in an honest way? To form an extensive and respectable connexion is the work of years, and requires a capital to start with, or one would not be able to await the time when he may expect to live upon the fruits of his labour. And not only this; he will also have to incur particular expenses in order to conform to the taste and the fancies of those from whom he expects employment. However much I desired to devote my time and energies exclusively to tuition, I soon found

that, from the causes just stated, it would be impossible for me to procure by teaching only a maintenance for my family and myself. I was therefore obliged to continue a small trade in jewellery, although I was conscious that such an occupation would be considered by many as inconsistent with the profession of teacher. To pursue only one calling, and that with zeal and perseverance, is decidedly preferable to being engaged in dissimilar and unconnected avocations. Common prudence and chance of success will point out the first course. A man, whose energies are divided between two different occupations, is very likely to fail in his ultimate object, and has no reason to expect great things from his twofold employment. Of this I was fully aware; I knew, as I have said before, that the small trade I carried on would be an impediment to my success as a teacher with many families; but there are higher considerations which may induce us to depart from the course prescribed by common prudence. The path of honesty, and that leading to worldly success, are frequently divergent; the man with notions of strict morality will not hesitate in his choice. I had to choose, on the one hand, between incurring debts without the prospect of paying them, or becoming a burden upon friends, in order to assume a mock respectability, waiting in inactivity till I should be so fortunate as to get sufficient engagement, and, on the other, the chance of gaining a few shillings, in an honest way, by selling jewellery. I had to choose between mere hopes and expectations, the realization of which I could not foresee, and between present exertions, which might keep me and my family from want and poverty. I had no difficulty in deciding. Oh! if the rich could see the struggles which their less fortunate, but honest brethren, have to endure, they would frequently be much

more charitable, and would feel much livelier sympathies with their sufferings. But "sympathy is rarely strong where there is a great inequality of condition," as the great historian of the present day justly remarks. Unfortunately, parade and appearances play so eminent a part in society, that they frequently become the rocks against which honesty and integrity are doomed to founder. It is thus that false notions of "respectability," as they prevail now-a-days, will often induce parents to select for their children, not those teachers who, by their talents and acquirements, would be most suited to impart instruction, but those who, by their outward appearances, approach nearest to their preconceived notions of tinsel respectability. They will choose a teacher as they choose a dress or a piece of furniture. He must be nicely polished—be of the latest fashion, to match the elegant furniture of their drawing-rooms. As long as he wears a nicely fitting coat and a shining Parisian hat, it matters not to them whether the part which the latter article is intended to cover be empty or not. If he make his appearance with a fine cane and kid gloves, it is all the better, and if, in addition to all these perfections, he lives in a house before which a carriage need not be ashamed to stop, and keeps a little liveried page to open the door—why, then he is the very *beau-ideal* of a teacher. What is it to them in what manner all these ornaments have been obtained? What does it matter whether they have been paid for or not, whether they have been purchased at the expense of the most pressing necessities of life, whether the fashionable teacher is obliged, in consequence of that expenditure, to forego the commonest comforts for his own person. He may embarrass himself with debts, he may pay the rent for his elegant house or not, he may defraud

others of their property—all this latitude he is allowed so long as the real state of his affairs does not become public. For so long as any thing transpires which might, in the least, damage his character, he is shunned and looked down upon by those very persons whose fashionable fancies and love of appearance were the primary causes of his dishonest actions.

Let me suppose the instance of a man, a teacher of French or German, endeavouring to procure a connexion among the higher class by the means I have indicated, and my readers will perceive what anxiety and impatience—what amount of distress and hardship, are concealed under the smooth surface of mere appearance. A Mr. A. or B. has some moderate means at his command; for, if he have any considerable property, he would hardly invest it in so precarious and unpromising a business as that of a private teacher. He takes a fine house, and tries, in one way or another, to get it elegantly furnished. His domestics must be suitable to his establishment, and have the appearance of a gentleman's servants. Whether their board be satisfactory, and their wages be regularly paid, I will not inquire into; it is sufficient that they impose upon the fashionable people who *may perhaps* call. Then circulars are required to be sent about in town and neighbourhood—advertisements to be inserted in the papers. Our fashionable teacher sits all day long at home, expecting carriages to drive up by dozens, and their owners to engage him. He hardly ventures upon a walk, lest some one should call during his absence. On his table are spread some English and foreign books. To pass his time away, he will take one of them up now and then, but, alas! he soon finds that his thoughts wander to more earthly subjects than those of which the volume may treat. His mind is so

occupied with his own affairs that he cannot concentrate his thoughts to read a single page. Like a person conscious of some great crime, he starts up at the slightest noise in the street; every carriage that passes, he fancies must concern him; but the carriage rolls past his door, as if to mock him, and the respectably-dressed ladies and gentlemen walking through the street, show no inclination to favour him with a call. Even the malicious postman, who brings letters to all the neighbours, seems to have singled him out, and will not bestow his double knock upon our friend's door. The servants are frequently rung for, to be drilled into exact attendance, and in order to be at least doing something for their wages.

Days, weeks, months, elapse, and no pupils yet. Mr. A. becomes impatient, "Hope delayed maketh the heart sick." The want of exercise and occupation begins to produce ill effects, physically as well as morally. He tries to keep up his spirits, he comforts himself with the prospects of future success, he bolsters up his fainting heart with hopes of ultimate gain, in which he himself has hardly any confidence. If he does once venture to take a walk for the benefit of his health, he assembles round him his little staff of servants, and gives strict orders how to receive genteel people who might call, and to be sure to show them into the drawing room. Go then, poor man, and inhale a little fresh air. Your silent sufferings are intense. Nature may perhaps buoy up your spirits a little. He has scarcely been gone ten minutes when a loud knock is heard at the door, a carriage having stopped before it. The young page, with the swiftness of a hind, runs to open the door. In steps a lady, inquiring whether Mr. A. is at home. The liveried youth, however, having learned his lesson well,

politely requests the lady to walk into the drawing room, without giving a definite answer to her inquiry. When the visitor is fairly seated in the handsome apartment she is told that Mr. A. has gone out, but that he would return in a few minutes. Exit the page, and the lady is left to contemplate, in undisturbed solitude, the elegant furniture, the costly carpet, the beautiful timepiece. The impression produced is favourable for the professor, the lady unconsciously drawing an inference from the elegance of the apartment to that of the owner, whom she expects every moment to make his appearance. Becoming impatient, however, the lady rings for the servant and informs him that she can stay no longer, and that Mr. A. will please to come over to her residence, which is but six miles distant, she being desirous of making an engagement with him to teach her children. The servant, of course, remarks that the message would be duly delivered to his master, as soon as he should come in, whereupon the lady enters the carriage, which immediately afterwards is heard rattling away over the pavement. The servants are highly pleased with the visit, their master having hinted that he would not be able to pay them their full wages unless he succeeded shortly to get some profitable tuition.

In the meanwhile, the teacher without pupils has enjoyed a pleasant walk, and has remained away from home longer than he had originally intended. On his entering the house the page, with a triumphant expression in his countenance, and with the bright air of a man who brings good tidings, hands the lady's card to his master, and delivers the message almost verbatim. The impression produced by the news upon our friend is a strange mixture of pleasure

and vexation:—of pleasure, because he flatters himself to have made, at last, a beginning to a brilliant and successful career; and, of vexation, because the lady—and that a lady in a carriage—had selected for her call the very time when he happened to be absent from home. Fortunately, she had left her card and the promising message, else he would feel inclined to consider himself the most unfortunate of human beings. To remain at home for days, weeks, months, in the vain expectation of customers, and, after all, just to be taking a walk, when fortune, in the form of a tall footman, for the first time knocks at our door, is, to say the least, rather awkward, and we have no reason to chide a man if, under such circumstances, he is dissatisfied with his stars—with the constellation under which he was born. It is true, King Lear says: “This is the excellent foppery of the world! that when we are sick in fortune (often the surfeit of our behaviour) we make guilty of our disasters, the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion.” But we must make allowance for weak, human nature, and, therefore, not be too hard upon Mr. A. when he accuses his nativity. Besides, had he been at home, the sudden appearance of a carriage before his door might have produced evil consequences on the state of his mind. We have heard of the fatal effect of too sudden a transition from grief to joy, from darkness to light. One consideration, in particular, reconciles our friend to his untimely absence; that is, that the lady sat a few minutes in the drawing room. She must have looked around, and been pleased with the taste and elegance prevailing in that apartment, which had been got up so studiously for effect, like a scene on a stage. So, taking every thing into account, there remains a balance in favour of his prospects.

On the next day the important question arises, how to proceed to the lady's residence? To repair thither on foot is rather common, and would ill correspond with the character of his establishment. It would, to use a current phrase, go against him. To hire a carriage he can hardly afford, but still he must make that sacrifice. You can scarcely offer a man low terms who comes to your house in a carriage, and, besides, the other engagements, most probably resulting from that new acquaintance, will amply repay the expenses of the hire. So that point is settled. Now Mr. A. is making his toilet in a very superior style, at the same time preparing in his mind a few nicely set phrases, which are to be let off at all hazards. On looking in the glass a feeble smile steals over his countenance. He is rather pleased with his appearance, and inclined to be sanguine of success. The carriage is already waiting at the door—a very decent set out: a pity, however, that the coachman has so much the air of a common cabman. The professor tries to get in with the graceful ease of one accustomed to carriages, and off he drives. I will leave him undisturbed in his silent soliloquies, and not attempt to analyze the mingled feelings which crowd upon him during his short journey.

He has arrived at his destination. His hopes rise on perceiving the stately, handsome, building. "Surely, such people," he thinks, "can well afford to pay high terms." He is shown into a waiting room, and fills up the few minutes that intervene, until the lady may make her appearance, by repeating those phrases which are to be delivered with great *éclat*. But now comes disappointment the first. Instead of the noble lady he expected to see, a sprightly young damsel of about sixteen enters his presence. She is exceedingly sorry that her ma' is not able to see him, as

she took cold on her coming home the day before, and the doctor will not allow her to leave the room. "But sir," continues the young lady, "ma' wishes me to inquire what your terms would be for coming over to our house twice a-week, and giving three of my sisters and myself a lesson, two hours each time." Mr. A. is at a loss what to answer. The disappointment of seeing the daughter, instead of the mother, has somewhat depressed his spirits, a thought of his "unlucky stars" has crossed his half-bewildered brains so that he is in a state very unfit for calculation.

According to a notion current among the Moslems, man is accompanied by two genii—a good genius on the right hand, and an evil one on the left. In the case of our professor, the evil genius must have been at first very active in confounding the teacher's thoughts. He could not, at the moment, decide whether he should walk, which would certainly be the cheapest way of locomotion, if it could only be made to agree with his false pride—or whether he should ride, which would certainly be very pleasant, if it were not so expensive. And, as my readers will perceive, this dilemma bore directly on the question of the terms. However, the good genius came to his aid, and suggested to him the reply, that he would take the liberty of calling again on a more convenient day, when mamma would have recovered from her cold. This expedient, he thought, would give him ample time to consider the question in all its bearings. The young lady forthwith conveys this message to her mamma, and soon returned with the answer, that he need not take the trouble to call again, but if he would be kind enough to send his terms in writing, her mamma would communicate her wishes in a few days. Thereupon the fashionable teacher bows politely, with a smile upon his countenance, but

with sadness in his heart. He returns home little satisfied with the result of his visit. Thus, by experience, are we taught the vanity of the hopes with which we so often set out on our career. We are apt to be sanguine as we enter on our vocation, whatever it may be; we are inclined to consider the impediments we may meet as of less moment than they really are. In our mind, we surmount difficulties with the facility of a conjurer; for not only do we underrate the obstacles likely to be met with, but we likewise overrate our energies. Unlike Don Quixote, who, in his chivalrous imagination, mistook the wooden sails of a windmill for a human being endowed with strength and the will to fight him, the generality of persons rather imagine matters more manageable than they afterwards prove to be. Distant objects appear smaller than they really are. Experience at length undeceives.

But I had almost forgotten our friend, the fashionable teacher. One ray of hope inspired him yet with courage—the hope of receiving a favourable reply to his letter, which he intends to write on his arrival at home, after having duly made his calculations. The first business he addresses himself to, after his return, is to calculate the terms of the prospective engagements. He has of course made up his mind that he must always proceed to the lady's residence in a vehicle—to walk is out of the question. The riding expenses for one quarter he calculates at ten guineas, the lessons themselves he sets down at five guineas. So he takes a fine gilt-edged sheet of note paper, and intimates to the lady, in the most genteel terms, that he would be most happy to accept the engagement at fifteen guineas per quarter. The mamma, however, does not seem to be very anxious to have her daughter's instruction commenced forthwith; for, in spite of Mr. A.'s impatience

to receive a reply, days pass without the postman delivering the longed-for note. We will even suppose that our friend has been successful in making a few engagements, still sufficient leisure is left him to watch the deliverer of letters, as he passes at certain hours of the day, and to listen to the rattling of carriages, in one of which the lady in question may perhaps be located. Has she not honoured him before with a visit? and may she not do so again? But, alas! the more impatiently we look forward to a thing, the longer it keeps us waiting, or, as the homely English proverb expresses it, "A watched kettle never boils."

One morning, however, after taking up, as usual, his position near the window, he observes the postman advancing towards him. Without waiting for the knock, or the servant to open the door, out runs the professor, and, listen O my reader, received from the hand of the blessed postman, half-a-dozen letters. Who can describe the excitement and the hopefulness of the teacher at that moment? If he had not been so extremely anxious to learn the contents of the letters, I have no doubt but he would have embraced the postman in the over-abundance of his joy. Surely, among these six letters there will be the reply to the note in which he had stated his terms, and very likely two or three with advantageous offers. With a trembling hand he opens the first, but, to his great disappointment, he finds—a tailor's account! The second contains—a grocer's bill, the third, fourth, fifth, disclose likewise, to his utter confusion, bills of troublesome tradesmen, who seem to have conspired for his destruction! Exhausted, he sinks down in a chair, oppressed with grief and sorrow, and hardly venturing to open the sixth letter, for fear that another similar spectre might meet his eye. He summons all the strength

that is left him, and, on opening the last, he finds, not indeed a tradesman's bill, but a letter full of reproaches by a friend whom he has disappointed in an engagement. The messengers who brought Job the evil tidings of his misfortune were not able to disturb deeply the pious equanimity of that patriarch. But, I regret to say, the deluded man of whom I am speaking, does not evince that sublimity of character. Not only are all his hopes entirely vanished, not only is he sorely disappointed in his expectations, but demands are urged upon him which he is unable to meet; his reputation is at stake; he cannot bear to look beyond the present moment—his vision is clouded by the multifarious embarrassments which rise before him.

Half-an-hour afterwards a carriage drives up to his door, a footman having taken a note from a lady in the carriage, makes a few gigantic strides towards the door, which is no sooner touched from without than it is opened from within by the well drilled domestic. The footman hands the note to the latter, resumes his seat behind the carriage, after having communicated to the coachman, in a laconic manner, where to drive next, while the domestic delivers the note to his master, in whose downcast countenance he is acute enough to read his own dismissal at no distant period. The note is to the following effect. "Mrs. B. thinking the terms too high, declines making an engagement with Mr. A."

"When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions."

The poor professor begins gradually to perceive his miscalculations, he sees the impossibility of his success as a teacher, under such discouraging circumstances. I need not dwell on the necessary consequences of

so fatal a speculation. The reader can easily supply them. I may, perhaps, be told that I have overdrawn the picture—that I have taken an extreme case. But those who will, for one moment, reflect on the expenses that are necessarily incurred through an establishment made to suit the fashionable taste, and on the other hand, on the length of time required for the obtaining of a numerous and profitable patronage, will find the situation of the man I have drawn to be taken from real life.

It certainly supposes little sagacity in a man, if he endeavours to promote his interests and to obtain a respectable station in society by the means and in the manner I have instanced. It may be folly rather than an indifference to the principles of honesty and integrity that prompts him to try such a course; he may perhaps be sanguine enough not to entertain the slightest doubt about his success, he may perhaps not harbour the remotest idea of defrauding a tradesman or his landlord. Perhaps it would be unjust, therefore, from a higher and moral point of view to burthen such a person in case of failure with the entire responsibility of the consequences resulting from his imprudent policy. Who, then, is to share the responsibility with him? It is society that looks more to appearances than to intrinsic worth; it is society that encourages man to consider show of more importance than principle, society that patronizes the mere exterior, regardless of the moral defects which may be hidden from the sight. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh to the heart." If people are taught that they can best succeed by putting on a mask, they will do it, and will assume different characters according to the necessities of the case. But here lies the evil. Characters are encouraged at the expense

of character; hence the demoralizing influence exercised by the man of "appearance." We often hear the phrase: "He or she must do it for appearance's sake, or to keep up appearances." What else does that signify but to sail under false colours, to practise imposition and falsehood? How many hard-working tradesmen are defrauded of their goods and their labour, in the course of one year, by trusting to mere outward show displayed by their customers? How much real good is neglected because the means requisite for its accomplishment are spent in mere display? But what is worse, many an honest, straightforward, virtuous mind, is depressed, if not crushed, while presumption, falsehood, deceit, flourish and shine in their painted and unreal colours.

Although this morbid desire of show is a far-spread disease in society, and, notwithstanding the common disregard of the real man, in favour of the outward man, there are, fortunately, many liberal, enlightened, and truly religious persons, who are above the prejudices of the multitude—not infected with those false and shallow notions which, as I have shown, are dangerous to virtue, and frequently undermine the foundation of honesty. I had the good fortune of becoming acquainted with some such men, and it afforded me infinite delight, apart from all personal and selfish considerations, to see people practising a humane and kindly benevolence, unbiassed by worldly and mean influences. These did not think it below their dignity to employ a man as teacher who struggled with all his force to remain honest, rather than assume a false appearance, at the expense of other people; they manifested, practically, their opinion, that honest and persevering industry deserves support rather than neglect; that it is the duty of men to encourage uprightness and

integrity wherever it is to be found. If we have once convinced ourselves of the soundness of a moral principle, we ought to act upon it, in defiance of prevailing prejudices, and regardless of what the world may think of it. People are often deterred from following out their own convictions from a fear of offending the prejudices of the multitude. Frequently it is the dependence of man upon man, in a worldly sense, that induces him to sacrifice his principles to the whims and humours of others, or it is the lack of moral courage in those who are in independent circumstances, to act as free and independent agents. We can hardly attribute much character to a man who, in all his doings, looks timidly about him, as if to inquire whether his actions are in accordance with the notions and opinions of the day; while, on the contrary, we look with admiration upon him who, guided by moral and elevated principles, pursues his own course, and, by his boldness and independence, ultimately impresses the lookers-on with an idea of his moral dignity, however much they may have felt inclined at first, to scorn and deride him.

Penetrated by such and similar sentiments, I have always endeavoured to be guided by the psalmist's words: "Trust to God and do what is right." Circumstanced as I was, with a family to maintain, and firmly resolved not to incur debts, without the certain prospect of repaying them, I could not limit my activity to teaching only, but tried to make up the deficiency by the sale of jewellery. Nor had I reason to repent the course I had adopted. With the blessing of God on the assistance of kindhearted men, I gained an honest living. I felt myself rewarded for the firmness with which I had clung to my principles. I was glad not to have built my expectations upon those who, desirous though they be of employing what they term

“respectable” teachers, refuse to pay “respectable” terms. How is a teacher in the country to keep up his respectability, if he does not find ready support and liberal payment? The landlord and the tax-gatherer are, as all the world knows, not mere creatures of fancy—not mere imaginary personages, such as the Arabian Nights are peopled with. They are, as it were, the monitors who tell us, every now and then, that life is not a dream; they are flesh and bone—they cannot be reasoned away or denied—they insist upon being paid, and will not accept the excuse—no, not even the excuse of a teacher, that he is in hopes of meeting with engagements at some future day. They and the tradesmen who, in their human weakness, will not allow their bills to be unpaid, follow the victim of folly and imprudence with the obstinacy with which, in heathen mythology, the Furies are represented to follow upon the heels of the wicked. Every day’s experience shows us such victims. Accustomed for some time to live in apparent ease, and having contracted expensive habits, they feel the more bitterly the reverse and the fall. They ruin themselves and their families—they lose their reputations and their names, which are more precious than wealth. “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,” or, as the wise king expresses it, in another passage, “A good name is better than precious ointment.”

We ought always to live according to our circumstances, and husband well the means at our disposal. To aspire to a shining and brilliant outside is the height of human folly. We ought to do that which makes us really happy and contented, and not rear up airy castles without solid foundation, in the vain hope that they will afford us durable shelter and satisfaction. We should, with humble means, make honesty—strict and

rigid honesty—our only guide on the road to prosperity. No matter what obstacles we may meet with, that guide we must always follow. And, if it please the Ruler of our destinies to drive us back again, after we believed ourselves near to our destination, we must gather new strength from our implicit confidence in God, who permits no good to pass unrewarded, as He allows no bad to pass unpunished, and again follow that guide.

