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THE JEW IN LONDON

THE JEW IN LONDON

A Study of
Racial Character and Present-Day Conditions

BEING TWO ESSAYS PREPARED
FOR THE TOYNBEE TRUSTEES

BY

C. RUSSELL, B.A., AND H. S. LEWIS, M.A.

WITH

An Introduction by Canon BARNETT

AND

A Preface by The Right Hon. JAMES BRYCE, M.P.

With a New Map specially made for this Volume

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PREFACE

THE Jewish nationality is so unique a phenomenon in the history of the world, by its antiquity and by its cohesiveness, as to be one of the most interesting subjects of investigation to which an inquirer can address himself. It is certainly not less so now than it was in the past, because within the last hundred years it has entered on a new phase, in which its power has been better shown and in which also its existence has begun to be more seriously threatened than was ever the case before. Nor is the inquiry anywhere more interesting than in England, because England is now pretty nearly the only country in which Jews are subject to no sort of disability, either social or legal, and is also

the country in which the struggle between two tendencies that are at work in the bosom of Judaism, the tendency to change and the tendency to conservatism, is most evident and active.

The subject of the two essays which form this volume is, therefore, one which deserves the attention of historians as well as of sociologists. They are primarily an attempt to describe the Jewish community in London, and especially that large part of it which consists of very recent immigrants from Eastern Europe, Germany, Poland and Russia. One of the essays describes these people as seen from the outside by an observer, who, though fair and even friendly, has no special personal ground of sympathy with the Jewish race or religion. The second essay, which is to some extent a criticism and commentary upon the first, is the work of a writer who, himself a member of the race, is thus able to enter fully into its feelings and aspira-

tions, and to set these clearly before the Gentile reader. He is, however, sufficiently detached and independent to perceive the defects of his nation, and sufficiently candid to admit these defects. Thus the two studies, taken together, seem to contain good materials from which a judgment may be formed on a problem to which the recrudescence of Anti-Semitism, everywhere except in England, has given a new significance.

The large immigration of foreign Jews into England has hitherto attracted public attention chiefly from the social and economic side. An outcry was raised, some years ago, that these immigrants were injuring the English working-man by unfair competition, were ousting him from certain trades, were lowering the rate of wages, and therewith the standard of comfort and decency, were increasing the burden of pauperism, which the lowest quarters of our great cities, and especially

of London, have to carry. To this it was answered that, so far from injuring trade they were helping it, by enabling some branches of industry to be worked so cheaply that other branches could be developed for the benefit of English work-people, that they were, as a rule, sober and thrifty, as well as laborious in their habits, and that they were, therefore, not likely to come upon the rates or swell the criminal class. These questions are discussed in the following pages with full knowledge and with calmness. The conclusions reached do not entirely sustain either of the views to which I have referred, but they certainly seem to dissuade any attempt to check by law the entry into England of these aliens. The immigrants are, no doubt, in some ways unattractive, but they are highly intelligent ; they are not prone to crime, and their children, taught in English schools, soon rise to the level of the English Jews,

whom no Englishman has proposed to expel after the fashion of King Edward the First, or of the more extreme Anti-Semites in Russia or in France. The picture of their character and habits given here is a curious one, and enables the reader to realize, vividly, the size and variety of London, in whose immense mass this community, large as it is, maintains its separate life almost unnoticed, except by its immediate neighbours in Stepney and Whitechapel and Bethnal Green.

Two other questions of great interest are dealt with in these essays. One is the conflict within the Jewish body between the forces that make for a persistence in the old orthodoxy of belief and the old regime of ceremonial usages, and the forces which tend to abolish those usages and to reduce the religion of Israel to a sort of philosophic theism, tinged, no doubt, by that strong race feeling which the recollections of a long and striking history have

imprinted so deeply upon the Jewish mind. No thoughtful Christian can be indifferent to this conflict. It resembles, to some extent, the struggle between the new and the old which goes on within Christianity also; and it suggests many thoughts upon the true interpretation of that part of Israel's annals which is recorded in the Old Testament. Jewish philosophers like Spinoza, and Jewish men of learning (of whom not a few have attained deserved eminence in their treatment of Biblical problems, within the last and present generation), have largely affected the movements of religious thought; and the results of their writings remain significant for the theological and historical student of to-day. In the present instance it is the English element, and the more educated element, that is penetrated by neological tendencies, while conservatism, as is natural, finds its stronghold among the simple and humble Jews who come from Eastern Europe,

where isolation and persecution have bound them closely to their Talmudic traditions.

The other question is as to the permanence of Jewish nationality in the future. This is a matter of practical consequence as well as speculative interest. If the race remains distinct and cohesive, it will probably be a potent factor in Europe for generations to come, not only by its undoubted talents and energy, but in virtue of its remarkable cohesion, which so greatly increases the force its individual men of wealth and ability can put forth. If it becomes by degrees absorbed into and merged in the general population of the countries where it dwells, its influence will be only such as that which the infusion at one time of Franco-Norman, at a much later time and to a smaller extent of French Huguenot blood had upon the population of England, the influence of a new and vigorous strain which, notable for two or three generations,

presently passes away and is forgotten. The writers of both these essays agree in thinking that the essential feature of modern Israel is to be found not in its blood but in its religion; and that its continuance as a nationality will depend on whether or no it clings to its religion. This is the one thing that really marks it off. If Judaism becomes merely theism, there will be little to distinguish its professors from the persons, now pretty numerous, who, while Christians in name, sit loose to Christian doctrine. The children of Jewish theists will be almost as apt as the children of other theists to be caught up by the movement which carries the sons and daughters of evangelical Anglicans and of Nonconformists towards, or all the way to, the Church of Rome. Intermarriage between Jews and Christians has already begun, even where each consort retains his or her religion, and it will spread much more quickly if

Judaism loses its external character. Now the practice of intermarriage is by far the most powerful solvent of racial distinctions, acting with exceptional force where the two races live intermingled in the same city, and where one is so vastly larger than the other that it necessarily imposes its social habits and ideas upon the smaller. A study of the phenomena of race-contact in the past, therefore, decidedly confirms the conclusion at which both these writers have arrived, that the religion of Israel is the ark of Jewish nationality. Strongly marked as the race is, it will dissolve like a lump of salt in water unless it clings to its religion, and, as has been already observed, the very fact that it has been better received and is better treated in England than anywhere else in the Europe of to-day, exposes it to a more severe strain than it has had to experience before.

Whatever be the issue, one can dwell

with unmixed satisfaction upon the absence among ourselves of any recrudescence of mediæval intolerance towards a people whose peculiar defects are fairly chargeable upon what they have been forced in the past to suffer, whose possession of some peculiar merits cannot be denied, and who have made within recent times extraordinary contributions to learning and philosophy, to science and to one, at least, of the arts. Those who would trace the source of these contributions to the special training which the Jewish race receives, as well as all who care for the study of social and industrial phenomena, will find much to interest them in the present volume.

INTRODUCTION

THE first Trustees of the Toynbee Trust, appointed in 1884, were the Earl of Dalhousie, Messrs W. Markbey, Arthur Acland, Herbert Foxwell, Alfred Milner, Henry Sidgwick and Robert Spencer Watson. They transferred the Trust in 1892 to the Council of Toynbee Hall—of which body Mr Lyttelton Gell, Lord Peel, Lord Herschel, and Sir Charles Elliott have been in succession chairmen.

The Trust was founded on the death of Arnold Toynbee by some of his friends as an expression of their affection for himself and as a memorial of his aims. Its object is stated to be 'for the promoting the investigation and diffusion of true principles of political and social economy,' and the Trustees are, among other things

authorised to provide for the delivery and publication of lectures.

Under the Trust Messrs Price, T. U. Smith, F. Maddison, M.P., A. Woodworth, Lord Fitzharris, and others have investigated, and either lectured or reported on special subjects affecting the life and industry of the people.

There is thus no necessary connection between the Trust and Toynbee Hall, which received its name not because the founders wished the place to be a memorial of Arnold Toynbee, but because his name seemed to express their hopes of uniting men of culture with men of industry. The friends or enemies—if there be any—of Toynbee Hall must not therefore, in taking up these essays, associate with them any of the opinions they may have formed about the place.

The subject of the present essays was chosen because of its immediate interest, and because of the facilities available for

its study. The Jews by their inheritance and by their experience are a 'peculiar' people. They inherit the mind both philosophic and practical, which was formed in a land where the Eastern man of dreams came into contact with the Western man of action. They by experience have habits, virtues and vices formed by centuries of opposition and persecution. They have preserved these results within the hedge of a Law, which keeps them distinct and forbids union with the people among whom they live. Their inheritance and their training have had advantages and disadvantages which can be recognised in their character and habits.

The poor Jew is, as a rule, more capable of thinking than the poor Gentile; he can shape an ideal in his mind with something of a poet's power. Hence he is able to work with an intelligence and a success which does not always follow mere technical education,

and he has dreams which he can enjoy in his hours of leisure without being driven to seek dreams through drunkenness. He has a sense of equality, which gives him self-confidence and enables him easily to take the place he gains in the world. He has a certain dignity born of the consciousness of the past, he treats his wife with respect, rarely calling upon her to work at a trade or behaving to her with brutal violence. His family life is as a rule happy, his children are often more judiciously fed than those of his neighbours, and are brought up without resort to so many scoldings and blows. He is very persistent—he endures hardships and faces opposition with a conquering perseverance. He takes up a new pursuit, he enters on new conditions of life, he begins again and again after failures with an energy and resourcefulness, if not greater, certainly more patient than that of the Anglo-Saxon. He is

essentially religious and has the consciousness of a relationship between himself and a higher power—a sort of spiritual intuition. This is evident by a thousand signs—by a vein of poetry in the most practical, by the admiration for goodness in the hardest, by a capacity for reverence, by the value he sets on the sense of the communal weal, by an interest in the unnecessary and the ideal, by his turn for philosophy and by his love for good music. He is the child of men who wrote the Psalms, but he is also the child of the modern time, imbued with its spirit of inquiry and impatient of all forms of unreason.

These advantages, due to tradition, inheritance and to training, are counterbalanced by disadvantages. The Jew is often timid and inclined to the subterfuge of the timid. He rarely tries frontal attacks, and his methods lead him to be suspected of duplicity. He likes making things easy for everyone, even for wrong-

doers, and he is disinclined to rouse animosity by openly punishing his enemy. His charity errs in being kind rather than remedial. He is essentially a town-liver, kept off the land for so many years and prevented by his Sabbath Laws from so many forms of labour, he has been driven to trade, and to trade he has applied his natural intelligence and his acquired persistency. He is thus a keen, hard bargainer, following the scent of gain through all the intricacies of exchange. In his success he develops unlovely qualities and is often a gambler.

His memory of persecution has made him more conscious of rights than of duties, at anyrate in his dealings with the Gentiles. He will have what he has paid for, and, if possible, a little more, with one result among others, that he is unpopular as a landlord even though he may do no more than the law allows.

Often, however, his very vices seem

to be a perversion of his virtues; the self-confidence of his dignity makes him self-assertive and loud, his persistency makes him hard, and even his spirituality is apt to be perverted to materialism. He goes after money as if it were his god. He throws ardour into his enjoyment of wealth, and he finds in the excitement of speculation the life he misses in worship. The Jew, who is by nature spiritual, tends to become material or sensuous, and in East London is sometimes notable for his coarseness and vulgarity. Altogether he has not popular qualities. His virtues raise him above his neighbours, his ability enables him to pass them in the race for wealth, and his manners give him the appearance of superiority. The immigrant Jew has, moreover, habits of living acquired in other countries which offend the prejudiced Englishman, who is apt to call 'dirty' whatever is foreign.

The Jew, thus distinct from his neigh-

bours, has lately become much more prominent in the Industrial World. He has taken his place as a workman among other workmen. He has begun to adopt the methods of Trade Unions, and in the branches of certain trades he has become supreme. He often takes an active part in local government and even in 'sport.' He gets on, and in the search after health and wealth succeeds in being the most healthy and the most wealthy. The Jew, who thus becomes prominent, is not like an Irishman or a German immigrant who becomes prominent, he is the representative of a distinct people settled in the community, a people with a peculiar history and character, and related by close ties with a kindred established in all parts of the civilised world.

His prominence is thus a fact which commands notice and cannot be left unnoticed.

Will the Jew be absorbed in the

British as other races have been absorbed, and yield to the meek forces of toleration what he has never yielded to persecution?

Will he develop along his own lines, preserve the type while he adapts it to new surroundings, remain a Jew while he becomes a better Jew, and in this way add a new element to the British national life?

Will he arouse against him the jealousy of his neighbours, and again in indirect way bring upon himself persecution?

These questions are being answered in one way or the other. The answers involve a policy in which everyone is taking a part by his conversation or by his action, inasmuch as everyone has dealings with Jews.

The object of these essays is to assist their readers to a right answer, and therefore to a right policy.

The writers have had special qualifica-

tions for their work. Mr Russell came highly commended from the authorities at Oxford. He had a year at his command before undertaking the duties he now performs in the Indian Education Department. He spent much of this year in and about Whitechapel, visiting at the homes and clubs and meeting-places of the Jews. He took pains to interview officials and others concerned in the administration of law or charity, and having thus amassed his facts, he brought a fresh mind to their study.

Mr Lewis has lived for many years in Toynbee Hall. He is a Jew and a Cambridge graduate, a Wrangler and an Oriental scholar. He has as a teacher in elementary schools, as a visitor for relief, as a school-manager, as an agent for the Children's Holiday Fund, and as a member of the Whitechapel District Board of Works come into close and various contact with his neighbours. He

is familiar among all sorts and conditions of people.

Mr Arkell has had the great advantage of working with Mr Charles Booth, and with him did the maps which illustrate his *Life and Labour of London*.

Both Mr Russell and Mr Lewis had at their command the resources of Toynbee Hall. This place, representing not one set of opinion but many sets, having as its residents men of strong faith and different faith, both political and religious, has generally avoided partisan suspicion. Jews and Gentiles alike are therefore in relation with its activities, and have been ready to put their information at the service of the essayists. They, sharing in the life of Toynbee Hall, have regarded this effort as one in which they are called to help, and have, when it has been possible, provided an open door by which the inquirers could enter.

But it is the residents of the place—

the succession of the men from the Universities who follow one another in making their home for a few years in Whitechapel—from whom much help was obtained. These men have an accumulation of experience, impressions hardly noticed, memories interwoven with memories, opinions which have grown without being formed, knowledge which is perhaps most intimate because unconscious. From them the writers in familiar conversation have been able to get light which has sometimes given another aspect to facts, and they have had, as it were, the use of many eyes, ears and minds in forming their judgments.

The Council of Toynbee Hall—acting as trustees for the fund—settled the subjects and chose the writers. I have no authority to speak for them, but speaking for myself, I can express the hope that, whatever policy in their dealings with the Jews these essays may lead their readers to favour, the chief effect will be to do away with

the prejudices which are founded either on the selfishness which is jealous of the Jews' success or on the ignorance which is irritated at their different habits and opinions.

SAMUEL A. BARNETT.

JEWISH EAST LONDON

NOTES ON MAP

SINCE the days of Cromwell the Jews have lived near the eastern boundary of the City, but the great increase of their numbers and their spread over a large part of East London is a matter of comparatively recent date.

The map of Jewish East London has been prepared to show the extent of the Jewish settlement, which has grown up around the old Ghetto by the City walls, and also the proportions of Jew and Gentile resident in the district. While the map embraces the great Jewish area of East London, it has not been thought necessary to extend it so as to include some minor

Jewish colonies, such as that in Dalston around Sandringham Road or in Hackney, north of Victoria Park. They have been omitted as, although in these and a few other outlying districts, the Jews are a noticeable component of the population, their numbers are small when compared with the central mass of their co-religionists, and they are far from being the dominant factor in the neighbourhood in which they live. A district extending from Bow to Limehouse on the one hand, to Shoreditch and the City of London on the other is thus included in the map.

The information possessed by the London School Board, covering the whole area of the inquiry, would, it was thought, form the best basis for a comparative statement, and our thanks are due to the Board for kindly permitting their officers to assist in the work, as well as to the Superintendents of Visitors of the Tower Hamlets and Hackney Divisions for their co-operation.

Nor must the intimate local knowledge and sympathetic help of the Visitors be forgotten, for without these the work would have been much more difficult.

The School Board Visitors' schedules contain particulars of all families with children of school age, and the officers make a note of all infants as possible future scholars, so that, practically, information was available respecting all families with children under fourteen years of age.

These particulars have been taken out street by street, the Jewish families being distinguished from the non-Jewish. The characteristics of the Jews are many and distinctive; Christian name and surname, the school to which the children go, the observance of the Jewish holidays, etc.; all these tokens are so clear that it proved comparatively easy to discriminate.

In dealing with the information thus obtained an assumption has been made similar to that made by Mr Charles Booth in his

inquiry concerning London poverty, *i.e.*, that the proportion of Jews and Gentiles in the homes where there are no children is the same as amongst the families appearing on the schedules. Jewish families being usually larger than those of their fellow-townsmen, the proportions have been calculated on the number of parents and children instead of the number of families. Generally the street is taken as the unit, but it was found possible to deal with the longer streets in sections, whilst local concentrations of either Jew or Gentile have been treated separately. Registered lodging-houses and other places where family life does not obtain were another source of possible error, and for these, allowances have been made; while hospitals, workhouses and other large public institutions have been left uncoloured.

For graphic representation the inhabitants of the area have been divided into six classes, each represented on the map by a separate tint ranging from bright red to dark blue,

the red tints becoming lighter and the blues darker as the proportion of Jews increases. The scheme of colour is as under :

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Less than 5 per cent. of Jews | Red |
| 2. 5 per cent. and less than 25 per cent. of Jews, Lt. red | |
| 3. 25 per cent. „ 50 per cent. „ | Pink |
| 4. 50 per cent. „ 75 per cent. „ | Light blue |
| 5. 75 per cent. „ 95 per cent. „ | Med. blue |
| 6. 95 per cent. to 100 per cent. of Jews . | Dark blue |

While the dark blue and red represent respectively a practically Jewish or Gentile population, the five per cent. allowance in classes six and one has been made so that the presence of a single family diverse from the rest might not create a false impression. It will also be noted that in all the streets coloured blue the majority of the people are Jewish.

Within the area represented the proportion of Jews varies; the population being almost entirely Jewish near the City, and becoming gradually less so as we recede from that centre, until at the extreme east

this element is lost amid the mass of typical East-enders.

The portion bounded on the City side by the Minories, Houndsditch and Bishopsgate, north by the Great Eastern Railway and Buxton Street, and South by Cable Street, forms the central Jewish area. Within its bounds are several well-defined intensely Jewish districts :

- (1). That inclosed by Houndsditch and Commercial Street, and Whitechapel High Street and White's Row.
- (2). The old Tenter Ground between Great Alie Street and Great Prescott Street.
- (3). The portion of St George's North, betwixt Cannon Street Road and Backchurch Lane. This area is even more Jewish than it appears, the percentage of Jews in many of the streets being nearly as high as in the darker patches.
- (4). The triangle formed by Commercial

Street, Old Montague Street and Hanbury Street.

In these areas it will be noted that the division between Jew and Gentile is usually sharply defined. In Spitalfields most of the red patches represent registered lodging - houses. In St George's East the streets coloured red are strongholds of the London labouring people, carmen, dockers, etc., mainly Irish, who have no dealings with the Jews and will not live with them. Broken windows and other forcible arguments have not infrequently been used to convince the unlucky Jew, who has had the temerity to take up his abode in these streets, that for him, at least, they are not desirable homes. Some of the smaller courts still resist the Jewish tide, the landlords objecting to Jewish tenants, and a similar prejudice keeps the Jew out of a few block dwellings, whilst in others, restrictions as to family and other matters are equally

effective, although not imposed with this object.

The gradual spread of the Jews, due partly to immigration and partly to the normal increase of a prolific people, has followed what may be termed the path of least resistance. From Whitechapel the outflowing wave has moved along the great highways, especially Whitechapel Road and Commercial Road, and into the streets immediately off these thoroughfares. In streets not directly connected with the main roads, and not readily reached, the influx has been slow and is comparatively recent. In some long streets directly connected with a main road, a distinct difference may be noted between the near and remote ends of the street. Bancroft Road is an example of this kind. The same tendency to spread along the main thoroughfares is seen in the outlying portions, smaller waves flowing along the Cam-

bridge Road, Green Street and Coborn Road.

Besides the outward trend, due primarily to increase of population, other causes affect the distribution, chief among these being the ownership of the dwellings and the displacements consequent on rebuilding. Some landlords will not let to Jews, whilst others invariably prefer Jewish tenants because a higher rent can be extracted from them, at least this is the reason assigned by unkind critics. Rebuilding is an important factor in the movement, and whenever houses are rebuilt or, as is more usual, replaced by tenement dwellings, the proportion of Jews sensibly increases. Numerous instances of these variations might be cited but a few will suffice. Displacements due to change of ownership are frequently concealed in the map, the property being in small holdings, but it is noticeable in small courts, where a single owner is

usual. Challis Court, Waterloo Court, Wellington Buildings and other courts in St George's East, are examples of this class of change. All were Christian until a few years ago, but are now entirely Jewish, the properties having been sold, rents raised and the old tenants replaced. Lucas Street is specially noticeable in this connection; the west side, owned by Jewish landlords, being over sixty per cent. Jewish as compared with twenty per cent. on the other side. Of changes due to rebuilding the eastern part of Underwood Street is an example, as are the Ravenscroft Buildings near Hackney Road and the dwellings off Stepney Green. Perhaps the most noticeable instance is the London County Council dwellings at Shoreditch, more than half the inhabitants being Jewish in Marlowe Buildings and some other blocks, while in the old Jago the Jew was hardly found.

Whilst these changes hasten the Judaisa-

tion of East London, other causes resist this general tendency in places. Race prejudice is strong. The antagonism of the Irish combined with geographical and industrial causes, has kept Wapping free from Jews, none being found between the Gravel Lane and Wapping Bridges. whilst, as already mentioned, there are several streets in St George's East without a Jew, in close proximity to strongly Jewish streets. Houses are held by employers for their work-people; most of the breweries provide dwellings for some of their men. The landlords' objection to Hebrew tenants, especially in the case of large blocks of dwellings owned by companies, is a potent factor, as in the dwellings erected by the Great Eastern Railway Company and mostly occupied by railway men; also the Albert and Metropolitan Buildings in Mile End New Town, where Jews are not admitted as tenants.

Of the future of these districts there

is little doubt but that they must soon become almost entirely Jewish. Within the last four or five years the movement has been rapid in the district east of Bedford Street. Streets that a few years back were English and non-Jewish, have now a number of Jews, and the gradual process of the substitution of a Jewish family for a former occupant is transforming the neighbourhood; whilst, if a Jewish family remove, the key of the house will certainly be sold to a co-religionist. In addition to this, the pressure due to demolitions of houses near the City for warehouses, railway extensions and business premises, constantly compelling the inhabitants of this district to seek new homes, tends to increase rather than diminish, and with it the change in the outer district may be expected to keep pace.

There are signs, however, that future growth may not follow the lines of the past. The Jewish authorities have seen

the evils of the crowded area in East London, and are making efforts to induce their people to settle in the outskirts. The more reasonable rents demanded in the outer suburbs add force to the argument, and we may hope that, so far as the central area is concerned, the congestion of the Jewish colony has reached its limits.