Infinite is the variety of circumstances. And, if one were to ask me how to act under any given circumstance, I would refer him to the Bible—the book of books, full of divine wisdom. I remember having once attended a lecture of C. L. Higgins, Esq., at the Bedford Literary and Scientific Institution. The subject of the lecture was an account of that gentleman's journey to Jerusalem. Among other things, he observed, "My friends, if you wish to travel through the Desert, take the Bible for your guide. It is the safest guide you can find." This is true in more than one sense; not only through the Arabian Desert shall we find the Bible to be our safest and most faithful companion, but, in following it, we shall pass safely through the desert of life—a desert in which many a poor wanderer finds but seldom an oasis where to rest and refresh himself from his painful and exhausting journey. The religion revealed in the Bible is the pillar of fire that shows us the road when darkness prevails around us, and when, without it, we could scarcely grope our way by our own efforts. It is a staff on which we may safely rest our weary limbs, on our passage from the cradle to the grave.

The lessons contained in the holy volume are well calculated to enlighten us, and to teach us how best we may do our duty. I purpose to give, in the next

chapter, a few illustrations from the Bible, a book which has that peculiar to it that affords equal delight and instruction to the child and the old man, to the simple and the wise, to the joyful and the sad—that it is made for all ages and for all times.



CHAPTER IX.

הָפְקוּ אִמְרֵי לִי הֲלֹא מִמֵּשָׁל מְשָׁלִים הוּא :

“ They say of me, Doth he not speak parables.”—

Ezek. xx. 49.

“ Nathan, the prophet, and wise instructor at Salem, sat among his disciples, and words of wisdom flowed from his lips, sweet as honey. Then Gamaliel, one of the disciples, asked the venerable teacher, ‘ Why dost thou ever teach us by parables ? ’

“ Nathan replied and said, ‘ Behold my son, as I grew up, I felt the word of the Lord within my heart, admonishing me to become a teacher of the people, and to bear testimony to truth. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I allowed my beard to grow, and put on a rough hairy garment, and went among the people chastising them with severe harsh words. But men fled from me; they did not take my words to heart, or they found in them allusions to their neighbours—not to themselves. Thereupon I grew angry within my mind, I took refuge in the obscurity of Mount Hermon, and I said to myself, If they will not see the light then they shall walk in night, and perish in darkness. Thus I exclaimed, wandering angrily in dismal obscurity.’

“ But twilight came, and was soon followed by the morning dawn, which purpled the heavens, and poured the early dew upon the mount of Hermon. The night had vanished, and Hermon sent forth sweet odours. Soft and lovely was the lustre of the morning, and misty clouds were hovering round the mountain-top, moistening the herbs. And men walked about cheerfully, and looked up with joy to the rising dawn. And now day descended from the heavens, and the sun left the embrace of the morning dawn, and sent his rays upon the dew-glittering plants.

“I stood lost in beholding, and my heart was moved. And the east wind rose whispering, and, in its whisperings, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Behold, Nathan, thus sendeth the Lord to the son of the earth, his most precious, most lovely, gift—the light of the day!’

“‘And, when I descended from the mountain,’ continued the prophet, ‘the Spirit of the Lord led me under a pomegranate. And the tree was a beautiful and shady tree, and laden with blossoms and fruits. I stood in its shade, looked upon its shade, looked upon its blossoms and said: Oh, how beautiful; it is like the purple blush of innocence upon the countenances of the daughters of Israel! And, stepping nearer, I discovered the delicious fruit, hidden in the shade of the leaves. And the voice of the Lord spoke to me from the pomegranate: Behold, Nathan, thus nature promiseth delicious fruit in the simple blossom, and, concealing her hand, offers it amidst the shades of the foliage.’

“‘After this, I returned to Salem with a joyful mind; I laid aside my hairy garment, anointed my head, and taught wisdom in cheering parables; for truth is grave, and has not many friends. Therefore, she loves to appear, robed in simple, cheerful attire, human among human beings, that she may win friends and disciples.’”

I have placed this parable at the head of this chapter, to serve as an apology, if, indeed, an apology be needed for the observations which I purpose to make. Parables, parabolical and allegorical expressions and illustrations were among the most ancient—probably the most ancient—methods of instruction. Before the human mind had ripened into a living fountain of reflection, before men were capable of descending into any great depth of reasoning, it was necessary to represent ideas by more tangible objects than mere sounds, and to fix the attention of the listener by images which were familiar to his senses. Among the Jews parabolical narratives were of frequent recurrence, and the writings of the rabbis abound in them. It is natural that, with them,

every thing was, if possible, supported, or at least adorned by a phrase or an expression from holy writ. The Bible is the Jew's all in all, and justly so. It is not only his code of laws regulating his spiritual, (and, as long as the Jews formed a nation, his political,) welfare, but it is also his history, and, though it may sound strange, a history containing the doings of his ancestors, and, at the same time, the condition of his descendants. In the Bible the Jew finds his intrinsic dignity and his apparent humiliation, his past losses and his future gains, his saddest laments and his most cheering consolations, his dearest recollections and his most ardent hopes. Is it to be wondered, then, that the Jew has most anxiously guarded this inestimable treasure—that every word, nay, every letter, has importance and significance for him, and that he is most tenacious of all its peculiarities?

For some time the Bible formed the exclusive, and for a series of centuries, the paramount subject of Jewish research. It would hardly be too bold to assert that the whole voluminous work of the Talmud is but a lengthened comment on holy writ. It is a current phrase among the Talmudists that the words of Scripture are like unto a flinty rock: When you strike the rock with a hammer, a number of atoms will fly in all directions; thus, when you expound a passage of the sacred book, it will diffuse light and instruction in a number of different bearings. It was thus that the popular teachers among the Jews often took a passage of Scripture for their text, and brought into connexion with it any moral truth which they wished to impress upon their audience. It was for that purpose not requisite that the passage quoted had any direct bearing upon the subject of which they treated; the slightest allusion—the faintest resemblance was deemed a

sufficient ground to be used as a support for their assertions. And who would censure a method which, though little in accordance with our modern ideas of explaining Scripture, and, which requires great caution lest it should become instrumental in perverting rather than interpreting the divine word, yet was calculated to introduce moral lessons, in a sanctified garb, and to secure for them ready admission and powerful influence.

In the following observations, I have followed a similar, but not exactly like, method. I have not, indeed, perverted the sense of holy writ, for which I entertain the most undivided reverence; but I have used expressions in meanings somewhat different from their literal significations, and I have endeavoured to deduce from passages of the sacred volume, lessons which, when properly taken to heart and followed up, will not fail to contribute to the happiness of my fellow-men.

Whoever has read, with careful attention, the first chapter of Genesis—the chapter containing the truly majestic account of the creation of this universe—must have noticed the frequent recurrence of the phrase “And God saw that it was good.” These same words are emphatically repeated after enumerating the several productions of every day—save one only. “And God saw that it was good.” We see thus the divine Architect standing still, as it were, at the decline of each day, to survey the work of His hands, and to convince Himself that it really corresponded with the design formed by His unerring wisdom. Then only, after the examination of the day’s work, that day is concluded, and the account proceeds to the succeeding one.

What a multiplicity of lessons may be derived from this passage, on reflecting attentively upon its bearings.

First of all, it teaches us to be humble and unassuming. Even He who forms the widest plans and who has, at his disposal, all the means possible to carry out these plans—even He condescends to examine His productions before He pronounces them “good.” But what do men, in their presumption? Our knowledge at best, is only an approximation to truth, our views are limited within a very narrow space, a thousand circumstances and unforeseen incidents change the aspect of things upon which we calculated, our means are circumscribed in every direction, our powers cannot extend beyond a certain limit, our strength is dependant upon numerous casualties—and yet how often do we find those who put their sole confidence in their own wisdom and act truly as if they were assured that what *they* do, must be “good.” No glance of survey or inquiry is thrown upon their actions, there seems to be no solicitude as to whether they be good or not; alas! if they were to stand still and to examine, how frequently would they see that it is *not good*.

Our heavenly Father has revealed to us his holy will in the sacred volume; he has thus furnished us with a mighty staff to support us on our wanderings through this earthly pilgrimage. But men, in their frowardness, throw away this staff, substitute their folly for the divine wisdom, reason away the laws of God, and would ruin mankind by their perversities. The holy book says: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” But presumptuous men say: We will love only those whom we choose, the others we will despise, persecute, torment, and slaughter. The divine law commands: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.” But short-sighted men say: Why should my neighbour live in a house more splendid than mine? Why should he indulge in

delicious meats, and I be satisfied with a dry crust? Why should he have a dress more costly or jewels more valuable than I possess? Thus their covetousness drives them to foolish undertakings; to equal their neighbour, nay, to surpass him, is their only aim, they risk every thing, and perhaps—lose every thing. Oh that men would be content! that they would stand and examine their own work and inquire whether it be *good*, not have their eyes ever fixed upon their neighbour's work, anxiously fearing that it may be better.

The second useful lesson that is deriveable from the passage above quoted, is—caution. Before the Almighty proceeded to the second day's work, he inquired into the goodness of the productions of the first day. To a superficial reader, it may seem as if there were no regular succession in the works of creation, and, as if the works of the fifth day might, with equal propriety, have been created on the first. But he who is accustomed to read Scripture accurately, cannot fail to observe that there is order and a natural gradation in the productions of all the six days as they follow each other. If, then, perfection was to be achieved, the first must have been good, it must have been entirely and properly finished before the next could have been commenced. Of what salutary effect would it be, if we would be instructed from this, and follow a similar conduct in our daily pursuits. We all know that no structure can be raised firmly and lastingly, unless it be erected upon a sound foundation, and we should surely not entertain a high opinion of a builder who would neglect this principle. And yet, every day's experience shows that there are many such characters among us. There are numerous persons, who go on rearing up what they consider the structure of their fortune without ever inquiring upon what foundations it is grounded, and then they

feel grieved and disappointed when their proud building, by one adverse accident, crumbles into rubbish. When a tradesman, at the close of one year's accounts, finds that the state of his affairs is not good, he should endeavour to consolidate the foundation, he should retrench his manner of living and economise with what is left him. But what is the conduct of most men in such circumstances? They regard not the base, they remove the eye from the tottering ground-work and look up to the top of the pyramid of riches and magnificence which they have erected for themselves in their mind; forgetting that their wings are insecure, they strive on and on in their flight upwards, and a sad, or, perhaps, fatal fall, is the unavoidable result.

How different is it with him who has learned from the omniscient Creator to inquire first whether the one step he has made is good, before he ventures upon a second. With him there will not, indeed, be any rapid ascent, but his progress, though gradual, will be secure. Before the evening of one day comes, before he considers one stage of his journey gained, he will carefully look around him, he will investigate cautiously whether what he has done entitles him to proceed further, whether the present aspect of his circumstances is propitious to promise future success, and whether no danger is to be feared from the stride he intends to make. Then, when he has perfectly satisfied himself in these respects, then will he contentedly close that period of his career and cheerfully set out upon the next day's journey, to see new creations spring up in his path, and to lead on his work to such ultimate perfection as is in man's power to obtain.

Among all the narratives which are introduced in the inspired writings there are few so touching, few so

replete with interest and salutary instruction as the history of Joseph, the son of the third patriarch. From the beginning to the end of the account, we may stop at almost every instance of it, to contemplate and compare the situation described with similar occurrences or circumstances in our own life, and draw from it impressive lessons and beneficent advice.

At the very outset of the history, when Joseph, "the lad, was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah," we read that "Israel loved Joseph more than all his children," and that "he made him a coat of many colours." This certainly was more the act of a fond than a wise father, and, as was natural, the object of his doting affection soon became odious in the eyes of his brethren. I do not think that I can be taxed with deviating from the original account, if I supply the link which seems to be wanting, and say that Joseph, by the distinction shown him by his father, grew proud and overbearing towards his brethren, and thus called forth their hatred, which was attended with such important consequences. A vanity of this kind, though by no means undeserving of censure, seems excusable in the lad Joseph; but how many are there among us, not merely youths, but men in the full development of their mental faculties, who exhibit no less foolish a pride than that grounded on "a coat of many colours." Some there are whom their heavenly Father has favoured—as if they were his particular fondlings—with riches, with honours, and all the other goods of the earth, whom, in short, he has clad in "a coat of many colours;" and I ask, Do they make better use of their distinctions than the lad Joseph did? Do they use these gifts of fortune, bestowed upon them for purposes best known to him who deals out the portions to all mortals—do they employ them in a manner to win the

love and esteem of their less fortunate fellows? Or do they not rather conduct themselves so as to incite the envy and hatred of their neighbours, or at least deserve their contempt? If the rich would consider the wealth apportioned to them as a means of doing good, if they would show their gratitude for the ease in which they live, by numerous acts of kindness to their suffering brethren, by giving a ready support to those that are sinking, and upholding those whose strength is fainting away. Then, indeed, would the "coat of many colours" in which they are wrapt, shine forth in all its brightness, to mark the favoured of the Lord, while, when they neglect to make the proper use of their possessions, their "coat of many colours" singles them out as objects of contempt and hatred, and the "many colours" are so many reflections of the reproaches which they incur.

I would liken the situation of the rich man on earth to that of a steward of a nobleman. A nobleman who possesses a large estate, keeps many servants, and employs a great number of labourers, does not himself take the charge of distributing the payments among all these persons, but he appoints a steward whom he entrusts with a considerable sum, and who is to distribute it according to his best views, and according to the claims of the several individuals. If this steward be a conscientious man, and endeavours to make the best possible use of the money at his disposal, he will not only please those among whom he distributes the sums, but he will likewise gain favour with his master for the judicious manner with which he discharges his office. But, if he be unjust, and withhold the sums from the poor labourers, these people will complain of him to his master, he will incur his displeasure and, perhaps, be dismissed from his post. In a similar situation has

the Lord placed those whom he has favoured with riches more than the rest of their brethren. They are, as it were, the stewards of the gifts of nature, which are in their hands. If they bestow them well, if they employ them according to the will of their Lord and Master, they will gain favour in his sight, and earn his blessings. But if they fail in the good administration of the fortunes entrusted to them, if they do not distribute liberally among their poorer fellows, these will cry to the Lord about their harshness, and the Lord will be displeased with his stewards, and perhaps deprive them of the riches that he had given to their keeping.

If, in this one instance, we had to remark upon the inconsiderate vanity of Joseph, we shall now, throughout his eventful history, find him a model of genuine virtue and charming loveliness. The heart-rending scene which takes place when he is sold into slavery by his unfeeling brethren, who are deaf to his urgent entreaties, cannot fail to engage for the unfortunate exile the favour of every reader. But his reverses have not yet filled their measure: by the intrigues of a woman, whose temptations his austere virtue withstood with all the firmness and courage of a hero, he is thrown into prison, there to linger with defaulters, and to be deprived even of that shadow of freedom which he enjoyed as a slave. His conduct in prison is perhaps the most remarkable throughout his life. What must have been his feelings when he contrasted his present condition with his former circumstances! In the land of Canaan he was the pet of an aged and wealthy father, who doted on him with all the weakness of old age and the affection of one who loved his virtues. There was nothing, probably, that was refused him, when he desired it, if it only lay within the means of his affluent parent.

Add to this, that the two memorable dreams which he had in youth, must have impressed his mind with visions of greatness and splendour, and kept alive within him the most sanguine hopes and the brightest expectations. On the contrary, he was now separated from all who were dear to him—no kind father, no brothers, no playmates, not even a friend was near him to sympathise with his sorrows, and he could not reasonably entertain the hope that he would ever be restored to the bosom of his family. He was in a foreign land, a despised slave, a prisoner deprived, no doubt, of nearly all the comforts of life—his table, we may imagine, not very amply nor very deliciously supplied. I can never peruse this part of Joseph's history without being strongly reminded of my own sorrowful condition when I first came to this country. In my youth I had likewise been accustomed to the kindness of affluent parents, and I had ever borne myself with the sanguine hopes of a bright future. Removed in tender years from the land of my birth, I was thrown on a foreign shore, and cares and troubles of all descriptions rushed upon me, uninured as I was to suffering and want. But the same light which brightened the dark recesses of Joseph's prison in Egypt, and converted his dungeon into a habitable dwelling, the same light guided me on my path beset with afflictions and miseries—it was the firm confidence in God's lovingkindness, who does not disown nor forsake any of his faithful children.

So deeply was Joseph impressed with that implicit trust in his Maker that, in the dark hours of captivity, his mind kept aloof, and, so far from giving himself up to despair, to which men are prone in the days of adversity, his conduct was cheerful and his manners so engaging that he found grace in the sight of his jailer,

who treated him with less rigour than the rest of the prisoners, seeing that his heart was truly good. This circumstance clearly shows what a powerful agent in all the changes of our lives confidence in God is. For it was by this, it was by the conviction that by the hand of Providence he had been led into that misery, that it was a trial sent him by the design of an allwise Being—it was by this that Joseph was likewise taught to hope that the same Hand would find the means of his deliverance, and that, if he went through this trial with a manly courage, success would not fail to attend him. And the result showed that his hopes were not futile, it proved that indeed “the Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.”

But let us not yet leave the Hebrew youth in the Egyptian prison, into which he was so unjustly cast. We read that, one morning when he entered the cell of two fellow-prisoners, he perceived that “they were sad.” With a kind sympathising interest, ready to participate in, and, if possible, to relieve the woes of his neighbours, Joseph enquired: “Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?” Simple words, it is true, but great in what they convey. We can fancy the sweet loveliness with which the amiable son of Jacob’s beloved wife pronounced these words, the cheerful countenance with which he looked at the dis comforted prisoners, and which, while setting them the example how to bear reverses of fortune, was a delicate reproach upon their despondency; we can imagine the magic effect which the sounds produced upon their disturbed minds, by declaring to them that, though they were disgraced with their master, though they were separated from all the world, and shut out from the society of men, yet there was a kindred soul near them, there was a

human being within the same walls with them, in whose heart there dwelt sympathy with their sufferings, in whose eye there sprang up a fountain of tears for their misfortunes. In no instance of his life does Joseph appear greater than when he uttered these kind words. Himself a captive and imprisoned without his own fault, himself deprived of every comfort, and friendless in a strange land, he yet sought to console those that were near him, to infuse healing balm into their wounds, and to convert the gloom of their countenances into a cheerful smile. How few followers has Joseph in this! When men are in distress they are generally taken up so much with their own misfortune that all they can give to the sorrows of others is, perhaps, an expression of sympathy which, properly viewed, is nothing but an echo of their own feelings. But who is there anxious to soothe the pains of others while his own pains are stinging him to the quick? Yet such was the disposition of the exiled, enslaved, and captive Hebrew, such were the principles of humanity in which he had been trained from his early youth, that he forgot for the moment how wretched he himself was, or sought relief for his wretchedness only in a kind, humane action.

In addition to the separation from his native soil, and to the hardships of imprisonment, it was Joseph's dire lot to experience likewise the pains of disappointment. For once the pious youth had swerved from his firm trust in his Maker: when he interpreted the dream of the chief butler, he entreated him not to forget his benefactor in the days of prosperity, but to lay the cause of the oppressed before the throne of Pharaoh; the unfortunate prisoner, however, was doomed to learn how little reliance there is to

be placed in men, and that ingratitude is not uncommon among the mortal race. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust to the Lord than to put confidence in princes." This truth had Joseph for one moment disregarded, and he was punished for his error. By addressing his request to the chief butler, who was shortly to be reinstated in his high office about the person of the king, Joseph probably thought that he could not fail to insure his speedy deliverance, especially as the man who was to plead his cause was bound to him by many acts of kindness, and particularly by this last deed of interpreting a dream which caused him so much uneasiness. Yet no sooner was Pharaoh's cup-bearer released from prison than he forgot Joseph and his kindness, and, for him, the innocent Hebrew might have lingered in his dungeon until death. Such, indeed, would be the lot of most men who would put their sole confidence in their neighbours. I will not here inveigh against the want of grateful feelings among men, I will not enter into a discourse how much falsehood there prevails amidst the children of the earth, and how many promises there are given without even the will to fulfil them; but, independently of these considerations, do we not know, that it is in the nature of men to be entirely engrossed with their own affairs? to be so deeply engaged in their worldly pursuits, of whatever description they may be, that they always make the care of their fellow-beings a secondary, and sometimes, no consideration at all? And especially, the sudden transition from adversity to prosperity is a dangerous step for most persons in this respect. They are but too often inclined to efface from their memory all the traces of their former situation, and vanity often induces them to suppress the sympathy

which would force itself upon their hearts, in behalf of those who were but yesterday their companions in misfortune.

Joseph's happiness, however, had been promised and decreed by a Friend in whom there is no deceit, and who is all truth, for "God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" He who had before, in nightly visions, indicated to the shepherd youth the greatness for which he was destined, now brought on the fulfilment of His mysteriously given promise. It is well known to all my readers how, through interpreting the dreams of the Egyptian king, Joseph was raised to the office of prime minister in that great empire of antiquity.

The first words which the Hebrew slave addressed to the mighty monarch of Mizrayim are beautifully illustrative of the sweet and amiable character of the youth, who unassumingly acknowledged his talents to be a boon bestowed on him by the especial favour of God. "It is not in me," said the modest youth, "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." And yet his heart must have bounded in transports, when he again appeared in the raiment of a free man, when he heard the prison doors shut behind him, and saw before him the prospect of regaining his liberty. But he would not purchase even that costliest of treasures by pretending to a knowledge which he was aware, he did not in reality possess; it was then that he collected all his confidence in his Creator, and the words which he uttered attest an implicit resignation in the will of the Most High. If it please God to free him from his present condition, thought he, this

might become a means to effect it, but he himself was powerless, it was the wisdom of God that would deliver him—not his own.

Before I quit this subject I will make a few observations on the dreams themselves and their interpretation. Pharaoh had dreamed that "the lean and ill-favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine. And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill-favoured." This Joseph interpreted, that the seven years of famine, which were to come over the land, would consume all the produce of the seven years of plenty which were to precede them; and he, therefore, advised that precautions should be taken that, during the years of abundance, stores should be laid up for the years of want. Practically, this advice may find multifarious applications in every man's life. When men are in prosperous circumstances, when the seeds they have sown produce an over abundant harvest, they should provide against the evil, they should not live up to their income entirely, but lay by a part for years to come. For the accidents of life are of various shapes; sometimes misfortune will come upon us in the form of illness, sometimes another occurrence will disable us from following up our usual pursuits. Those that take Joseph's advice, those that have saved a part of their abundance, to serve as a support in days less bright, will then earn the reward of their provident conduct, and fare well with it. But there are many who utterly disregard this important practical lesson, there are many who, as Diogenes said, "live as if they were to die every day;" as long as fortune showers down her gifts upon them and surrounds them with affluence, they live sumptuously, they expend their

full income, nay, sometimes more; for the intoxication of wealth easily induces men to desire and to expect greater riches daily, and when fortune leaves them they are utterly wrecked, there is nothing left from their former prosperous condition but the mortification of the cruel contrast, and the thought that they had it in their own power to provide against this wretchedness, and that they neglected to do so—they are then “ill-favoured” indeed.

No one, in good circumstances, ought to allow a day to pass without having done something for the future. It is folly to imagine that, because we are now well favoured, we must ever be so; change and inconstancy are the two perpetual companions of human life, and, if they exercise their empire on one thing more than upon the rest, it is upon the fortunes of men. He who was a wealthy man yesterday may to-day be reduced to the wretched condition of a pauper; he who but yesterday could have dispensed charity amongst thousands of his brethren may to-day be obliged to beg a crust of bread from his benevolent neighbour; and he who yesterday lived magnificently in a gaudy palace may to-day seek an asylum in an humble cottage. If men could but be taught by such lessons without the severe rod of experience! But alas! daily do we see persons regardless of this maxim; daily do we see men squander their possessions in folly, expend more than, according to their earnings, they ought to do, and live beyond their means. But what is the consequence? They rob their kind fellow-men (for their creditors are not their oppressors, but rather their benefactors); they thus draw upon themselves the contempt of every man who is upright of heart, they lose the estimation in which they have hitherto been held by their friends

and acquaintances, the riches which they have consumed are no more seen, in fact, "it cannot be known that they have eaten them," but they are in all respects "ill-favoured."

While the above observation applies to persons of mature years, and more particularly to such as are engaged in some trade or profession, the words of Scripture convey likewise a sound, useful lesson for the young. The years of youth are the years of plenty. During the early period of life the human mind is in a state of exuberancy—the soil is most fit for cultivation, and, if properly sown, would yield "an hundredfold." The mental powers, not yet worn out with cares and anxieties that beset the path of every traveller in the earthly wilderness, are in full vigour; and the organs of the body exhibit the picture of healthful life and freshness. This is the time when we should lay in a store for years to come. Old age is not always—it is not necessarily—a time of want, but it is surely a time from which we cannot reasonably expect an abundant produce. The declining years of man are not always "years of famine," but they are generally "poor and very ill-favoured, and lean-fleshed." Who then would allow the years of plenty to pass away without making such use of them as will tend to shed a lustre of comfort and happiness on the evening of his life?

Frequently has the human life been compared to a single day, and in this respect also the comparison holds good. As the morning hours are the best for study, because then the mind is yet free from the various thoughts which will naturally cross it during the day, so are the years of youth, the morning of life, the best time for the acquisition of knowledge.

When the mind is yet tender and open to impressions, these impressions ought to be made; we cannot begin too early to introduce the young to the study of the sciences and to the exercise of their religious duties. The latter particularly must be inculcated in the youthful heart before any evil propensity can take root there. Most persons, I may confidently say, have experienced during the course of their lives, that to unlearn is a task of much greater difficulty than to learn. It is tiresome work to outroot first all the weeds that cover a field before we can lay in the seed. Those, therefore, that are anxious for the sound, religious education of their children, should not wait until these have contracted habits which must again be laid aside, or have imbibed notions in discordance with those principles which they are expected to follow through life. Our sages have said: "This world is, as it were, the antechamber to the world to come," and so are the years of youth the antechamber to the life of a man. While we are in this antechamber we ought to prepare all we intend to say or to do in the palace we are about to enter; so ought we to go forth from youth well prepared for the different situations of life, so that, in any condition in which we may be placed in after years, we should be able to take counsel from the lessons received in our youth, and not be left without a guide in this labyrinth of dangers and casualties.



CHAPTER X.

וְאָתָּה תֹּאמַר לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹתִי אֲנִי יְהוָה :

“*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.*”—Lev. xix. 18.

Religion as well as science, literature, politics, and manners, has experienced the irresistible influence of civilisation and progress. It is not so much, however, the religious systems themselves that have undergone changes in modern times, although, in the interpretation of dogmas and religious doctrines, the influence of philosophy, of enlarged views concerning humanity in its widest sense, is distinctly perceptible. The progress, with respect to religion, consists rather in the altered spirit with which the more enlightened professors of the several religious persuasions view the doctrines and precepts of their respective faiths. Religions were formerly exclusive, now they have become tolerant; formerly they preached hatred and persecution against infidels and heretics—names given to dissenters and followers of other creeds—now humanity and freedom have checked that irreligious and ungodly zeal; formerly, every one born in a different faith was *ipso facto* an enemy, now he is considered as a fellow-man; formerly, the fire of the stake and the *auto da fé* were to enlighten people respecting the doctrines of the church, now the light is diffused by much gentler and more humane means. The history of religious persecutions forms, indeed, the darkest page in the history of mankind. The professors of

Judaism have reason to be proud that their fathers were only passively concerned in such persecutions.

One great injustice which strikes us as done to the Jews is, their being continually reproached with aversion and hatred towards their oppressors and persecutors. The universal prejudice against that race was not the consequence of the crimes imputed to them, such as poisoning the wells, kidnapping Christian children, blaspheming the Author, and scorning the rites of the Christian religion, but these imputed crimes were, on the contrary, the consequence of that very prejudice—the product of that anti-Jewish feeling by which Christians, in those dark and happily bygone ages, thought it a sacred duty to be animated. Those prejudices and anti-Jewish feelings had their origin in the early history of the Christian religion. On this point, however, it is not my intention at present to enter.

To repel the above-named and other charges against the Jews was frequently undertaken by men of patriotism and learning. Among others, this was done, at least with some practical success, by Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel, who, in the time of the Protector, came over to England from Amsterdam, in which place he was the spiritual chief of the congregation of Portuguese Jews. The Jews had been expelled from England under the reign of Edward I., and it was not till the time of Cromwell that they received permission to return to this country. For this they were principally indebted to the said Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel, who, accompanied by a small number of his co-religionists, pleaded their cause before the Protector and parliament. He met, however, with greater obstacles than he had expected, and, when he almost

despaired of the success of the undertaking he wrote a paper called "the Justification of the Jews,"* in the shape of a reply to certain questions which an Englishman of high standing had addressed to him concerning the wrongs generally imputed to the Jewish nation.

Some of the charges refuted sound ridiculous enough to our ears; but as it may be of interest to some of my Christian readers to learn the nature of the infamous slander to which the Jews were exposed, and as these, moreover, are characteristic of the spirit of the times in which they were produced, I will mention the principal points contained in Rabbi Manasseh's letter.

He begins by refuting the malignant accusation that the Jews were in the habit of using the blood of Christians for their passover cakes. He shows the absurdity of this imputation from passages of the written and oral law, and from the writings of Jewish sages. It would be wasting the time of my readers, and attributing to a preposterous calumny an importance which it has altogether lost in these days, were I to dwell on the arguments taken both from Judaism and from common sense, or on the facts totally annihilating the accusation, which are adduced by the rabbi. So far, indeed, are the Jews from killing Christians, the rabbi proves, that they continually pray for, and endeavour after the peace, welfare, and prosperity of the city wherein they dwell, and the inhabitants thereof, and they call down a particular blessing upon the prince or magistrate under whose protection they live.† "And this," continues Rabbi Manasseh, "the Right Honourable my Lord St.

* Note 20.

† Note 21.

John can testify, who, when he was ambassador to the Lords the States of the United Provinces, was pleased to honour our synagogue at Amsterdam with his presence, where our nation entertained him with music, and all expressions of joy and gladness, and also pronounced a blessing, not only upon his Honour then present, but upon the whole Commonwealth of England, for that they were a people in league and amity, and because we conceived some hopes that they would manifest towards us, what we ever bear towards them, viz. : all love and affection."

He then proceeds to answer the questions whether the Jews in their synagogues really bestow upon the scrolls of the law an adoration amounting to idolatry, whether it is a part of their religion to curse and hate the Christians, to blaspheme their religion and consider them as idolators, and whether it is the practice with the Jews to convert others to their faith.

Having dealt with these questions in a masterly manner, Rabbi Manasseh addresses himself to the consideration, whether the English would be losers in a commercial point by admitting the Jews to settle in England. "Some say," he remarks, "that if the Jews come to dwell here, they will draw unto themselves the whole negotiation to the great damage of the natural inhabitants." But the Jewish rabbi is inclined to think that the English would gain by the transport of the goods of the Jews, and by the public payments of customs, excise, and similar taxes. Besides, the Jews being acquainted with the different parts of the world, would confer advantages upon commerce in general, by communicating their knowledge respecting the different countries, their wants

and products. While on this subject he passes a compliment on the English, by saying :—

“ In my opinion there is not in the world a more understanding people for most navigations, and more capable of all negotiation than the English nation is.”

The whole letter breathes a spirit of pious submission to the decrees of Him who scattered Israel among the nations of the world, and, at the same time, evinces in the writer a consciousness of oppression mingled with the strong desire of releasing his co-religionists of their almost intolerable burdens. I recommend to my Christian readers a perusal of Rabbi Manasseh's letter, and I am convinced they would not lay it down without feelings of deep sympathy with the sufferings which the Jews had to endure, and without indignation at the gross injustice of these sufferings. The concluding passage of the letter runs thus :—

“ And to the highly honoured nation of England I make my most humble request that they would read over my arguments impartially, without prejudice, and devoid of all passion, effectually recommending me to their grace and favour, and earnestly beseeching God that He would be pleased to hasten the time promised by Zephaniah, wherein we shall serve Him with one consent, after the same manner, and shall be all of the same judgment; that, as His name is One, so His fear may be also one; and that we may all see the goodness of the Lord (blessed for ever!) and the consolations of Zion. Amen.”

Almost two centuries have elapsed since that letter was written. The prejudices against the Jews have greatly diminished, and those which yet exist no longer appear in that odious form which they had assumed during the dark centuries of oppression and persecution. It is an important proof of the power of

civilisation, and it affords, at the same time, consolation to the friend of humanity, that even that which is radically bad in human nature shows, in its manifestations, the influence of that progressive spirit which leads the human race onward in its career. Selfishness, avarice, envy, deceit, intolerance, though in their nature and essence they are the same as they were a thousand years ago, manifest themselves in a different way in the nineteenth century from that in which they appeared in the fourteenth. The same applies to the prejudices yet existing against the Jews. They have assumed a milder form, and the spirit of the age prevents them from assuming a dangerous character. It is impossible to tell how far some of the opponents to Jewish emancipation in parliament would go had they the power to do what they like, and were there any possibility of annihilating the force of public opinion. Their intolerance is composed of the same stuff of which the intolerance of a priest of the Inquisition was made. But, though the materials be the same, the pattern is necessarily different. Even Sir Robert H. Inglis, Messrs. Spooner, Newdegate, and Plumtre, would not put Jews to the rack, burn them in Smithfield, or even expel them in a mass from this country. Such is the influence of progress even on those who are opposed to progress, who cherish ancient prejudices as the antiquarian does the rust on pieces of great antiquity. This party has, I might almost say, an insuperable aversion to the Jews; its members are so intensely religious—if, indeed, it deserve that term — that they opine England can only be truly happy and prosperous, as all her inhabitants acknowledge *their* principles and dogmas. It is not owing to them that Roman Catholics have seats in parliament; they would exclude dissenters if they

could. In opposing the admission of Jews into parliament they have recourse to all sorts of arguments which have been again and again refuted. Thus, they say that one Jewish member of parliament would unchristianise the country, thereby paying, unconsciously, a great compliment to the Jews. In their blind zeal they appeal to antiquated prejudices; they represent the Jew as being animated by an ill feeling against the Christians, and entertaining loose notions on important points of morality. But, as it is part of my object in these pages to show the prejudices against my brethren in faith are unfounded; that the Jewish religion commands us to practise kindness and love to non-Israelites, that there is nothing in the Jewish law which prevents us from being loyal subjects and useful citizens.

A most crying injustice has always been the disposition to impute to the whole community of the Jews the impropriety of an individual. No matter how small or how great the offence, the whole nation has been forthwith charged with it. The responsibility has been, as it were, thrown upon the entire body of the Jews. This, I regret to say, is done even now-a-days by the vulgar. But what would Christians say if every fraud, theft, murder, perpetrated by individual Christians, were laid to the charge of the Christians in general? Happily, in the present age, this injustice is not attended with any palpable evil consequences. But there was a time when whole communities had to suffer for an offence justly or unjustly attributed to one of its members.

Nor is this injustice without a natural cause. The Jews have always preserved a separate existence, in outward appearance, in religion, in manners and in customs. The Jew was easily recognised by his

characteristic distinctions, so that he was at once known to be a Jew wherever he appeared, and it necessarily fastened itself upon the attention of those who came in contact with him. His individual character was lost in the generic one. This is the case with all bodies of men who distinguish themselves by certain characteristics from the great mass among whom they live and move. For example, an offence committed by an individual who happens to be a member of the Society of Friends, would be spoken of as an offence committed by a person belonging to that community, and would thus reflect disadvantageously on the whole body of Friends, at least in the eyes of the unthinking multitude. To this natural cause were superadded, in the case of the Jew, the aversion and hatred existing against the whole nation, and malice and intolerance availed themselves but too gladly of opportunities to blame upon the Jews in general what was only the fault of an individual.

The penal laws and restrictions to which the Jews were subjected more or less in all countries were attended by evil consequences to their moral character. Freedom is a necessary condition of development, physical as well as mental and moral. No plant can thrive—can attain to full growth—without freedom. The human frame becomes crippled, if restrained in its free development. If we compare a people living under a despotic government with one in the enjoyment of free institutions, we shall find that the latter are superior to the former in all manly qualities—in honesty, straightforwardness, independence, and energy. Is it, then, matter of surprise that the Jews, during centuries of persecution and slavery, nay, worse than slavery, should have contracted habits unbecoming free men? I have already, in a former chapter, spoken of the

influence which the multifarious restrictions upon the energies of the Jews exercised upon their social position. But he surely must be blind, or unwilling to use his eyes, who would deny the immense progress the Jews have made in all countries since the day when their emancipation commenced—since the time when the sun again began to shine upon them. To say, therefore, that the Jew is by nature selfish, intent upon gain, averse to the higher vocations of life, or animated by any unkind feeling towards his Christian brethren, is the height of injustice.

The bond of union which attaches the liberal Jew to the liberal Christian becomes closer and closer every day, and we hear or read daily of acts of kindness and love unrestricted by considerations of sect and diversity of religion. The following fact will serve as an illustration :—

Some time ago, a Jew received a communication from a lady residing about fifteen miles from Bedford, inviting him to come to her house, on a certain day, carrying with him certain articles of merchandise; as she expected some friends who intended to purchase from him. On the morning of the appointed day, he left home to proceed to the lady's residence. He had to drive through Elstow, a village about a mile and a half distant from Bedford. The Rev. John Wing was incumbent of that parish, and his mother, a lady possessing an excellent heart, was at that time residing at Elstow. Mrs. Wing had always been very kind to the Jew of whom I speak, who would never pass through Elstow without calling at her house and inquiring after her welfare. It afforded him great delight to meet that countenance beaming with kindness and benevolence. The expression of kindness in the human

countenance is peculiarly pleasing, and, if anything, gains an attraction with the decline of physical charms. So accustomed did he become to that lady's house, that he always felt as if he were visiting the dwelling-place of some near and dear relation. Many favours did she show to the poor Israelite struggling to obtain an honest livelihood in a foreign land, and the pleasure with which she heard of his progress, gave evidence of a heart whose naturally kind disposition was not restricted by narrowmindedness or bigotry.

When, on the day above-mentioned, he drove through Elstow, he stopped at the lady's house as usual, but, on entering, he perceived her countenance cast down and bearing the marks of some inward agitation, he was somewhat reluctant to acquaint her with the purpose of his journey, seeing that her mind was too much occupied by some other matter. Still her kindness prompted her to ask how he was getting on, and he then told her on what business he was going. Thinking that he could perhaps relieve her mind, if he knew the cause of its depression, he asked whether anything distressed her? Whereupon she replied, in a sorrowful tone, that a poor woman in the village who, some days ago, had given birth to her first child, was in a very dangerous state—that, in fact, she was not expected to live beyond an hour or two. "Poor woman," added the good lady, "she every now and then sighs for her minister, she is very anxious to see him before she departs this world." He at once offered his services to Mrs. Wing, to drive over to the rev. gentleman, who was, at the time, six miles off in a direction opposite to that which he intended to follow, and to inform him that his presence was required at Elstow. The good lady remonstrated; she told him that he, having a family to maintain, could not afford to lose the few pounds which

he was likely to earn that day. But, unfortunately, she could not procure a messenger, people being all busy in the fields with the harvest at the time. The heart of the Israelite was too sensibly touched at the recital of the Christian's woes, and he replied, "money we may earn any day, if it pleased God to prosper our ways, but we have not every day an opportunity of rendering a service of charity to a fellow-creature in the last moments of her earthly pilgrimage." And, without losing another moment, he drove as fast as he could, and was fortunate enough to find the rev. gentleman at his house, and delivered the message to him. As a light, before extinguishing, sometimes flares up once more, as if to make a last effort before annihilation; so must the eyes of the dying woman have assumed a fresh lustre never to be renewed, till the day when in her "flesh she shall see God," as she beheld her minister approaching her death-bed and offering to her departing spirit the consolations of religion.

As it was now too late for the Israelite to keep his appointment on that day he returned home; but the sweet consciousness of having done his duty as a man, and of having been instrumental in removing "the bitterness of death" from a poor sufferer, must have been much more delightful to him than any worldly gain he might have derived from a mercantile transaction.

The following allegory beautifully illustrates the duty of man to be merciful and charitable to his fellow-creature:—

"Let us make man," said the Creator, and myriads of angelic beings listened to his voice. "Do not create him," spoke the Angel of Justice, "he will wrong his brethren, injure and oppress the weak, and cruelly ill-treat the feeble."

“Do not create him,” spoke the Angel of Peace, “he will manure the earth with human blood; the first-born of his race will be an assassin, and murder his own brother.” “He will desecrate the sanctuary with his lies,” said the Angel of Truth, “and, though Thou stampest on his countenance thine own Image, the seal of truth, yet will falsehood and deceit prevail in his voice.” “Create him not, he will rebel against Thee, and abuse the freedom which Thou bestowest upon him,” exclaimed the chorus of assembled angels. Still they spoke, when Charity, the youngest and best-beloved of the Eternal’s creation, approached His throne, and knelt before Him. “Create him, Father,” she prayed, “in thine own Image, let him be the beloved of Thy goodness. When all thy servants forsake him, I will seek him, and lovingly assist him. His very errors will I turn into good. I will fill the heart of the weak with benevolence, and render him merciful towards those who are weaker than he. If he depart from peace and truth, if he offend justice and equity, I will still be with him, and the consequences of his own errors shall chasten his heart, and purify him in penitence and love.” The universal Father listened to her voice, and created man a weak and erring being. But even in his errors a pupil of the Divine Goodness, a child of mercy, love, and charity, which never forsakes him, and still strives to amend him.

“Remember thy origin, O man, when thou art cruel and unjust. Of all the divine attributes, Charity alone stood forth to plead that existence be granted to thee. Mercy and Love have fostered thee; then, remember, be just, be merciful.”