The information was collected between March and October 1899, and the map represents with fair accuracy the condition of things obtaining in the summer of that year. Some changes have taken place since then, the most noticeable being the commencement of the clearance of the courts and alleys between Middlesex Street and Bell Lane.

THE JEW IN LONDON

I

BY C. RUSSELL, B.A.

I

THE JEWISH QUESTION IN THE EAST END*

I.—INTRODUCTORY

IT would perhaps be correct to say that ^{A Cosmo-}the Jewish question all over the world is ^{politan}one and indivisible. None of the local ^{Question}

* The following essay is the result of studies and inquiries which have occupied me for about a year. I have received assistance from a great variety of sources, but especially from many members of the Jewish community, whose kindness and courtesy in giving help has added greatly to the pleasantness of my work. I must, however, content myself with a general acknowledgment of my obligations. It is not only that detailed acknowledgments would involve too long a list, but few, perhaps, of those to whom my thanks are due would care to have even the semblance of responsibility for my conclusions. As Mr H. S. Lewis, however, speaks for himself, I may take this opportunity of confessing my indebtedness to him. Between my conclusions and his the reader must be the judge. It is fair to explain that Mr Lewis has an intimate and familiar knowledge of the Whitechapel Jewry with which my brief experience cannot be compared. But while there are, no doubt, advantages in seeing a subject from the inside, it is also sometimes an advantage to see it freshly and with wholly unbiassed eyes; and this may possibly be a case in which an outsider has a better chance of appreciating the broader tendencies which are at work.

problems which the presence of a Jewish population creates can be treated satisfactorily in isolation from the rest. They are all merged in a single huge problem. Two features of the Jewish character are mainly accountable for this; and they are among the commonplaces of the subject. One is the peculiar 'solidarity' which holds the Jewish race together; the other is the no less remarkable 'adaptability' which allows continuous changes to take place in its character and distribution. Thus the Jewish community of the East End has on the one hand been largely dependent, for the support of its institutions and the guidance of its affairs, upon the Jews of Hampstead and Bayswater. On the other hand, its condition is affected even more by the amount of foreign immigration. This in its turn is largely determined by events in Russian Poland. The Whitechapel problem thus turns out to be European in scope, and

it is not much less bewildering in its inner complexity than in the immense range over which it spreads itself. Besides being part of a larger question, it contains a multitude of smaller ones, and opens up a field of inquiry in which racial, industrial and religious questions are bound up with one another, and refuse to be dissociated.

There is one problem, however, the National-
isation problem of the 'nationalisation' of the Jew, which recurs wherever the children of Israel have pitched their tents. Superficially, at any rate, they have a marvellous faculty of adapting themselves to a new environment. They are quick at picking up new habits and ideas, and doubtless they make genuine efforts to assimilate themselves. But it is everywhere a question how far they can be said to really assume the nationality of their adopted country. To the Gentile, at any rate, this point is of central interest in all Jewish affairs, and it is a point which, to

some extent, admits of isolated treatment. Different experiments are being tried in different parts of the world, and in each case the result may be judged, more or less provisionally, upon its own merits. The following essay is an attempt to indicate some of the bearings of this problem as it presents itself in the East End of London, and to estimate as fairly as may be the results which are likely to be worked out by the Anglo-Jewish method of solving it. For it will readily be seen that the Jewish question, as it presents itself in the East End, has a variety of peculiar features; and it is fair to add that in recent years it has been presenting itself to the leaders of the Anglo-Jewish community under circumstances of peculiar difficulty.

These circumstances may be said to date from the outbreak of Russian Anti-Semitism in 1881, which let loose a flood of Jewish immigrants. Huge numbers of

them arrived in London in a pitiable and more or less destitute condition. Dirty, poverty-stricken, and degraded alike in morals and physique by the oppressive conditions of their Ghetto-life in Russia, they seemed by no means a promising addition to the country's strength, and it was hardly to be expected that they would be received as welcome guests. Their British co-religionists, however, would not—perhaps did not dare to—disown responsibility for them, and accordingly found themselves confronted with a very formidable task. The invasion of the country by hordes of hungry Israelites, who seemed unfairly qualified for success in the industrial market by the combination of a sleuth-hound instinct for gain, with 'an indefinitely low standard of life,' naturally stirred up a certain amount of jealous hostility among the working-classes. To disarm this hostility, by removing all just grounds for it, was a task that called

for tact and prudence, besides entailing a large expenditure. Through the Jewish Board of Guardians, however, and the Russo-Jewish Committee, the community took the matter in hand with admirable shrewdness and energy, and if they cannot be said to have stemmed the tide of immigration, did very much to lessen its evil effects. Numbers of immigrants were sent on to America or the colonies, and many of the least promising cases were repatriated; while every effort was made to improve the conditions of those who remained. Loans, allowances and relief in various forms were granted to numbers of the poorer applicants, and an inspector was appointed to insure the better sanitation of their homes. By a system of hiring out sewing-machines, the industry of the foreigners had already been directed into a channel for which it proved itself conspicuously qualified, and at the same time was able to partially exonerate itself

from the charge of unfair competition with English labour. Efforts were also made to 'Anglicise' the new arrivals in language, habits and ideas, and these again (at any-rate in the case of the rising generation), have proved themselves astonishingly successful. The crisis was thus tided over, and a possible burst of Anti-Semitism was averted; but the situation is still one that requires constant watchfulness on the part of the English Jews. Their burden was lightened, it is true, towards the end of the decade, by a considerable slackening in the rush of immigration. But at the present moment it appears to be again increasing,* and in any case it would be idle to imagine that the immigration difficulty is disposed of, so long as we are liable to be inundated afresh by

* There is no available material for anything like a trustworthy statistical estimate of the number of immigrants who come here to stay. Such evidence, however, as is obtainable, points to the fact that the influx of Russian and Polish Jews has increased to a considerable extent in the last few years (*v.* Board of Trade Report on 'Immigration and Emigration.')

any new or reactionary departure in the policy of the Russian Government. And it will appear further on that the British workman still has certain grievances against the foreign Jew that are not wholly imaginary.

Scope and
Purpose of
this Essay

It is a subject that has hitherto been generally treated from the economic side. Whether the Jewish immigrant is, on the whole, a blessing or a curse to the East End, is not, however, by any means a purely economic question. It is commonly said that he contributes nothing to the strength of the nation; and whether this charge is just depends mainly on the extent to which he enters into the nation's life. So long as the Jews remain an isolated and peculiar people, self-centred in their organisation, and fundamentally alien in their ideas and aims, the rapid growth of their community can hardly be regarded with complete satisfaction. The more prosperous and successful they become, the more hostility

and jealousy are likely to be aroused by their presence; and it is conceivable that they might develop into an actual source of danger. A 'state within a state' is generally recognised as an undesirable anomaly; and so long as the Jews remain independent and unabsorbed, they must expect to be regarded as strangers in the land. Now, it is obvious that as circumstances at present stand, the East End Jews must be regarded as in effect an alien community. A considerable proportion of them speak a foreign tongue; while in religion, in character and habits, and in social and industrial organisation, they are marked off from their neighbours by peculiar features. It is the object of this essay to inquire how far these peculiarities appear to be of a permanent or an eradicable nature, and how far they constitute — or are likely in the future to constitute—an impassable barrier between Jewry and the outer world.

It is a question which presents itself under three more or less distinguishable aspects.

There is :—

- (1). The general social question : How far do the Jewish and Gentile population mingle with and mutually affect one another? Is there any appreciable tendency towards a closer amalgamation?
- (2). The industrial question : What is the effect of economic conditions in maintaining or diminishing on the one hand the isolation, and on the other the unpopularity of the Jewish race?
- (3). The religious question : How far is the 'separateness' of the Jewish community due to the tribal and exclusive character of Judaism? And how far is their religion likely to exercise a lasting influence in this direction?

It is quite obvious—and perhaps it will

become even more obvious as we proceed—that the three questions are intimately connected. They overlap one another along the whole line, and are bound together by numberless and intricate threads of causation. But, for the sake of convenience, it is perhaps simpler to consider each under a separate heading.

II.—THE SOCIAL QUESTION *

Jewish
Population

THE total Jewish population of London may be very roughly estimated at 110,000, of whom about 100,000 live in the East End; and out of these something like 60,000 have been born abroad.† That their numbers are rapidly increasing is beyond dispute; though it is questionable whether the bulk of this increase is due to immigration or to the extraordinarily prolific character of Jewish marriages. There is little doubt, however, that it is considerably augmented from both sources. The area covered by the Jewish quarter is extending its limits every year.

* For a concrete picture of social life in the East End Jewry the reader is recommended to study Mr Zangwill's 'Children of the Ghetto,' and to supplement it with Mrs Sidney Webb's admirable sketch of 'The Jewish Community' in *Life and Labour of the People* (Vol. III.)

† Appendix A.

Overflowing the boundaries of Whitechapel, they are spreading northward and eastward into Bethnal Green and Mile End, and southward into St George's-in-the-East; while further away in Hackney and Shore-ditch to the north, and Stepney, Limehouse and Bow to the east, a rather more prosperous and less foreign element has established itself, and formed new centres for the growth of the community. And beyond this there is a considerable migration into remote parts of London,—notably into the district of Soho, where the Jewish tailoring industry is rapidly establishing itself over an increasing area.

Dirt, overcrowding, industry and sobriety may be set down as the most conspicuous features of these foreign settlements. In many cases they have completely transformed the character of the neighbourhood. There are certain districts of Whitechapel, which—before they were over-run by the foreigners—were haunted by roughs and

Effect on
the Neigh-
bourhood

criminals of the worst description, and had as evil a reputation as any slums in London. These are now exceptionally quiet and orderly; and, except in school hours, generally alive with swarms of small children whose brightness, decency of garb, and apparent enjoyment of life give almost a sunny aspect to their surroundings. The change, indeed, is perhaps rather more superficially striking than it deserves to be. It must not be supposed that it is wholly from black to white, or that the criminal element has completely vanished. The foreign Jew avoids the grosser and more outrageous forms of crime; but he errs in the direction of what his enemies would call the meaner, and his friends the less brutal vices. He has few scruples and sometimes considerable ability in such matters as perjury and swindling; and often rouses disgust in those who come across him by what an English workman described to me as his 'crawlin' under'and ways.' It is also well-known

that he is an inveterate gambler. Numerous police reports and the recent agitation for a Jewish industrial school, further seem to testify to the growth of a class of youthful pick-pockets in the community. There are many respects, in short, in which the Judaised districts are still capable of improvement; but it may be said that the ruffian element and the hopelessly degraded type of home have entirely disappeared. There are, of course, other causes besides the expansion of the Jewish quarter which have contributed to this change; but the Jews are entitled to a share in the credit. There is something very typical of the Jewish character in the way in which, under the protection of a policeman's whistle, they obtain a footing in such districts and quietly displace the former population. I have heard a bitter opponent of the foreign immigrants (himself, by the way, an English Jew) violently denouncing their masterful progress and encroachment, and in the same

breath instancing certain streets in Bethnal Green, which are now inhabited by foreigners, and a few years ago were so full of ruffians that he hardly dared to pass through them, even by daylight. It is a process in which the meek effectively assert their title to the inheritance of the earth.

Anti-Jewish
Feeling

In those districts on the edge of the foreign quarter, where the native population is thus being driven out, there is naturally a considerable amount of hostile feeling. And seeing that the method by which this victorious progress is achieved commonly consists in paying abnormally high rents, and defraying the expense, in defiance of all laws of decency or sanitation, by taking in a sufficient quantity of lodgers, the indignation which is aroused is by no means groundless or unjust. At the present moment this is the most widespread and acute grievance against the foreign element; and it is undeniable that it opens up some very serious questions. The evil

High
Rents and
Over-
crowding

of a system of high rents maintained by overcrowding is one that it would be hard to exaggerate; and under present conditions there seems to be little hope of improvement. For the landlords are to be reckoned with as well as the tenants; and a good deal of house property has lately changed hands, and been bought up—purely as an investment—by the shrewder and wealthier among the foreigners themselves. As such investments are extremely profitable, the example of these small capitalists seems likely to be followed; and it appears probable that rent in these districts may go on rising indefinitely, and no doubt causing a proportionate rise in all the neighbouring districts. When there is a very limited supply of house-room and a rapidly growing demand, it is hardly to be expected that rents will remain moderate. A certain amount of weight, no doubt, is thrown into the other scale by philanthropic building enterprises; but beyond this there

seems to be no remedy except in the enforcement of the sanitary law ; and it is a case in which it seems almost impossible for inspection to be made thoroughly efficient.*

Causes of
Congestion

The causes of this abnormal demand for houses within the Jewish quarter are not very far to seek. It is natural for a race of strangers to herd together ; and in the case of Jews who wish to observe strictly the ordinances of their religion, it is absolutely necessary for them to remain in the region of synagogues and 'kosher' meat. Thus the newly-arrived immigrant probably, in the first instance, takes up his quarters with a relative or 'landsmann' ; and in any case it is out of the question for him to go far afield until he has mastered the English language. And the Yiddish-speaking community is at once so large

Language

* Since the above was written the rent question has reached a much more acute stage ; but a vigorous agitation has done something to check many of the grosser evils of house-speculation.

and so socially isolated that, for the adult immigrant, there is little need to put himself to this trouble. With the children, indeed, who have passed through an elementary school the case is very different; but even these after they have grown up, seem often to remain in the district, out of regard to the feelings of their parents, who are perhaps dependent on them for support. Beyond all this, there are naturally strong inducements to remain in a district which is full of Jewish institutions. Charitable ^{Charities} relief may there be obtained from a great variety of sources, ranging from the Board of Guardians in Middlesex Street down to the free Medical Missions of the conversionist societies; and there is every facility for the training of their children,—from the great Free School in Bell Lane, ^{Free School and 'Chedarim'} which provides free clothing and free meals, along with an admirable elementary education, down to the small and frequently insanitary 'Chedarim,' where a foreign 'Melammed'

sometimes charges as much as two shillings or half-a-crown a week, for instilling a probably ephemeral knowledge of the Hebrew language. Amongst other attractions must be reckoned the daily market in Wentworth Street, where commodities and prices are adapted to their demands.

Industrial
Centre

A further cause of the permanent congestion of the Jewish population is to be found in industrial conditions. Whitechapel is the great centre of the typically Jewish trades; and in these trades employment in the slack season is generally so uncertain, and the hours of work in the busy season so long, that it is a great convenience and advantage for a man to live in the immediate neighbourhood of his work. And in the tailoring trade, at any rate, it is almost necessary for workshops to be within easy reach of the City, as work is constantly being sent to and fro; so that as far as their industry is concerned there seems to be little hope of any very wide dispersion.

But beyond these special causes, a good deal must be set down to the general character and habits of the immigrants. In the first place, they have no particular objection to overcrowding. They have been thoroughly inured to the worst conditions in their native country; and what to an Englishman would be intolerable is scarcely a hardship to the newly-arrived immigrant from Poland. He does not expect to live prosperously at once; and while he is occupied in gaining a footing in his new home he is ready to lower his standard of life indefinitely. And in the second place, there is a strongly sociable and clannish spirit among the Jews which naturally draws them together; and in the case of the fresh immigrant this is intensified by a sharp distrust and suspicion — not only of all ‘goyim’ or Gentiles—but even of English Jews, whom he regards as little better, and as quite fallen away from the orthodox tenets of Judaism.

Russo-
Jewish
Character

Efforts at
Anglicisa-
tion

This local concentration is, of course, a great obstacle to the 'Anglicisation' of the foreign Jews. But in spite of this, a surprising measure of success seems to attend the efforts of the Anglo-Jewish community in that direction. The system of apprenticeship adopted by the Board of Guardians and the Location and Information Bureau of the Russo-Jewish Committee, both make it their object to relieve the strain upon the 'congested' industries and districts. It is true that only a tiny proportion of the community is directly affected by these measures, and a considerable amount of opposition is encountered, on the grounds that they are likely to result in compulsory Sabbath-breaking, and the consequent undermining of Judaism; but on the whole they seem to have quite an appreciable effect. A similar suspicion seems to have been entertained even in regard to the teaching of English; but the free evening classes organised for that purpose by the Russo-

Jewish Committee appear to be increasingly effective. Thus according to a late report 'the number of individual attendances at the classes in the year 1896-97 amounted to 57,684, a number considerably larger than the total of any year since the classes were started,' and 'the Committee believe that a certain prejudice which was experienced to a limited extent when the classes were first started has now entirely passed away, and illusory ideas as to any possible religious decadence being likely to result from the preliminary step of learning English in the process of becoming "Anglicised" are no longer entertained.' Whether such ideas are quite as 'illusory' as is here maintained is a point with which I propose to deal further on; but the decreased suspicion must be taken as evidence of a gradual modification of tone and attitude.

The 'Anglicising' process, however, cannot be said to be very widely or thoroughly effective, except in the case of the rising

Their Success in Case of Children

generation. Here the transformation effected by an English training is astonishing in its completeness. All the children who pass through an elementary school may be said to grow up into 'English Jews'; and in this phrase there is implied almost a world of difference. This, in fact, is one of the central features of the whole Anglo-Jewish question. There appears to be almost a stronger line of severance between the English and foreign Jew than between the English Jew and Gentile. In habits, ideas and religion they are fundamentally distinct; and when they come much into contact there is even mutual hostility and contempt. In Whitechapel the bitterest enemies of the foreign immigrant that I have come across have been English Jews; while the foreigners are commonly shocked and scandalised at the laxity in faith, and the shamelessly 'non-observant' lives of their English co-religionists. Charges of hypocrisy on the one side, and of flagrant impiety on the

English and
Foreign
Jews

other, are freely preferred ; and in secular, as in religious interests, the two sections appear to have little in common. The same line is drawn very clearly by public opinion among the Gentile population. English Jews I have found to be surprisingly popular. They are pronounced to be good fellows, and 'just like us Christians.' They spend their money freely and 'have the best of everything' ; and command respect, especially amongst the *habitués* of the public-house, by the lordly style in which they take their pleasures. Foreigners, on the other hand, are for the most part, cordially disliked. They are accused of cutting down wages, of displacing British labour, of dealing solely with one another, and generally of being dirty and disreputable members of society. It is true that this ill-feeling is by no means universal, and does not, except under special circumstances, amount to anything like a bitter hostility ; but it presents a sufficiently marked contrast to the friendly

feeling which is generally entertained towards the English Jews.

Drawbacks
of Angli-
cisation

The process of 'Anglicising' foreign children is so far eminently successful ; but, unfortunately, it can hardly be claimed that it is a process of unalloyed improvement. While outgrowing many of the virtues of their fathers, they are apt to pick up the fashionable vices of their adopted country. If swearing, betting and a passion for the turf are to be taken as the hall-marks of our nationality, the young English Jew of Whitechapel must be allowed to be British to the core. Drunkenness, it is true, he does not affect ; though he drinks a good deal, he drinks circumspectly, and rarely, if ever, falls a victim to the passion for alcohol. He inherits, in fact, the prudence, temperance and self-mastery, which centuries of harsh discipline have impressed on the Jewish character ; while he loses much of the devotion, religious enthusiasm and intense inner life which

belong to the adherents of a persecuted faith. The Ghetto-type is strangely compounded of superstitions, meannesses and ideal aspirations; and the process of emancipation is naturally ambiguous in its results. What is gained in breadth is lost in depth; and it is perhaps questionable whether, on the whole, the English-bred Jews are as respectable a human species as their foreign parents. But, although the two types seem tolerably well marked, there is, of course, a sufficient gradation and variety of character in each to make any reasoning upon such a question more or less vague and unsatisfactory.

How far the peculiarities of the Jewish mind and temperament are, on the one hand, hereditary, and, on the other, due to education and environment,* is too

* It would be interesting to work out the bearings of Jewish history upon the scientific controversy concerning the inheritance of acquired qualities. It is perhaps noteworthy that in ordinary conversation upon any point of Jewish psychology, it is an almost invariable assumption that such transmission has taken place.

Education

large and complex a question to be fairly within the scope of this essay. But the part which education has played in the formation and development of a Jewish type is certainly too important to be passed over. It is true that so far as this education has been peculiarly Jewish, it has always been religious rather than secular in character; and the discussion of it should, therefore, perhaps be deferred. But it is worth while to remark the general agreement as to its efficacy in sharpening the intelligence, and developing that power of subtle and abstract calculation, which has contributed so largely to the competitive success and progress of the Jewish race. The Jews have always been 'a nation of students.' The Talmud sets the scholar above the king; and a thorough training in Hebrew is still held a matter of the highest importance. Five is recognised as the proper age at which a child should begin to

study the Law; and a pious parent is ready to make almost any sacrifice to secure what is, in his eyes, a thorough and competent instruction for his children.

It is true that this sort of education, Teaching of Hebrew being valued purely from the religious standpoint, is apt to be mechanical and superficial. The object in the first instance is to enable the child to follow the synagogue service, and understand the portion of the Law which is appointed to be read for each week. Hence the faculty of speedy translation is apt to be cultivated at the cost of thoroughness and full comprehension. And, to an outsider, at any rate, the rapid sing-song in which the sacred writings are commonly read and translated, appears hardly compatible with a very intelligent grasp or appreciation of their meaning. This, however, is a matter upon which a Gentile's impression is probably worthless; and the educational value of this teaching certainly

seems to be well established by its results. The foreign children at the East End board schools are universally allowed to be sharper and more intelligent than the English, and they carry off a large proportion of prizes and scholarships. There can be little doubt that this is due, in part at any rate, to the extra teaching which they receive in Hebrew.* The study of the Law is, in fact, a sort of classical education for them; and, no doubt, it has something of the same effect, on a narrower scale, as the study of Greek and Latin has on the average English schoolboy. Both are rather mechanically imbibed, and to all practical purposes forgotten very shortly after leaving school; but both have some permanent effect in the training and development of the mind. The study of languages, indeed—and in a special degree of dead languages

* Two other considerations, however, must be allowed some weight: (1) the greater precocity of Jewish children; (2) the greater stimulus and encouragement afforded in Jewish homes.

—seems to have an educational value that can hardly be supplied from any other source. The task of recognising ideas which are disguised in a totally different medium of expression involves a certain degree of actual mental exercise that can hardly be evaded. A boy is obliged to use his head in a way that is quite uncalled for, so long as it is merely treated as a passive receptacle for facts and names. Moreover, it must be remembered that the original and native language of the foreign child is 'Yiddish'—a 'jargon' which mainly consists of bad German—and that besides learning English he has this Hebrew education superadded. He is thus practically a master of three languages; and it is evident that the degree of mental activity which this implies must be very considerable. There is little doubt, in fact, that it is, on the whole, excessive. Such a training is too purely intellectual, and involves too much

Defects of
Cheder
Training

strain upon the intellectual faculties. The school hours of some of the children who attend *cheder* as well as an elementary school, seem to be almost incredibly long, and have a very serious effect upon their physique. Moreover, by the time a child leaves school he is apt to be worn out in mind as well as in body; such abnormal and forced development of the brain-power in early years is bound to be followed by a reaction.

There is, however, a certain toughness of fibre in the mental, as well as the physical constitution of the Jew, which, no doubt, makes the evil effect of such a system much less considerable than might have been anticipated. Still, its net result is, in many respects, unsatisfactory. The mental energy which it absorbs might be directed into more profitable channels. For the instruction thus given seems to have little, if any, direct bearing upon after-life. In Russia, of course,

it is a necessary preparation for a life in which almost every detail is regulated by a religious code; and in the eyes of the Russian parent who has settled in Whitechapel, this is still presumably its end and purpose. But in England the alien influences under which the child grows up almost invariably seem to prove too strong; and as soon as he leaves *cheder*, he practically leaves the Judaism of the Polish Ghetto behind him; and the devout intentions of his parents are frustrated. When the child has celebrated his *Barmitzvah* or religious majority (at the age of thirteen), his parents' responsibility ceases, and with it, apparently, the growth of the spiritual or Judaic half of his nature. From that point his development is upon purely secular lines. One or two *Melammedim* (Hebrew teachers) have admitted to me, mournfully, that Hebrew studies are scarcely ever prosecuted beyond school age; and a very unfavourable contrast is

drawn between the state of things in England and in Russia. There are, no doubt, exceptions, but this seems to be a general rule. The younger portion of the community bears a reputation for impiety, which does not speak highly for the efficacy of its *cheder* education. This must be judged, therefore, wholly by its value as an intellectual training. As religious teaching, it appears that it does not, as a rule, serve the purpose for which it is intended; and for what are commonly called 'practical' ends it is obviously quite useless.

Effect of
chedarim
as a Check
to Assimi-
lation

But we are here mainly concerned with its effects in modifying or retarding the process of assimilation. The hours spent in the *cheder* must have some tendency to counteract the purely English training of the elementary school. The child is here impressed with the fact that he is a Jew and different from English children; and, if he has any imagination, he is

perhaps moved by the idea that his people are exiles in a strange land. In a large majority of the *chedarim*, moreover, the teaching is given in 'Yiddish'; and in some the standard of cleanliness and ventilation is more Polish than English. Such conditions, no doubt, exercise some degree of retarding influence; but, on the whole, it does not appear to be considerable. In many cases, no doubt, it is more than counteracted by the disgust which children acquire for all that is associated with such surroundings. Among the orthodox Jews of Whitechapel the increasing laxity and indifference of the rising generation is commonly recognised and deplored. As they grow up and make money and mingle with Christians, they bring themselves more and more under de-judaising influences. They lose the sense of racial and religious separateness, and, with English habits and ideas, acquire something of English stolidity and inertia. The idealistic

and enthusiastic elements of character which their parents imported from Poland do not seem to take root in English soil. Nominally, they remain Jewish in religion; but religion is no longer one of the vital and potent factors in their life.

Whether the transition should, on the whole, be called an improvement depends largely on the point of view.

The Angli-
cised Jew

Whether the English Jew is a better man than his foreign parent is open to question, but it can hardly be disputed that he is a better citizen. His secular interests are less bounded by his home and family, and he plays his part in local politics. There is a loss, no doubt, of many of the finer qualities which are bound up with a strong religious feeling; but there is a gain in cleanliness and self-respect. The English Jew, moreover, is often an ardent patriot; he is proud of being an Englishman, and seems generally to regard his foreign co-religionists from

the English rather than the Jewish standpoint. Except, perhaps, in business matters, he has quite a different set of virtues and vices. In business he remains a Jew in shrewdness and capacity, and often in unscrupulousness as well;* though palpable lying and cheating are less characteristic of him than of his foreign brethren. Much of this change of character is, of course, due to emergence from poverty; a fairly prosperous man has little to tempt him into many of the meaner vices. He acknowledges a standard of respectability which may not be a very lofty one, but none the less acts as a safeguard against certain anti-social tendencies. Similarly, he has failings to which poverty is not liable,

* The commonly received opinion that the standard of commercial ethics as recognised by Jews is, on the whole, somewhat lower than that acknowledged by the rest of the world may possibly be mere 'prejudice'; and doubtless an element of prejudice often enters into it. But if so, it is a prejudice not wholly confined to Gentiles. In a recent interesting discussion in 'Young Israel' of the supposed unpopularity of Jews and its causes, there are some cogent remarks on this point.

Significance
of the
Change

Great importance must evidently be attached to this change in social character. It would perhaps be difficult to exaggerate the contrast between the typical immigrant and the typical English Jew. It should be remembered, however, that such a comparison must always be in some degree misleading. The gradual character and frequent incompleteness of the change is apt to be left out of sight. In a great number of cases the process is arrested at various stages; and the total change is, perhaps, not generally accomplished in a single generation. Many generations, in fact, are likely to pass before all traces of the Ghetto can be eradicated. Still, up to a certain point, the process of adaptation is marvellously rapid, and suggests that a complete amalgamation with Gentiles may be the final, and possibly not very distant, solution of the Jewish problem.

The present tendency in this direction

certainly seems to be a strong one; although there are many counteracting forces. A main obstacle is the rigid prohibition of intermarriage which is one of the articles of the Jewish religion; and perhaps the safest test that could be used to measure any such tendency would be given by the number of mixed marriages. But, unfortunately, it is a point on which it is impossible to get any statistical evidence. There seems, however, to be a fairly general impression that the number is increasing; and looking at the matter from an *a priori* standpoint, it is certainly hard to see how it can be effectually discountenanced, so long as 'Anglicisation' and social intercourse with Gentiles are encouraged. In this respect, indeed, the policy adopted by those who are in authority in the Anglo-Jewish community often seems to be in contradiction with itself. Facts seem to show that their two objects—of converting Jews into Englishmen and of

Inter-marriage

Anglo-Jewish Policy

keeping them rigorously 'separate' in their Judaism — are fundamentally inconsistent. The two methods of life are, of course, just capable of combination; and among highly educated Jews there are, no doubt, a few conspicuous examples of it. But to expect that such a combination will ever become general, especially in the poorer classes, is to expect a very astonishing piece of psychological development. Mixture with Englishmen and the absorption of English ideas can hardly fail to act as a dissolving force upon the crude Judaism of the East End. The question is, of course, primarily one of religion, but it has other aspects which are important enough to make it very complex. There seems to be a strong, if more or less unconscious, tribal instinct, which often persists after religion has lost its vitality, and no doubt sometimes has a reactive influence in strengthening a failing creed. But it is not to be anticipated

that such an instinct would long survive the decay of the religious system which has hitherto preserved it. Evidence, however, of its present strength seems to be afforded by the rooted objection to inter-marriage which persists even among the laxer Jews. But it must be remembered that what is now taking place in the East End is virtually a new experiment, and has not yet had time to show any very marked or definite results. The vast majority of East End Jews are not more than a generation removed from a Russian Ghetto; and; naturally they still bear more or less trace of their origin.

But the point which gives its chief novelty and interest to the experiment is the complete absence of Anti-Semitic feeling. This is one of the most striking features of the question as it presents itself in Whitechapel; it is considerably truer of the British workman than even of the richer classes. In the higher levels

Absence of
Anti-
Semitism

of society there is still, no doubt, a certain amount of racial prejudice; it is not uncommon to meet with persons who have an instinctive and quite unreasoned dislike for Jews. But in the East End there is hardly a trace of this; against the Jew as a Jew there seems to be no sort of hostile feeling. The English Jew, as has been remarked above, is surprisingly popular. And such hostility as does exist towards the foreign element is neither racial nor religious in character. It is always based either on some special grievance, whether real or imaginary, or—much more rarely—on mere insular objection to all foreign and outlandish persons. That is to say, that the ill-feeling which exists is not properly Anti-Semitic in character. It is true that on occasions it may seem to take this form, but at bottom it is something quite different. Thus an Englishman who has a personal quarrel with a Jew may very probably become an Anti-Semite for

the time being; and Jews and Christians may occasionally find themselves ranged into opposite parties upon some point of political organisation or local government. But such incidents are quite exceptional, and do not indicate any deep or widely-spread antagonism.

This absence of ill-will may be said to be a new feature in the Semitic problem; and it clearly has important bearings upon the question of assimilation. Through almost the whole of history, isolation has been forced upon the Jews by the hostile pressure of external forces, and the necessity of combination in the face of common dangers. When this pressure ceases the task of maintaining their separateness is likely to prove increasingly difficult; in the long run, it can hardly be safeguarded except in an atmosphere of more or less mutual hostility. But this safeguard, apparently, is in the course of being broken down, not only by the general drift of

social forces, but by the strenuous efforts by which the Jewish community itself endeavours to remove all source of grievances and to smooth the path of Anglicisation.

Causes of
Mutual Ill-
Feeling

It would be absurd, however, to imagine that the question is at all simple. A certain amount of mutual antagonism still prevails, though it has ceased to be racial in character, and arises from causes that are likely to be more eradicable. On the side of the Gentiles there are certain grievances, apart from the house-rent question, which are largely due to jealousy of the industrial success achieved by the foreign Jews; and when Jewish competition is acutely felt, these grievances, doubtless, often give rise to a pronounced feeling of hostility. And on the side of the foreign Jews themselves there is a certain sense of alienation from Gentiles, which is religious in its grounds, and tends to maintain a traditional aloofness from Gentile ways and Gentile

society.* As far as public opinion on either side is considered, these are the two principal sources of estrangement; and it should be remarked that neither is appreciably active in the case of the English Jew—that is to say, of the Jew who is a generation or more removed from a foreign Ghetto.

So far, therefore, the 'social question' resolves itself partly into the economic and partly into the religious; and it is to be hoped that further light may be thrown upon it in the following chapters.

* The feeling of racial superiority is doubtless much stronger on the Jewish than on the Gentile side, though, of course, it is much more carefully concealed. It is perhaps rather characteristic of the chosen people to preserve a humble demeanour in public, while privately thanking God that they are not as other men are. On the other hand, I have several times had it remarked to me by British workmen, that the poor Jews are in many respects 'a pattern to us.'

III.—THE INDUSTRIAL QUESTION

Scope of
Treatment

IT is fortunately unnecessary to attempt a thorough treatment of the various economic questions which have been raised by the advent of the Jewish workman. To discuss such a subject in all its aspects and bearings would obviously be a colossal task; and here it is only necessary to consider the condition and effects of Jewish industry in so far as they influence the relations between Jew and Gentile. The broad question with which we are concerned is this:—How far do industrial conditions tend to maintain or dissolve the existing solidarity and separateness of the Jewish community? It has been indicated already that there are two principal economic considerations

which help largely to keep up the severance of Jew and Gentile, viz. : (1) the jealousy and ill-feeling on the side of Gentiles which is based upon economic grievances, and (2) the confinement of Jewish labour to certain specifically Jewish trades.

It must first then be asked how much Economic Grievances justice there is in the common outcry against Jewish labour as an economic nuisance ; and how far Jewish competition in the labour market is likely to be a source of permanent hostility among English workmen? The question is important, because it appears that on the answer to it may depend the possibility of an outbreak of Anti-Semitism in England. It may, at least, be safely said that there is little danger of Anti-Semitism from any other source. It has been contended, however, that in the East End, conditions are almost ripe for a *Juden-hetze* ; and it is worth while to carefully examine what actual ground there may be for such an outbreak.

The whole question of the industrial effects of Jewish labour has fortunately been sifted very thoroughly in recent years; and in spite of the complexity and frequent contradictoriness of the evidence which has been produced, there seem to be certain inferences which can be drawn with confidence.

Inquiries
on the
Subject

The question of alien immigration was investigated in 1888 by a Committee of the House of Commons, and in 1889 a very exhaustive inquiry into the Sweating System was carried out by a Committee of the House of Lords. Various aspects of the question are very ably treated in Mr Charles Booth's 'Life and Labour of the People in London'; and more recently the whole question of the 'volume and effects' of alien immigration, with especial reference to the boot-trade and women's labour, has been dealt with in a report to the Board of Trade, published in 1894.

Complexity
of the Issues

One main result of these investigations

is to show the untrustworthiness of any broad and simple generalisations on the subject. They certainly do not bear out the sweeping accusations which have been brought forward against the alien immigrant. 'Pauper competition,' 'cutting down of wages,' 'displacement of labour,' are phrases that become discredited by a cool examination of the facts. The picture of foreign paupers driving British workmen into work-houses or across the seas, which gives plausibility to the anti-alien cry, has not been justified. Nor, it should be added, has the rival picture, as drawn by the alien's friends, of the immigrant Jew as a sheer benefactor, importing new industries and astonishing virtues into the country. The Jew does not suck the blood of the British workman, but neither is he a disguised angel, showering unmixed blessings wherever he sets his foot. The whole matter is, in fact, too complicated to be disposed of in any such summary fashion.

When a new factor, such as Jewish labour, is introduced into the huge and complex machinery of the industrial world, its influence is felt, not in one but in many directions; and to imagine that its total effect can be made obvious by a few simple considerations is to be ignorant of the conditions of the problem.

The Case
against the
Immigrants

It is easy to understand the sources of the hostile feeling which is naturally aroused by the presence of these foreign workmen; and certainly a strong *prima facie* case can be made out against them. They arrive in an abject and sometimes half-starved condition. They have been used to living amid the vilest surroundings, and are prepared to work for abnormally long hours, and under conditions that an English workman would not tolerate, for a wage that will barely suffice to keep off starvation. Cheap labour of this sort can, of course, always find employment; and the result is naturally a deterioration both of

Low Stand-
ard of Life
and Cheap
Labour

wages and skill. While ministering to the consumer's passion for cheapness, it is fatal to any sense of the dignity of a craft, and tends to the degradation of workman and product alike. It is not fair that the better workman should be handicapped by his self-respect, his sense of decency and his habit of thorough and conscientious craftsmanship. Yet in a market where competition is fast and furious and cheapness an unfailing bait for purchasers, it may be urged that in any community there will always be sufficient temptation to produce articles of inferior quality, without aggravating the evil by importing alien labour of a sort that is exactly calculated to fall in with and profit by this mischievous tendency. And the ability to live on a starvation wage is not the only undesirable quality which gives an unfair advantage to the Jewish immigrant. The single eye with which the Jew will always strive after what is profitable is at the root at once

Love of
Profit

of his success, and of many of the mischievous results which ensue from it. It gives him an advantage on the field of industrial competition which is not obviously earned by anything like a corresponding degree of social utility. The preference of the Jew for profit rather than wages, is a matter of common observation; and the combination of this spirit with a strongly individualistic type of character, and a keen competitive instinct is apt to render his presence a common factor in the degradation of industry. He cuts his own way at the expense of the community's broader interests. Small masters, home work and the lack of effective organisation among the workmen are among the characteristic features of Jewish industry; and they are obviously connected with one another in a common evil tendency. Such features combine to depress the workmen's condition and keep it on the lowest possible level, and are

Competitive Individualism

Disorganisation of Industry

Resultant Evils

mainly responsible for the worst evils of what is called the 'sweating system.' Low wages, uncertain employment, excessive hours of work and easy evasion of sanitary laws are almost everywhere characteristic of the small workshop; and where work is taken out to be done at home they are even aggravated. The adoption of the large factory system is generally recognised as the remedy which is most likely to prove satisfactory; but the Jewish industrial character is a force which must always militate against such a change.

It is undeniable that Jewish workmen have many admirable qualities; but they have also certain failings which might possibly be summed up as a lack of industrial morality. Gain is, to many of them, an object to be pursued at any cost. Their attitude is thus always the attitude of a bargain-driver; and nothing that can be a possible source of gain comes amiss to them. They are, for the most part, quite

Defects of
Character

‘Pauper-
ism’

Jewish
Solidarity

ready to lie and cheat, and have no sense of shame in accepting charity. It is true that charitable relief does not generally demoralise them, and that they rarely come upon the rates; but none the less many among them are ‘paupers’ in the sense that they do not entirely support themselves, and are unfairly subsidised as competitors with English labour. For while the Jews as workmen are disunited and without organisation, and so far at the mercy of their employers, they have on the other hand as Jews a strong sense of racial community, and have organised systems of relief and mutual help which give the less competent among them a considerable advantage against Gentiles. This is not only seen in the admirably-managed system of Jewish charity; it also works in less obvious ways. Thus it is a common complaint that, while an Englishman will deal with Jew or Gentile indiscriminately, the foreign Jews always deal with one another; so that there is

a tacit combination which makes their competition more formidable than it deserves to be. If they mingled freely with the general population and entered the industrial market on the same terms as others, there would be less cause for grievance; but so long as they remain an isolated and self-contained community whose hand is, in a sense, against every man's, it is only natural that they should incur hostility and that every man's hand should turn against them. And however true it may be that these objectionable features disappear as the foreigners become Anglicised, it is no less true that the evil is perennially renewed by the stream of immigrants.

Such, in brief outline, is the case against the foreign Jews; and it may be said that, so far as they go, all the charges contained in it are roughly true. But if it is put forward as the whole truth it must be pronounced a misleading and radically unfair statement of the facts. And when it is

supplemented by all that is to be said on the other side, it will perhaps be seen that it furnishes a very inadequate basis for the conclusions that have generally given rise to the anti-alien cry.*

The Other
Side

Thus on the matter of the low standard of living and consequent lowness of wages, which are commonly supposed to prevail among the immigrants, there is undoubtedly a basis of truth in the anti-alien argument; but it is a matter on which there has been considerable exaggeration. The 'greener' certainly has a remarkable capacity for living on the verge of starvation. According to a witness before the Sweating Commission, he is commonly able to cut down his daily fare to a red-herring and a cup of coffee. And that he works for terribly long hours is equally undeniable. The continuous

*The rise in house-rent, for which the foreign element in the East End is responsible, is dealt with elsewhere. Though a much more real and more acutely felt grievance it is here left out of account, as it hardly enters into the general industrial question which is at the basis of the anti-alien agitation.

strain is not as intolerable to him as to an Englishman; and in order to increase his earnings he will often ruin his health by over-work. And living in this style he is, of course, enabled to subsist upon the minimum wage. But at the same time it would be a mistake to suppose that this contents him, or is accepted as other than a stepping-stone to comparative prosperity. It is, as a rule, only for a few months that his wages remain extremely low. In the meantime he is learning his trade and looking about him; and in a surprisingly short time he becomes a fair workman and commands a fair workman's price. Generally shrewd and alert and fully alive to his own interests, he scarcely ever quite answers to the popular conception of the sweater's helpless victim. His condition is usually one of steady and continuous improvement, and he rarely sinks into that sodden and disheartened state which means hopeless poverty. It is true that

‘Progressiveness’

Elasticity
of Standard

chronic pauperism is not unknown in the community, but it seems to be more generally due to physical than to moral breakdown. In the worst times he seems always to remain ambitious and on the look-out for a chance of rising. His standard of life, in fact, as has been well pointed out, is not to be called low so much as indefinitely 'elastic.' He is less easily starved than the Englishman—but he is also less easily contented; and there are many respects in which his way of life involves more expenses. While he spends little in drink, he is apt to fling away a good deal in gambling (though on the other hand, no doubt, he may occasionally supplement his earnings by winnings). But apart from this, he marries very early and almost invariably has a large family; and as he becomes fairly well-to-do there are many calls upon his purse. The Hebrew education of his children has to be paid for; and a certain amount of income commonly goes in charity and

synagogue subscriptions. His wife, moreover, is probably a more costly encumbrance than the Gentile's, as she very rarely, indeed, brings in any wages,* and is generally ambitious and fond of ostentation in the matter of clothes. According to Mr J. A. Dyche (an immigrant tailor who has recently been contributing with considerable ability to the *Contemporary Review*) Jewish women are, for the most part, 'idle, wasteful and extravagant. Among Jews again there appears to be a keener spirit of emulation than among Gentiles; they are continually struggling after some improvement in social position, which ordinarily has to be maintained by increased expenditure. This strife for personal distinction seems to be one of the main causes of that multiplication of small organisations and institutions which is such a marked feature of the East End Jewry. It appears that the ambition of the

Social
Ambitions

* Miss Collet's Report on *Foreign Immigration in Relation to Women's Labour*, p. 104.

well-to-do and rising immigrant commonly soars after some kind of official dignity; and as he is willing to pay for it—or, at least, to expend time and trouble in the performance of its duties—it is natural that a sphere should be readily found for the fulfilment of his aspirations. Hence the number of small synagogues or *chevras*, friendly societies and miscellaneous institutions, which spring up like mushrooms wherever the foreign Jews are gathered together. It should be clearly recognised that they form a community which is not stagnant in poverty, but everywhere bubbling up with life and enterprise;* and that even the smallest manifestations of this vitality are significant as comments upon that damning charge of ‘pauperism’ (with all

* The recent extensive purchases of land at Benfleet seem to be an instance in which the enterprise of the foreign Jew has for once outrun his shrewdness. A large proportion of the buyers at last year’s sales never paid more than the first deposit on their purchases. They are interesting, however, as an illustration of his independent and keenly speculative character. A less respectable illustration of the same feature is afforded by the growth of the class of rack-renting landlords.

that is vaguely implied in it), which is commonly urged against the Jewish immigrant.

It must next be asked how far the success of the Jewish workman is really due to the inferior quality of his work. It is a question which can hardly be treated singly, as it requires a different answer for each trade; but there are a few general considerations which may first be taken into account. It is certainly true that Jewish labour is not typical of the highest class of skilled and conscientious workmanship. Work done on a highly subdivided system and for a cheap market does not admit of such qualities; and it is further obvious that the circumstances of the immigrant 'greener' are calculated to shut him out of the higher classes of industry. Even if he has been a skilled artisan at home, he has been accustomed to work on Russian methods; and apart from that, his ignorance of the language

Qualities of
Jewish
Workmen

Lack of
Training

is sufficient to keep him out of English workshops. He therefore drifts into one of the typically foreign industries which require no special training and are easily learned. He works irregularly and for a small pittance for a few weeks or months; and as soon as he has mastered the trade and can earn a fair wage he aspires to becoming a small employer on his own account. Such an industrial training is obviously not calculated to produce a first-rate workman. Still it would be a great mistake to suppose that Jewish work differs from English, merely or mainly in being cheaper, more slovenly and less skilled. In certain qualities, such as neatness and finish, it can at least hold its own. But, on the whole, its success seems

Intelligence

rather due to the fact that it is exceptionally intelligent and well-organised. There is a Mediæval 'jargon' proverb which has not yet lost its point:

'Save us from the Christian *Koach* (strength),
Save us from the Jewish *Moach* (brains).'*

It is largely his superior brain-equipment which gives the Jew a flying start in the industrial race. Good English labour, no doubt, has the advantage in thoroughness and solidity of workmanship; but in the Jewish workshop decidedly more judgment seems to be shown in the distribution of skill. It is commonly said, for instance, that an English tailor will always put the same amount of work into every part of a garment; whereas the Jew will content himself with inferior workmanship wherever good work is not required. Good management, economy of skill and a keen eye to the market are among the principal elements which have ensured the success of Jewish industry. It should be recognised, however, that at bottom their success is probably less a matter of skill and management than a matter of character.

* Israel Abraham's *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 106.