If those who are ever ready to reproach the Jew with lovelessness and aversion, not to say, hatred, against their non-Jewish fellow-creatures, knew a little more of Judaism, they would hesitate before they bring these charges against him, unless their bigotry bade them close their eyes against truth. I have in a former chapter alluded to the passages in Scripture forbidding hatred against the Edomites and Egyptians

who entertained national animosities against the Israelites, and thence concluded *a fortiori* that much less would it be in keeping with the spirit of that prohibition were the Jews to hate those among whom they are allowed to live in peace and quiet. But the many passages occurring in the five books of Moses which directly enjoin sympathy with, and toleration of, the stranger, nay command his equality with the native Israelites, are the best proofs that that law was considered of high importance. Those sins against which the divine lawgiver wished particularly to guard his people, such as idolatry, are repeatedly prohibited; the worship of the One True God is inculcated in numerous passages with more than ordinary force, because the immediate neighbourhood of idolatrous nations, and the very imperfect religious education of the Israelites were likely to entice them but too frequently into the sensual rites of the heathens. From similar reasons did the divine Wisdom think it necessary to urge upon them the toleration of the stranger. Surrounded as the Israelites in Palestine were, by hostile nations, with whom they frequently came into hostile contact, and against whom it was natural they should have entertained national animosities, it was the more urgent to instil into their minds good feelings towards the stranger. "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." Again, "But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." The addition, "you were strangers in Egypt," clearly expresses the idea that one who has himself suffered will feel much livelier sympathies with actual sufferers than one who has not, and, putting the people in mind

of their own, or their ancestors' servitude in Egypt, when exhorting them to show kindness to the stranger, is in perfect consonance with the tendencies of the human heart. But to the following two verses I wish particularly to draw the attention of the opponents of Jewish emancipation. They who always quote the Scripture, when it suits their purpose, ought, in justice to truth and the sacred doctrines inculcated by the Bible, not lose sight of those passages which, though they upset the whole fabric of their arguments, are nevertheless even in their opinion of divine origin. "One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations. As ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you." These verses do, methinks, most unequivocally prohibit the existence of penal or exclusive laws, and undeniably manifest the spirit of brotherhood which was to pervade the Israelitish community. Nor can I forbear quoting one passage more which enjoins actual assistance of, and charity towards, the stranger. Moses, speaking of God, says: "He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loved the stranger in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger, for ye were strangers* in the land of Egypt." Now the Old Testament is the Jew's religious guide, and with such unmistakeable passages as those quoted it is difficult to comprehend the perverseness of an understanding, even clouded by prejudice which insists upon charging Judaism with anti-social doctrines. Is it likely that the Jew should learn unkindness or hostility against those differing from him in the worship of God from the Bible, which teaches us to be

* Note 22.

kind even to our enemies and not bear them any grudge? which says, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt not, in any wise, rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." Those who are so anxious about the salvation of our souls and who, among other reasons for converting us, deny to the Jewish religion the character of a religion of love, maintaining that Christianity alone teaches to love our enemies, should read the Old Testament more attentively, and they would there find passages unsurpassed in a spirit of kindness and love by any in the New Testament. "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him. Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth. If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink." Let the opponents to Jewish emancipation ponder on those verses, and not say when it suits their purpose, "That is the word of God," and when it does not, to say with scorn, "O, that is Mosaic!"

But I hear the prejudiced adversaries of the Jews object: "We are aware of the existence of these and similar passages in the Old Testament; yet, do not the Talmud and the rabbinical writings preach a different doctrine?" To this question I answer. Most decidedly not. A few passages, which might be construed into hostility against non-Israelites, refer indisputably to the heathens who were the open enemies of the Jews; other passages have been completely misunderstood, either through ignorance or, more frequently, from wilful perversion. And even suppose

there were to be found in Jewish writings of ages long gone by, sentiments which are not compatible with an enlightened humanity, I ask whether the doctors of the Christian church did not leave the rabbis far behind them in intolerant and narrow views? The theological literature of the middle ages contains much more theology than religion, and the Hebrew literature of that time need by no means shun a comparison with the contemporary Christian writings.

The Talmud, taken as a whole, abounds in precepts of humanity and love, and is rich in narratives embodying toleration and feelings of brotherhood. "I call heaven and earth to witness," says a rabbinical writer,* "that the Divine Spirit rests on the Israelite as well as on the non-Israelite, according to their actions." The celebrated Maimonides, in a letter to R. Chisdai, gives utterance to the following opinions:—

"And as to your question respecting the Gentiles, you must know that God looketh to the heart and therefore our sages teach that the pious of all nations will participate in the blessings of a future state, if they have acquired the necessary knowledge of God, and accomplished themselves in virtues. Thus it is that our wise men say, 'Even a heathen, who studies the law of Moses, is equal to the high priest.'"

Practical charity towards heathens is inculcated in the following Talmudical passages:—

"The poor of the heathens are not to be prohibited to glean in the fields. It is our duty to support the poor of the nations, to visit their sick, and bury their dead, as well as if they were Israelites. It is not permitted to deceive any one by words, not even a heathen."

Note 23.

In what spirit the rabbis practised honesty will appear from the following narrative:—

“An Ishmaelite once sold a camel to Rabbi Simon, whose pupils led the animal home to the rabbi's house. On taking off the saddle, they found under it a collar ornamented with diamonds. ‘Rabbi, Rabbi,’ they exclaimed, ‘the blessing of God maketh rich,’ thereby expressing that God had given the diamonds to him. ‘Take back the diamonds to the man of whom I bought the animal,’ said the rabbi, ‘he only sold me the camel, but not the precious stones.’ The diamonds were consequently returned to their owner, who was not a little surprised at it, but the rabbi had received the more precious ones—honesty and probity.”

The Jerusalemite Talmud contains a similar story of some wise men who returned a purse of money which they found in some wheat they had purchased of a heathen.

Such were the opinions, and such was the practice of all the eminent men in Israel respecting honesty and charity. They knew too well that all men are the children of God, that all are His creatures, and their love and awe of the Creator were too deeply felt to be consistent with any doctrines militating against comprehensive and enlarged views of religion and virtue.

As the Jewish doctrine concerning love and charity does not limit the practice of these virtues merely to Jews between themselves, but extends them to all fellow-creatures; so the Jewish law encourages loyalty as subjects, and usefulness as citizens without reference to the country in which the Jew is settled. Jeremiah, in his letter to the Jews in Babylon, tells them:—

“ Build ye houses and dwell in them, and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it ; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.”

And, again, we read in Jeremiah :—

“ And Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans, dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.”

And here we must bear in mind that the king of Babylon had carried on a successful war against Judah, had destroyed the temple, and carried away the king and thousands of his subjects captives to Babylon. And still the divine prophet recommends obedience and loyalty. It would be superfluous hence to draw the conclusions concerning the Jews, who live under a free and mild government. In a similar spirit is conceived what the Talmud says on this subject :—

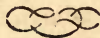
“ The laws of the land are valid, and must be obeyed.”

Again :—

“ The government on earth bears resemblance to the heavenly Government. Pray for the peace and prosperity of the government of the land ; for through its authority order is preserved.”

By these teachings the Jew was to be guided many hundred years ago. If we now take into consideration the immense change that has taken place in the political and intellectual world, if we bear in mind the influence that progress and civilisation, humanity and enlightenment have wrought upon the minds of the

civilised portion of mankind, if we consider that our notions of toleration, our views of the human society are much more comprehensive than they were in times gone by. Then every unprejudiced mind must come to the conclusion that the Jews have a right, and are entitled to a political and social equality with their Christian fellow-creatures. Since the Jew considers the Christian as his brother, the latter cannot, if he wishes to act in conformity with the doctrines of Christianity, refuse to hold out to the former the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood.



CHAPTER XI.

אָזָה פִּיהוּ מְלֵא וּמְרֻמוֹת וְתֵדָה תִּחְתֵּל לְשׁוֹנוֹ עֶמֶל וְאָוֶן :

“His mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.”—Psalm x. 7.

Among the evils of human society, not the least destructive of human happiness, not the least preventive of peace and prosperity among men, assuredly is deceit. When men speak with “a double heart,” when their words and speeches are so many textures of treachery and falsehood, when the utterances of their lips are not the genuine likenesses but forged counterfeits of their thoughts, they undermine the very foundations of faith and brotherhood, which condition their happy co-existence, and, by destroying the main securities of their intercourse, throw a dismal gloom over the days of their limited pilgrimage. He who is false to his neighbour, who either conceals the truth from him or tells him what is untrue, fails in the fulfilling of the first social virtue, and is an unfit member of that family the lineaments of which are discernible in his outward form.

However contemptible deceit is in any shape, it is yet more so when religion, the most sacred boon to man, is made the subject of it. And yet deceit in religion is so often practised among men. The facility with which it is exercised, and the considerable profit which it frequently promises and yields, induce many individuals to make a trade of that divine gift which is vouchsafed to weak man as a guide in his doubts and a solace in his

discomfitures. It is not an uncommon thing for men to put on a semblance of piety, wrapping themselves in a cloak of godliness, thus to impose upon the credulity of others, and making their respect for truly pious feelings the instrument of extorting support from them. It would seem that no man who lays claim to the reputation of being a moral and religious character, would countenance, much less encourage, the practice of such detestible impositions, but would deem it a solemn duty to unmask the hypocrite, and to divert the liberality of his neighbours from so unworthy a channel, in order to turn it to better advantage. In here alluding to the "Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews," I desire to be understood as guided only by a sense of the duty I have just named. I do not impugn the motives of the pious and kind-hearted Christians who support that society. I believe they are most sincere in their wish to do good to the Jew; but as firmly do I believe that their method is unwisely conceived, and that their operations afford an inducement to hypocrisy, and give encouragement to dishonesty and imposition to an extent, and of a kind at which the ingenious mind must shudder. In every community—be it Christian or Jewish—the worthless as well as the estimable are to be found; and let my Christian readers call to mind all the so-called Jewish converts of whom they have heard, and say to which of these classes can they be awarded—to the good or to the vile; to those who are influenced by a desire to promote their worldly advantage, or to those who, like Moses, would sacrifice the wealth and title of princes rather than assume a profession which the judgment never sanctioned, and which, consequently, the heart has not been able to sustain. O that the eyes of my Christian brethren would be opened, that they might see that, whilst they imagine they are doing a work of charity pleasing in

the sight of their God, they are, in fact, spending their money on persons to whom religion is nothing but a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence—who are Jews to-day, call themselves Christians to-morrow, in the prospect of certain advantages, and, for a few shillings more, would turn Mahommedans the day after! Such, I am convinced, is the character of the great majority of baptized Jews.

From what I have hitherto advanced it will appear but natural that I deem it a meritorious act to expose such impostors publicly, and to bring their deceitful conduct under the notice of those who have become, or are likely to become, the victims of their infamous trickeries. In general, it is uncharitable to disclose the stains in our neighbour's character to the view of society, but to be indulgent in such cases as those of whom I am speaking would be, to be uncharitable to charity itself, by allowing it to be abused; it would be robbing the needy and really deserving of the benevolent support of their friends, and squandering it upon contemptible creatures who are unworthy of any regard, much less of favours and patronage. These motives have ever induced me, whenever an opportunity offered, to unmask such deceivers, and to let my Christian neighbours see these individuals in their true light. In some instances I was fortunate enough, in spite of numerous and arduous difficulties which I had to encounter, to adduce the most unquestionable evidences of the imposition practised, and I will now proceed briefly to state one of these cases.

Some years ago an individual of the name of Herschel came to Bedford. He gave himself out as a Jew, and visited several Jewish houses, where he met with a friendly reception, and was made welcome.

As he pretended to live strictly according to the dictates of Judaism, and to abstain from all those kinds of food of which Jews are prohibited to partake, he was frequently invited to the table of one or other of the Jewish families at Bedford. For it is not easy for any single man of the Jewish persuasion to provide himself with such animal food as he may eat, in a small provincial town, where the number of Jews is but small, and where, generally, there are no Jewish butchers.

It will, perhaps, not be deemed out of place if I enter here into a consideration of the laws prohibiting to the Jew the enjoyment of certain kinds of food. At first sight it may appear whimsical, not to say ludicrous, that some animals should be judged clean and fit for the food of man, and others should be forbidden him and declared unclean, especially as it is difficult to see any reason in the distinguishing characteristics. But on a closer examination of the subject, we shall perceive that these prohibitions tended greatly to enhance the dignity of the Israelites as the spiritual leaders of mankind, for which office they were selected by the Lord. The opinions of the learned on this subject have been very divergent, since some have gone so far as to assign a particular reason for every class of animals which are forbidden to the Jew. I will confine myself to the following observation, which seems to me to account, in the most rational manner, for these apparently arbitrary laws.

In the chain of creation man stands between the Divinity and the lower animals. While his divine imperishable soul stamps him the progeny of the former, his mortal frame, together with all its wants and desires, proves his relationship with the latter.

Now, it is the destination and duty of man, while he stays in this life, as much as possible to triumph over his animal nature, and to progress towards the qualities of the Deity. This purification, as it were, of the human mind, can be effected only through the medium of a morally religious life, and, for that purpose, the revelation of the divine Will was vouchsafed to man, as a safe guide on this all-important journey. The laws regarding the food of man, which form a part of that revelation, ordain that great caution should be observed in the transition of animal life into the life of man, in order that the two might not be assimilated, and the latter degraded, by which the human soul would be degraded, depraved, and unfitted for its approach to the Divinity; because it would be filled with the grosser desires of the animals of the lower orders. In this sense, the prohibition of eating the creeping things is accompanied by the words, "Do not make yourselves abominable," which, when the language of the original is consulted, ought to be rendered, "Do not make *your souls* abominable." According to this the lowest orders of animals, the reptiles and insects, are altogether forbidden; of the fish only those are permitted that are provided with scales and fins, viz.: those which have the most complete animal organization. The same view is carried out among the quadrupeds, of which the Jews are only allowed to eat those that are cloven-footed and chew the cud, likewise those whose organization is the most complete. In addition to this it may be observed that the blood of animals, which is undoubtedly the most essential representative of animal life, is strictly forbidden to the Jews; so that all these prohibitions seem to agree in this one purport—not to admit of too great a transition of the vital substances of the lower animals into the system of man.

Besides this, the intention of the divine lawgiver in proclaiming these prohibitions may have been to accustom his people to the value of temperance. When man is introduced into this universe, where he finds a richly provided table of enjoyments spread before him, it is undoubtedly beneficial to the cultivation of his mind, if his desires are, to a certain degree, checked, if he is obliged to abstain from certain things, and he will thus learn to exercise one of the most difficult and, at the same time, important, duties of man — self-control. The rabbis have designated such laws, the reason of which is not quite evident to man, by the phrase of “royal mandates,” meaning commandments which are only given in order to try the obedience of faithful subjects to their monarch, and which must be observed without inquiring into the motives of the legislator.

After this short digression I will return to my narrative. In the manner described, the above-mentioned Herschell stopped for some time at Bedford, looked upon as a sincere religious Jew, and enjoying the hospitality of his brethren in faith resident in the town. This had been going on for several weeks, when he was one day observed going to Biddenham, (a small village about a mile and a half from Bedford,) with some books under his arm. All his acquaintances knew him to be a man of business, and it appeared rather strange that he should go about with books instead of attending to his trade. Some one, therefore, asked him what he did at Biddenham? He replied, that one day he had been at the house of the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe on business; the conversation happened to turn upon the French language, and when they perceived that he was a proficient in it, the ladies engaged him to give them lessons in French. As we had no proofs to the contrary, nor any reason to suspect Herschell's veracity, we

all believed his story. Simple-minded men are always inclined to believe what any body tells them when they have no misgivings about that person. In fact, those that are themselves truthful will never, of their own accord, imagine that what they hear is a falsehood; to them truth is the rule, falsehood the great exception—a rare irregularity for which they are not prepared. This circumstance did not alter our conduct towards the foreign sojourner—we continued assisting him in whatever manner we could, and did not cease inviting him to partake of our meals. It is altogether a frequent occurrence with a Jew to have a poor brother Jew, or even several, at his table. The liberality of the Jews in this respect seems to be an hereditary virtue, some precious relic from the hospitality of the East, preserved amidst the cold civilization of the western world. I recollect, from the time of my boyhood, that it was customary in my father's house, to have two or three poor Jews partaking of our meals every Saturday. And my father was not the only man in the town who did so, but every one of the Jews who was in somewhat easy circumstances, exercised this kind of liberality.

Not long afterwards, a report was spread about Bedford that a young Jew was shortly to be baptized at Biddenham church by the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe. Such ceremonies are not of frequent occurrence in that neighbourhood, and this extraordinary case created quite an excitement all around. I was very anxious to know who the Jew might be. After what I had heard of this Mr. Herschell, I began to entertain very great suspicions that he was the person. Yet I would not directly accuse him of such an intention, since I had no positive information about it, and if my surmise should be false, I might perhaps injure the young man's credit with my brethren without his having done anything

wrong. Men should always consider well before they proceed to accuse their brother publicly. "Thou shalt not raise a false report," says the commandment, and the love of our neighbour, which is so emphatically enjoined in the Mosaic law, teaches us first to inquire minutely before we maintain anything evil of a fellow-man. I therefore wished to convince myself about the matter previously to taking any steps. I quietly waited for an opportunity when I might be alone with him, and, having asked him one day to take a walk with me, I at once charged him with the crime he was contemplating. Let not my readers be surprised at my using what may be considered a harsh term; an act of bare-faced deceit wrapt in the cloak of religion, a tampering with what ought to be sacred, a levity about the holiest matters, does surely not deserve a more mitigated designation. He positively denied that he had any such intention, and said that he surely was not the man in question. When I still urged him upon the matter, he said, "I will tell you who it is; it is a young man of the name of Müller, who is coming to Bedford to-day. I am not surprised at your suspecting me to be the individual, since I am told that I have a great resemblance to him." This reply so far from removing the suspicion from my mind, rather confirmed me in it. I felt that he was prevaricating and I began to speak very seriously to him. I told him of the wickedness of the step which he was meditating; I represented to him that not only did the happiness or wretchedness of his own mind depend on it, but that a man who would publicly give a declaration of professing a religion without having convinced himself of its truth would incur the just contempt of all who knew him; I entreated him not to forsake frivolously the religion to which his forefathers had adhered for thousands of years, but to examine its tenets, and he would surely

find the light of truth streaming in upon all his doubts if he should entertain any; and I reminded him in the most energetic terms that the part he was acting now—giving himself out among the Jews as being a strict follower of Judaism, while in fact, he had already begun to court Christianity—that this part was degrading in any human being and could not fail to meet its deserved disgrace. To all this he protested his innocence, and I left him, still uncertain whether there was any truth in his assertions or whether it was all a texture of detestable falsehood. From that time, however, Herschell was no more seen to visit any Jewish house at Bedford, which circumstance naturally contributed to convince me that my accusation was well founded. Nevertheless, I would not mention the matter to any one until there should be no doubt about it. A few days afterwards, I met the young man again, and again introduced the subject. He said, “Well, I will not deny it any longer, I am the man who is to be baptized.” When I began to reproach him with his conduct, he made a defence in about the following manner: “Suppose they do baptize me, they pay me well for it, and what does it matter? I do not deny my God in heart. And what I do is not worse than what most persons do sometimes in their lives. Why, the most respectable tradesman occasionally tells an untruth in order to induce a customer to purchase an article, the most respectable innkeeper generally practises some means of deceiving. And why do they do it? Not because they are really bad men, but because they are desirous of making a profit. Now, I look upon this matter in the very same light—it is a lucrative thing; if Christians are such fools as to pay Jews for being baptized, let them do it. We all know that there is not a Jew baptized, either in this country or in any other, but he makes some profit out of it. Either

they are actually paid for it, or they are made missionaries, or they marry rich ladies, or they receive some other kind of support from the Christians. I assure you, I have no other motive, I only do it for gain's sake."

I saw with how contemptible a man I had to deal, yet I tried whether I could make an impression upon him by touching upon those feelings of which no man is altogether void. I reminded him of his parents. I represented to him how grieved they must feel when they should hear of his deed. They were no doubt sincere, religious Jews, and the act of apostacy which he was going to commit was in some measure equal to depriving them of their son, upon whom they could no more look with their wonted affection. Even if he wished to conceal it from them, he would not be able to do so, since these occurrences are always published in the papers. "I have taken care of that," said he, "my parents will never know of it; for I do not go by my real name. Here I have called myself Herschell, in some places I give my name as Jacob, in some as Abraham, and so on; in fact, wherever they baptize me, I have a different name, and I am careful that they shall never know my right name."

It may, perhaps, seem strange that a man should thus lay open his infamous tricks to one whom he must know to be his opponent; but he well knew that whatever I should say against him would go for nought with those that were anxious for his conversion, or would only heighten the interest they took in him, by proving to them how he was ill-treated by the Jews.