Character As regards the industry, sobriety and thriftiness of the Jewish workman all accounts are unanimous, and in these respects the Englishman's inferiority is, unfortunately, very conspicuous. 'Every-one that striveth for the mastery,' said the

Sobriety Christian apostle, 'is temperate in all things'; and the part which a temperate habit of life has played in the victorious progress of the Jewish workman can hardly be over-estimated. Of all the circumstances which tell in his favour, the fact that he does not get drunk is one of the foremost. And although this superiority to alcohol is doubtless in part a matter of physical constitution, it must also be regarded as partly the outcome

Tenacity of a disciplined and morally tenacious character. The poor Jew is not easily demoralised, and can spend his life without respect of circumstances in the unflinching pursuit of an end. He has learned to take fortune's buffets and

rewards with equal thanks, and allows neither to throw him off his balance. He is governed, in fact, more by calculation than by impulse; whereas an Englishman of the same class is slow in learning to subordinate the present to the future. Before the Sweating Commission a statement was made by Augor Wilchinski, a Polish tailor, which is curiously typical of this quality:—‘I myself do not smoke, I am a teetotaller, and I believe in everything that will tend to make me better off.’* It is the confession of a faith that is likely to triumph in the industrial world, and it is perhaps the dominant creed among Jewish workmen. For although few even of the poorest Jews are total abstainers from either spirits or cigarettes, these indulgences are rigidly and almost universally subordinated to the great aim of becoming ‘better off.’ Such a type of character has, of course,

Long-headedness

* Minutes of Evidence, 4084.

the defects of its qualities; there is a lack of generosity and impulsiveness, and it is apt to generate a mean and profit-seeking spirit which is the reverse of attractive. Still its better points are worthy of emulation; and it must, I think, be admitted that on the whole its success in the struggle for existence is due to its good rather than its bad qualities.

It is time, however, to consider the effect which the influx of alien labour has actually had upon the trades into which it principally enters. Of these the tailoring trade is considerably the most important. At the time of the last census no less than one-third of the total number of male Russians and Poles in the country (over ten years of age), were employed in this industry; and, though it is impossible to speak with any certainty, the proportion seems to be fully maintained at the present time. The question with which we are concerned has here been very

Tailoring
Trade

thoroughly investigated, and it cannot be said that the Jewish tailor has been convicted of any very pernicious influence upon the trade. He has introduced new methods and a new type of workmanship; and it would be largely though not entirely true to say that he does not actually compete with the native industry. His work is confined to certain branches, which he may be said to monopolise. Jew and Gentile, according to Mrs Sidney Webb, who speaks with authority, work 'in water-tight compartments.' Thus in the East End coat-making is a purely Jewish industry; and it is worth remarking that it is better paid than any other branch of the trade.* Coats of a certain class cannot be made except upon a system which the Jews have practically introduced, and which Gentiles either from distaste or inability have never adopted.

Separate
Jewish and
Gentile
Branches

* 'The number of Jewish vest and trouser-makers is very small. The Jewish coat-makers account for this on the ground that "it is impossible to make a living on vests and trousers."' (Report by Miss Collet on *Foreign Immigration in Relation to Women's Labour*, 1894, p. 111).

Machine-
made Coats

Work is done by machine instead of by hand, and time and skill are economised by extreme subdivision of labour. The result is the cheap production of a fair quality of coat. The highest class of coat-making is still in the hands of the old-fashioned English tailor; and there is no direct competition between the two sets of workmen. At the same time there is unquestionably a certain amount of indirect competition; and there is no doubt that, on the whole, the older and better-paid industry is losing ground. Jewish tailors have established themselves in Soho; and much of the work done in the West End is undoubtedly passing into their hands. From the consumer's point of view, the fit, quality and durability of the English-made garment seem to be less of an attraction than the cheapness and decent appearance of the newer article. The competition, however, is not between workmen, but between different classes of goods; and even here it can only be said to

Indirect
Competition

touch a limited section of the English trade. In any case the wages of the highest class of English tailor are quite unaffected by foreign competition; and the competitive success of the new industry seems only to be won at the expense of the inferior qualities of English work. The Irish tailor of Whitechapel, and the second-rate English tailor of the West End are being driven out of the market; but this is perhaps an instance in which the process of the survival of the fittest is tolerably justified in its results. Apart from this the only industry which appears to have been very seriously damaged by the introduction of Jewish methods is the second-hand clothes' trade; and here, if tradition has any value, the competition must have resolved itself wholly into a struggle between Jew and Jew.

Cheap production is of course a main Cheapness element in the success of the imported industry; but, at the same time, it would be

quite unfair to describe the Jewish coat-maker as a mere slop-worker. In style, finish and elegance, if not in the more solid qualities, his work compares favourably with that of his English rivals. He is nimble with his fingers; and it has been said that he uses the machine like an artist. And his prices in this instance do not necessarily imply cheap labour. Highly-skilled work can still command high wages, though it is confined to a few processes and only bestowed upon a small part of the garment. It is said that a first-rate machinist can sometimes earn as much as two shillings an hour in the busy season. That would of course be very exceptional; but, on the whole, the average rate of wages throughout the industry does not appear to be specially low. The cheapness of the product is mainly due to the organisation and elaborate subdivision of work.

There is much, no doubt, that might be said on the advantages and disadvantages

of the whole system of highly specialised and subdivided labour. That it suits the interest of the consumer is proved by its success, but its effect upon the standard of workmanship and the general morals of the workman is perhaps more dubious. Such a discussion, however, would here be irrelevant; the responsibility for the new system cannot be put specially upon the Jew. It is a stage in the evolution of industry, and no one class of workmen is to be specially praised or blamed for it. If all Jewish tailors were to be swept out of London to-morrow, the old-fashioned industry could hardly be resuscitated to take their place. Cheap clothes (*i.e.*, of the ready-made class), would be manufactured on the subdivided method either in country factories or abroad, and would simply be imported to supply the London market. The change in the character of the industry which is generally associated with Jewish labour is, in fact, due to

Conservatism of
English
Workmen

industrial conditions which (in London) the Jew has been the first to see and take advantage of. The truth seems to be that the Jew has succeeded by adapting himself to the new conditions; while the conservatism of the English workman has kept him to the old grooves. Thus an English tailor will often absolutely refuse to use a machine, even when it is admittedly superior to hand-work; and I have come across an instance of an English tailor sending work which required machining to a Jewish workshop. So far as this spirit arises from the pride and tradition of good workmanship, it is no doubt commendable; but so far as it proves unable to adapt itself to the present condition of the industrial environment, it cannot be expected to hold its ground.

Mantle-making

The ladies' jacket and mantle trade, again, is an industry which the Jewish immigrant has virtually introduced into

this country. So far, at least, as the better class of work is concerned, the peculiar skill and methods of the foreign Jew place him quite above the reach of native competition. To establish this it is sufficient to quote the following interesting letter from one of the largest wholesale houses, in answer to an inquiry by Mr J. A. Dyche:—

An Im-ported Industry

‘ST PAUL’S CHURCHYARD,
‘LONDON, 31st January 1898.

‘DEAR SIR,—In reply to your question as to the effect upon the home labour-market of the work done in London by foreign Jewish tailors, it is only fair to remind you that the foreign Jewish tailors introduced new methods of manufacture, and created a trade which has become a distinct gain to the country’s commerce.

Messrs Hitchcock, Williams & Co., on Jewish Tailoring

‘We were, we believe, the first wholesale mantle manufacturers in town to employ foreign Jewish tailors in a factory, and it is interesting to recall our reasons for

doing so. In the year 1885 the demand for ladies' tailor-made jackets came into vogue, and to meet the demand for our British and Colonial trade we were compelled to import large quantities of these garments from Germany. They were made of German materials by tailors in and around Berlin.

'We tried to produce those garments in our own factories, but without success; our women workers were unable to manipulate the hand-irons used by the tailors, and we could not get them to do the work. As the fashion became more pronounced larger orders went abroad, and in 1888 £150,000 was sent to Germany in payment of these accounts.

'In 1889 we decided to introduce foreign Jewish tailors and their special methods into a new factory we had recently built, with satisfactory results. Their work has been excellent, British material has been used instead of German, and a large part

of the money sent formerly to Berlin has been distributed among British manufacturers and in wages.

‘The quality of the work has improved year by year, the garments made in our factory are better than those imported previously.

‘Other English firms have followed our lead, and to-day the German press admits the loss of her trade, in those goods, with England.

‘Our experience shows that these foreign Jewish tailors do a class of work which our workers cannot undertake with success, and earn a high rate of pay.

‘HITCHCOCK, WILLIAMS & Co.’ *

The boot trade is the second in importance of the Jewish industries; but here, unfortunately, the Jewish workman does not show to equal advantage. The class of work which he undertakes is distinctly inferior to that done by Englishmen, and

Boot-making

Stronger Case against the Jews

* Quoted in the *Jewish Chronicle*, April 22, 1898.

it cannot be claimed that he has introduced any very beneficial novelties in the way of method or organisation. There is no doubt that here the lower class of English work has suffered considerably from foreign competition ; but owing to the state of the trade it is impossible to estimate, with any approach to accuracy, the total effect which has been produced by immigrant labour. Here, as in tailoring, we find the old hand-sewn industry persisting but steadily losing ground before the cheaper production of machine-made goods. But the case is complicated by the introduction, not merely of sewing-machines, but of machinery on a large scale, and the consequent transition from small workshops to factories.* Such a transformation, of course, involves a general readjustment of wages and methods, and when the total process is so large and complex, the part played by such a factor as immigrant labour

But Transitional State of the Trade makes it difficult to estimate their Influence

* Report to Board of Trade by Labour Department, 1894, p. 68.

is comparatively insignificant. Here it is machinery and not Jewish immigration which has introduced the principle of subdivision; and, in the long run, the competition which is formidable to the English industry in London, is not that of the Jew so much as that of the large provincial factory. Thus Mr Llewellyn Smith, in the Report published in 1894, Mr L.L. Smith's Report insists that 'the general character of the evolution of the boot and shoe trade has been entirely independent of foreign immigration,' and the following is his summary of the effect of Jewish labour:—

'If it be desired to summarise in a word the influence of the Russian and Polish Jew on the character (as apart from the remuneration) of the boot and shoe trade in this country, it may be said to consist in this—that it has somewhat prolonged the intermediate stage of transition from hand-labour in small workshops to machine-labour in factories, by the provision of a

supply of labour especially adapted to help handicraft on the small scale, and with sufficient powers of endurance and a sufficiently low standard of living to enable them to make head (for a time at least) against the enormously superior odds of the great machine-industry.' *

Home-
work

In the branches of 'lasting' and 'finishing,' and in the 'sew-round' or slipper-making trade there is no doubt that the home-work, which is the province of the Jewish immigrant, is often done under bad conditions and for wretchedly low wages. In 1890 a strong effort was made to remedy this evil; and a Jewish union was formed which took a creditable part in a general strike of boot and shoe operatives. The outcome of this was an 'agreement' between workmen and employers, to the effect that all manufacturers should provide workshops and that all work (except sew-round) should be done indoors. But since

The
'Indoor
Agreement'

* p. 71.

then the Hebrew branch of the National Union has been dissolved, and the agreement (so far as cheaper work is concerned) may almost be said to have fallen to the ground. In the last few years especially, outwork has revived to an increasing extent. It is also a trade in which the evil of 'slack times' is a recurring source of misery. These, however, are ills that seem mainly to affect the immigrants themselves, and, as far as competition is concerned, it does not appear that they are very dangerous foes to any class of English workmen. The better class of work is still done by Englishmen under 'statement' prices; and in the lower grade the Jew is perhaps the least formidable among the several competitors. That he has lowered the condition of the London trade is undeniable; but it appears probable that it is only in virtue of these lowered conditions that the trade in London has been enabled to survive. In cheapness of rent and the

consequent facilities for introducing large machinery the provincial factories have advantages against which it is hard for London to compete.

Cabinet-
making

In cabinetmaking there are large numbers of Jews employed; and complaints are occasionally heard of the effects of 'greener' labour. The better class of work, however, does not seem to have suffered appreciably, as the workmen are strongly organised, and Jew and Gentile alike can command good wages. A good deal of inferior work, no doubt, is done by foreigners in small workshops; but this seems hardly to have affected the general condition of the trade. Cheap furniture has for the most part created its own market, and does not compete to any considerable extent with the better class. There has been in late years a large increase in the export trade, which seems to be mainly due to the introduction of the foreign industry.*

* Board of Trade Returns.

There are other trades such as cigar and cigarette-making, furriery, tin-working and street-selling, in which a fair proportion of foreign Jews are to be found. None of them, however, can be said to present any sufficiently remarkable features to call for special notice; and it is worth while to consider briefly a general source of complaints against Jewish workmen, which perhaps constitutes a more serious indictment than any that has yet been mentioned. This is their alleged incapacity for trade-The Jew as
Trade-
Unionistorganisation. It is a charge which is certainly not groundless; but at the same time it must be insisted that unqualified statements are no less misleading here than elsewhere. It must be remembered that trade-unionism is a new thing to the Polish Jew; and it is natural that he should hold aloof from it until he has been educated into some sort of sympathy with English ideas upon the subject. And from the number of Jewish unions which have sprung

into existence in the last few years, it is evident that English ideas are not wholly thrown away upon him. In the *Jewish Year Book* there is published a list of fifteen Jewish unions in London. Those in the mantlemaking, cabinetmaking, and cigar and cigarette-making trades are in a fairly flourishing condition. None of the others, however, seem to be of much account; and the number of organisations in itself is in part a sign of weakness. The presence of rival unions in the same trade indicates a disunited state; and possibly points to a radical incapacity for organisation on a large scale. Thus in the cabinet trade only half of the Jewish unionists belong to the Hebrew branch of the Alliance Cabinet-makers' Association, which is the principal organisation in the trade and has branches all over the kingdom; the other half were unwilling to submit to the control of a central executive and founded an 'Independent' union of their own. Similarly in

the tailoring trade, there are only about forty members of the Hebrew branch of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors,* and the Jewish 'London Tailors', Machinists' and Pressers' Union,' in which the 'Independent' and 'International' unions were merged has quite recently again divided its ranks. That the state of Jewish unions is generally unstable is an inference which is unmistakably forced upon anyone who has tried to gather information by visiting their secretaries or going the round of their meeting-places, as given in the tables last published by the Board of Trade. Even out of the list given in the *Jewish Year Book* (published in August 1898), three had disappeared before November 1898, or were at least untraceable, one had had a 'split' and one was reduced in membership to the secretary and treasurer. The truth appears to be that the foreign Jew is easily

* This branch, by the way, is not included in the *Jewish Year Book's* list.

roused to enthusiasm upon the subject, but is at once too quarrelsome and too impatient for results to be a 'good unionist.' He does not like paying so many pence a week without any prospect of a prompt or substantial return; and he seems to have a shrewd distrust both of fellow-unionists and officials. Each is too bent on playing for his own hand, and efforts at organisation are not backed by any real feeling of solidarity. As, however, the foreigner becomes thoroughly Anglicised, he seems generally to grow into sympathy with English ideas, and is able to shake off this reproach. It must also be remembered that the Jew has a genius for individual bargain-driving which goes far to counterbalance the lowering effect which his incapacity for organisation might have upon the rate of wages. Nor would it be quite fair to say that this cuts both ways when the employers are Jewish; since it means that master and men can already deal with one another

upon tolerably even terms—a condition which English workmen can only assure by combination.

By way of summarising a somewhat Summary desultory review of a large question, it will be as well to gather up briefly the points which are specially relevant to the present inquiry. As regards the economic grounds of Jew-hatred, it must be pronounced that the general arguments against Jewish labour are inconclusive and based on a partial view of the facts. The progress of the Jew as a successful competitor in the labour-market is, no doubt, a source of some ill-feeling, which is accentuated by his 'aloofness,' and by certain unattractive features of his character. But in industrial conditions there do not seem to be any grounds of permanent antagonism. In certain branches of work the Jews have the field to themselves, and, no doubt, in the process of establishing themselves in these industries they have made them-

selves unpopular by (directly or indirectly) 'displacing' English labour. Ill-feeling on this score is, however, in the nature of the case likely to be transitory; and it may be added that almost all causes of ill-feeling are so far transitory that they disappear with regard to the English-born generation. It should be added that, apart from the justice of its grounds, the actual amount of ill-feeling is less than might be expected, and probably much less than is generally supposed. British workmen are, perhaps, the most tolerant class in the world. They have a good-humoured way of recognising that even a Jew must live, and among the best of them there is a good deal of generous pride in the feeling that England is and should be 'a free country.' The outcry against the 'pauper alien' seems, in fact, to be commoner, and on the whole more bitter in political than in industrial circles. A curious comment

upon the anti-alien movement was afforded by a recent debate in Toynbee Hall, which was opened by a gentleman from the West End, who advocated restrictive legislation. The hall was mainly filled with English workmen, but not a single one supported the speaker;* and at the end of the debate he confessed (with almost unique honesty), that his own convictions on the subject were shaken. The meeting was certainly not fairly typical of East End opinion, but it represented an attitude which is very common among the more thoughtful members of the working classes.†

* The only expression of anti-alien sentiment was from a man who was heard after the debate had terminated, protesting that, for all that might be said, these foreigners were 'too damned artful,'—a protest which may also be taken as representing one section of public opinion.

† The question of the real expediency of restrictive legislation is one on which a volume might be written. But without entering upon the question at all fully, it may be worth while to set down briefly one or two relevant considerations. On the one hand, merely in view of the overcrowded state of East London, and the evil of increasing house-rent, any diminution in the flow of immigrants would certainly be so far for the public advantage. On the other hand, the charges against the immigrants merely as industrial competitors are, at any rate, not sufficiently well

Concentra-
tion and
Dispersion
of Jewish
Labour

In regard to the other question of the confinement of Jewish labour to specific trades, it appears that there are only two trades (viz., coat-making of the cheaper class and mantlemaking), to which the character of Jewish work is especially adapted, and of which it is, therefore, likely to have a permanent monopoly. Of bootmaking it is difficult to speak

established to call for legislation; and it appears that some more satisfactory remedy might be discovered for the evil of overcrowding. Or again, if home-work could be effectually discouraged and a check put upon the demand for cheap and unskilled labour, the volume of immigration might be reduced without recourse to a measure so repugnant to English traditions. It is further obvious that it is hardly possible to frame a measure which could distinguish between desirable and undesirable immigrants.

It is a case, perhaps, in which more weight than usual ought to be allowed to what are often called 'sentimental' considerations. If the non-sentimental arguments are at all fairly balanced it would assuredly be a beggarly policy to shut the door which has stood open for so many generations. And some account, at least, should be taken of the moral effect upon a certain proportion of our own working classes. Indulgence in fine sentiments is not a failing to which the British workman is ordinarily very prone; and the sentiment about England being 'a free country,' which is fairly common among the more intelligent of the working classes, is certainly one that deserves to be respected. Pride in one's own country is bound up in it together with a generous feeling towards foreigners, and such a combination of ideas is an element of liberal education which is worth retaining. A policy which would make this particular vein of patriotism impossible seems certainly to demand a strong justification.

positively ; but on the whole the tendency of altering conditions seems to be towards the exclusion rather than the attraction of foreign labour. The advantages of proximity to the City in the bespoke tailoring and bootmaking trades are, of course, a cause of local congestion which must not be underrated. In other trades, again, there seems to be no dividing line between Jews and Gentiles. They do (approximately) the same branches of work, and are brought together in the workshop as competitors on even terms. And in such trades, wherever there is a tendency in favour of large factories as against small workshops and home-work, it must tend also to throw Jews and Gentiles into contact. But on the whole a slow process of dispersion seems to be taking place ; the alien population is gradually spreading into different trades and over a wider area. It must be remembered that efforts are continually being made by the Jewish Board

of Guardians and Location and Information Bureau of the Russo-Jewish Committee to promote this dispersion, and though necessarily conducted on a small scale, their operations in this direction seem to be attended with a fair measure of success. Here, as elsewhere, assimilating forces begin to work mainly upon the second generation, as is shown by the fact that there are no specifically Anglo-Jewish trades.

IV.—THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION

IT has already, perhaps, become fairly evident that the question of the fusion or continued separateness of the Jewish community is ultimately a religious question. It is in virtue of their religion, with its rigid system of observances, and its jealously tribal and exclusive character that the Jews have been, and still remain, a peculiar people. The orthodox Jew is continually kept in remembrance of his Jewishness by the observance of a unique code of prescribed and forbidden actions; and throughout the year he celebrates a series of fast and holy days, designed to celebrate and symbolise various episodes in the history of his race. It is brought home to him by numberless observances that he is not

Importance
of the
Religious
Element

Separatism

as other men are; and it is part of the duty of his people to keep itself 'unspotted by the world.' The dietary laws are in themselves an effectual hindrance to social intercourse with Gentiles. Meat that is good enough for Christians is unclean and an abomination to the Jew; and it is almost as hard for him to eat at a Christian's table as to give his daughter in marriage to a Christian. He is never allowed to forget that he belongs to a chosen people, exalted above the nations, and consecrated and set apart for a peculiar mission. And when the isolative influence of such a religion is enforced by a general community of character and interests and a strong sense of racial fellowship, it is obviously a very potent factor. But, as has already been suggested, there are circumstances which make it appear doubtful whether its past influence can be permanently maintained.

The future of Judaism as a religion

is, of course, an immense problem; and it would be audacious to prophesy with any confidence. At the best only vague tendencies can be indicated. But it is impossible to discuss any Jewish question without taking some account of the religious aspect of Jewish life; it is intimately connected with all other aspects, and is certainly too vitally important a matter to be disregarded. And it is the more necessary to go into the question with some thoroughness, because at the present moment it seems evident that English Judaism is in a state of unrest and instability, if not of rapid transformation. The community is split up and disunited; and the common religion which should hold it together assumes widely divergent forms in different sections. For it must be remembered that the Jews in England do not form a homogeneous community; Polish immigration has introduced a new type, which differs from

Disorgan-
ised and
Transi-
tional State
of Judaism

the English in religion almost as much as in habits and appearance. The religion which the Polish immigrants bring here is the religion of the Ghetto; it has been at once intensified and narrowed by ages of persecution, and consists largely in a devotion to the letter of the Law, which is by no means shared by those who have grown accustomed to a freer atmosphere and a wider range of thought. At the same time it must be emphasised that the Ghetto-creed and the Ghetto type of character are pre-eminently typical of all Judaism. Judaism owes its strength and persistence, as well as its narrowness and impenetrability, to the stress of persecution. So far, indeed, as it is rigidly orthodox modern Judaism is the fruit of the Ghetto; and what may be the effect of its transference to a new environment is a problem which history has hardly as yet had time to solve. For the position of English Jews appears to be something

Effect of
Exodus
from the
Ghetto

almost new in Jewish history. It is not merely that they are tolerated, and share in all the privileges of citizenship; nor that they are receiving an English education, and breathing an atmosphere of Western thought. The period happens also to be one of almost universal religious disintegration. The barriers between creeds are everywhere breaking down; and orthodox Judaism does not appear to be a creed specially capable of resisting the dissolving influences which critical thought can bring to bear upon it. And apart from the intellectual solvents, an even more powerful influence is perhaps brought to bear by the change to an easy and prosperous life; a change which often seems to be dangerous, if not fatal, to a religion which has proved itself so marvellously adapted to the needs of the poor and afflicted. But whatever may be the causes, there is little question about the fact that Judaism has, to a great

extent, lost its hold upon English Jews. It is generally recognised in Jewish circles that the stronghold of orthodoxy is in the East End where the foreign Jews congregate. And in the East End itself, the division between English and foreign Jews is roughly a division into the lax and the orthodox; and within the ranks of the latter there are numerous gradations of orthodoxy, which (also very roughly) correspond to the degree of Anglicisation and length of residence in England. It is, moreover, generally recognised that the foreigners themselves are less strict observers of their religion than was the case ten years ago; and this is doubtless due to the number who have become acclimatised to English habits in the meantime. It can hardly be doubted that it is one of the results of the very praiseworthy efforts which the Anglo-Jewish community has made to 'Anglicise' the foreign immigrant. It was not, of course,

intentional; interference with religion is the last thing which the leaders of the community would be likely to attempt. But it appears to be an inevitable result of such efforts; and, although those in authority are naturally fain to deny it, there is an amount of feeling on the subject among the foreign population, which is strong evidence that the process of Anglicisation is apt to prove fatal to orthodoxy. Among the strictest sect of the new arrivals it is denied that there is such a thing as orthodoxy at all among the English Jews; they are all regarded as 'reformers,' and the Chief Rabbi himself has been declared to be the 'Chief Reformer.' And to the ears of the devoutly orthodox such phrases perhaps carry a weight of sarcasm that a Gentile can scarcely appreciate.

A striking manifestation of the depth and extent of this hostile piety was recently evoked by a discussion of the

*The West
End Jews
and the
Chedarim*

East End
Protest

chedarim, which took place at a West End conference on Jewish education. The *cheder* system was there rather sharply, but not unsympathetically, criticised; but the result was an astonishing outburst of indignation in the East End. A meeting was held at the Jewish Working Men's Club, at which the bitterest speeches were delivered; and a resolution was carried 'amidst a scene of tumultuous enthusiasm' to the effect,—

'That we East End Jews protest against the discussion upon the *chedarim* and *Talmud Torah* at the Elementary Education Conference.

'We further do not recognise the West End Jews as authorities upon Hebrew and religious education.'

In the course of his speech, the mover of this resolution, the Rev. H. Orleansky (according to the report in the *Jewish Chronicle*) 'made a violent attack upon English Jews, especially the clergy who,'

he said, 'were ignorant of the Torah and the Talmud, and who did nothing for the East Enders. They had no right to find fault. Let them mind their own business. The Chief Rabbi was their *Rav*, to decide upon questions of ritual law, but not to interfere beyond. Whatever the English Jews had done had been wrong. They had pulled down a synagogue before building another. They had a free dispensary which was not free. The East End desired to be left alone. He protested against "reformers" dictating to those who were orthodox upon religious matters. They wanted men to criticise their actions who were learned in the Law, and could speak with authority upon religious matters.'*

It seems probable, moreover, that the logic of the situation is on the side of these ultra-orthodox foreigners. They accept the whole system of Rabbinical

Strength
the Ultra-
Orthodox
Position

* *Jewish Chronicle*, July 22, 1898.

ordinances, and frankly recognise that the whole duty of a Jew consists in the scrupulous observance of them. And they refuse to be lured from their path by the snares of 'Anglicisation' and Western culture, to which their English co-religionists have fallen victims. They are at least consistent in their narrowness; while it may be that English Jews are attempting an impossible compromise. It is undeniable that a number of English Jews know very little about the Talmud; that their children, as a rule, get a very inadequate religious education; and that a very small proportion of them are regular attendants at synagogue. But an important and, from the orthodox standpoint, a disquieting consideration is that each of these foreign immigrants commonly becomes responsible for a large family of Anglo-Jewish children. It is true that Polish orthodoxy is continually recruiting its ranks with new arrivals; but in this country it seems to

be a phase that rarely outlasts a single generation.

But whatever may be the stability of the ultra-orthodox element, it must be credited with energy and enthusiasm; and the strength of its protest is evidence of the real gap which severs English from Polish Judaism. It is quite recently, however, that this protest has taken the shape of a formal secession from the English community. In September 1898, at the beginning of the Jewish New Year, a new synagogue was opened in Spitalfields, by a society styling itself the *Mahazike Haddath* (or 'Supporters of the Law'), which repudiates the authority of the Chief Rabbi, and takes its stand upon principles of the strictest orthodoxy. The new synagogue is the largest in the East End, and has accommodation for two thousand worshippers; and next door to it is a *Talmud Torah* school, in which teaching is given to nearly one thousand children

Militant
Orthodoxy

The
Mahazike
Haddath

in Hebrew, through the medium of Yiddish. The initial cost of the two institutions was about £6000; and practically the whole sum was raised by the subscriptions of East End foreigners. It is obvious that a movement which can count on as much effort and sacrifice as this implies must have a strong *raison d'être*; and it testifies to a deeply-seated spirit of revolt. The same spirit is shown in a constant suspicion and jealousy of West End interference. The East End Jew is very far from considering himself the inferior of his wealthier co-religionists, and often displays a keen resentment at the idea that he is regarded mainly as an object of charitable schemes. He is fond of announcing that he does not want patrons and benefactors; and sometimes he seems to have a lurking suspicion that charity may cloak schemes for the subversion of his religion. It should be explained, however, that it is mainly among the upper strata of the foreign community,

Inde-
pendent
Attitude of
the East
Enders

who are comparatively prosperous, that this independent spirit is to be found; and that there is a fairly large section to whom no amount of charity comes amiss. But even in such cases there seems to survive something of the spirit of Mr Zangwill's 'schnorrer'; and assistance is accepted as something rightfully due to them, rather than with any deep sense of gratitude or obligation.* Certainly, so far as the East End Jewry can be said to take up a common attitude at all towards their wealthier brethren, it is an ostentatiously independent if not a defiant attitude. And it cannot be doubted that their sense of alienation is grounded on a difference of religion.

The secession of the *Mahazike Haddath* has important bearings on the question of assimilation. When such a division has been made and can no longer be dis-

Bearings
upon the
Assimila-
tion
Question

* A feature which may partly account for the generally acknowledged fact that charity does not 'demoralise' them.

guised, the gap between the two sections is likely to widen. On the one hand, no doubt, the new synagogue will be a powerful force on the side of orthodoxy. It will probably attract a considerable proportion of new immigrants, and so far as these are concerned, will be an influence retarding their Anglicisation. But, on the other hand, by accentuating the breach between orthodox and unorthodox, it is likely to have the opposite effect upon those whom it fails to attract. For, apart from the question of orthodoxy, most immigrants are moved with the ambition to become Englishmen; and seven or eight years' residence in this country is often enough to fill them with contempt for 'foreigners.' English Jews have a higher social standing; and, naturally, it is the *parvenu* of the East End who most despises the Yiddish-speaking part of the community. Now a part of the effect which must be pro-

duced by this schism in the congregation, will be to emphasise the association of extreme orthodoxy with the speech, habits and general social inferiority of foreigners. That is to say, in a majority of the community, and especially in the rising generation, it will serve to hasten the process of alienation from strict Judaism.

In many quarters, indeed, orthodoxy has already fallen into contempt through being associated with foreigners of the lowest social grade. I have met an English Jew who assured me, with a grave countenance, that orthodoxy and dirt always went together; and that the former was invariably found to vanish under the influence of soap and water. This is an epigrammatic statement of the case, but it has a remote basis of truth, and it certainly indicates the sort of feelings which the newly 'Anglicised' Jew is apt to entertain on the subject of his religion. The contempt, however, which the

Mutual
Esteem of
the Two
Sections

'Englishman' of the Jewish community entertains for the 'foreigner' is heartily reciprocated. Each, in his own eyes, stands on a pinnacle above the other. They recognise totally different standards of human worth, and despise each other respectively for dirt and irreligion. The *Mahazike Haddath* is at once the outcome of this estrangement, and a force likely to perpetuate it. In it the ultra-orthodox part have cut themselves adrift from the body of the English Jewry, and are, therefore, no longer likely to check it in what seems its natural progress towards assimilation.

Zionism in
England

A somewhat similar testimony to the strength of the forces which make for assimilation, is afforded by the Zionist party. For it seems fairly plain that in England Zionism is in its essence a revolt against this tendency; and it appears to differ widely in aim and motive from the Zionism of the Continent. Emigration to Palestine and the foundation of a Jewish

State is there regarded principally as an answer to Anti-Semitism, and the only possible refuge from an intolerable state of things. Whereas in England the state of things is not intolerable; and accordingly the movement has here awakened a comparatively feeble response. Among English Jews proper, in fact, there can hardly be said to be any Zionism at all. It has been estimated that there are ten thousand Zionists in England; but practically all of them seem to be foreign immigrants. English Jews are for the most part either indifferent or hostile; and those in authority have generally set their faces against it. The Chief Rabbi, for instance, has declared the movement to be 'an egregious blunder'; and it is generally deprecated as chimerical and extravagant. The Zionists, however, attach little importance to such expressions of Anglo-Jewish opinion, and look to the Continent for their lead, without apparently recognis-

ing that within their own ranks there is any divergence of ideas. Yet on the question of assimilation there is a significant difference of tone in the utterances of English and Continental Zionists. Thus Dr Herzl, at the Basle Congress, spoke of 'our efforts of assimilation, the unsuccess of which has brought us again together'; whereas to the *Jewish World*, the organ of the English Zionists, it is the glory of Zionism, that 'it has called a halt to the assimilators.'* It should be said in fairness that the contradiction is probably not so sharp as might appear, because the word 'assimilation' is somewhat ambiguous; but there is, undoubtedly, a broad difference of attitude. It is significant that the same word should, in England, stand for an imminent disaster to Judaism, and on the Continent for a heaven out of reach. Similarly, it appears that in England Zionism is

* *Jewish World*, September 2, 1898, p. 241.

closely identified with extreme orthodoxy; the Chief Rabbi of the *Mahazike Haddath* is one of the prominent figures in the movement; and at Basle it was Dr Gaster, the Chacham* of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation in England, who insisted that 'the religious element lies at the very foundation of the movement,' and moved a resolution to the effect that 'Zionism will not undertake anything which would be contrary to Jewish religious law.' On the Continent the religious aspect of the movement (so far, at any rate, as its leaders are concerned) is quite overshadowed by the political; and neither Dr Herzl nor Dr Nordau are supposed to be very specially concerned about the survival of orthodoxy. An attempt, indeed, was made at a recent meeting of Zionists in East London, to criticise Dr Herzl for his lack of reference to religion; and

* Chacham (*i.e.* wise man), the official title of the Chief Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation.

although the speaker failed to obtain a hearing, he undoubtedly touched a point of difference which is likely to become more acute as the movement develops, and ceases to be a matter of mere enthusiasm. Here, however, the peculiar character of English Zionism is of interest mainly as evidence of the progress which the English Jewry has made towards assimilation; it shows that in the opinion, at least, of a section, this process has reached a point at which it becomes a menace to Judaism. Zionism and the cult of the 'National Idea,' are here proclaimed as a refuge against absorption among the Gentiles. Assimilation, it is held, must in the long run prove fatal to Judaism, and would be an ignoble end of Jewish history.

The
Zionist as
a Patriot

One effect of Zionism is evidently to raise in an emphatic form the old question, 'Can Jews be patriots?' According to the most outspoken Zionists, Jews are not Englishmen and cannot regard England

as their home. This was stated pretty unequivocally by Dr Gaster at the East End meeting:—‘Some of our Anti-Zionist friends have said that they prefer to remain citizens of a big nation to becoming members of a puny Jewish state. That is merely a matter of sentiment. As far as I am concerned I would rather live in a hut of my own than be a guest in a grand palace.’ And the same thing has been put even more trenchantly by a correspondent of the *Jewish World*:—‘There is no such thing as an English Jew, just as there is no such thing as a German Chinaman.’ Such a statement is commendably frank and honest; and it is certainly hard to see how a Zionist can at once burn with enthusiasm for the National Idea of Israel, and at the same time profess himself to be heart and soul an Englishman. In fact, the position of those who do so seems to be barely respectable, and it is not improved by

their attempts to justify it, which commonly consist in the quaintly sophistical plea that devotion to two countries is as easy a matter as devotion to two parents; they have a father-land and a mother-land, and their patriotic ardour is divided impartially between the two. Such an argument can hardly be very convincing even to those who employ it; and there is something questionably ambiguous in their whole position. To put the case quite baldly, it would appear that they are anxious to share the status, the goodwill, and the privileges of English citizenship, but at the same time steadily refuse to throw in their lot for good and all with the English nation. They wish, in fact, to stake out a claim in the Promised Land without renouncing the flesh-pots of Egypt. It is an attitude of which the motive is more intelligible than the logic, but it is hardly an attitude which can be permanently maintained.

To discuss the probable future of Zionism would take us too far afield, but it is worth while to emphasise one or two points in which it illustrates the main contention of this essay. English Zionism is at bottom a religious rather than a political movement, and appears to be mainly the outcome of a conviction that, in the long run, 'Anglicisation' is not compatible with the preservation of Judaism. The Religious Idea and the National Idea, it is said, are one and inseparable, as the body and soul of Judaism, and the one can only be maintained by a revival of the other. Zionism is offered as the sole alternative to complete absorption. And it is remarkable that this line of argument seems never to have been fairly met by the Anti-Zionists. The movement has been abundantly denounced 'on prophetic, political and financial grounds.' It has been decried as impracticable and as alien to the true 'mission of Israel.' But this particular

A Protest
against
Assimila-
tion

argument, either because it is unanswerable or for some other reason, appears to have been passed over in silence.

To show that the above account is not a mere caricature of the position taken up by the representatives of Zionism and orthodoxy, it is worth while to quote at length the following striking paragraph from the leading article in a recent number of the *Jewish World*. The article is one dealing with some remarks made by Mr B. L. Cohen, until lately President of the Board of Guardians, deploring the present apathy in communal affairs, and the insufficient support given to communal institutions:—

The
Jewish
World on
Anglicisa-
tion

‘The effects proceed from a cause, and having expressed the full measure of our sympathy with Mr Benjamin Cohen, let us look for a moment to the cause that has made his grievance possible. Who dares deny that we owe the present condition of affairs to the spirit of Anglicisation run wild? The present generation of Jews of the upper

middle class has been brought up "Anglicised," *i.e.*, has been trained directly or indirectly to sever itself from the rites and customs of orthodox Judaism. Knowing little or nothing of Hebrew, it finds our services dull, having little reverence for old-time customs, the attractions of the synagogue no longer attract, and cultured Hedonism marks all too many of the younger generation. Sometimes we see the Hedonism without the culture. The generation has lost its Judaism and consequently has nothing for the development of its ideals and sense of duty. We would not for a moment believe that the ardent advocates of superficial "Anglicisation" at any cost ever reckoned what the disastrous result of their work would be. They did not realise that it would scatter the very flower of Jewry, dispel its faith and leave it helpless to save or be saved. They did not realise that the immediate effect would be seen in the community, that because the

fathers had eaten sour grapes, the children's teeth would be set on edge. Even now though we hear lamentations and regrets, though the community stands publicly rebuked, there is little or no endeavour to grapple with the real problems, the problems whose solution will make or mar the whole English-Jewish community within the next generation.' *

Testimony
to the
Strength of
Assimila-
tive Forces

Zionism appears so far to corroborate the testimony to the decay of orthodoxy which was furnished by the *Mahazike Haddath*. Both are witnesses crying out against the de-Judaising influence of English life; and if they are right, the comparative weakness of the Zionist movement in England, and its almost exclusively foreign character show that the danger to Judaism is a very serious one. The apathy and aloofness of the great body of English Jews is a sign that they have lost both national and religious enthusiasm. In a word, they

* *Jewish World*, October 14, 1898, p. 41

have become Englishmen at the cost of their Judaism.

It may be, of course, that the Zionists and ^{Its Value} the 'Supporters of the Law' are wholly mistaken. Zionism, after all, has more the character of an enthusiasm than of a reasoned policy; and the ultra-orthodox party are too narrow and fanatical in their views to be credited with a very large outlook upon the future. Their hostility towards their Anglicised brethren may be grounded on mere prejudice; and the religion of which they are so jealous perhaps consists in little more than a superstitious adherence to old forms. But it must be remembered that it is the ceremonial element in Judaism which has for centuries been the principal barrier between Jew and Gentile, and has thus maintained the Jewish race and religion in something like its original purity. And although it is common to hear English Jews distinguishing between the 'essence' and the forms of Judaism, the attempt to

sever them is perhaps likely to prove a perilous experiment. The policy of preserving the spirit and abrogating the letter has been criticised as an attempt to break the vessel without spilling the wine; and it certainly appears that a Judaism shorn of all ceremonial adjuncts would have a poor chance of survival. Yet an increasing neglect of observances seems everywhere to accompany the process of Anglicisation; and it cannot be said that there are signs of any spiritual awakening sufficient to counteract the destructive influences which are at work.

Other
Indications

Allowing then that the apprehensions of the Zionists and the ultra-orthodox are not to be dismissed as groundless, it is worth while to consider some of the more specific indications of the process on which these apprehensions are based. One of the points which first presents itself is the increasing laxity in the observance of the Sabbath. The religious question is here complicated

Sabbath-
Observance

by industrial conditions which have made observance of the Law a matter of peculiar difficulty. Thus the dispersion of Jews into a number of non-Jewish trades, which is a main feature in the policy of the Board of Guardians and Russo-Jewish Committee, is obviously a process which must lead almost directly to Sabbath-breaking. Even though Sabbath-observance is made a condition of apprenticeship, it is none the less likely to prove a stumbling-block after the term of apprenticeship has expired. But even in the most Jewish of trades, such as tailoring and bootmaking, the fact that the press of work generally comes on at the end of the week is a temptation to Sabbath-breaking, which seems to have proved too strong for many Jewish employers. And even when there is no actual work done, the Law is often violated by the payment of wages on Saturday. No doubt so far as this laxity has arisen from industrial conditions, it was originally more or less compulsory ;

but naturally it has had a demoralising effect, and wilful Sabbath-breaking is undoubtedly on the increase. Thus in Whitechapel Road there is a small music-hall * called 'Wonderland,' which is mainly patronised by foreign Jews and supports a company of Yiddish actors; and performances are given on Monday, Friday and Saturday nights and on Saturday afternoon. Similarly in the Standard Theatre, Shore-ditch, Saturday afternoon is commonly selected for the performance of a Yiddish play—presumably as being the date likeliest to attract a Jewish audience. An amusing illustration of the neglect into which the Sabbath sometimes falls is given by the following story (told in the columns of *Young Israel* by the Rev. Harris Cohen), 'The disregard of the Sabbath in some homes was never more painfully illustrated than in a reply I received from a child in

* Since this was written 'Wonderland' has been deprived of its licence, by order of the London County Council.

an infant school. "Who can tell me why God rested on the seventh day?" I asked. For a little while there was perfect silence in the room, but soon there came the answer, "'Cos it was Sunday.'"*

Special emphasis ought to be given to this particular form of laxity, because Sabbath-observance is a central feature in Jewish religion, and its neglect is apt to involve the neglect of much else along with it. It is written in the Talmud that 'if a man breaks the Sabbath it is as if he broke the whole Law'; and though it may be questioned how seriously this is meant to be taken, there is a sense in which its truth seems to be borne out by the practical consequences of Sabbath-breaking. The following extract from an official circular issued by the Chief Rabbi on the subject is evidence of the extent and seriousness of this form of back-sliding :—

The Chief
Rabbi's
Circular

* *Young Israel*, April, 1898, p. 29.

‘We cannot but be profoundly pained by the knowledge that the Divinely instituted Sabbath is no longer viewed by all Members of the House of Israel with the olden awe and the olden reverence.

‘I believe that this disregard is due not so much to a relaxation of religious sentiment as to the fierce struggle for existence which now prevails, and the keen competition that pervades every walk of life.

‘But the fact cannot be gainsaid that neglect of the Sabbath with its sweet calm and peace, and the incentive it gives to attendance at Divine worship, is calculated to lead to entire estrangement from Judaism, and is, therefore, fraught with the gravest spiritual peril both to us and to our children.’

Synagogue-
Attendance

The proportion of regular attendants at synagogue would afford further indication of the extent to which the East End Jewry is lapsing from orthodoxy; but it is not easy to give any trustworthy estimate.

That the number of habitual absentees, however, is considerable, is shown by the insufficiency of accommodation on the one occasion in the year on which all Jews flock to the synagogue. This is the Day of Atonement, the great fast-day of the Jewish calendar. Not only are all synagogues, most of which have been very sparsely attended throughout the year, filled to overflowing; but theatres, schoolrooms and public halls are transformed for the occasion into impromptu places of worship. Thus on the last Day of Atonement it has been estimated that 4000 Jews attended service at the Paragon Theatre, 3000 at the Jews' Free School, 3000 at Shoreditch Town Hall, 1700 at Beaumont Hall; and an immense number of smaller rooms and halls were lent or hired for the occasion. There is, in fact, a whole class, upon whom the nickname of 'Yom Kippur Jews' has been bestowed, where observance of the Day of Atonement is the sole remaining link with

The 'Yom
Kippur
Jews'

the synagogue. It is true, of course, that the persistence of this one observance testifies almost as strongly to the strength of Judaism, as the number of those whose whole religion it constitutes testifies to its weakness. But as one of the preachers on last 'Yom Kippur' insisted 'there is no denying the fact that they (the "Yom Kippur Jews") have narrowed down to a terribly dangerous limit, that which ought to animate the whole of a man's life.'*

Such inferences, however, as can be drawn from the decrease of synagogue-attendance and the increase of Sabbath-breaking apply indiscriminately to the whole East End community. There is no doubt that it is mainly the English or Anglicised Jews who set the fashion of non-observance; but, though public opinion is unanimous on this point, it is less easy to find any definite test by which the effect of Anglicisation

* The Rev. A. A. Green (in a sermon preached at Hampstead), *v. Jewish Chronicle*, September 30, 1898.

in this direction may be measured. A fair ^{Hebrew Teaching} indication, however, is afforded by the amount of Hebrew education which is deemed necessary for their children by English as compared with foreign parents. The *cheder*, or private Hebrew school, is practically a foreign institution. The Hebrew ^{The Cheder} teaching given at elementary schools and in synagogue classes, which is sufficient for the English Jew, is, in the eyes of the foreigners, shamefully inadequate, and they have imported the *cheder* from Poland to supply the deficiency. The *cheder* has already been discussed from the educational point of view (*v. sup.*); and here it need only be taken as an illustration of the difference in the standard of religious education as recognised by English and Polish Jews. Some figures obtained at the Stepney Jewish schools, where a considerable majority of the children are of English parentage, will be enough to show the foreign character of the *chedarim*. Eight classes were visited,

and in these there were seventy-three boys altogether who attended *cheder*, or otherwise received extra teaching in Hebrew; and out of these only seven were the children of English parents. And when it is remembered that this extra teaching frequently entails a great sacrifice upon the poorer foreigners, whereas the English Jews, being for the most part comparatively prosperous, could easily afford to pay for it, it is obvious that the difference of religious feeling which such figures indicate must be very considerable. That the patrons of the *cheder* are fully conscious of this was emphatically shown by the character of their response to the criticism offered by the Educational Conference. It is true that, judging from the character of the rising generation, the *cheder* does not seem to be as powerful a bulwark of orthodoxy as its defenders would fain believe. Still it is an institution that bears witness to the strength of the religious spirit which

animates those parents and others by whose contributions it is supported.