The above words went like daggers into my heart. To hear a man speak with such unpardonable levity on

the subject of religion, appeared to me like listening to blasphemy, and I turned away with disgust. For a moment I was quite bewildered; for, though I knew that such individuals are seldom men of any sound religious principles, yet I had never imagined that a man could fall so deeply as to be utterly regardless about what ought to be his first care, and literally look upon the articles of his faith as saleable goods. To my own sorrow, however, I must confess that what this contemptible man put forth as excuses, though it did by no means extenuate his wickedness, contained a great deal of truth with respect to the conduct of Christians in such matters. I have observed before, that, by the facility with which they give ear to the falsehood of such impostors, and by the readiness with which they hold out liberal support to those who declare themselves ready to adopt the tenets of Christianity, they encourage hypocrisy and deceit. In addition to this, there generally prevails a very strong, I might almost say, insurmountable prejudice against any Jew who may boldly step forward to open their eyes upon such an individual. The Jew is not believed in what he says: they imagine that the Jew, in exposing the character of an apostate brother, is merely influenced by motives of hatred and persecution against that individual. I can assure my Christian readers that sentiments of so base a nature are as far from a sincere pious Jew as they are from a sincere pious Christian. The Jew is merely anxious to uphold the dignity of his sacred faith, and to prove that those who abandon that faith, for the most part, do not trouble themselves about conviction, but have some worldly advantage in view. Yet, the reader will gather from the perusal of this incident what trouble I had to undergo to make my Christian friends perceive the imposition that was being practised upon them. Nay, some that were really

sincere and intimate friends, or liberal supporters, of me, turned against, and all but forbade me to enter their houses. So difficult is it sometimes to assert the truth.

After the conversation above described, excited as I was, I turned my steps to the house of a lady, who, I may say, stood foremost among my Christian friends. She had given me so many proofs of her kindness; she had always received me with so much affability that my sentiments towards her were almost like those of a child towards its mother; and to her accordingly I ran to relieve my heart of the weight that was pressing upon it, and at the same time to warn her against being imposed upon. I entered the house, and at once proceeded to relate the words which I had heard the man utter who was to be a convert to Christianity. I knew that my friend was an advocate of conversion, and was very liberal towards those whom she thought sincere in their profession of the faith of which she herself was a devout follower. I, therefore, considered it my duty to go to her and inform her about the man in whose behalf her charity was likely to be shortly taxed. I told her how unworthy the individual was of any support, and cautioned her that, if he should come to her for any subscription, not only to withhold her hand, but to turn him out of her house. But what was my surprise when the lady suddenly rose, laid down the book in which she had been reading when I entered, looked at me with an eye flashing with indignation, and said, in an angry tone, "I am in duty bound to believe the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe, and this worthy gentleman assures me that the person of whom you are speaking is a sincere Christian." I was thunder-struck—I could not utter a syllable. What, thought I to myself, one of my best and most liberal friends prejudiced against me, because I endeavour to put her

on her guard against a vile impostor ! But such is the blindness of zealotism, such is the deceit practised by these contemptible hypocrites, that the best persons are led to discard their friends if they speak against those whom they imagine to be sincere converts. For me this was a time of great trouble. Besides the grief which I felt in perceiving that my friends—persons to whom I was bound in gratitude, and whom I esteemed highly—were imposed upon, I had the mortification to find that my endeavours to shield them against this imposition were construed into acts resulting from hatred against the impostor, and, in addition to these, considered I was much aggrieved to think that a follower of my own religion should have sunk so deeply in the scale of morality. It was likewise very painful to me to observe with what coolness I was treated by my Christian friends, for some of whom I had a particular respect. Instead of receiving me with an air of friendship as they were wont to do, they looked upon me as a troublesome intruder when I entered their houses. My only consolation in these troubles was the confidence in the justness of my cause. “Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is ; which keepeth truth for ever ; which executeth judgment for the oppressed, which giveth food to the hungry.” In such thoughts as these I found the ease of mind which my situation was calculated to disturb. I did not feel angry with my Christian friends for their conduct towards me. I had had so many opportunities of perceiving their kind feelings towards me that the impression which they had made upon my heart could not so easily be removed ; besides, I knew that the unjust treatment which I now suffered at their hands, sprang up, in fact, from a good source—the love of religion—

whose channel had merely been misdirected. But, fervently did I pray to my God that, by His aid and mercy, the eyes of these blind might be opened, and I be justified in their sight. I will now lay before the reader a short account of the manner in which my full justification came about.

The day for baptizing the young Jew had been fixed for Sunday, the 29th of March, 1846. Bills had been posted about the town announcing the ceremony, and so far went the religious zeal that notes and messages were sent to all the Jews of Bedford, inviting them to attend. Now, it so happened that, on the Thursday previous to that Sunday, I had to call on a gentleman on some particular business. I did not find him at home but was told that, if I wished to see him, I was sure to meet him at a certain smoking room in the town. Thither I accordingly repaired; the gentleman I wished to see was not there, but finding, on entering, that the topic of conversation in the room was the baptism fixed for the following Sunday, I sat down to listen. Nearly all the persons present were strangers to me. I had not been there many minutes when one gentleman remarked, "I shall blame Mr. Grimshawe very much if he baptizes such a fellow;" another said, "I hope and trust Mr. Grimshawe will not be imposed upon by that fellow, for, by what I have seen of him at the house where he lodges, I am persuaded that he is a good-for-nothing rascal." Many similar expressions fell from the lips of several individuals in the room. When I went away I asked one of the gentlemen whom I knew, to accompany me for a few steps, which he willingly did. I then inquired who these gentlemen were that had expressed such unfavourable opinions regarding the young convert, and when I had received from him full information I went home. Early on Friday I called on

these gentlemen, one of whom, Mr. L—, seemed to be well acquainted with the character of that hypocrite. He told me things of him which I will refrain from repeating in order to spare myself the feeling of repugnance and my readers that of disgust. I asked him whether he would lend a hand in exposing this impostor, and found him willing to assist me, “mostly,” as he added, “out of respect for Mr. Grimshawe, for there is not a man who stands higher in my esteem than that rev. gentleman, and I should not like to see him imposed upon.” I left him with a feeling of great satisfaction, thanking Providence for the almost miraculous manner in which my exertions had begun to prosper; for it could not but appear providential to me that just a few days before that 29th of March, I should by accident be led into a house which I had seldom or never entered before, and that I should meet there the very person who could give me the information of which I was so much in need.

The next step I took in this matter was to repair again to the house of my esteemed friend—the lady I have mentioned before, who had not received my first information in the most gracious manner. For I was most anxious to eradicate from her mind the notion which she seemed to entertain of the motives actuating my endeavours, and being now enabled to confirm my statements by the testimony of one of her own co-religionists, I deemed it my duty to justify myself in her eyes. I was, however, much surprised when, after having told what I had to say, I found that her opinion on the affair in question had undergone a complete change, and that by the aid of Almighty God—I recognised the “Finger of the Lord” in this sudden alteration—she was ready to give credence to my words. The lady

apologised to me for the manner in which she had treated me at the last interview, and, to my astonishment, related to me how, since then, doubts had arisen in her mind regarding the sincerity of the new convert, that she had expressed the same in a note to the Rev. T. S. Grimshawe but to which the rev. gentleman had sent an indifferent reply.

Knowing, as I did, the excellency of Mr. Grimshawe—that he was a man who well deserved the veneration in which he was held by all who knew him, by his innumerable acts of philanthropy, by the dispensation of benevolent charity which he tendered to all those that were in need of either spiritual or temporal support, irrespective of their station, country, or religion—knowing all this I felt grieved that such a man should become the dupe of vile hypocrisy, and was anxious to save him that mortification. I therefore went again to the aforesaid Mr. L—, and begged of him to accompany me to Mr. Grimshawe. Urgent business unfortunately prevented him from doing so, but he wrote a note to the rev. gentleman, to the effect that he had heard of Mr. Grimshawe's intention to baptize a Jew of the name of Herschell, who, he had reason to believe, was anything but sincere in his professions, and was, in fact, practising a gross imposition on persons who were taking so great an interest in him. This note I sent by my servant, but it was too late; the impostor's deceit had been too efficient; in concert with another baptized Jew, a Mr. Müller, he had so ensnared the unsuspecting clergyman that all cautions were fruitless, that in spite of all these warnings Mr. G. baptized the Jew, and named him after his own name—Jacob Grimshawe Herschell. On the occasion a collection was made for the convert, and I can imagine with

what self-complacency the cunning couple must have divided their spoil, and laughed at the good heartedness of those upon whom they had practised so successfully.

Though the ceremony of baptism had now actually taken place, yet I did not give up my hopes of being able to justify my former assertions, and still publicly expressed my opinion that I considered the new convert to be a hypocrite and an impostor. I confess, it was a painful task for me to expose the impious conduct of a fellow man, who had once been my brother in faith, and who had sold his birthright for "a mess of pottage;" but, in the circumstances in which I was placed, it had become an incumbent duty for the honour of my religion, and for the justification of my words, and before these, all other considerations must necessarily vanish. Albeit, Mr. Grimshawe took offence at my conduct, and sent me a letter, intimating that, as I was still persisting in calling his convert an impostor, he deemed himself bound to bring this matter before a court of justice, which should decide if Herschell was guilty or innocent of the charges that I preferred against him; and, that if his innocence would be proved I must abide the consequences. The rev. gentleman did this because he considered his own reputation to be concerned in this affair. The name of "law" always had something terrifying for me, and without direct proofs in hand, I saw that I should not be able legally to prove that of which I was myself morally and perfectly convinced.

But it seemed as if Providence especially favoured my exertions, and by almost miraculous means, crowned them with success. For it so happened that, on the day following, I had some business at Olney, a town in Buckinghamshire. I drove thither and stopped at the

Bull Inn. As soon as I entered, I met there a Dr. A—, who at once said to me, Mr. Lissack you should have been here last week, we had some good fun with one of your brethren—a converted Jew. I very anxiously inquired in what that fun consisted, when the doctor told me that a Jew, *i. e.* a converted Jew, by the name of Müller, had come there the week before and offered some articles for sale. In doing so he declared that he did not follow this business for gain, but only for amusement, since he was well provided for, Baron Rothschild having settled a handsome sum on him for life. They asked him how that happened, and he told them that some years ago, when in America, he was taking a walk one day with one of the Rothschilds who stayed there at the time, when a rattlesnake jumped upon his companion, and he, by killing it, saved Rothschild's life. Dr. A—, who could not be imposed upon by so unlikely a story, said, "Then the Baron will surely be pleased to see you, we expect him here every minute, for he is hunting in this neighbourhood." When Müller heard this, he turned pale, packed up his goods as quickly as possible, and forthwith left the inn, pretending that he expected a parcel which he had by mistake ordered to be sent to the Bell Inn instead of the Bull. He had not gone many minutes when the high constable made his appearance, who came in search of Mr. Müller, having received a letter from the Preston police (Lancashire) which stated that a converted Jew, by name Francis Müller, was now in the neighbourhood of Olney, and he had with him a great number of testimonials from the clergy and gentry, which he had obtained previous to his committal to Wakefield gaol, for robbing an innkeeper of that town; and he (the constable,) would confer a great benefit on the public, if he could succeed in taking these testimonials from him. Some person who heard of this letter, had mean-

while met Müller in the streets and informed him of what was in store for him, and consequently he made his escape.

This "fun," as Dr. A— called it, was, to me, a god-send. I immediately went to the constable, and begged of him to let me see the said letter; and, having convinced myself that all was perfectly true, I asked the favour of having that letter lent to me for a few days, as it would be of great assistance to me in exposing the individual designated therein, at Bedford. The letter was given over to me, and, having returned home, I showed it to several of my Christian friends, who had been very liberal and zealous supporters of Herschell and Müller, and, to my great satisfaction, I found that they considered it a full justification of my former assertion. The affair spread about, and soon reached the ears of Mr. Grimshawe, to whom I wrote a note reminding him of the lines in which he threatened to bring me before a court of justice, and stating that I was now prepared to justify myself. After some days I paid the rev. gentleman a visit, and then learned that he had already sent away Herschell, together with another baptized Jew—a Mr. Sejanky. I told Mr. Grimshawe that my object, in the whole transaction, had not been to satisfy a feeling of hatred and persecution, but merely to protect my Christian neighbours against imposition, and I showed him the letter from the Preston police about Müller. The worthy clergyman was surprised, and appeared greatly affected; an ample inquiry into the character of these men was now made, when it was proved that Herschell and Müller were gross impostors; upon which Mr. Grimshawe inserted a caution against Herschell in "The Record." Now the Christian minister looked no more angry at the innocent Jew, held out no more threatenings against

him, but treated him with the greatest respect and kindness ever after. But the greatest satisfaction which I derived from this occurrence was in the thought that I stood fully justified in the eyes of my Christian friends, and that it was evident that a love of truth, and not a feeling of persecution had actuated my proceedings.

I will now relate an incident from the life of one whose name often appears in the columns of the "Jewish Intelligencer," as a missionary to the Jews in the Holy Land. Not many years ago Mr. Sejanky came to Bedford in the character of a hawker, and in the dress of a Jerusalem Jew—of which city he represented himself to be, viz. : he wore a blue cloak, a red cap with a large blue tassel, carried a large red umbrella in his hand, and had a small beard. We, the Jews of Bedford, evinced for him all that interest which the Jews generally feel for those of their brethren who come from the country of their glory ; and, as he pretended to be a particularly strict follower of the Jewish religion, attending conscientiously to all its most minute ceremonies, we made him welcome in our houses, and invited him to our tables. During the several weeks which he stayed at Bedford and its immediate vicinity, he every evening took his meal with some one of the Jews of this town, after having returned from the surrounding villages. He continued performing before our eyes the ceremonies of the Jewish religion in the most rigorously orthodox manner, and affected devotion and piety to such an extent as even frequently to annoy us, *e. g.* he would put his hands before his eyes when a lady entered the room, and conducted himself in a similar way in many other particulars. However, we had no doubt in the sincerity of the man, and, therefore, put up with these things, still

continuing to give him board gratis, as long as he stayed with us.

A few weeks after he had left us, I had some business at a village called C—, a few miles from Bedford. I called at an inn where the landlady, who knew me to be a Jew, said, in the course of conversation, "I want to ask you a question, sir: Is there any difference between a Jerusalem Jew and an English Jew?" "Not that I know of," said I, "a Jew is a Jew wherever he may come from; but allow me to inquire what makes you ask that question?" "Why," said the lady, "within the last few weeks we had a gentleman stopping here occasionally, very curiously dressed in a blue cloak, and wearing a red cap. He said he was a Jerusalem Jew; but, in the evening, he used to go to the butcher to buy some meat for his supper, and one evening he brought a pork chop. Now, I know the Jews here do not eat any meat from Christian butchers, and, especially, they never eat pork, and I thought I would ask you whether a Jerusalem Jew may eat that meat?" I was very much struck at what I heard, and, on the truth of which, the respectability of the person left not the shadow of a doubt. When I came home, I related to my Jewish friends in what manner we had been imposed upon, but they could hardly believe there could have been such deceit and falsehood in the man—so well had he contrived to play his part.

For several years we did not see anything of the man but I heard that he had been baptized shortly after he left Bedford. About the time when the convert Herschell practised his imposition upon the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe, this man again made his appearance in the house of a Jew at Bedford and I happened to be present. I hardly knew him again—such a metamorphosis

had taken place in his appearance. His wide blue cloak had been changed into a fine *black coat* of English cut, his red cap into a *hat*, and his large umbrella, which he used to carry about him as a constant companion, had now given place to a *handsome cane* with a gilt top—altogether he unmistakably looked the **CLERGYMAN**. He anxiously inquired about the man who had hypocritically imposed upon the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe, and said to me, that I had better drop the matter, “because,” he added, “though you may be correct in what you assert, yet, if you, as a Jew, speak against a converted Jew, you will not be credited, and only make yourself enemies among your Christian neighbours, which may injure you considerably.” I felt no inclination to argue the point with such a man; but I thought this a fit opportunity to prove before my Jewish neighbours that I had not unjustly taxed him of hypocrisy; I asked him, therefore, whether he, being a learned man, would not think it sinful for a Jew, under any circumstances to eat meat which had not been killed in the manner prescribed by the Jewish religion, and whether a Jew, in any situation, could be justified in eating pork. Not having any idea to what I was alluding, he at once answered that he was much surprised how I could put such a question, since I had only to refer to the Bible to find a distinct answer to my interrogations. “I know perfectly well,” said I, “what the Bible tells me about it, but I should like to hear your opinion.” “Well,” replied he, “I will tell you, then, that, as long as a Jew lives according to the dictates of his religion, he is strictly forbidden to eat any such meat, especially pork.” “Does that prohibition likewise extend to the Jews of Jerusalem?” I inquired then. Upon which he said, “You must have known before this, that all the Jews, in whatever part or country they live, have but one and the same law.”

“What a thorough hypocrite you are!” I then said to him; “Why, you did eat meat from a Christian butcher, and even *pork*, at C—, at a time when you did at least *pretend* strictly to act according to the precepts of Judaism!” At first he attempted to deny the fact, but when I mentioned the parties by whom I had been informed, he said, “I was then thinking about conversion to Christianity.” “Christianity!” exclaimed I, “the very name of Christianity is disgraced when uttered by your lips. Christianity does not teach to act the hypocrite and the deceiver. Can there be anything more mean and more disgraceful than your conduct at that time? You knew to what expense the Jews of Bedford had to go in order to obtain the meat killed in the prescribed manner, and yet you came to cheat these families—some of them anything but wealthy—out of their meals, which they readily gave up to you, believing you to be sincere in your professions.” With such and similar reproaches I upbraided him, but the only answer I could obtain was, that he was then thinking of becoming a Christian; so that I at last left him in disgust.

I have now placed before the reader, the characters of two individuals who have become converts to the Christian religion, and I will leave it to him to judge whether such conduct, on the part of either of them, does much credit to the religion which they profess. But I may be told that I would make the exception the rule, and that I am wrong in drawing general conclusions from particular cases. I can assure my Christian friends it is not so; by far the greater part of all the converts that are made in England, bear a character similar to that which I have described. And in order to account for this fact, and to show that it is not likely it should be otherwise, I will lay before them,

in the form of a dialogue between a Jew and a Christian, a series of arguments, tending to prove that the motives of conversion are in most cases, somewhat unworthy of the solemn act, and that as long as the trade in religions is held out to be a lucrative one, mean individuals will always be found to take advantages of the weakness of the multitude.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A CHRISTIAN AND
A JEW.

Christian.—I have frequently heard you as well as others of your co-religionists express a decided aversion to converted Jews. Now, although I can, in some measure, account for that feeling, still I should like to know by what reasons and arguments you support it.

Jew.—I must confess that I would rather avoid any discussion on the subject.

Chr.—Why?

Jew.—I am afraid of being carried away by the heat of argument, and thus perhaps giving utterance to expressions which you might consider disrespectful and which I should regret afterwards.

Chr.—If that be your only reason, I assure you, I will make every allowance for any hasty expression uttered in the warmth of debate.

Jew.—Besides, you might think me actuated by spite against baptized Jews. It is so difficult for persons arguing from two different points of view, to enter into each other's sentiments.

Chr.—As to spite, you need not fear my attributing to you any such motive. And it is exactly by reasoning, that you will convince me that your aversion to converted Israelites cannot be a natural effect of mere rancour or malice, but is a dislike, founded on sound reasons. Your remark about the difficulty of entering into each others opinions is perfectly correct, but I promise to listen to your observations with all the coolness and with all the impartiality of an uninterested party.

Jew.—Well, as you seem so very anxious to discuss the subject, I trust I shall convince you, in the course of our conversation, that the term “baptized,” is much more applicable to the case than “converted;” and the aversion I and others with me entertain against the individuals in question is based upon strictly moral and religious considerations.

Chr.—What makes me particularly desirous of discussing the question with you is on account different rumours about converted Jews having lately reached me.

Jew.—Can you tell me, sir, how many of the baptized Jews of whom you have heard, or with whom you have become acquainted, are Englishmen?

Chr.—I am sorry I cannot answer that question, although I am a subscriber to the society for converting the Jews to Christianity.

Jew.—I venture to say, that if you were to look at the list, among those that have been baptized since the establishment of the society, there are not a dozen, no not even half a dozen of English Jews.

Chr.—What is your purpose in drawing a distinction between English and foreign Jews?

Jew.—My purpose is to show that the individuals whose assuming the cover of Christianity you promote, are actuated in their profession of change from interested motives, from shere motives of trade.

Chr.—Motives of trade! How can you justify that expression?

Jew.—I am not at all surprised that you should find this rather a strong term, but it is borne out by the facts of the case. These men try to become missionaries or clergymen, and situations, which they generally succeed in obtaining, (if they are but somewhat competent,) are very lucrative, considering the low circumstances in which those men were before their so-called conversion.

Chr.—But might not English Jews become missionaries or clergymen?

Jew.—No, sir, and for this reason. Because English Jews and especially the lower classes of them, have not that knowledge of Hebrew and biblical literature which foreign Jews, for the most part possess.

Chr.—Then you mean to say that the foreign Jews allow themselves to be converted from pecuniary and worldly consideration?