Apart from the general influence of English education and an English environment, there are one or two minor influences which are just worth taking into account. Among them Socialism deserves to be briefly noticed as one of the disruptive forces with which East End Judaism has to reckon. Jewish Socialists are for the most part Freethinkers ; and as the leaders of Jewish Socialism have generally been also the pioneers of trade-unionism, they have obtained a certain amount of influence over a fairly large section of the Jewish workmen. Still the spread of Socialism among the foreign community does not seem to have been considerable. The Jew is an individualist by nature ; and though he is enough of a dreamer to be attracted by almost any remote ideal, there seems to be peculiarly little in the programme and promised Utopia of Socialism that is really congenial to him. Even those who

Socialism
as a
Disruptive
Force

have been Socialists in Russia do not seem to find much that is to their taste in the Socialism of English workmen; it is not flamboyant or revolutionary enough to kindle their enthusiasm. Moreover, in Jewish circles, it is the correct thing to disapprove of Socialism; it is vaguely associated with Atheism, and the word 'Socialist' is perhaps most commonly employed as a term of abuse.

Conver-
sionist
Societies

Socialism therefore need not be considered a very formidable antagonist to the Jewish religion; and the same may be said with more emphasis of the Christian conversionist societies. It is questionable, in fact, whether they would not be more truly described as disguised allies. They are certainly at the root of a good deal of suspicious and hostile feeling towards Christianity; and so far go to strengthen the jealous watch which the Jew keeps over his religious birthright. Nothing could be much better calculated to keep

A Prop to
Judaism?

the great body of Jews united and the spirit of Judaism alive than the constant presence of a common enemy. On the whole, then, it is perhaps fortunate that the uniform unsuccess of these missions causes them to be viewed with contempt rather than with alarm or active hostility. The number of conversions is so few, and the genuineness of most of them so questionable, that the conversionist movement is not regarded in the light of a serious menace to Judaism. The Jew who loses his own religion does not commonly become a Christian, but remains (as Sheridan put it) 'like the blank leaf between the Old and New Testament.' Of those who actually do embrace Christianity, at least a large proportion appear to be 'professional converts,' to whom their new faith appeals solely as the avenue to a lucrative calling. It is fair, however, to say that most of the missions seem to aim less than formerly at securing a record of baptisms, and more at merely spreading

a knowledge of New Testament history and teaching; and in this way a certain amount of useful educational work may be accomplished. But it is to be feared that their total effect is mischievous rather than beneficent. It is an ungrateful business to find fault with those who support or carry on the work of these institutions; and their motives are, no doubt, in many cases entitled to respect. But it is necessary to protest against the expenditure of such enormous sums of money upon work that is, from every point of view, unprofitable. The 'London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews' has an income of about £40,000 a year; and a perusal of the Society's own reports is enough to convince most people of the wastefulness of such undertakings. One of the boasts of the Society is that 'nearly five million missionary publications have been placed in the hands of Jews'; and the same Society 'claims to have been the first to

establish English medical missions in the world.'* The account given of the working of the medical missions is instructive. The proceedings begin with 'a short evangelistic service' in jargon, before the doctor arrives; while the applicants wait their turn to see him, 'the missionaries talk with them individually,' and 'as each comes from the doctor he gives his name and address to another missionary in a private room, who then has a splendid opportunity of pressing home the Gospel as he talks with him alone.'† There may be a standpoint from which such tactics appear justifiable; but, to say the least, they seem to be scarcely worthy of the cause which they are intended to serve. On the Jewish side, a work which is carried on by such methods is more calculated to create than to remove prejudices, and is not likely

* *Missions to the Jews*. A handbook of reasons, facts and figures. By the Rev. W. T. Gidney, M.A., p. 58.

† *Jewish Mission Work in London, or the Metropolitan Mission of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews*, p. 15.

to convey a very desirable impression of the dignity of the Christian Church. There is, in fact, little doubt that if the total effect of these institutions is taken into account they must be put down among the obstacles to fusion.

There are, of course, a number of retarding influences which offer an amount of resistance that it would be easy to underestimate. Judaism is much more than a ceremonial religion; and its complex and many-sided character give it a remarkable strength and vitality. Those who have given up all observances rarely abandon its monotheistic basis; and though it is of course impossible to say how much vital faith is generally left in such a creed, it suffices to justify them in a nominal adherence to Judaism. But even those who are wholly and frankly irreligious cannot generally quite shake off their Jewishness; and a racial instinct—a sense of tribal exclusiveness—often seems to survive even

The
Vitality
and Many-
Sidedness
of Judaism

Race and
Religion

when nothing is left that could be called religion. In the rooted objection to intermarriage which is common among all classes of Jews, there seems to be a racial as well as a religious element; and no doubt it is a repugnance which can only be eradicated in the course of generations. Assimilation will not be complete until intermarriage becomes common; but if the assimilative forces are on the whole as preponderant as they seem, the objection to mixed marriages, which is at present undoubtedly strong, can hardly be more than a phase in the transition which is taking place. As social intercourse increases, and religious prohibitions lose their authority, the policy of continued isolation must become increasingly difficult. The remnant of religious and racial sentiment which survives the decay of orthodoxy is in itself a vague and perishable thing, and could hardly outlast for many generations the system of forms and ceremonies in which it has hitherto

been embodied. Shape, solidity and permanence can hardly be assured to it except through ordinances and institutions; and if these break down it must give way in time before the slow encroachment of alien habits and ideas. And it seems almost certain that they are gradually losing their hold upon the great mass of Jews.

Strength of
Judaism on
its
Financial
Side

There is one feature, however, which tells strongly in favour of Jewish communal institutions. They are for the most part excellently managed; and on the financial side their affairs are admirably regulated. The prominence, indeed, of financial topics at committee meetings has given rise to a good deal of sarcastic comment in the Jewish press and elsewhere. One of the characters in Mr Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* describes the State Church of the Jews as 'simply a financial system to which the doctrines of Judaism happened to be tacked on,' and goes on to prophesy that 'long after Judaism has ceased to exist

excellent gentlemen will be found regulating its finances.'* It is a feature which has its humorous side; but none the less it is a decided element of strength, and can hardly be dismissed as unimportant. Even here, however, the state of things seems recently to have been growing less satisfactory. Complaints are not uncommon that the whole management of communal affairs is passing into too few hands, and that the younger generation are not coming forward to take up their share of the burden. The ex-President of the Board of Guardians, in a speech which has already been referred to, recently spoke in strong terms of the gloomy prospects of the Board owing to the decrease at once of workers and of contributions; and the *Jewish World*, it will be remembered, put down this state of affairs to 'the spirit of Anglicisation run wild.' Whatever may be its exact cause, such a grievance must certainly be regarded

* p. 242.

as a symptom of decreasing life and solidarity in the Anglo-Jewish community; and it is at least possible that it may be connected with the decay of orthodox belief.

Final Con-
siderations

It is easy, no doubt, to underestimate the strength of many of the ties which bind even the least orthodox of Jews to their race and religion. And no doubt one who approaches the question from the outside is a poor judge of the force and vitality which may still inhere in sentiments and associations that do not lie upon the surface. But, allowing for this, it is difficult to imagine that there can be sufficient power in them to form a lasting barrier. It is a case undoubtedly in which there are strong factors on the side of conservatism; but on the whole the array of social forces which are working towards a change seems to be immensely preponderant. And there are certainly abundant indications of the direction in which this change is likely to take place.

V.—CONCLUSION

THE attempt which has been made in the foregoing chapters to deal with so large and difficult a question as Jewish assimilation can perhaps only be justified by the pressing importance of the problem. The answer to it must largely determine our attitude towards the Jewish community which lives among us; for until it has been answered, it is impossible to say whether this Jewish element is likely in the long run to prove an advantage or a burden to the country. If the Jews are always to remain separate they are likely also to remain a constant source of disquietude and offence. But if, as has been contended, they are on the way to complete (or virtually complete) absorption in the national life, the verdict must un-

Practical
Interest
of the
Assimila-
tion
Question

doubtedly be a strong one in their favour. Whatever may be thought of the Jewish character in itself, there is no doubt that an infusion of Jewish blood would introduce an admirable strain into the breed of Englishmen.

The conclusion which has been forced upon us is that, on the whole, the present tendency is strongly in the direction of absorption. There are a variety of expansive forces from within the Jewish community, and of assimilative forces from without, which all seem to be working towards the same end. At the same time, it is a subject upon which one must be ware of crude and hasty inferences. In confining our attention to the East End of London, we have only explored a corner of a large question; and the total Jewish problem is one that cannot satisfactorily be treated piecemeal. The Whitechapel Jewry, however, has some instructive features, and the transformation which is

Cautions—
1. Incon-
clusiveness
of Many
Local Con-
siderations

taking place in it is perhaps typical of a wider process which is taking place in many quarters of the world.* It exemplifies the immense difference between the Jew of the Ghetto and the emancipated Jew, and at the same time shows the effect of contact between the two types under conditions of freedom. The newly-arrived Russo-Jewish immigrant is, in all essentials, a mediæval product, and his children grow up into something like the type of modern Englishmen. The evolution which the older Anglo-Jewish families have accomplished by the growth and effort of hundreds of years, is in Whitechapel being compressed into a single generation. And it appears that such a sudden and radical metamorphosis, with its accompanying breakdown of old habits and traditions, is likely enough to have more far-reaching

The
White-
chapel
Experiment

* cf. Le Roy Beaulieu. *Israel among the Nations*, ch. xii. Liberal treatment of the Jews, however, which appears to be one of the main factors in 'assimilating' them, seems at the present moment to be almost confined to England.

consequences than any that have yet manifested themselves.

2. A
Question
of Degree

A second and equally necessary caution is to avoid being led astray by phrases. The word 'assimilation' is apt to convey too hard-and-fast a meaning; and it would of course be absurd to prophesy anything like the complete extinction of the Jewish race. 'Assimilation' is, in fact, largely a matter of degree; it is a process which has been operating in a greater or less degree through the whole of Jewish history. And the question before us is mainly how far this process seems likely in the future to expand or contract its sphere of operation.

Summary.
1. Social

It has been seen that the social isolation which preserves the Yiddish-speaking community from all the contaminating influences of intercourse with Gentiles is no longer maintained in the case of the English-born generation. The English training, and the inculcation of English habits and ideas, goes far towards robbing

them of their Jewishness. They consider themselves Englishmen, and do not apparently attach any very great sanctity or importance to the racial and religious ties which bind them to their fellow-Jews who have immigrated from foreign lands. And the reality of this change is at once attested and emphasised by the cordial feelings with which English Jews are commonly regarded even by the most bitterly anti-foreign among the East End Gentiles. The barrier of social prejudice, in fact, may be said to have broken down.

Similarly the economic grievance against ^{2. Economic} Jewish labour was found to be on the whole unjustified, and unlikely to become a source of permanent estrangement or antagonism. The Jewish workman has both good and bad qualities, and in certain respects his influence upon the standard of industry has been the reverse of beneficial; but it has certainly not been proved against him that (to any appreciable extent) he really takes

the bread out of English mouths. In workshops, indeed, there appears to be little mixture of foreign Jews with Englishmen ; but even here, with the decrease of Sabbath observance, which is a main cause of this industrial separateness, the obstacles to fusion are losing their power.

3. Religious Obviously, however, it is upon religion that the whole matter ultimately hangs. 'What is Jewish separateness,' asks Mr O. J. Simon, 'when the Jewish religion has ceased to operate? It is nothing but a short-lived relic.*' And it is here that we have the most striking evidence of the process of transformation which is taking place. On such a subject it would doubtless be unwise to base any very trenchant conclusions on as superficial a study as has here been made ; but, so far as we have seen, all the facts seem to point in the same direction. The English and the Polish Jew are a bye-word and an astonishment to one

* *Fortnightly Review*, 1896, p. 579.

another for laxity and superstition respectively. It is almost evident that the old Judaism of the Ghetto cannot survive in anything like its original shape; in England the 'hardshell' Jew—the 'Oriental Israelite Hebrew Jew'—of the traditional pattern is a dying type. The process of assimilation, in fact, has set in, and there is no apparent reason why it should stop at any particular point. To drop any fraction of the organised system of beliefs and observances which make up Judaism is to be on the way to losing the whole. And throughout the Jewish community this tendency seems to be very generally recognised. On the one side the Zionists and the *Mahazike Haddath* are hostile witnesses to its strength; while on the other side there is a small but highly-intelligent party which even hails the prospect of assimilation with approval.

The present state of things, from a Jewish standpoint, is obviously unsatis-

factory. It is beginning to be realised that communal affairs are getting into a parlous state, and it can hardly be disguised that religious orthodoxy is steadily losing its hold upon the community. 'Manifold are the perils which beset Judaism,' was the burden of a sermon recently delivered by the Chief Rabbi,* while, in the *Fortnightly Review*, we find one of the descendants of Aaron proclaiming that 'Among the many gross mistakes current about the Jews, none is so great as the belief that they are a religious people.'† It is easy no doubt to over-emphasise such utterances, but quotations to the same effect could be multiplied, and taken in connection with other facts, they certainly seem significant of the times.

A Practical
Question
for the
Jews

For the Jewish community, of course, the whole question is one of practical politics, but unfortunately one of the 'communal defects'

* *Jewish Chronicle*, Oct. 14, 1898, p. 21.

† *Fortnightly Review*, 1896, p. 624.. Herman Cohen.

most commonly deplored is the lack of statesmanship in such matters. Doubtless the number of discordant factions in the community would make it almost impossible to frame a policy which would be generally acceptable, but in many quarters there seems to be a general unwillingness to face the real issues and grapple squarely with the facts of the situation. And although there is a general sense of instability and dissatisfaction with the present state of things, it cannot be said that there is much life or urgency in the demand for change. The condition of Judaism, as seen from the standpoint of the average English Jew, might perhaps be summed up in Dogberry's words as 'very tolerable, and not to be endured.' The feeling seems to be mainly one of stolid and resigned dissatisfaction. Apart from the Zionists, the *Mahazike* Rival
Haddath and the Reformed Congregation, Pro-grammes
there is no suggestion of a remedy. Of these parties, the two first are practically

confined to the foreign part of the community, while the Reformers are neither very numerous nor very enthusiastic. They offer, indeed, a more or less progressive policy, and would adapt Judaism to the changed conditions of the time, but it is shrewdly suspected that 'Reform' would only open the door to assimilation, and that this would mean the ultimate death and burial of Judaism. Yet there is only the choice of going forward or backward. Judaism may either shake off all its tribal features, and emerge purely as a religion, or it may creep back into the shell of nationalism and establish itself in Zion or elsewhere as the nucleus of a state.

Reform or
Zionism

Reform and Zionism are the broad alternatives. But to the majority of English Jews neither course seems to recommend itself; the one is shunned as dangerous and the other as retrogressive. And while concerned to retain their Jewishness, they are also, for the most part, keenly alive

to the necessity of proving their patriotism and conciliating Gentile opinion. Hence one occasionally comes across what Dr Herzl caustically describes as 'the efforts of amphibious - minded men to combine ancient tradition with an exaggerated imitation of national customs.'* One of the main results of this state of things is a general reluctance to taking up a decided attitude upon any question. The community, as a whole, is thus without a policy, and so far at the mercy of external forces; and the drift of circumstances appears to set strongly in one direction.

It is easy to understand the antipathy which the great body of Jews naturally feel towards the prospect of assimilation. They have too much pride of race to relish the idea of complete absorption. But (at least from the Gentile standpoint) it is no less hard to see the justification than the practicability of a policy of con-

Policy of
Drift

The 'De
Jure'
Question

* *Contemporary Review*, 1897, p. 588.

tinued separatism. There is doubtless a loss in every departure from historic traditions; but if these traditions have outlived their value and purpose, or even acquired a mischievous tendency, the loss may be more than counterbalanced. It is pitiful also, no doubt, to witness the decay of a religion which has gone far in many lives to transfigure, or at least to render tolerable, the harsh conditions of slum-life; but in another aspect there is to be taken into account (if I may borrow the words of a recent contributor to *Young Israel*) 'the legacy of bigotry and superstition of the narrow-souled denizens of dark and noisome Ghettos.'* And, on the whole, if the gains and losses of assimilation could be reckoned against one another, there seems little doubt on which side the balance would be found.

* *Young Israel*, August 1898, p. 52.

APPENDIX A.
POPULATION STATISTICS

ANYTHING like a trustworthy estimate of the Jewish population of London seems to be impossible. The materials which are available are of such dubious value that no calculation based on them can have much claim to be considered accurate. The census returns are almost useless, as they do not take account of religious distinctions; and any calculation based on the official records of deaths and marriages is made uncertain by the presence and constant influx of a large immigrant element which throws out the ordinary proportions between old and young. For a review and criticism of the various methods of making an estimate, the reader must be referred to Mr Llewellyn Smith's treatment of the subject in *Life and Labour of the London People* (Vol. III., p. 103). No elaborate calculations are here attempted, and the result, roughly indicated, may be taken for what it is worth.

There are three various sets of statistics on which estimates may be based :—viz. (1) Marriages ; (2) Deaths ; (3) Children at elementary schools.

The following figures are quoted as abridged from the *Jewish Year Book* :—

(1) AND (2) 'RETURNS MADE TO BOARD OF DEPUTIES' :—

	LONDON.		
	Seatholders.	Marriages.	Deaths.
1873	2,289	331	847
1874	2,287	309	875
1875	2,498	317	817
1876	2,435	275	755
1877	2,860	297	878
1878	2,972	377	985
1879	3,378	325	1,068
1880	3,199	349	883
1881	3,418	364	970
1882	3,274	372	930
1883	3,397	381	959
1884	3,428	439	991
1885	3,521	462	1,061
1886	3,689	472	1,148
1887	3,573	443	1,119
1888	4,108	589	1,129
1889	4,458	613	1,215
1890	4,578	654	1,450
1891	5,502	724	1,431
1892	5,669	743	1,625
1893	5,594	788	1,792
1894	6,561	839	1,620
1895	6,250	864	1,905
1896	6,625	963	1,738
1897	7,601	937	1,804

(2) JEWISH CHILDREN IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

	Total.	Born Abroad.	Born in England of Foreign Parents.	Native Parents.
1894. East End	14,592	4,528	7,141	2,923
Other parts of London	1,372	271	718	383
Total	<u>15,964</u>	<u>4,799</u>	<u>7,859</u>	<u>3,306</u>
1897. East End	16,849	4,938	8,295	3,516
Other parts of London	1,589	281	922	386
Total	<u>18,438</u>	<u>5,219</u>	<u>9,217</u>	<u>3,902</u>
1898. East End	17,954	5,171	9,125	3,658
Other parts of London	1,488	291	821	376
Total	<u>19,442</u>	<u>5,462</u>	<u>9,946</u>	<u>4,034</u>

With these figures may be compared the following, which, however, were collected unofficially and are less exhaustive (*v.* Joseph Jacobs—*Statistics of Jewish Population in London, etc.*—1873-1893.

	1882 _a	1886.
East End	6,024	8,990
Other parts of London	905	1,031
Total	<u>6,929</u>	<u>10,021</u>

From these various starting-points (with the help of dubious assumptions) the following results may be worked out, taking the 1898 figures:—

(1.) The marriage returns (assuming that the

London marriage-rate for 1896 (of 18 persons married per 1000) is a near enough approximation) give a population of about 104,000.

(2.) The burial returns (taking the London death-rate of 18.2) give 99,120.

(3.) The school children figures (following Mr Llewellyn Smith's method of multiplying by 6) give 116,600. It seems probable that this is, on the whole, a rather nearer approximation than that given by either of the other methods. The influx of adults probably has the effect of depressing both the marriage* and death-rate; and in the latter case, while allowing for their congestion in the East End of London, something also must be allowed for the superior longevity of the Jewish race. On the other hand, though the school-period of Jewish children may possibly be rather shorter than the average, the larger size of Jewish families, and the comparative rarity of unmarried Jews and Jewesses, make it probable that the figures arrived at by the third method are excessive. On the whole it may be conjectured — not very hazardously — that the total Jewish population of London is something between 105,000 and 115,000.

The third method would further give a Jewish population of 107,700 to the East End; but this

* Out of 2811 inmates of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter in 1896-97, 1446, or more than half, were married. As, however, a large proportion of the unmarried remnant would be of marriageable age, the effect upon the marriage-rate is very open to question.

is certainly a larger proportion than is just. The list of schools given in the *Jewish Year Book* is obviously less complete for other districts than for the East End.

It is worth while to compare the above figures with the results of previous inquiries, though these, of course, are of very diverse value (*v. Life and Labour of the London People*, Vol. III., p. 104), viz. :—

- 1858.—27,000 (*Jewish Chronicle*).
- 1864.—18,000 (*London Labour and the London Poor*).
- 1871.—35,000 (calculated from burial returns).
- 1883.—46,000 (*Jewish Chronicle*).
- 1885.—45,000 (Mr Lionel Alexander).
- 1888.—‘Over 60,000, and possibly as many as 70,000’ (Mr Llewellyn Smith).
- 1891.—64,280 (*Jewish Year Book*).

II

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE QUESTION

By H. S. LEWIS, M.A.

MR RUSSELL in his able essay has made a wide survey of the various aspects of the Jewish question. I am in agreement with much that he has written, and do not wish to cover the same ground again. I think, however, that there are some misconceptions in his essay which vitiate the general conclusion to which his argument is directed. I shall endeavour to establish that the Jewish race, as a separate entity, has a future; that its mission as such is far from completed, and that it can look forward

to something better than the painless euthanasia to which Mr Russell apparently condemns it.

A personal consideration may be permitted at the outset. Mr Russell occupies a position of mental detachment to which I cannot pretend. The future of Judaism may be a theme for curious sociological inquiry to the Anglo-Saxon; to the Jew it is an intensely practical question. If his race has hitherto maintained its separate existence, it has been at the cost of constant and painful effort. Is this effort to be continued, or shall we rather welcome absorption in the larger life of the world around us? The early associations of a Jew, and his pride in a past full of glorious memories, strongly induce him to answer this question emphatically in the affirmative. At the same time it may be fairly argued that the mere observer of Jewish life will be unable to gauge the strength of feelings and attachments which he sees from the

outside, and which to the Jew himself are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

One fact must be borne in mind when we consider the changes produced in the life and thought of the Jew as he comes under English influences. The separateness of the Jewish race has struck the observer in all ages, but their imitativeness has always been a no less remarkable feature. To show that this is no new thing it is only necessary to glance through the pages of the Talmud. The Jew, say the Rabbis, brought back from Babylon the names of the angels and the names of the months.* As a matter of fact, the post-exilic angelology was mainly an exotic growth. Again, the Rabbis praised certain customs of the Medes and Persians,† and we find a certain 'chief of the exile' who decided a civil dispute in accordance with the principles of Persian law.‡ The influence

* Talmud. J. Rosh Hashshanah I. 5.

† Berachoth, 8 b.

‡ Bava Kama, 58 b.

of Greece and Rome on the Rabbis was still closer. Not only are many of the principles of Talmudic legislation directly derived from Roman law, but some of the technical terms used are merely transliterated in Hebrew, without being translated.* Indeed, a certain readiness to assimilate foreign ideas is a feature found throughout Jewish history, and we need not wonder if we meet with this phenomenon in our own times. Unfortunately the Jew does not always adopt those ideas and practices which are worthy of imitation. Mr Russell has reminded us of that not infrequent type of Jew who adopts betting and swearing as the hall-marks of English citizenship. The Rabbis of old had, in like manner, to reproach those of their brethren who acted after the fashion of the Gentiles and always chose the worst examples. But the influence on the Jews of other races has sometimes been an equally strong force

* For example, *ὑποθήκη, ἐπίτροπος, κατήγορος.*

for good. If the modern Jew strives to absorb the highest culture of the age, he need not necessarily lose hold of his faith. The step he is taking is quite analogous to that of his mediæval forbears who were foremost in absorbing the teaching of Aristotle and his successors, which was then the most powerful instrument for the progress of human thought.

To forecast the future is always a hazardous undertaking, and it must be a matter of conjecture whether the Jews will continue to maintain a separate existence. Past experience, however, certainly justifies us in believing that we shall be able to resist assimilation. Even if one admitted the accuracy of Mr Russell's survey of present conditons, a wider generalisation would be required before one predicted that the Jewish race had survived nearly two thousand years of dispersion only to disappear at last. Nor can it be admitted that present conditions are essentially

different from those which prevailed in former times. Martyrdoms and persecutions form the most striking chapters in the history of Israel, but, after all, they have nearly always been exceptional occurrences. The victims of the first Crusade recognised this fact and declared that God had sent a portion of the chastisement due for the sins of Israel on their generation, because by its constancy and steadfastness it was capable of enduring so severe a trial. The records of mediæval Jewry are by no means coloured with uniform gloom. Not only did the community possess a vigorous internal life, but the relations between Jew and Gentile were at times far from unsatisfactory.* There could, of course, be no question of political emancipation, but, after all, the bulk of the native population were equally dependent on their social superiors. Jewish

* See Israel Abrahams' *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, ch. xxiii.

separation has doubtless been accentuated by persecution, but it has not been found incompatible with the maintenance of friendly relations with the outside world.

We must not fail also to do justice to the wonderful recuperative powers of the Jewish race. Its mere physical power of multiplication is, doubtless, a source of strength, although it may become, as here in London, a source of temporary perplexity, and even of danger. But Judaism has also a subtler faculty of recovering lost ground. The Jew cannot discard his nature and the racial sympathies which lie latent in his heart, even when he seems hopelessly estranged from his religion and his kindred. Even in those families where assimilation has gone far we find frequent reversions to the hereditary type. Israel, say the Rabbis, is like the sand of the sea-shore, in which, if a hole be dug over night, the space is filled up

before the morning,* or, to adopt an earlier metaphor, our nation is like a tree which remains alive although it sheds its leaves.† This doctrine of Isaiah as to the faithful remnant in whom the true life of the nation is in reality embodied, is indeed essential to the understanding of Jewish history in all ages. 'What is it to me that the ten tribes are lost untraceably, or that multitudes of the children of Judah have mixed themselves with the Gentile populations as a river with rivers? Behold our people still! Their skirts spread afar; they are torn, and soiled and trodden on, but there is a jewelled breastplate.'‡

The whole argument of Mr Russell may be summed up conveniently in one sentence. He maintains that as the East-End Jew becomes an Englishman, he ceases to remain a Jew. To test the accuracy of this statement it may be well

* *Pesikta* (Ed. Buber), ch. ii.

† Isaiah vi. 13.

‡ *Daniel Deronda*, ch. xlii.

to consider first the characteristics of the Jewish workman who has been domiciled in England for several generations. Numerous examples of this class are to be met with in Stepney, in the model dwellings between Houndsditch and Commercial Street, and in some of the streets and courts within the same area. The typical Jew, of the class we mention, has certainly been thoroughly Anglicised, although he may bear a Dutch name which indicates the country from which his family came originally. He thoroughly identifies himself with England, and takes, at any rate at election times, a keen and occasionally an intelligent interest in politics. If, as is often the case, he is a cigar-maker, he probably belongs to the Trades' Union, a peculiarly well and soberly managed society. On the other hand, he continues to regard himself as a Jew, although he is not usually very observant of the minutiae of his religion,

and only attends synagogues a little more regularly than the average Christian workman attends church. His attachment to his race and creed continues, however, to be strong, and may, indeed, be as real as that of his foreign co-religionist, although it is partially concealed by that acquired quality of British stolidity of which Mr Russell speaks. The English Jew, it may be added, rarely gives encouragement to the efforts of the conversionist agencies which are so active in East London. Such influence as these bodies may obtain is practically limited to a section of the foreigners. In social morality the English Jew of the working classes is in no wise inferior to the ordinary Englishman, and I regret that Mr Russell should have given currency to the vulgar prejudice that Jews are commonly disposed to sharp practice and unscrupulousness. We have our black sheep as have other people, but it is a little

hard that we should suffer the discredit of all their malpractices. The friendly feeling existing between Jewish and Christian working men, to which Mr Russell himself testifies, could hardly have grown up in the face of earlier prejudices, except as the result of favourable experience.

Of course the English Jew of the working-classes has his faults. The most prevalent of these is betting and other forms of gambling. I shall have occasion to recur to this subject when I speak of the immigrants, but it must be at once admitted that the trading instinct in Jewish character is an impelling force towards speculation, both as a business and an amusement. This feeling is illustrated by the extent to which Jews have taken up the sale of perishable articles, such as fruit and fish, where the opportunities for considerable profit are balanced by the possibilities of heavy loss. The professional bookmaker, of whom there are

too many specimens in Stepney and Bow, brings up his children to his own business without any apparent sense of moral degradation. The perfectly sober and respectable workman will indulge in an occasional bet without much scruple, although he is seldom so reckless as to ruin himself by betting. The English Jew frequents the public-house more than his foreign co-religionist, but he is very rarely a drunkard. Public opinion amongst his class condemns this form of intemperance.

The attitude of the English Jew towards Christians is a curious mixture of respect and contempt. He is naturally disposed to look up to a dominant race, and he desires the good opinion of his neighbours. On the other hand he still regards the non-Jew or *goy* with some suspicion, and considers his own people superior in acuteness, in family affection and in freedom from superstition. He regards Christians with perfect good feeling and

mingles with them on neutral ground, but he seldom enters their homes or invites them to his. In short, they are rather his acquaintances than his friends.

Mixed marriages are admittedly rare, and I doubt the accuracy of Mr Russell's statement that they are increasing, at any rate amongst the working classes. It is noticeable, also, that it is very unusual in East London for a Christian to marry a Jewess. Marriages between a Jew and a Christian woman are not quite so uncommon. Usually the wife is nominally converted to Judaism, and the children are brought up as Jews.

The attitude of the English Jew towards the foreign Jew is similarly a mixed one. On the one hand, the latter is sometimes a trade rival, who is suspected to have brought down prices and to have taken the bread out of the mouth of the native-born workman. The foreigner has been also, as we shall see, an important factor in raising rents in many parts of East London, and his willingness to

overcrowd is patently injurious to all his neighbours. But the English Jew often expresses himself more strongly on these points than he really feels. It is almost proverbial that Jews love to criticise their fellows, and some of Mr Russell's informants on this point have probably availed themselves of the opportunity to indulge in this pleasure. Practically the English and foreign Jew feel themselves more in sympathy with each other than with the outside world. They are found, to a greater extent, in the same workshops, notably in various branches of the boot trade, and intermarriages between them are common.

The English Jew is most anxious to send his children to a Jewish school. He prefers such a school as the Stepney Jewish, where a fee is charged, to the numerous free schools in the same neighbourhood. In a large majority of instances he does not, like the foreigner, give his boys additional instruction in Hebrew at the *cheder*. He does not be-

come a paying member of a synagogue unless he reaches a certain level of prosperity, and he attends but rarely, except at times of family festivity or sorrow. He is particularly regular in his attendance during the eleven months of mourning for a deceased parent and on the 'Yahrzeit' or anniversary of the death. It must be sorrowfully admitted that the religious heads of the synagogue have done little to adapt the service to his needs. We shall sum up the situation by stating that Judaism has not weakened its hold on the English Jew of East London as a racial bond. As a religion it has become weaker and less intelligent, because it has cause to need an inspiration which has yet to be supplied.

The foreign Jews are much more difficult to appraise correctly ; for one thing, they are so numerous that any generalisation will be most perilous. Intellectually they are often superior not only to native-born workmen, but also to many native-born merchants

and stockbrokers. Their interests are less purely personal; they mostly have an acquaintance, however superficial, with some of the masterpieces of Rabbinic literature. Their morality is a strange mass of contradictions. They love their children, for whose welfare they will make almost any sacrifice. Their domesticity is remarkable, and they spend their leisure at home. They seldom allow their wives to work for them* and yet wife-desertion is one of their common offences and gives rise to a difficult type of case with which the Jewish Board of Guardians has constantly to deal. The foreign Jew has a greater sense of generosity than of justice. The 'greener,' just arrived in London with scanty resources, will be sure to meet with hospitality from some 'landsmann.' If a poor family loses all its belongings in a fire, some kind friend will often make a collection amongst the neigh-

* This is almost as true of the English Jew, and in strong contrast with the numerous cases where Christian women in London go out to work after their marriage.

hours to supply what has been lost. In times of sickness and death one sees most touching examples amongst the foreign Jews of unselfish help, of sacrifices freely given both of time and money. On the other hand, we find evil qualities, chiefly, no doubt, the result of persecution, but none the less unlovely. One is sometimes tempted to conclude in despair that the bulk of the Polish immigrants have no sense of truth whatever. No more painful spectacle can be witnessed than the hearing of a summons at an East-End police court, where the parties concerned are foreign Jews. Obvious perjury, on the smallest provocation, is committed in case after case. The comments of Judge Bacon at the Whitechapel County Court on this fact have been at times severely criticised by the Jewish press. His generalisations may have been too sweeping, being based on his experience of petty litigation, where the seamy side of life is necessarily pro-

minent. At the same time, his remarks have been based on a substantial substratum of truth. It is the experience of most visitors amongst the foreign poor for charitable societies, that although absolute imposture is exceptional, falsehoods with regard to the details of cases are constantly met with.

It is to this taint of untruthfulness that most of the other defects of the foreign Jews are to be traced. I fear that it cannot be denied that their standard of business morality is often defective. A statement of this kind may be regarded as unfair, and it is, of course, difficult to put it to any exact test. An illustration is, however, afforded by the return of convictions, periodically issued in the minutes of the London County Council, for the use of false weights and measures, and kindred offences. Judging by the names of the offenders, an altogether undue proportion of them appear to be foreign Jews. We

meet also, in East London, with far too many cases where the Bankruptcy laws are evaded by persons who pass through the courts and reappear in business with suspicious celerity and without apparent loss.

The foreign Jew as landlord is a new and unwelcome figure. The Chief Rabbi, in a recent sermon, tells the story of an East-End Jew who exclaimed to him, 'Thank God I live under a Christian landlord.' This statement illustrates quite fairly the evil reputation that Jewish landlords have acquired amongst their own co-religionists. The condemnation is undoubtedly too sweeping. In East London there are good Jewish landlords, some of whom are foreigners, whose excellent qualities are acknowledged by their tenants. But harshness, oppression and even fraud are too often associated with foreign Jews who have recently invested in house property. Considering this question, at the moment, as illustrating the sense

of morality of the offenders, it must be noted that many of them cannot be considered as bad men in the ordinary relations of life, whilst, in several notorious instances, they make professions, probably not consciously insincere, of charitable and religious zeal. The root of this inconsistency is the notion, too often entertained, that business stands apart and is governed by different rules from those prevailing in the other relations of life. One of my friends asked a landlord how he came to oppress one of his tenants, a very poor man and a Jew like himself. 'When I go to synagogue,' was the reply, 'I am a Jew; when I come for my rent I am a *goy*.' This inconsistency is, of course, common enough outside the Jewish community; it has been a favourite theme of satirists in all ages. It is, however, peculiarly offensive in the followers of a religion which teaches, above all others, that a man should consecrate all the activities of life to the service of the Supreme.

It must be noted, on the other hand, that the proportion of convictions for serious crime amongst the Jews, native and foreign, is far smaller than amongst the general population. The number of Jewish convicts has, of course, increased in recent years with the growth of the Jewish population, but it is still inconsiderable. In 1897, 485 Jewish prisoners, convicted or awaiting trial, were admitted into English prisons.* The offences most commonly committed by them are larceny and receiving stolen property. The great majority have been born abroad. Thus, of the twenty-four Jews who were imprisoned in Wormwood Scrubbs in April 1899, eighteen were from Poland or Russia, some having arrived from one to six months from abroad. Habitual criminals are rare.†

* These figures are taken from the *Report of the Overseers of the United Synagogue for 1897*. I have been unable to obtain later figures.

† Thus, of the twenty-four in Wormwood Scrubbs in April 1899, fourteen were imprisoned for a first offence; five for a second; two for a third; two for a fifth; one for a sixth. Rev. M. Adler, who

On the other hand, the increase of juvenile crime amongst the Jews of Whitechapel has, of late, attracted the serious attention of the magistrates and has necessitated the foundation of a Jewish industrial school. Even so, the boys concerned are in reality few; it is just because crime rarely occurs amongst the Jews that their doings have attracted so much attention. The process by which large districts of East London have been invaded by foreign Jews may be regarded with mixed feelings; it is certain that, in many streets, it has replaced a thoroughly vicious class by hardworking and respectable persons.*

has visited the prison since 1892, informs me that he has only met five men who may be called habitual criminals. It may be added that there never have been more than six Jewesses at one time at Wormwood Scrubs; and the officials can only remember four who have been sent there more than once.

* The following streets, which, in Mr Charles Booth's map, compiled in 1887, were coloured black as being inhabited by the 'vicious and semi-criminal,' are now Jewish and respectable:—In Whitechapel and Spitalfields—part of Plough Street, Thrawl Street, Flower and Dean Street (a few bad houses remain here). In St George's-in-the-East—Ship Alley, St George's Court, now Challis

I have little to add to Mr Russell's remarks about Jews and public-houses. It is, of course, a commonplace that drunkards and teetotallers are about equally uncommon amongst us. It is rare indeed to see a drunken Jew in the streets, and although Jewish publicans are common enough, their houses are nearly all conducted respectably. Trade societies habitually hold their meetings in public-houses—a fact which one is disposed to regret; but there is no reason to suppose that this leads to any actual excess. A few public-houses, owned by Jews, on the borders of the City, have an evil reputation for being used for the purpose of betting, but they are certainly not frequented by foreigners.

·Court (William Street), Matilda Street, Matilda Place, Turner's Buildings, part of Little Turner Street, Barnett Street. In Mile End—John's Place (Baker Street), part of Adelina Grove, Eagle Place, part of Oxford Street and Newark Street. In Bethnal Green—Code Street and Butler's Buildings. In Great Pearl Street and Little Pearl Street, Spitalfields, a large proportion of the vicious population has been replaced by Jews.

A word must be said of gambling, which is so common a failing of the foreigners, as it is of other sections of the Jewish community. Card-playing, at home or at one of the cook-shops which abound in Whitechapel, is a favourite form of dissipation, possibly harmless in itself but very likely to be carried to excess. A brisk trade in foreign lottery tickets is also carried on; it is not uncommon for a Jewish workman to spend £5 a year in the purchase of these. The restraining force of prudence prevents all but a small section of persons from reducing themselves to actual destitution by gambling, but it cannot be doubted that this unhealthy form of excitement exercises a deleterious influence on those who succumb to it.

We cannot deny therefore the existence of certain signs of moral degeneration in the Jewish immigrants from Russia and Poland. Their defects are to be attributed, however, almost entirely to the influence

of generations of persecution. The Jew living in Russia has to fight with a hostile government for a bare subsistence. I have heard from quite reliable informants that they have been forced to abandon business after business owing to malicious interference on the part of the Russian police. When law and order thus become the foes of the honest man, the belief is inevitably induced that any evasion is allowable. Just as a forty years' wandering in the desert was needed to wean the Israelites of old from the defects of character induced by Egyptian bondage, so will the discipline of experience alone avail to remove the Ghetto taint.

Let us remember also that the foreign Jew possesses many valuable qualities both moral and intellectual. I have already said something about that generous charity which is nowhere more displayed than amongst the foreign Jews of East London. 'I sleep but my heart awaketh,' exclaims the Shulammitte woman in the *Song of Songs*, who typifies

the congregation of Israel. 'Though I sleep,' explain the Rabbis, 'with respect to the fulfilment of other precepts, my heart is awake in performing acts of kindness to my fellow-men.' The Polish Jew rarely loses his Jewish sympathies. One of my friends, living in St George's-in-the-East, had a neighbour who married one of his daughters to a Christian and another to a 'Socialist,'* while his wife would sometimes curse in the yard like a 'devil, not a man.' Yet this family would take poor Jews into their home and support them for days at a time. Besides performing individual acts of neighbourly kindness, we find that the foreign Jews organise a number of charitable societies which depend almost entirely on local support. The larger communal institutions do not, in most cases, obtain any considerable proportion of their income from East-End sources, but the chief cause of this

* See Mr Russell's remarks (p. 128) on the connotation of this term as employed by the foreign Jews.

is that they do not cater for weekly subscriptions—the most favourite method of contributing to societies, and indeed the only one possible for persons of limited means. The success of the Orphan Aid Society, which collects funds for the Jewish Orphan Asylum at Norwood, will illustrate the value of East-End support. This Society contains 1300 members, and contributed last year £388 to the funds of the parent institution. At least 1150 of its members belong to East London.

The beauty of Jewish home life has always struck the outside observer. This is primarily due to religious influence; for Judaism consecrates the home, which is the sphere of some of its most touching ceremonials. Friday evening, which ushers in the Sabbath, is in particular a family festivity, as all readers of *Daniel Deronda* will remember. Jewish children, sent for a fortnight's holiday in the country, and living for the time amongst Christians,

have often told me how they miss the usual family gathering, when the Sabbath lamp is lighted, the cup of wine is drunk, and the father pronounces a blessing upon his children. It is no exaggeration to say that the happiest hours of a Jew's life are those spent within his home; and family ties are in consequence much stronger amongst us than in the outside world. This fact will help to explain one of the means by which Judaism resists the tendency to assimilation. Although neither the knowledge nor the practice of religion comes by inheritance, yet Judaism is strengthened by forces of early association and ancestral love.

The zeal of Jewish parents for their children's advancement is very noticeable. For this end they will make every sacrifice. Nor is it simply their ambition that their children should make money. They regard a good education as valuable for its own sake. They take a great interest in their children's progress at school. The high

percentages of attendance in the Jewish voluntary schools, and in Board schools largely attended by Jewish children, are as creditable to the parents as they are to the teachers. In a Jewish home, however humble, intellectual interests are never entirely absent. It is most pathetic to see the zeal with which scholars of the Jews' Free School, sometimes members of a family occupying only one room, will struggle with the difficulties of home lessons amidst all the interruptions of crying babies and other household distractions. Jewish parents have availed themselves most eagerly of the opportunities for secondary teaching given to promising children by means of the scholarship ladder of the Technical Education Board. We shall have occasion to speak presently of their zeal for the religious education of their sons, but we may note in passing that the almost invariable presence of intellectual interests amongst Jews causes degraded types of

poverty to be of rare occurrence amongst them.

Jewish law is very strict in requiring the utmost honour and obedience to parents. Scripture teaches that the fear and honour of parents is a duty only comparable with reverence for God himself. A son may not sit on his father's seat or contradict his words. He must honour his parents by providing them with all necessaries, treating them with the utmost respect although they may be entirely dependent upon him.* These principles secure from Jews far more than a mere theoretical adherence. Undutiful children are quite an exception in our community, and it may be added that if any comparison be made in this respect between English and foreign-born, such comparison will certainly be favourable to the latter. It is true that childish disobedience and rudeness to parents are common enough. The child in Poland

* See *Kiddushin*, 31.

probably enjoys less freedom than he does in Whitechapel, where his playground is the street with all its promiscuous comradeship. Added to this fact, Jewish parents are usually indulgent and sometimes very indiscreet in the management of children, so that we need not be surprised if they sometimes lament that 'englische Kinder'—*i.e.*, children brought up in England—are inferior to those educated abroad. The injudicious mother who bribes her children by frequent gifts of farthings is a common enough figure in East London. On the whole, however, disobedience is exceptional and evanescent, and respect for parents is preserved even after the critical age when the boy or girl goes out to work and gradually becomes self-supporting. Grown-up children, living at home and unmarried, contribute a fair proportion of their earnings to the family exchequer, sons usually giving over half, whilst daughters, who spend more money on clothing, often content themselves

with paying their parents about five shillings a week. A large majority of parents, when past work, are willingly supported by their children, although, of course, there are other cases where the task is beyond the means of the children and the assistance of the Jewish Board of Guardians or of a home for the aged becomes necessary. It is most unusual for the aged poor of the Jewish community to come upon the rates, even in those parishes where out-door relief is given.

The conjugal relations of the foreign Jews present some difficult problems, but they must be pronounced to be generally satisfactory. The Jew is a born critic, but he seldom finds fault with his wife, and he is, as a rule, blessed with domestic happiness. The Jewish husband spends most of his leisure at home, and, possibly owing to this fact, his wife's advice and influence count for much with him. As I have already stated, Jewish women are

seldom allowed by their husbands to go out to work, although, if the family has a shop, much of its management devolves on the wife, and interferes very little with the performance of ordinary home duties. The Jewish husband is generous to his wife so far as his means will allow, and he does not retain a large proportion of his wages as pocket-money. So far as household expenses are concerned, the wife is chancellor of the exchequer. The result is that the husband seems often more liberal in his ideas of money than the wife, who is weighted with the responsibility of avoiding a deficit in the family budget. Poverty necessarily makes home life more difficult, and the absence of privacy for members of a family who have only one or two rooms of their own must often tempt them to seek distraction elsewhere. It is all the more remarkable that foreign Jews, whose houses are so often over-

crowded, are able to conquer adverse influences and to set such an example of happy and contented home life.

I must revert to the question of wife-desertion, which is an evil sufficiently common amongst foreign Jews to detract from the almost completely favourable judgment which one would otherwise pronounce on their conjugal relations. The evil is one dating far back in Jewish history; it was, and often is, caused by the husband's necessity and not his choice. Commenting on the verse which declares that the daughter of Zion 'has become *as* a widow,' the Rabbis explain that she is not actually widowed, but is as one whose husband has departed to lands across the sea, intending to ultimately return.* The idea was doubtless suggested by the experience of their own times. The following remarks by Mr Israel Abrahams on wife - desertion in the Middle Ages

* *Taanith*, 20a.

will help us to understand present day conditions :—

‘Wife - desertion was an evil which it was harder to deal with, for, owing to the unsettlement of Jewish life under continuous persecution, the husband was frequently bound to leave home in search of a livelihood, and, perhaps, to contract his services for long periods to foreign employers. The husband endeavoured to make ample provision for his wife’s maintenance during his absence, or, if he failed to do so, the wife was supported at the public cost and the husband compelled to refund the sum so expended. These absences grew to such abnormal lengths that, in the twelfth century, it became necessary to protect the wife by limiting the absence to eighteen months, an interval which was only permitted to husbands who had obtained the formal sanction of the communal authorities. On his return the husband was compelled to remain at least

six months with his family before again starting on his involuntary travels.’*

These statements require modification if they are to be applied to Modern England, where persecution is non-existent and the control of the ‘communal authorities’ has become weak. It still, however, continues true that the absent husband has often left in search of work and intends to return or to send for his wife in his new home when circumstances become more favourable. The Jewish Board of Guardians finds at times, in alleged cases of desertion, that there is collusion between husband and wife, and that they are in regular communication with each other. It may happen also that a man is compelled to leave England by a doctor’s orders and that his wife has to remain behind until he has established himself in America or South Africa. Undoubtedly, however, there are cases where a Jewish husband loses his work and tries to escape

* *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, ch. v.

his responsibilities by flight. The excuse which he sometimes makes is that he cannot bear to see his wife and children starving, and perhaps he imagines that, if he goes, charitable assistance will be forthcoming on their behalf. The Jewish Board of Guardians has frequently the painful duty of refusing such relief, which, if freely given, would encourage desertion in other cases. As an explanation of the worst type of cases of wife-desertion, it must be remembered that foreign Jews have been accustomed to a greater facility of divorce than is permitted in England, and the unscrupulous amongst their number wish to evade the provisions of English law. Cases of wife-desertion, as opposed to those of temporary absence, are, however, comparatively few in number.