Jew.—Yes, sir, and the English Jew too.

Chr.—And what motive can the latter have, if he is not fit for a missionary or a clergyman?

Jew.—Pardon me for replying to your question by one of mine: has there never an English baptized Jew called on you with goods for sale?

Chr.—Oh yes, there was one here a short time ago.

Jew.—What induced him to call upon you?

Chr.—He brought a recommendation from a friend of mine, requesting me to buy some articles of him, as he was a converted Jew.

Jew.—Now, sir, we shall come a little nearer to the point. You say he is a converted Jew, and deserves your patronage.

Chr.—There can certainly be no harm in helping him on a little.

Jew.—Now let us suppose a case. Suppose you knew me well, and wishing to be of service to me, you recommended me as a teacher to some persons about ten miles from this place. I express my thanks to you for

your kind recommendation, but I add the request that you will have the goodness to pay my travelling expenses and compensate me for the loss of time I shall have to incur by going there. What would you say to such a demand?

Chr.—I should consider it very impudent and foolish.

Jew.—And is there not a similarity between this case and that of the converted Jew who claims your patronage on account of his conversion.

Chr.—Perhaps you will explain yourself a little more distinctly.

Jew.—I will. A Jew comes to one of your co-religionists, and expresses to him a most anxious desire for the salvation of his (the Jew's) soul. Pretending to have some obscure, and yet undefined notion that Christianity would afford him that spiritual peace which he has in vain sought in Judaism, he assents to be instructed in the dogmas of your religion. He raises an objection now and then, just to make his Christian teacher believe in his sincerity. Now and then he will affect a want of comprehension, and trouble his instructor for a little more light, while in truth he has known the principal doctrines and articles of faith long before. At last his scrupulous conscience is satisfied, and he is baptized. His next step is to find out the benevolent of his new co-religionists. He trusts they will buy something of him, considering that he is a converted Jew; and, in nine cases out of ten, he asks for his goods double the price which he would obtain if he were not baptized.

Chr.—I see now at what you are driving.

Jew.—Now that man having obtained, as he says, through the kindness and Christian love of one of your ministers, the salvation of his soul, than which there can be nothing more desirable, has the front to demand payment for that salvation in saying, you must buy.

of me, because I have become a convert to Christianity. I ask you, sir, what honest and moral man would make his religion a vehicle for worldly profit?

Chr.—What you say is certainly true. But what are poor converted Jews to do, shunned and persecuted as they are by their Jewish brethren?

Jew.—Persecuted by their Jewish brethren!—I am well aware that this is a common falsehood with them calculated to excite the commiseration of the benevolent. A persecuted person is sure to meet with active sympathy from Englishmen; these baptized gentlemen know this, and turn it to account. But more foul calumny than this imaginary persecution never passed a man's lips, as I shall presently show you.

Chr.—As to downright, positive persecution, that would not pass in our age, and least of all, in this country. But there is, no doubt, a sort of negative persecution, if I may call it so, on the part of the Jews by their avoiding every intercourse with a converted brother, by abstaining from trading with him, or encouraging him in his business.

Jew.—Now suppose a Protestant tradesman were to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, would strict Church of England men, who were in the habit of dealing with him, continue to do so? I doubt it very much; that tradesman would certainly be, in some measure, a persecuted man. If that man were therefore to apply to Roman Catholics for their patronage on the plea that his Protestant customers had withdrawn theirs, I think such application would be justifiable.

Chr.—Well, this is exactly the case with converted Jews.

Jew.—I beg your pardon, sir, I am sorry to perceive that you too are affected by that chloroform which your baptized friends have administered to you, in

order to perform a safe operation upon your pockets. Excuse this comparison.

Chr.—Never mind! Go on, sir.

Jew.—They have no right to talk about persecution from the Jews, because if you look to the manner in which those persons obtain their livelihood in the country, you will find that Jews were not at all dealing with them before their “conversion” as you call it; you will find that all of them, without exception, owed the living they made to Christian customers in the provinces.

Chr.—If that be the case it is certainly absurd to talk about persecution.

Jew.—Now, sir, when some years ago I brought you a recommendation from one of your friends, stating that you would oblige him by introducing me among your friends, did I state I was a converted Jew?

Chr.—I wish you could have done so.

Jew.—May the light of the sun cease to shine upon me whenever I should use my religion as a means for worldly prosperity!—But to return to our point. Did my recommendation to you state anything else but that I had been known to your friend many years and that I was deserving of encouragement? And did you not do your utmost to act upon that recommendation without troubling yourself about my being converted or not converted?

Chr.—I certainly did not think it necessary to inquire about that point. I considered it my duty to assist you as an honest and industrious man, and I shall always be glad to assist any one who has these qualities.

Jew.—Why then should the baptized Jew be so very anxious to be recommended to you as a converted Jew? If he is really deserving of encouragement because he is sober, industrious, and honest, why does he never

fail to show his certificate of baptism, as a man would show a letter of credit?

Chr.—There is no denying that, in doing this, prospects of profit enter into his calculation.

Jew.—I assure you, sir, from the manifold experience I have had on the subject, it is all calculation of profit. But the fault lies, in a great measure, with the Christian.

Chr.—How is that?

Jew.—Because many of your co-religionists allow themselves to be imposed upon by every poor wretch who, finding his trade or business alone insufficient to obtain a livelihood, forthwith betakes himself to religion, to advance his interests. He is making literally a business of it. He knows the weakness of many benevolent Christians, that, as soon as they perceive in a Jew the slightest inclination to abjure his religion, by his asking a few questions about salvation, they will not further trouble themselves about his character, but have him at once taken care of, instructed, and baptized. They may think, perhaps, from a laudable confidence in the power and influence of their religion, that the conversion will, in all probability, wipe off the stains that might be attached to his character. Collections are made for the neophyte, which invariably enhance and strengthen his belief and faith in the superiority of Christianity over Judaism. Your Christian friends, too scrupulous to give him a testimonial as an honest man, because they do not know him sufficiently for that, furnish him, nevertheless, with a certificate of baptism. And, to do the convert justice, this is all he wants. What does he care about honesty and integrity! That certificate has a truly magic power—it combines the qualities of a passport, a letter of credit, and a check from the Bank of England.

Chr.—Great importance as I attach to conversion, I

think there ought certainly to be more inquiry into the moral character of such men. Besides, clergymen ought to be able to distinguish between hypocrisy and sincerity.

Jew.—I am happy to say, not all ministers are so credulous. As an instance, I may tell you that, some time back, a Jew presented himself to a rev. gentleman of this town, expressing a wish to be baptized, and adding that he should also like to have a certificate of his baptism. The rev. gentleman at once saw through that man's designs, and dismissed him. Not so in other cases I have mentioned, where the party did not hesitate to baptize him. Converted the man certainly was not; for he was found out to be *afterwards* what he had been *before*—an impostor.

Chr.—I am sorry this is but too true.

Jew.—I am glad to perceive that your confidence in the sincerity of the baptized Jews is not unbounded, and I hope, before we have finished, to convert you, not indeed from your religion—God forbid that I should ever attempt such a thing—Judaism does not claim exclusiveness with respect to salvation, but tells us that the pious of the non-Jewish nations will participate in the blessings of the future world. But I hope to convert you from your opinion that your so-called conversion is a meritorious work.

Chr.—Well, your argument seems to me to be this: If the baptized Jew sincerely believes, as he professes, that salvation is only to be obtained through Christ, he should rather endure hardships than go about and claim support on account of his conversion; that, if he be a sober, honest, and industrious man, he will be sure to get on in the world without using his religion as a means to promote his worldly interests. And then you want to show that, for a man to say he is persecuted by the Jews, because they do not support him in his trade or

profession after his "conversion," is an absurdity, since he was not supported by them before.

Jew.—Exactly so. Take, for instance, myself. You know, sir, the circumstances I was in when I first came to this country; you know what struggles I had to undergo, but I declare to you that I never had a sixpence from a Jew. My business has always been with Christians; but, would I, on that account, be justified in speaking about persecution from my Jewish brethren? Certainly not; no more are your converts in representing themselves as persecuted persons.

Chr.—I am aware that there are a great number of Jews living in the provincial towns, whose dealings are only with Christians.

Jew.—Now, sir, to open your eyes a little more on this subject, do you remember the two baptized Jews who came to this town a few months ago?

Chr.—I only remember having seen one.

Jew.—They were two partners, and you will see directly how it was that you only saw one. Mark what a disgraceful mockery the pretended Christianity of those men is. One of them professed dissent, and the other the religion of the Church of England. Now, if you go all over the town, you will find—this is a most remarkable and, at the same time, a most suspicious fact—that these baptized Jews did not make a single mistake in their calls, but that, most miraculously, the dissenter happened only to call on dissenters, and the Church-of-England man on persons of the Church of England only.

Chr.—It is quite true, I only saw Mr. D—, who said he was a member of our church.

Jew.—Of course, and the dissenters only saw Mr. S—, who pretends to be a dissenter. Well, sir, is this not a positive proof that these men only make a trade of their religion? Ought such persons not to be discountenanced

by Christians as well as by Jews? Can there be a greater desecration of the sacred name of religion than to use it for *a low trick to do business*?

Chr.—Now this is really a disgrace and ought not to be suffered.

Jew.—But you not only suffer it, you even encourage it. I repeat what I have said before, it is more the Christian's fault than any one else's. To prove to you more clearly, if that were needed, the truth of what I stated, I will mention to you the case of that baptized Jew at Northampton, which happened but a short time ago.

Chr.—By the bye, what was that case? I intended to ask you about it several times.

Jew.—I will tell you the whole disgraceful affair. You remember some time ago when the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe was imposed upon by that infamous impostor against whom I had cautioned him in vain.

Chr.—I remember it perfectly well. There were two of them. Were there not?

Jew.—Yes, sir, the second, who had already been baptized and carried most excellent testimonials about with him, introduced his companion to Mr. Grimshawe. I had a great deal of trouble to convince Mr. Grimshawe that he had to deal with rogues, but, at last, I succeeded; whereupon they parted, one went one way and the other another, and then the rev. gentleman inserted a caution against the two fellows in one of the public papers, (the "Record").

Chr.—I wish to know particularly how you exposed the one at Northampton, who had such good testimonials from the clergy.

Jew.—Well, sir, do you know Mr. W—, at Northampton.

Chr.—Very well, indeed. He is a most gentlemanly man.

Jew.—I called on him with some recommendations,

and asked him whether he would be good enough to recommend me to a few of his friends. He kindly promised he would do his best for me to procure me some pupils. When I was about taking my leave of him he said: "By the bye, do you know the converted Jew, Müller. [That is the one who introduced the other fellow to Mr. Grimshawe.] I replied that I was sorry to say, I did know him. "Sorry!" he said. I then told him what had happened between Mr. Grimshawe and myself, and, at the same time, stated my opinion that Müller was an impostor, when Mr. W— replied: "Sir, it is very unjust of you to speak in such strong terms against a man whom I know to be a sincere Christian. If that man deceives me, I would no more place confidence in my own brother." I observed that Mr. W— had taken great offence at my expression, and that, like most of my Christian friends, he ascribed it to a feeling of spite or ill will. I departed, and the following week when I again called on Mr. W—, I showed him the letter from the Preston police, to the effect that Müller had been in Wakefield prison for a robbery committed after his "conversion." Mr. W—, after having perused the letter, said: "It is certainly the same name, but I can never believe that it is the same man," and he again expressed the good opinion he entertained of his *protégé*. Some months after it so happened that Müller came to Northampton the same day on which I professionally visit that town. Mr. W—, hearing that I was in the town, sent for me to ask whether I would prove to Müller's face what I had said about him. I at once consented, and, on being introduced to each other, I asked Müller what had become of Herschell, that being the man whom Müller introduced to Mr. Grimshawe, to be baptized. Müller, however, strongly denied having any knowledge of that person, and in the same man-

ner met my question, how long he had left Wakefield gaol? He most emphatically denied the charge, asserting that he had never been before a magistrate in his life. Indignant at such barefaced effrontery, I replied that I would have him before the magistrate who would soon find out who he was. Müller, perceiving my determination, hesitatingly told his benefactor that he had once stopped at an inn in Wakefield, where some person must have put a pair of silver sugar tongs in his (Müller's) pocket. The consequence was that he was taken up, and sentenced to three month's imprisonment.

Chr.—And what did Mr. W— say to that?

Jew.—It is impossible for me to describe his surprise.

Chr.—What a hardened villain that man must have been to make such false statements!

Jew.—Dare you call a converted Jew a *villain*?

Chr.—Really, I must confess, I never dreamed of such imposition.

Jew.—No more did Mr. W—. But you remember, sir, in a previous conversation we had together, you said it was impossible there should be men so lost to every feeling of reverence for holy things, that they will, for mere temporal advantage, allow themselves to be baptized twice.

Chr.—I still hope there are no instances of that kind.

Jew.—I wish I could entertain the same hope, but if you ask Mr. W—, he will tell you there are such. You recollect when I asked Müller about Herschell, he denied being at all acquainted with him. So I proposed to Mr. W—, to drive over with Müller and myself to the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe, there to test the truth of Müller's statement. Müller, hearing that, made a second confession, not only of his knowing Herschell, but that the latter, after his baptism by the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe, had told him, he had been already baptized

at Yarmouth, and that the Yarmouth baptism had fetched him a little more money than the Biddenham one.

Chr.—Shameful! shameful! and pray, what did Mr. W—, say to that?

Jew.—He at once told Müller to leave the house.

Chr.—Was that all?

Jew.—That was all. Mr. W— was much grieved; but I am sorry to perceive there is a great inclination among many of your zealous conversionists to hush up such disagreeable occurrences. They fear that these facts becoming public, may bring conversion into an evil odour. And instead of having such villains punished by all the rigour of the law, they allow them to slip away.

Chr.—I do not hesitate one moment to say that that man ought to be most severely punished.

Jew.—Do not say that man, but rather those men, for as I told you before; they are all alike.

Chr.—No, no! be charitable! I have no doubt there are many who are sincere.

Jew.—Well sir, if you will permit me, I will relate to you another instance that happened in the same place which I mentioned before.

Chr.—Do you mean at Mr. W—'s?

Jew.—Exactly so. I think you know the person yourself, of whom I am going to speak. I remember having heard you speak of him as a faithful missionary at Berlin.

Chr.—You do not mean Mr. B—?

Jew.—That is the very man.

Chr.—I am sure you cannot say anything against him, I have known him for many years.

Jew.—I shall only mention facts, and then you shall judge yourself.

Chr.—You really excite my curiosity to a high degree.

Jew.—You will at least see that Mr. B— is not over anxious to enter into conversation with Jews with a view of making them follow his example.

Chr.—Well, let me hear the facts, if you please.

Jew.—The facts are these: a few months after I had exposed Müller before Mr. W—, Mr. B— visited Northampton. Some of my Christian friends, knowing that I visited that town occasionally, asked me to do them the favour to see Mr. B—. “Oh, he is such a dear creature,” one of my friends said, “I am sure you will be pleased with him.” I told my friends that, if I should meet him I would speak to him, especially as it was after the revolution at Berlin, about which I should like to hear some particulars. Accordingly, when I came to Northampton, I went to the library with the expectation of meeting him there. After sitting there for about half an hour, in came Mr. A—, with another gentleman. Mr. A—, who knows me, came up to me, while his companion, (Mr. B—,) looked at one of my cards which hung in the library, and was just going to make some remark about it, when, Mr. A— observing this, gave him a hint that I was sitting there. No sooner had Mr. B— noticed it than he gave me a side glance, and said to Mr. A—, “all right, come on,” and in one instant he was out of the room.

Chr.—And you never spoke to him at all? Did he not come back?

Jew.—He did not return, but I saw him afterwards at Bedford; when I came home, I related the incident to my friends, who could scarcely believe it.

Chr.—Well, what did they say to it?

Jew.—What could they say? They thought of some petty excuses for him, at which I could not help laughing. But they invited him to Bedford, and a friend called with him at my house.

Chr.—Now this shews you that leaving the library at Northampton so suddenly was not in consequence of your being there, and was not occasioned by a disinclination on Mr. B—'s part to enter into a conversation with you.

Jew.—You will excuse me, if I think you are not justified in drawing that inference. Mr. B— called on me, not because it was his wish to do so, but because he could not well avoid doing so. He came to me at the request of his supporters, who subscribe largely to keep him.

Chr.—No, sir, I cannot allow this.

Jew.—I beg to remind you of your promise to overlook any harsh expressions that I might give utterance to in the course of our conversation.

Chr.—Well, well, go on, sir.

Jew.—Mr. B—'s friends being surprised at his not speaking to me in the Northampton library, proposed to call on me. And could he refuse? Would they not have suspected his sincerity, and doubted his zeal for the Christian cause, if he had done so? He could not help paying me a visit, much against his will as it was.

Chr.—You are not sure that his visit was not voluntary. And what did he say when he called on you?

Jew.—I was not at home at the time.

Chr.—Then you did not see him any more?

Jew.—Oh yes, I did. I was not afraid of him, if he was of me. When I came home, and heard that a friend had called on me with Mr. B—, I went to the house where he was staying.

Chr.—And did you see him?

Jew.—I did, sir. As soon as I had entered the room, and had been introduced to him, he said to me, in a most solemn and hypocritical tone: "I believe I had the pleasure of seeing you at Northampton?" "I do

not believe," said I, "you had any pleasure at all at seeing me, or else you would not have run out of the room so precipitately when you heard that I was there." "Why," said he, "I was not introduced to you." "Not introduced to me!" replied I, "do you not say that, although you are baptized, you still continue to be a Jew? "And do we not say, all Jews are brethren? There can be no need of an introduction, if a brother wishes to speak to a brother." "Besides," said he, seeing that his first excuse would be insufficient, "there were some ladies outside the library whom I would not keep waiting."

Chr.—Had you no further conversation with him?

Jew.—No, sir, I would not stay any longer. I only went there to convince his friends of the correctness of my statements.

Chr.—And what did his friend remark upon it?

Jew.—Excuse me for observing that the supporters of the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, among whom you are one, all alike shut their eyes to the very facts, and then say, they do not see. These baptized Jews know that very well, and turn it to account. Now, sir, did there never any suspicion enter your mind, when you read in the "Jewish Intelligence," letters written by these baptized Jews from all parts of the world, stating that they had a conversation with A. in B., or that they had baptized Rabbi C. in D. Why do they not state the names and places in full?

Chr.—I dare say many of those converts in foreign parts try to keep their conversion, for fear of giving offence to their friends and relations.

Jew.—No, sir, because your faithful and veracious missionaries know full well, that you do not go to B. or D., to enquire who A. and Rabbi C. are. Besides, you surprise me, sir, with your remark. If those con-

verts in foreign parts dare not openly confess their new religion in the face of their friends, then their faith in it cannot be very strong. But how is it that sometimes the full name and address does appear? Does this not plainly show, that those names with initials are merely fictitious.

Chr.—Although you have not proved those names to be fictitious, still I confess it would be preferable to have the names in full, in order to avoid suspicion.

Jew.—Depend upon it, sir, those names have no more real existence, than the feelings and opinions which those missionaries profess to entertain. If you wish to be undeceived on these points, you should read the “Jewish Chronicle” occasionally. Do you remember some time ago, I showed you a pamphlet, entitled “The Faithful Missionary?”

Chr.—I remember it perfectly well.

Jew.—Now, would you have believed that a baptized Jew would turn round upon you in such a manner?

Chr.—I was indeed very much surprised at it.

Jew.—I was not at all surprised; for, look here, that man has been a missionary for many years, and is now getting old. He knows that his days are numbered and he cannot obtain much more support from the Society. Having remained a Jew in his heart all along, while his lips professed Christianity, he now, as if to atone for his apostacy, turns his back upon his benefactors.

Chr.—How was that pamphlet received by the Jews?

Jew.—It was condemned by every sincere Jew when we saw what a deal of scandal it contained.

Chr.—Well, I am very glad to hear that.

Jew.—You may rely on it, that the Jew who remains true to the faith of his fathers is much more your friend than he who departs from it under the suspicious cir-

cumstances I have mentioned. The man who, by changing his religion, improves his position in the world, cannot escape the suspicion that his apostacy has been brought about by interested motives, and, that there is much ground for such imputation, I think I have sufficiently proved to you.



CONCLUSION.

In laying the above facts and reflections before the public, it was my intention principally to impress upon the mind of the reader two important truths: *First*, that the happiness of man and his advancement in society depend, in a very great measure, on himself, on the energy with which he approaches, and on the perseverance with which he pursues, his undertakings; *Secondly*, that the Jewish religion, so far from being anti-social or obstructive to man's progress in life, is, by its tenets and usages, peculiarly calculated to imbue the mind of its faithful followers with those principles which tend to the well-being of society in general, and of the individual in particular.

Man is placed upon earth as a free agent, with a certain amount of talents and capabilities, and he is born under given circumstances, more or less advantageous. It is his task to apply these talents and capabilities so as to improve his circumstances in every respect, and to raise them to any possible degree. Life presents, in its labyrinthic paths, a multiplicity of obstructions and impediments to check the too rapid advance of man. Against these man has to struggle, these he has to overcome, and it is not without laborious exertions, not without many failures and disappointments, that man can climb the steep height of fortune. Many, indeed, are they who are so bewildered by the sight of the gigantic difficulties which beset their path, that they despair altogether of reaching a certain height, but content themselves with re-

maining in the lower regions, enviously looking at the pinnacle at which some of their fellow-travellers have arrived, instead of toiling on in the unpromising task where success is apparently rare, and failures plentiful. But those who have courage enough to face those difficulties boldly, to go to war with them, and not to despair after a few defeats, will ultimately see their labours crowned with success, and prove, by their example, that for him who earnestly perseveres, nothing within the limits of reason, is impossible. The following forms another portion of Zollikofer's essay on "The Dignity of Man :"—

" Beautiful is the sun, beautiful the moon, beautiful are the stars, beautiful the vegetation and plants that adorn the surface of our earth—every one perfect in its kind, and incapable of improvement—but that which they are they remain—their form, their beauty, their movements, their properties are, and continue ever the same. They are precisely that which they are destined and limited to be. Not so with man. Never does he exist precisely in this manner (*was er seyn soll und kann*). No limits of space and time confine his progress utterly and for ever. One step towards perfection conducts him to another, and never stands he so high that he may not mount still higher. His abilities develop themselves, his powers expand conformably to the method in which he applies and exercises them ; and his intellectual horizon and sphere of activity extend with the degree to which his abilities expand and his powers increase. When has he learnt so much that he can learn no more ? or when are his acquirements so universal that there is no place for more ? When are his advances in the study of virtue and wisdom so eminent that nothing further is attainable ? When is he so conspicuous, both in the power and the will to do good, that there is nothing more which power and benevolence united may achieve ? And when do his inclination and his efforts cease ? Who shall name the limits of the human mind in all these relations, such as he himself,

by his own capacity and endowments, and, by the favour of his Creator, durst not hope to advance beyond?"

Man's circumstances on earth, before his own exertions have shaped them into any peculiar form, are much like a rough block of wood in the hands of a workman. If that workman take up the wood, look at it, and, after a few abortive attempts to give it some shape, throw it down again, saying: "it is too rough, I cannot make any thing of it:" that piece of wood will be unperfected, and, through the workman's fault, never be anything but a rough piece of wood. But if the man do not give up the work as impossible, but try experiments upon experiments, he will surely at last find the means to remove that discouraging roughness, and may, in the end, be able to convert it into a form which shall contribute to the ornament and utility of life.

The same difference that exists in the conduct of these two workmen, we find among the numerous members of the human family. We meet with many a one who says: "I am a poor man, I have no means to establish a business, I have no friends, I have no connexion. What use would it be for me to work, be it ever so hard? I shall never be able to obtain a respectable livelihood." And with such words he resigns all his claims to an honourable position in society, and suffers poverty and want while he lives in comparative idleness. Some even are found who endeavour to persuade themselves that, since it appears so difficult to support life by honest straightforward dealings, they may be excused for using dishonest means. The ingenuity of man is greatest when he labours to defend before the tribunal of his conscience, any act that flatters his egotism, or favours his natural inclination to idleness; his ingenuity, I say, is then greatest, but

it teems with errors and abounds in sophistical reasonings. I have taken several opportunities in the course of this work to show that dishonesty is a suicidal policy, and that, independently of its being an infringement upon divine as well as human laws—the former established by an unerring wisdom, the latter dictated by necessity—it mostly fails to produce a lasting advantage to him who is vile enough to practise it.

The only real infallible way to wealth, or at least to a respectable maintenance, is honest perseverance, “Drive thy business, let not that drive thee,” said the immortal Franklin. For the man in business; in particular, it is of the utmost importance that he should ever be on the alert, that he should never relax in his endeavours to get on. Disappointments will often damp his spirits, failures in some speculation or other will frequently exercise a discouraging effect, losses will sometimes consume the produce of many months’ labour; there is only one remedy for all these evils, but a sure and effective one—it is *perseverance*.

There is, however, nothing that will form, in the mind of man, a more solid base for this perseverance—that will nourish it more plentifully and defend it more powerfully against all attacks from the vicissitudes of life, than a truly religious feeling. That feeling which inspired the sublime psalmist to exclaim, “Trust in the Lord and do good,” is the safest guide for any man upon earth. He who is convinced that all his doings are watched over by a protective Providence, who is interested in his welfare as a father is in that of his child, what should he fear from the tempestuous storms that rage around him? They cannot prevail against him. For are they not sent by that same loving father who has declared through his prophet, “I have no plea-

sure in the death of him that dieth?" It is not, then, to annihilate us that the Lord sends these trials upon us, but it is in order to prove us and to strengthen us; and we may rest assured that, if we patiently await His time, the clouds that seem to threaten ruin, will pass away and bright sunshine will be restored to our horizon.

The Jew may learn this firm confidence in God not only from the direct admonitions to the same, contained in his religious books, but from the numerous instances occurring in the great history of his ancestry. It was this unshakeable reliance upon the lovingkindness of his Creator, this utter resignation to the will of the Almighty, with the conviction that it is ever intended for our good, which gave the patriarch Abraham the courage to bind his only, his beloved son, and lay him upon the altar, ready to sacrifice him if it should be so ordained. Our great lawgiver Moses, led forth a host of six hundred thousand men into a sterile desert, where he knew there would be no corn to provide them with bread, no wells of water to refresh them on their weary march through the sandy plains; but he had a firm trust in Him from whom he held his great mission, and his courage was bold. He saw the mighty armies of the Egyptians pursuing his fugitive people; they were surrounded on all sides, death seemed inevitable, and to aggravate the sadness of his situation, the Israelites loaded him with reproaches for his heroic deeds. Amidst all these troubles, in the most embarrassing situation in which perhaps any mortal being was ever placed, the divine prophet stood calm, and his only endeavour seemed to be to infuse in his reprobate people that confidence in the Lord which was the source of his calmness. "The Lord will fight for you," were the great words which the greatest of all prophets addressed

to the most ungrateful of nations ; we all know how the result justified his expectations.

With such, and many other examples before him, the Jew must indeed be little of faith, if he should ever abandon himself to despair, and give himself up for lost. No, when we are ever so much encompassed with troubles and misfortunes, our courage must not sink, we must toil on with good confidence, though we do not clearly see before us the way of deliverance, soothing our mind with the great national consolation, addressed to the Lord : " Our fathers trusted in Thee ; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them."

There is one temptation to which the Jew, who has to work hard for his maintenance, is exposed, in addition to those that offer themselves to his Christian neighbour, viz. : to abandon the strict observance of his faith for certain worldly advantages. It is undeniably true that Judaism exacts sacrifices from its followers. The abstaining from work on sabbaths and festivals, the restrictions ordained by the Jewish religion, with regard to several kinds of food, are additional difficulties set in the way of the labouring Israelite. Besides, there prevails among many of my Jewish brethren a notion that, as Jews, they would not be able to secure for themselves the respect and patronage of their Christian neighbours, and they, therefore, seek to deny their religion, are ashamed of practising its ceremonies, and would fain erase even the religious distinction which exists between Jew and Gentile. This opinion, I venture to maintain, is altogether erroneous. If the Jew be industrious and unrelaxing in the pursuit of his business during the whole of the week, the keeping of his sabbath will not, in any considerable measure, interfere with the

welfare of his business. For, do there not, in this country, in the metropolis in particular, exist numerous examples of strictly orthodox Jews who have obtained great riches without infringing upon the statutes of their religion, and are there not, at the same time, many who have thrown aside all restrictions, and yet do not find their affairs in a thriving condition? He who commanded our forefathers, when they were in possession of the Holy Land, to let the fields lie fallow every seventh year, and who provided them so plentifully in the sixth, that we read nowhere of a famine that should have ensued in consequence of not sowing for a whole year—that same eternal Being will surely be ready to bless our undertakings, and to favour our progress, if, besides following His commandment to keep the seventh day holy, we do not forget faithfully to carry out the injunction attached to that commandment, viz. : to labour six days.

As to the idea that a faithful adherence to the religion of Moses is averse to the obtaining of respect and patronage among Christians, my own experience has sufficiently taught me that there is no foundation in it, and it is not without some self-satisfaction that I can refer my Jewish brethren, who should entertain such an opinion, to my own example. It has always been my particular care to sustain the character of a sincere Jew, it has always been my pride to belong to the nation whose ancestors had been favoured with the direct revelation on Sinai; and yet my Christian neighbours have not despised me for it—far from it. I can confidently point to some individuals, of no mean rank and station in English society, who have not only honoured me with their patronage, but who have likewise exerted, and do yet exert their influence in my behalf, and encourage me in all my undertakings. So

much is it true that honest endeavours will ever find acknowledgments and support from all men, of every religious denomination, and of every social condition, and that encouragement from Jews and Christians will never be wanting to JEWISH PERSEVERANCE.



NOTES.

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* p. 18.

"Das eben der Fluch der bösen That,

"Dass sie, fortzeugend, immer Böses muss gebären."

Schiller's Wallenstein, Die Piccolomini, Akt v. Szene 1.

* p. 20.

It is a prevalent custom among the Jews, even at the present day, to bless their children on solemn and important occasions, such as the coming in, and going out, of sabbaths and festivals, the departure for a long journey, the approach of death, &c. The ceremony is performed simply in this manner: The child steps towards the parent, inclines his or her head, and the parent lays the hands upon the child's head, pronouncing these words: "God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh," if the child be a son; and "God make thee as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah," if it be a daughter. The ceremony is at once simple and touching, and is frequently applied as an effective moral agent. The child's inclining the head seems to indicate an acknowledgement of submission, and a promise of ready obedience to the wishes of the parent whose blessing it implores. On the other hand, when a father is displeased with the conduct of his son, he may withhold his blessing, and this is considered a very great calamity. Cases are not unfrequent where the withholding of this blessing leads a refractory child back to a sense of his duty, and to the path of virtue, from which he may have strayed. It is true that such an effect can only be expected from children whose hearts beat with real affection for their parents, and are animated with true piety; but I have observed, during the course of the work, that this piety and affection between parent and child is the rule among the Jews.

It is also worthy of remark that Jewish children are often sent by their parents to the rabbi, to receive his blessing. This is one of the many indications of respect which the Jew pays to the ministers and teachers of his religion, and shows how anxious an Israelite is to impress his children at an early period of their lives, with the true value they ought to set on the office of those persons whose occupation it is to lead them in the path of faith and morality.

* p. 21.

As many of my readers may be ignorant as to the nature and contents of this extensive work, so often spoken of, and so rarely appreciated, I will give a brief sketch of the same. There are two works which bear that name, the Babylonish Talmud and the Jerusalem Talmud, and each of them consists of two distinct parts, viz.: the Mishnah (repetition, secondary law,) and the Gemara (completion). The Mishnah was composed by Rabbi Jehudah, surnamed Hannasi, (the prince,) also Hakkadosh, (the holy) who lived in the latter half of the second century, and was the contemporary and friend of the Emperor Antoninus Pius. As it is impossible to establish a code of laws applicable to all cases, it is natural to suppose that the written law of Moses was accompanied by oral explanations from the divine legislator himself concerning such laws and precepts as were acted upon by the Israelites during their journeyings in the wilderness. These explanations and interpretations were increased, in the course of ages, and handed down, from generation to generation, through oral tradition. If we take into consideration that the wording of the Mosaic law is frequently obscure, and that many instances must have occurred where the laws concerning sacrifices, festivals, marriages, divorces, &c., were to be applied to particular cases not provided for in the written canon, we shall easily understand the meaning of an "oral law," especially when we remember that it was originally a strict rule not to commit to writing things delivered by word of mouth. The traditional law was subsequently taught in academies established for that purpose; among which those of Hillel and Shamai were the most celebrated. The teachers in those academies occupied themselves with scriptural interpretations and learned disquisitions concerning laws, customs,

and usages, and frequently introduced new regulations which were adopted by the people.

Although, as we have observed, it was considered unlawful to commit the oral law to writing, still Rabbi Jehudah held it to be his duty to act against that principle, as the political state of the Jews of that time made it necessary that some written code should be provided for them, besides the Bible.

During the persecutions which the nation had to suffer under Hadrian, the Jewish academies had been destroyed, the teachers cut off, and the disciples dispersed. The Hebrew language had long ceased to be the national language and was rapidly sinking into oblivion. Religion sunk lower and lower. Under these circumstances, R. Jehudah fearing the traditionary laws might be entirely forgotten, collected them in the work called "the Mishna," consisting of six parts, which we shall presently enumerate.

The Mishna soon obtained an unlimited authority; it was taught in all schools, and introduced into the congregations as the principal book of laws. The learned Jews of that and succeeding ages expounded its concise language, explained its difficult terms, and founded upon it their commentaries. These explanations, together with many new ordinances and regulations, were collected and written down, and thus arose the Gemara of Jerusalem and that of Babylon. The former, which was the product of those schools in Syria and Mesopotamia that escaped the fury of the Romans, was compiled by R. Jochanan about one hundred years after the conclusion of the Mishna, while the latter, the Babylonish Gemara, (so called from the schools in Babylon) was collected about two centuries later by the Rabbis Ina and Ashi. The Mishna, together with the Gemara, forms the Talmud. The Babylonish Talmud, by far the larger of the two, has also enjoyed the greater authority.

The first of the six parts or series into which the Mishna is divided treats of agricultural laws; the second of the sabbath and the festivals; the third of the intercourse between the sexes—of dowry, marriage settlements, divorces, &c.; the fourth, of the laws of property and of commerce; the fifth, of the sacrifices and their laws; the sixth, of cleanliness and purifications.

Each of these six parts consists of several treatises, and these again are subdivided into chapters.

Besides the subjects mentioned, the Talmud contains many explanations of biblical passages, tales, allegories, moral and philosophical maxims, historical and archæological matter.

Such is the work which has so often been slandered by those who were ignorant of its contents and tendency, and who would not take the trouble to examine before they judged. I have frequently heard it said by Christians; "I wish the Jew would lay aside the Talmud, and confine himself to the Bible." This is a most unmeaning argument; for the Jew would act very unwisely if he were to confine himself to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and lay aside those genuine explanations of biblical passages written by men who lived nearest to the age when the inspired writers themselves flourished and wrote.

Another reproach frequently made on the Jews, chiefly by conversionists, is, "that they will not read the whole of the prophetical writings, but only select portions therefrom." That the Jew does not reject, in his private reading any part of the prophets may easily be proved from the fact that among the articles of the Jewish faith, as compiled by Maimonides, and which have their full value in the present day, the sixth runs thus: "I believe, with a perfect faith, that *all* the words of the prophets are true." But the circumstance that the Jews in their synagogues, read publicly only certain portions of the prophetical books, rests on an historical foundation, viz.: during the time of the cruel persecutions to which the Jews were exposed under the reign of the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes, (about 168 B.C.), the scrolls of the law were destroyed, and the Jews strictly prohibited from reading any portions of it. Their sages then selected portions from the prophets, corresponding, in some degree, with the respective portions of the Pentateuch, and ordered them to be read in the synagogues, instead of the books of Moses. E. g. instead of from Gen. i. to vi. they read from Isa. xlii. 5, to xliii. 11; for Gen. vi. to xii., Isa. liv. 1, to lv. 6; for Gen. xii. to xviii., Isa. xl. 27, to xli. 17; for Gen. xviii. to xxiii., 2 Kings iv. 1—38. And

when the persecutions had ceased, and they resumed the reading of the law of Moses, they still retained those selected portions, and these the Jews of the present day read after the weekly portion from the Pentateuch.

* p. 23.

. Baruch, or, as he is more generally called, Benedict Spinoza, was born at Amsterdam in the year 1632. Being the son of Jewish parents, he occupied himself with the study of the Talmud, which, however, did not entirely satisfy his inquiring and original mind. He soon began to advance opinions so contrary to the spirit of the Jewish religion, and to evince such a disregard of its established tenets and ceremonials, that he was excommunicated from the synagogue, and, shortly afterwards, compelled to leave his native city. He retired to a village in the vicinity of Amsterdam, and devoted his time to the study of the classical languages, mathematics, and the Cartesian philosophy. His livelihood he obtained by making optical instruments. At a later period of his life he removed to the Hague, where he passed the rest of his days in retired and uninterrupted study. Unwilling to quit his philosophical retirement he declined a professorship at the university of Heidelberg, which had been offered him, with the assurance that he might there enjoy the utmost freedom in his academical instruction. He died at the age of 45, in the year 1677. The most celebrated of his writings is his "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus." The philosophical system of Spinoza, generally designated as pantheism, is based on the following points: There is but one sole Substance and that substance is God. This one Substance, with the two modifications of thought and extension (mind and matter,) is infinitely diversified, having, within its own essence, the necessary causes of the changes through which it passes. All things exist only in that Substance, are modes or affections of God's attributes, and can have no separate existence from that of the Universal Substance. God, in his infinite extension, comprises within Him all particular things, and man's intelligence is consequently a portion of God's infinite intelligence, or, in other words, the human mind is a portion of the Divine

Substance. It will be seen, from these few sentences, that Spinoza established an identity between God and the Universe, and that his idea of the Deity is materially and essentially different from that which we entertain of the Supreme Being, as the Creator and Ruler of everything that exists. Nor is it to be wondered at that the pantheism of Spinoza should have been frequently represented as atheism.

* p. 32.

At every important moment of our lives religion steps in to prescribe the most worthy manner of conduct we are to pursue—to suggest the reflections and meditations that should fill our minds, and to frame the words in which we can pour out our souls most freely. There is, perhaps, in the whole range of human life, not a time in which man stands more in need of aid from this Divine Guardian than when the awful hour of dissolution draws near. The guides of Israel, feeling keenly as they did, that the judgment of man's life rests alone with the Author of all life, have appointed prayers suitable to every stage of sickness, from the moment when the organs of life begin to deviate from their usual course of action to the final departure of the heaven-born soul from its abode of clay. These prayers are expressive of every change of sentiment; leading the mind from the most confident hope in a speedy recovery to an unlimited resignation in the will of the Most High, when the sun of life declines to set.

But, not only are there forms of prayer provided for the patient himself, there are likewise, in the Jewish ritual, orisons to be pronounced by the friends or relations of the sufferer. When it is perceived that the illness of an Israelite assumes a dangerous aspect, he is not left alone for any time, so that the sound of prayer may not fail to ascend with the fleeting soul to the throne of the Eternal Judge. And it is particularly recommended that, at the moment when a man expires, the bystanders should utter the sentence, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one," arranging it so that the last word is said while the last breath steals from the dying person. Thus the soul

enters upon its heavenly flight amidst the proclamation of that unity which it delighted to acknowledge and adore during its stay on earth.

Characteristic of the Jewish death-bed is the punctilious care which is taken not to accelerate, for one atom of time, the moment of dissolution. For it is strictly prohibited to touch a person while in the agony of death, to remove him from his place, or to remove anything from under him. It is likewise prohibited to give the patient any medicine, or any sort of drink, in his dying moments.

In order that the awful hour may in nowise be unnecessarily embittered, the near relations of a dying Israelite are not allowed to stay in the room at the moment of his departure, lest their wailings and laments should aggravate the fatal struggle.

* p. 38.

The three extracts, which I have inserted in the text, are taken successively from

1. The Book of the Pious,
2. A book written by R. Moses ben Jacob, of Coucy.
3. The Book of Morals.

The Book of the Pious was written, or more likely compiled, by Rabbi Jehudah the Pious, of Ratisbon, (in Bavaria), in the latter part of the twelfth century, and contains a collection of moral maxims and treatises.

R. Moses ben Jacob lived about the year 1245. On his travels through France and Spain he delivered many moral and religious discourses in the Jewish communities which he visited, and his book is a digest of his opinions on those subjects.

The Book of Morals was written in the fifteenth century, but its author is not known.

From the scanty extracts I have quoted, it may be seen that the moral doctrines of the Jews in those ages were no ways inferior to any system of morality laid down in subsequent times; and the Jews must then, in a moral respect have stood higher, not only than their Christian contemporaries, but even than the Christian priests of several European countries at a much later period.

* p. 43.

The principal German, or rather European, fairs are those of Francfort on the Maine, Francfort on the Oder, and Leipsic. Merchants of all nations visit them to dispose of the manufactures and productions for which their several countries are distinguished. Business is transacted there to a very great amount. Francfort on the Maine has two, and Francfort on the Oder three fairs yearly; Leipsic has also three annual fairs, and these are by far the most celebrated. The Easter fair is attended by the principal booksellers of Germany, and by many of the adjoining countries. Leipsic is to the literature of Germany what London is to that of England. The fairs usually continue for about three weeks.

* p. 46.

The passage quoted occurs in the Babylonian Talmud, Tract Pesachim, fol. 113 a.

† p. 46.

The regulations of that vexatious passport system are different in the different states of the Germanic confederation. Austria, as may naturally be expected from the despotic character of her institutions, has hitherto been notorious even among the German states, for her rigorous and troublesome laws concerning passports. In the other parts of the country the establishments of the *Zollverein*, or commercial league, has greatly contributed towards the pulling down of those barriers which had offered such powerful obstacles to the free intercourse between the inhabitants of different parts of Germany. If Englishmen wish to form an adequate notion of the character of such a system, let them suppose that the inhabitants of London who wish to go Birmingham and Manchester, or *vice versâ*, had to provide themselves with passports, and to pay for them too. It is to be hoped that, with the progress of freedom on the continent, the passport system will disappear along with other laws of a similarly despotic nature.

* p. 50.

The commandment of making fringes to their garments is enjoined upon the Israelites in two passages of the Pentateuch, viz.: Num. xv. 38, and Deut. xxii. 12.

Holy Writ has given no particulars about the making of these fringes, but tradition has supplied that deficiency. Each fringe consists of eight threads, of which one is much longer than the rest, and is twisted round the others, first 7 times, then 8 times, then 11 times, then 13 times; each of these numbers of twistings is separated from the other by a double knot. Mystical writers have not failed to ascribe a meaning to these different numbers, and to find in them allusions, for the right understanding of which it is necessary to remind the reader that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet were likewise used as figures. The Hebrew name of the Deity consists of four letters יהוה corresponding consecutively to the numbers $\begin{matrix} \text{ה} & \text{ו} & \text{ה} & \text{י} \\ 5 & 6 & 5 & 10 \end{matrix}$; the Hebrew word אחד, signifying "one," consists of three letters corresponding to the numbers $\begin{matrix} \text{א} & \text{ח} & \text{ד} \\ 4 & 8 & 1 \end{matrix}$.

Now the numbers of the first two twistings 7 and 8 give the sum of 15, equal to the sum of the first two letters in the name of God; the third twisting, consisting of 11 rounds, corresponds with the sum represented by the last two letters of that name, $6+5=11$; lastly, the number of 13 is the sum of all the letters forming the Hebrew word for "one." According to this, the manner of attaching these fringes would contain an allusion to the highest and most important truth in the Mosaic religion, viz.: "the Lord is one."

If we however wish to inquire what might have been the real object of a law so very peculiar and extraordinary, we have only to refer to Scripture itself, and we shall find it there stated clearly enough for any one that understands how to read. For the divine lawgiver says (Num. xv. 39): "And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them." It is evident, from these words, that the fringes were intended as an external sign to remind the

Israelite, at every minute of his life, of his sacred mission as a member of the chosen people, a people chosen to promulgate the true doctrine of one God among the inhabitants of the earth. And is it not natural that among men who were barely capable of conceiving and understanding abstract notions, and at a time when symbols and symbolical expressions were current among all nations who aspired to a degree of civilisation, recourse should have been had to such symbols in order to set an admonition of their peculiar law constantly before the eyes of the multitude? The words "that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes," seem to indicate that the fringes were to remind the Jew of the necessity of suppressing all lusts and desires before the dictates of religion, and that he must not let sensual pleasures prevent his spiritual welfare.

It may be worthy of remark that the Jews were commanded to put upon the fringe "a riband of blue." The colour of blue is mentioned several times in connexion with sacred things, and is undoubtedly a symbol of the canopy of heaven, thus intended to lead our mind to the meditation on our heavenly Father, who has revealed to us his holy will for our own well-being.

Originally it seems to have been the intention of the Jewish lawgiver that all their garments should be provided with these fringes. In the course of time, however, this must have been found very inconvenient, and the fringes are now confined to the *טלית*, a quadrangular silk or woollen scarf, in which the devout Jew wraps himself while reciting his prayers, and to the *ארבע כנפות* (four corners,) a part of the Jew's wearing apparel, consisting of two square pieces of silk, wool, or cotton, joined by two bands of the same material, and which is worn under the clothes so that one of the square pieces falls over the chest, and the other over the back. To each of the four corners of this piece of apparel a fringe is attached in the manner we have described.

* p. 53.

It is customary among Jews to visit the graves of their deceased parents at least once in every year. The time selected by the pious Jews for fulfilling this filial duty is the

month preceding the festival of the new year, or the week intervening between that festival and the day of atonement—a time particularly given up to devotion and serious reflections. There are forms of prayers composed for that occasion, and the strictly orthodox keep the day in which they visit those revered graves as a fast day. It is likewise a common practice to make some charitable distributions on such a day.

* p. 60.

In the text of the book (in the beginning of chapter ix.) I have taken the opportunity of showing the usefulness of parables. I need hardly remind my readers of the high antiquity of this mode of illustration, since we know that the sacred writings contain very fine specimens of it. I allude to Jotham's parable of the trees contained in the book of Judges, and to the one (2 Sam. xii.) used with such good effect by the prophet Nathan, to bring the man after God's own heart to a right sense of his guilt and his duty.

The parables and allegories which I have occasionally introduced in my narrative are partly literally taken from the Talmud, or other rabbinical writings, or are translations from the German of Herder or Krummacher, two great authors who have written many of those interesting narratives upon biblical subjects, mostly drawn from talmudical writings.

* p. 65.

That translations seldom, if ever, come up to the standard of their originals, is a fact generally known and acknowledged. But if it is difficult at all times to retain in a translation the full spirit of the original, the difficulty is increased tenfold, in the case of the original being poetry, or, of its language being one that has been dead for many centuries, and had been spoken in a country far remote, by a people of peculiar manners, customs, and institutions, in short, by a people living in an entirely different state of society from that prevailing in the country in whose language the translation is made. This is the reason why modern translations of the Bible, and more especially of the poetical portions,

are so inferior and inadequate to the original. I will not here speak in particular of the authorised version which, besides bearing the marks of the difficulties just stated, is incorrect in many parts, and, in the poetical portions, is spoiled by a too close and literal adherence to the text.

But, speaking generally, the Hebrew language is so different in its etymological and syntactical constructions from modern idioms; its mode of expression, its similes, its ideas, its poetry, in fact, its genius, are so eastern, that the languages of the west can only give a faint copy of the original Old Testament. The Hebrew language combines power and harmony with great simplicity, the diction is brief and concise. It is capable of expressing a variety of ideas in a few words, and of giving various modifications to a word by vowel changes and other inflections. There is, even in its pronunciation, a fine change of the strong and the soft, produced by a harmonious intermixture of vowels and consonants. All these beauties are necessarily lost in a translation, and it is no more possible to form an exact idea of the sacred original from an English version than it is to derive a notion of the fragrance of a rose from a painted representation of that flower, however skillfully it may be executed.

* p. 67.

It would be presumptuous and, indeed, incorrect, to designate charity *exclusively* a Jewish virtue, but it must be owned, even by those who would fain deny any estimable quality to be the offspring of Judaism, that the Jews were ever distinguished for their charitable feelings towards their brethren. In former times, when Germany abounded with itinerant poor Jews, both from Poland and from the different countries of Germany, arrangements were made in almost every Jewish community to provide these poor Israelites with food for a few days, and mostly, likewise, with a trifling sum of money. Where such arrangements did not exist, it was customary for rich men to invite any poor strangers, that they saw in their town or village, home to their own table, and board them and, sometimes, lodge them for a few days. This was especially done on sabbaths and

festivals, and any poor Jew who was approaching a Jewish community on the eve of such a solemn day was sure that he would be enabled to enjoy the day or days of repose without feeling any want of subsistence.

I will not enquire into the causes from which such charitable inclinations emanated; be it, however, remembered, that the Jewish lawgiver, in his legislation, took particular care of the poor, and that the Jews, among the many eastern customs which they preserved, did not forget to bring to Europe a sense of oriental hospitality.

* p. 88.

The dispersion of the Jews over all the quarters of the globe renders it impossible to give an exact statement of their numbers. By some they are reckoned at 6,000,000. But this estimate rests on no solid foundation; it is more likely that the number of Jews in the world amounts to something between three and four millions. In Great Britain they are reckoned at 30,000; in France at 65,000; in Holland and Belgium at 80,000; in Prussia at 180,000; in the rest of Germany at 138,000; in the Austrian empire at 610,000; in Russia and Poland at 1,080,000; in Italy at 36,000; in Denmark at 4,000; in the Turkish dominions at 800,000; in the Barbary states at 70,000; and in the United States at 10,000. There are communities of Jews at Bokhara and other parts of Tartary, in India, and even in China,

* p. 89.

At the betrothment of Jewish parties, preliminary documents are drawn up, and signed by the lady and gentleman, as well as by their respective parents. It is likewise customary for the gentleman to give his betrothed some present (generally a ring,) as a token of the engagement. After every thing has been agreed upon between the parents or relations of the parties, and the mutual consent given by the individuals nearest concerned, a cup is broken, and mutual congratulations take place. This curious ceremony of breaking a cup corresponds with another taking place at Jewish weddings, viz. that of breaking a glass, and it is done,

as it is generally supposed, to remind the bystanders that among Jews, no joy—no festivity should be altogether complete, as long as the Jews are not in possession of their national rights. It will be seen from this, that such a ceremony has no particular meaning in the present age, when Jewish nationality, in a political sense, is superseded by the love of the country in which Jews live; but it is still preserved as an old practice, and in a moral point of view, may be taken as an admonition in the hour of joy not to overstep the due limits. I have noticed this singular ceremony with its singular reason, because many persons entertain erroneous notions as to the real cause of it.

* p 92.

In the Mishna, Tract Yomah, (ch. viii. 9), we read: R. Elieser says; For those sins which man commits against God, pardon may be obtained on the day of atonement; but for the sins which man commits against his neighbour no atonement can be made unless the offended neighbour be first reconciled; for it is written: Ye may be clean from all your sins *before the Lord* (Lev. xvi. 30).

From this salutary doctrine the custom has sprung among the Jews of endeavouring to obtain, on the eve of each day of atonement, the pardon of all those whom they may have offended during the past year. It is an occurrence not at all unfrequent in Jewish communities that persons among whom a discord had arisen during the year, approach each other, previously to the day of atonement, with offers of peace and reconciliation, asking forgiveness for offences they have committed, and testifying a readiness to forgive those which they have suffered. Thus having practised forbearance and effected reconciliation, they step before their Maker to pray for that pardon and forgiveness which His unbounded mercy holds out to all those who approach him with true repentance.

† p. 92.

The biblical instances of Joshua and the Gibeonites, of Jephtha and his daughter, sufficiently prove the importance attached to promises and vows in the Old Testament. And it shows no small degree of ignorance of Jewish laws and

customs to suppose, as has been done by some, that the Jew thinks lightly of the breaking of a promise or oath, or that he is by his religion allowed to do so. Even the heathenish nations of antiquity considered the oath as a religious act, thereby increasing its binding force. It is much to be regretted that the spirit of truth has as yet so little penetrated the mass of mankind that its violation is of so frequent occurrence. If education were more perfect and more general, if morality were better inculcated in the youthful heart, truth would be considered more sacred, than is commonly the case. Truth is the standard by which a man's character may be measured; in proportion as he holds it sacred or not, in that proportion he is more or less of a moral being. What we promise, ought to be sacred and fulfilled to the letter. To keep one's word truly and faithfully, ought to be one of the first moral maxims in the intercourse between man and man. To promise, and not to keep what we have promised, is a double sin. It is uttering a falsehood in the first instance, and it is deceiving our neighbour. Incalculable is the mischief which is daily done by the breaking of promises, and it is to be regretted that the law which punishes the breach of certain promises does not extend much farther.

* p 105.

It is hardly paying a compliment to the German language to say that it has of late become "quite a fashionable language." I will not stop to inquire how much the fact of the prince consort being a German may have contributed to raise the value of that language in the eyes of the more fashionable portion of the British community. But, independently of this, the German language has manifold claims on the attention of the English student. Not only are the German and English languages descendants of the same Teutonic family, but the two literatures exhibit in many points a great similarity. To instance the influence which at certain periods, both have exercised upon each other, I need only remind the reader of the effect produced by the writings of Luther and other German reformers upon the English mind, and, on the other hand, of the vast change wrought by Shakspeare in the literature, and especially the drama, of

Germany. That the intellectual intercommunion between the two countries has, in our day, been greatly increased, is sufficiently shown by the numerous translations that are daily made from German literary and scientific works. And, when we further consider that, in consequence of the present rapid mode of communication, Germany is annually visited by thousands of Englishmen, either for pleasure or business, when we bear in mind the great commercial intercourse existing between the two countries, it is obvious that a language which is besides so rich and flexible, and is spoken by upwards of forty millions of persons, well deserves to be studied with attention.

* p. 111.

The Jewish literature of the middle ages bears, for the most part, a religious and theological character. The Jews, having forfeited their national existence, concentrated all their mental energies upon the religion of their fathers, and consequently made the books of the old covenant and the oral law, as contained in the Talmud, their principal study. The books and treatises relating to subjects of religion in its practical and theoretical bearings form, in themselves, a vast literature. The ceremonial laws, the liturgy, the dogmas, the exegesis of the Bible, and the Jewish jurisprudence, were extensively treated by men eminent for talent and piety.

The Spanish Jews, in particular, were distinguished during the middle ages for their literary productions. Not only were ethics, philosophy, and poetry, cultivated by them with great success, but many also distinguished themselves as physicians, mathematicians, and astronomers, leaving behind them works of considerable literary value. Amongst the Jewish writers of Spain are preëminent: Maimonides, one of the greatest minds the Jews ever produced; Eben Ezra, immortal as a commentator and a poet; Albo, and the poets Halevy, Gabirol, Jehudah Halevy, Alcharisi, and others.

Next to Spain it was Italy that produced the greatest number of Hebrew poets. Amongst the great commentators of the Bible must be mentioned the celebrated Rashi who lived in France, and Abarbanel, the latter of the Spanish

school. Nor were grammar and lexicography neglected. The works of Kimchi occupy, even now-a-days, when all the sciences have made such rapid progress, a high rank amongst the productions of Hebrew philology. In fact, the various branches of knowledge which were cultivated in the different countries where Jews lived, were studied and cultivated by them, though, generally speaking, their works referring to the profane sciences, are much less numerous than those treating of religious and theological matters.

* p. 172.

This work of R. Manasseh ben Israel has been translated into English by M. Samuels, and we refer those who feel a curiosity to know more about the work, to that translation.

Another interesting work of the same author has been translated into English by E. H. Lindo, under the title of "the Conciliator," being a reconciliation of the apparent contradictions in Holy Scripture. To the latter work there is prefixed a short biographical sketch of the learned Rabbi, together with a list of all his works.

† p. 172.

The following prayer is read, in Hebrew, in all Jewish synagogues, on every sabbath and holiday:—

"May He who dispenseth salvation unto kings, and dominion unto princes; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; who delivered His servant David from the destructive sword; who maketh a way in the sea, and a path through the mighty waters; may He bless, preserve, guard, assist, exalt, and highly aggrandize [Here follow the names of the sovereign, and of the principal members of the royal family]. May the supreme King of kings, through His infinite mercy preserve her [him], and grant her life, and deliver her from all manner of trouble and danger; make her enemies to fall before her, and cause her to prosper in all her undertakings. May the supreme King of kings, through His infinite mercy, incline her heart and the hearts of her counsellors and nobles with benevolence towards us and all Israel. In her days, and in ours, may Judah be saved, and Israel dwell in safety; and may the Redeemer come unto Zion; O that this may be His gracious will! and let us say, Amen."

The above prayer is read in *all* Jewish synagogues, not only in those countries where the Jews are in full or partial possession of civil rights, but even in Russia, where their condition is little calculated to inspire them with love for their ruler. And additional prayers are read in the synagogues on different occurrences. Another token of loyalty is manifested by the Jews, that on beholding a king and his court. The Jew will repeat the following blessing:—“Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God! King of the universe, who hath imparted a portion of thy glory unto flesh and blood.”

* p. 183.

The term “stranger” (גֵּר) so frequently occurring in the Pentateuch, signifies a non-Israelite, a person not descended from any of the families of Israel, but who had settled among the Israelites, and, by undergoing the ceremony of circumcision, had entirely entered into the national communion. An individual of that description enjoyed all the rights of civil and religious citizenship; for him there was to be “one law and one manner” with the native Israelite, and it was enjoined upon the Jews not to oppress him, but rather to protect him, and to love him. There was thus established an equalisation of all the inhabitants of the country, both civilly and religiously.

While I am on the ground of biblical terms, I deem it a fit opportunity to offer an observation on the Hebrew term (גֵּוֹי) generally translated “gentile,” which has so often been misconstrued, for the purpose of perverting the sense of Scripture.

In the first instance, this word means any nation whatsoever, the Israelites themselves are frequently denominated by this term, e. g. (Deut. iv. 6). The term was, however, afterwards used to signify people of other nations, just as the later Romans used the word “gentiles.” With this signification was introduced the idea of inferiority—of contempt, similar to that attached by the Greeks to the word βάρβαρος and, finally, the word was applied to persons of evil habits, irrespectively of their country, thus we find (Ezekiel ii. 3) that it is applied to Israelites forsaking the Lord.

* p. 185.

The passage occurs in a work on moral subjects called "Tana debe Eliahu," the author of which is not known by name, but is supposed to have lived in Babylon about the latter part of the tenth century.

THE END.

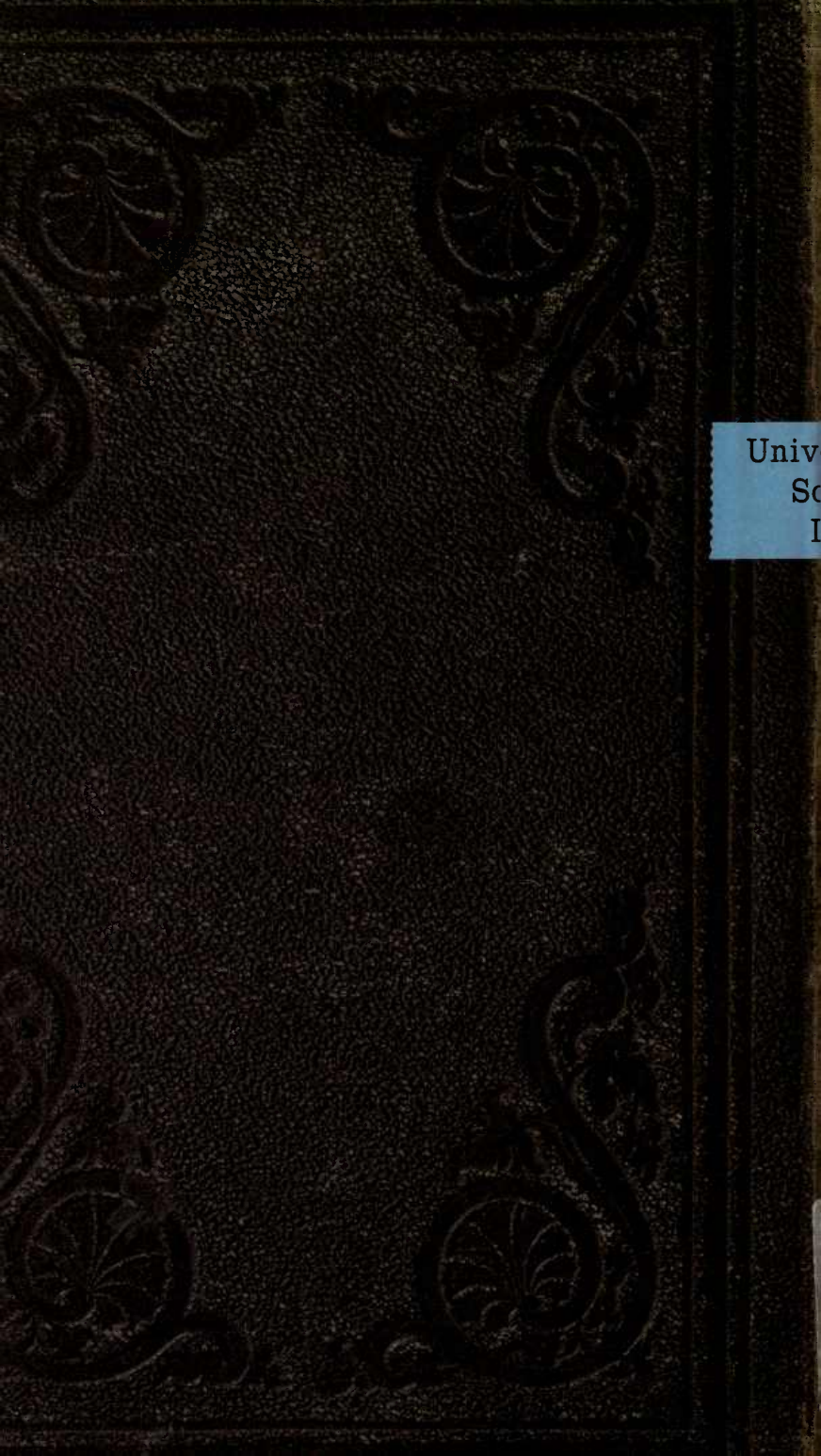
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