The masterly picture, drawn by Mr Russell, of the Jew as workman may be accepted as substantially correct. Undoubtedly he is industrious, sober and, in a sense, reliable; but, on the other hand,

an inveterate individualist, whose ambition is usually for himself rather than for his class. He desires almost invariably to become ultimately a small master, a dealer or a shop-keeper; to live, in short, on profits rather than on wages. This fact diminishes his powers of combination, and few permanent successes can be recorded in the history of Trade Unionism amongst the foreign Jews resident in England. The prevalence of the 'sweating system' in such specifically Jewish trades as tailoring, boot-making, cabinetmaking, arises largely from these peculiarities of character, although trade conditions have, of course, a most important influence on methods of production. I only propose to consider how far social life and the 'sweating system' are mutually interdependent.

One important aspect of the case must not be forgotten. In the small workshop there is practically no class distinction between master and man. They are usually

also united by a common religion and by numerous associations, which tend to humanise even business relations. It will often be found that the master, in selecting his hands, gives a preference to his 'landsmann' who hailed originally from the same town in Poland. This will not always prevent the master from imposing hard or even unfair terms, but it remains true that, in the small workshop, there usually exist far more kindness and good feeling than in the large factory. Journeymen out of work often receive much assistance from their former employers, and many small acts of kindness, which do so much to sweeten human relations, are some set-off to the criticisms which can be justly levelled against the 'sweating system.'

There is another special peculiarity of the foreign Jew which has tended to create and to perpetuate this method of production. Whilst possessing undoubted industry and

powers of endurance, he is with difficulty disciplined into the orderly regularity and steady methods which are essential to the large factory. The long hours for which tailors and bootmakers work are not quite so exhausting as they seem. The pressure is by no means equal. At certain times it is undoubtedly very intense—Thursday evening, for example, often brings with it a great press of work. But there are intervals also in which very little is done; when cigarettes are smoked and topics are discussed in the workshop which would surprise those who have not been initiated into the vigorous intellectuality that often lurks behind the unpromising exterior of the Polish Jew. It might be much better for his health to work steadily for ten hours a day in a factory, but not only are his powers as an industrial machine undoubtedly greater under the present system, but he finds life fuller and richer in interest. It must be noted also that the difficulties of

Sabbath observance are lessened for those who work for small masters.

Social relations between Christians and foreign Jews are very limited in extent, even when they are employed in the same workshop. The question whether they compete together in the labour market to a serious extent has been often discussed, and a summary of the arguments on both sides is stated very fairly by Mr Russell. Personally, I do not believe that any antagonism which may exist between them is caused by a mutual feeling that they are trade rivals.

Two other motives are much more powerful in this respect. The Jews of London are insignificant in numbers compared with the whole population, but in some parts of East London they are in an overwhelming majority. Their numbers are undoubtedly increasing rapidly, less through immigration from abroad than from the natural increase of population which is

exceptionally great amongst them, because they usually marry young and have extremely large families. This growth of population has been obvious to those who have only been able to observe it for a few years. Whole streets, formerly Gentile, have within the last three years become almost completely foreign. In St George's, in Stepney, and in the south-west division of Bethnal Green, the change has been most marked. The density of population, too, within the Jewish district is much increased; the two-storied tenement houses having been often displaced by the lofty model dwellings, which shelter some hundreds of families upon a comparatively narrow site. Thus the Jew is more in evidence than ever before, and, being naturally self-assertive and fond of display, he does not allow his presence to be forgotten. He overcrowds his home, and can therefore afford to pay a higher rent than that previously obtained, and he

therefore gradually displaces the Gentile population. The facts of the situation have been rapidly grasped by certain house speculators, who take merciless advantage of economic conditions. The housing problem is common to London as a whole, but it will be seen that in the Jewish districts it presents features of its own which render anti-Semitism a very real danger. On the other hand, the Jewish community is awakening to its responsibility in the matter, and will probably do its share in providing, through private enterprise, house accommodation for the working classes at reasonable rents.

But, temporary causes apart, such feelings of dislike, or rather of mistrust, as exist between the Christian and the foreign Jew depend less on logic than on sentiment. Holy Writ commands us to 'love the stranger,' but the natural man finds it difficult to obey this injunction. We all tolerate, with reluctance, any

departure from the type to which we ourselves belong. Firm persistence in the maintenance of separate religious rites is, in itself, unpopular; although consistency, even in an unpopular cause, wins respect in the long run. External differences probably weigh more with the general run of man than those which depend on doctrine or ritual. Mere dissimilarity of appearance, language, ideas in itself produces antagonism. Even the townsman and the countryman are in imperfect sympathy with each other, and where differences are more essential distrust will be correspondingly greater. Years ago I heard Ben Tillett say of the foreign Jews, 'Yes, you are our brothers and we will do our duty by you. But we wish you had not come to this country.' I think that these words represent not unfairly the views of a large section of London workmen. Undoubtedly the foreign Jew, on his side, regards the

Christian as his inferior both morally and intellectually. The healing influence of time may not produce uniformity of type, but it will gradually bring about a better mutual understanding between Jew and Christian which will enable them to work out their destinies side by side.

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Hitherto I have chiefly been considering the external relations of the East-End Jew. I turn now to the consideration of his inner spiritual life. The question is at once fundamental and extremely difficult; I cannot pretend to do more than indicate certain tendencies which appear to be at work.

I must admit that Mr Russell makes out his point that Sabbath observance and synagogue attendance are both diminishing, although his statements appear to be somewhat exaggerated. In such specifically Jewish trades as tailoring and boot-making, it seems clear that over half of

those employed abstain from work on the Sabbath. A circular on Sabbath observance, sent by the Chief Rabbi in 1897 to the principal merchant tailors who employ labour in their own workshops or give out work to middlemen, elicited many encouraging replies. Some extracts from these may be of interest. 'The Jewish tailors and tailoresses who work on these premises are paid on Friday afternoon . . . no difficulty is created by the company calculated in any way to prevent such workpeople from attending to and enjoying their religious duties.' 'Our own factory in . . . Street we have closed for some years past on Saturday as regards members of your community.' 'We always do all we can to meet our Jewish *employés* as regards their religion, and as far as we know none work on Saturday.' 'We have always done our utmost to enable our Jewish work hands to keep their Sabbath; workshops, devoted entirely to Jews, are

closed from Friday afternoon at about four o'clock and the whole of Saturday. These are open on Sundays.' 'Our factory is closed on Saturdays and festivals, so that our Jewish workmen can keep the Sabbath.' A master tailor, living in Princelet Street, Spitalfields, who is in a large way of business, informs me that in his own immediate neighbourhood very few employers open their workshops on the Sabbath. On the other hand, the customer tailor, who obtains orders at irregular intervals, which have to be executed at short notice, often finds it practically impossible to avoid Sabbath labour. In the various branches of the furniture trade—cabinet-making, upholstering, polishing—there is much desecration of the Sabbath. In many cases also where a Jew engages in trades in which the bulk of those employed are Christians, he finds it difficult to observe a day of rest different from that of his fellow-workmen. This fact is illustrated

by the result of an inquiry into the apprenticeship system of the Jewish Board of Guardians recently conducted by Mr Ernest Morley and myself. After examining 115 cases of lads whose indentures had expired for about two years, we found that a large majority were working at the trade to which they had been apprenticed and were doing well. We felt it our duty, however, to make the following remarks on the subject of Sabbath observance:—

‘We thought it wiser to make no systematic inquiries as to whether apprentices were working on the Sabbath. Two apprentices complained that they got inferior work and wages because they refused so to work. One states that he works on Sabbath and obtains New Year and the Day of Atonement with difficulty, and another actually lost a situation through refusing to work on those festivals. In addition, a considerable number volunteered the information that they worked on

Sabbath but regretted the necessity of doing so, and although we are unable to produce statistics we are practically certain that the majority do as a fact (whether of their own free will or otherwise) work on Saturdays. One Christian master mentioned that he kept on his apprentice because he was satisfactory, but that he found it very inconvenient because the latter did not work on Sabbath, while his Jewish trade rivals were less scrupulous.'

Jewish shopkeepers in the bye-streets of the Jewish districts nearly all close their shops on the Sabbath. Wentworth Street—which has inherited the name and traditions of the old 'Petticoat Lane'—enjoys a Sabbatical calm and quiet which is unknown to it during the remainder of the week. On the other hand, many Jewish shopkeepers, in main thoroughfares such as the Whitechapel Road, carry on business on the Sabbath; and the same is true of Jewish costermongers who are

dependent on Gentile custom—those, for example, who trade in Watney Street, St George's - in - the - East, or in Brick Lane. In many cases this desecration of the Sabbath arises from a quasi-compulsion, and has been preceded by an effort to observe the day of rest, only abandoned after serious loss has been sustained.

Mr Russell has mentioned the wilful desecration of the Sabbath practised by those who frequent places of amusement on that day. Although this laxity is undoubtedly increasing, it is generally condemned by Jewish public opinion, and it is practised by a comparatively small section of the community. It should be mentioned that the morning performances in Yiddish, on Saturday afternoons and Jewish Festivals, at the Standard Theatre, are only given very occasionally.

I agree with Mr Russell that an increasing proportion of Jews attend synagogue irregularly, although a considerable number

of new places of worship, including the synagogue recently opened by the *Mahazike Haddath*,* are well filled. It is certain that the number of foreign Jewish workmen attending synagogue is far greater than that of churchgoers amongst any sections of Christians other than the Catholics. Again, whilst in most church congregations there is a large preponderance of women and children, they are in a minority in the East-End synagogue. Judaism does not, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, regard women as inferior, but there has certainly been a tendency amongst Jews † to consider that the proper sphere of female influence is rather the home than the synagogue. At any rate, the wife of the East-End orthodox Jew does not attend synagogue very often. Her chief duty is to train up her children well and re-

* See p. 101.

† I say advisedly 'tendency amongst Jews' rather than of Judaism. The Biblical narrative tells of as many heroines as of heroes.

ligiously, to keep a kosher house, and to practise that bestowal of kindness to which Judaism attaches more importance than to mere almsgiving.

East-end synagogues are perhaps not calculated to impress favourably a casual visitor to whom the whole service is unintelligible. There is no decorum, and during parts of the service there is much talking and noisy movement. But, none the less, the little synagogue, sometimes insanitary and built with unlovely surroundings, is the seat of deep devotion—a devotion full of self-abandonment, supplying the worshipper with an inspiration which transfigures his life and makes him feel that he too has a share in the traditions and in the hopes of the chosen race. It is indeed difficult to realise how strong is the affection which the Jewish liturgy excites amongst those who have grown up under its influence. The ground-work of the service

is almost without exception simple and sublime; even in a translation its beauty can be appreciated.* On the festivals and chief Sabbaths this is supplemented by a number of poetical compositions, sometimes beautiful, sometimes quaint and curious, occasionally absurd, often endeared to the worshippers by familiar and touching melodies. And we must note that none of the activities of life are considered common and secular. The Jewish poet dares to praise God, on occasion, for instructing us in the weights and measures; † he converts the Ptolemaic system of cycle and epicycle into an ode of touching sublimity, in which he rehearses, as far as his knowledge permits, how the heavens declare the glory of God. ‡ A large majority of Jews understand their

* I would refer the English reader to the *Authorised Daily Prayer-Book*, with an excellent translation by Rev. S. Singer.

† Kalir in a long poem for the *Sabbath of the Shekels*.

‡ Solomon Gabirol in his *Kingly Crown*, which is included by some Jews in the ritual for the Day of Atonement. Parts of it have been translated into English verse by Mrs Lucas in her *Jewish Year*. She leaves out, however, most of the astronomy.

liturgy very imperfectly. Many of the poems contained in it were written by the learned for the learned, and presuppose some degree of familiarity with allusions to Talmud and Midrash. The simple-minded orthodox Jew of modern times will read them without understanding them very much, and perhaps associating them chiefly with the tunes to which they are chanted. At the same time, he is in full sympathy with the spirit of the service, and he feels a spiritual glow as he repeats the words which his father taught him, and which link him with so many past generations of Jewish worshippers. Where the meaning of the words is hidden his imagination will supply the gap. It may not be the highest form of worship, but it is better than the attitude of the cold critic who does not worship at all.

The English Jew has been trained in another manner, and he finds the existing service of the synagogue unsatisfying. In

the West End he may show his dissatisfaction by active protest at congregational meetings or by writing letters to the Jewish papers. He asks for shorter and more intelligible services, for omission of allusions which he regards as antiquated, and for a more extended use of the vernacular. The English Jew of East London, with no leisure for religious controversy, usually protests, when he feels so disposed, by simply absenting himself from the synagogue. The *Yom Kippur* Jew, to whom Mr Russell alludes,* is certainly to be found both in East and West London. On the Day of Atonement one sees many persons in the Whitechapel Road who refrain from work and food, but spend most of the day in wandering aimlessly about the streets. The need for a more elastic service, appealing to the hearts of those brought up under the altered conditions, is sufficiently clear. It is widely

* See p. 123.

recognised, and in West London especially something has been done to satisfy modern requirements. But officialdom moves slowly, and besides, the orthodox resent not unnaturally every concession made, and desire that the Judaism of the Talmud and of the mediæval codifiers should alone be recognised in the service of the synagogue. These ritual disputes are therefore more fundamental than they appear on the surface, and indicate varying conceptions of Jewish dogma. Sufficient unity of feeling continues, however, to exist between the various sections of the community to lead one to hope that Judaism will continue to possess that solidarity which has enabled it in the past to avoid sectarianism whilst preserving full freedom of speculation for all within its fold.

Jewish history has always been marked by much controversy but no abiding division. This principle will probably be exemplified again by the future history of

the *Mahazike Haddath*. The secession of these 'upholders of the law' was, at bottom, a protest against undue centralisation—against the government of the foreign Jews, who are the most numerous section of the community, by English Jews, who are in imperfect sympathy with them. The leaders of the movement wished to have an ecclesiastical head of their own, independent of the Chief Rabbi, who has done wonders in holding the community together, but has naturally offended many extremists. The foreign Jew complains that his native-born co-religionist preaches to him constantly about the duties of English citizenship, but is deplorably lacking in 'Yiddish-keit'—Jewish observances and Jewish feeling. He speaks contemptuously, in moments of bitterness, of the 'West-End *goy*,'* and desires to be independent of him in religious matters. This general sentiment of distrust has been complicated by irritating disputes about the

* *Goy*, *i.e.*, heathen.

licensing of Jewish butchers and the slaughter of animals for food. Some of the orthodox have expressed distrust with the precautions taken by the ecclesiastical authorities to ensure the proper method of slaughter and to remove forbidden fat from the carcasses exposed for sale. None of the questions that have arisen would excuse a prolonged breach. The healing influence of time will lessen divergence of sentiment and enable native-born and foreigner to cultivate a better understanding. The practical grievances of the secessionists will probably be ultimately remedied by the recognition of their rights and that of their Rabbi to exercise a defined measure of independent control.

Whilst giving every credit to the earnestness of many who have identified themselves with the *Mahazike Haddath*, and to the enthusiasm which enabled them, during the autumn of 1898, to open a large synagogue in Spitalfields, it cannot be doubted that there are

other elements in the movement besides religious zeal. An independent foreign community, if created, would give scope to the ambitions of many men who feel themselves now unappreciated. The size and importance of the new synagogue have attracted new members who had hitherto held aloof. It must be added that the past record of some prominent leaders in the movement is far from inspiring confidence.

The formation of the Stepney Orthodox Synagogue also deserves mention as illustrating divergent currents of opinion in the community. In Stepney there is a place of worship under the control of the United Synagogue, a body to which are federated the chief metropolitan synagogues. The members are chiefly English Jews, and the minister is a very zealous and open-minded man, who takes an active share in communal and philanthropic work. In the hope of enlisting the interests of the younger members of the congregation in synagogal

matters, he organised in December 1895, with the approval of his board of management, a voluntary choir, partly composed of girls. This step is in conflict with orthodox custom,* and it led to the secession of a certain number of members, who founded the Stepney Orthodox Synagogue, which continued to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Chief Rabbi. In the long run this secession has proved beneficial, although it caused locally some temporary bitterness. Judaism, like the Church of England, can only preserve its catholicity by admitting varieties of service and ritual suited to the ideas of the various sections of the community. In this particular instance the gaps in the membership of the older place of worship have been filled up† and the two synagogues are both prospering side by side.

One of the most striking features in the

* Some would say that it is in conflict with orthodox *law*, but I do not think that this can be established except on the Talmudic principle that 'a custom of Israel is law.'

† Before the secession there were 306 male seatholders; at the end of 1898 there were 324.

foreign Jew is his anxiety that his children should receive sufficient instruction in Hebrew. Quite poor parents frequently pay a shilling a week for each of their sons to the *melammid*, or teacher, who instructs them in the Hebrew school or *cheder*. The boy attends there from the time when he is six years old, or earlier; and he nearly always leaves at the age of thirteen, when Jewish law regards him as responsible for his actions and bound to perform all Mosaic commands. During this time he learns in succession Hebrew reading, the translation of the Pentateuch, and easy passages in the commentary on the Pentateuch, written by Rashi, an illustrious French Rabbi of the eleventh century. He also gains familiarity with the fundamental portions of the liturgy, although, unfortunately, he is sometimes taught to 'daven,' or repeat his prayers, without understanding them. In some of the better *chedarim* Hebrew grammar is taught, and

the more advanced pupils study the elements of ritual law. Moral instruction is given by the more enlightened teachers, but is often neglected. The teaching given is usually very earnest and effective; boys attending *cheder* acquire a far greater knowledge of Hebrew than those whose training in that subject is only derived from Jewish voluntary schools or from the religious classes attached to those Board schools which are principally attended by Jewish children.

Mr Russell has given an adequate description of the attack directed against the *cheder* at the conference on religious education held in 1898. This attack has been more recently renewed by Lord Rothschild, who sent a circular to the parents of the scholars of the Jews' Free School, of which he is president, begging them not to endanger their children's health by the excessive hours of the *cheder*, and assuring them that the managers of the school

would be willing themselves to give additional facilities for more suitable religious teaching. The issue of this circular led to an outbreak of angry feeling amongst the parents, and a subsequent conference between the parents and a representative of the managers, who invited them to send delegates to confer with Lord Rothschild, broke up in confusion.

The chief complaints made against the *cheder* are that Yiddish is used as the medium of instruction, that the rooms used are insanitary, and that the hours are too long. A few remarks on each of these points may be desirable.

It is complained that the use of Yiddish in the *cheder* arrests the process of Anglicisation. Now it is perfectly true that in only a few *chedarim* is instruction given in English.* This arises chiefly through the

* Five such *chedarim* are known to me in Whitechapel, besides others in outlying districts. The average number of pupils in each is 50, whilst a large majority of children, taught in Yiddish, attend *chedarim* conducted on a much smaller scale.

lack of suitable teachers who can speak English, and partly, doubtless, through the preference of the parents. Parents, who themselves speak Yiddish only, like to hear their boys repeat on Saturday what has been learnt during the week. Many of them, too, entertain the prejudice that Hebrew can be better taught through the medium of Yiddish, or even imagine that this jargon has more holiness than English. A prejudice of this kind tends, however, to cure itself, and quite equally foolish is the idea of the West-End Jew that instruction in Yiddish will arrest the inevitable process of Anglicisation. It stands to reason that the boy brought up in this country, and attending an English school, will grow up an Englishman. As a matter of fact, the influence of the day school, in training English citizens, has in no way been impaired through the attendance of boys at *cheder*. None the less, it may be hoped that the use of Yiddish will be

gradually discontinued. One gentleman, whose experience with East-End boys is very great, has assured me that the religious influence of the *cheder* is far more permanent when the teaching is in English, for the child brought up in England regards Yiddish with contempt. I have myself met boys who had been taught to translate Hebrew which they did not understand into Yiddish, which was equally unintelligible to them. But, admitting that English is a far better medium of instruction, it cannot be denied that Yiddish is at present a necessity, and that much good work has been done by means of it.

With regard to the alleged insanitary condition of *chedarim*, after having visited many, I believe that the case against them breaks down almost entirely. The larger *cheder* is fitted up with desks as a school-room; it is not used for living purposes, and is seldom overcrowded or badly ventilated. The objectionable *chedarim* are

those established on a small scale by 'greeners,' who arrive in England without any means of livelihood, and supplement a precarious living as hawkers, or sellers of foreign lottery tickets, by teaching a few children sent to them from charitable motives by their neighbours and friends. A *cheder* of this kind is held in a living-room, sometimes in an underground kitchen. The only excuse—a most inadequate one—that can be urged for it is that it is usually not more unhealthy than the home from which the child comes. A very small proportion, however, of the children attending *chedarim* are educated under these conditions, and it is most unfair to condemn all on account of a defective minority which should be dealt with by the local sanitary authorities.

I do not think that the statistics of the hours of attendance at *cheder*, collected by the late Mrs N. S. Joseph* and quoted by

* I regret to express dissent with the able paper written by Mrs

Mr Russell, are correct. These figures were obtained by questions put to boys whilst in attendance at the day-schools. I believe that the children stated the time that the *cheder* is open and not the time that they themselves attended; in some cases, too, they had no idea whatever of time. Thus one boy, who is a pupil at one of the best *chedarim*, said that he went there for eighteen hours a week. As a matter of fact, he attended, theoretically, for two hours on five days of the week, and in practice, through being always late, he was only there about one hour a day.* As to the general charge that children suffer in health through attendance at *cheder*, I would repeat an argument used by Mr Cohenlask, president of the society of *cheder* teachers, in a letter addressed by him to the *Jewish Chronicle*. Foreign Jews do not

Joseph on *chedarim*, more especially at a time when her death is lamented by all sections of the Jewish community, and by none more than the poor, of whom she was such a faithful and wise friend.

* See Appendix B.

send their daughters to *cheder*, yet there is no reason to suppose that East-End girls enjoy better health than their brothers. It is eminently desirable to improve the health and physique of the East-End Jew, but the abolition of the *cheder* is not one of the methods to be attempted.

Besides the children attending *cheder*, a considerable number are taught by visiting masters. Collectors of East-End provident and philanthropic societies often supplement their earnings by taking a few such pupils.

Side by side with the *cheder* there exists the *Talmud Torah*,* or institution for teaching Hebrew and religion, supported partly by pupils' fees and partly by subscriptions, and managed by a committee of subscribers. The two principal institutions of the kind are situated in Whitechapel. The larger of the two is now closely connected with the *Mahazike Haddath*. There are about a thousand pupils, and instruction

* *Talmud Torah*, a Hebrew phrase meaning 'Study of the Law.'

is given in Yiddish. The other has over six hundred pupils and instruction is given in English. Both institutions are quite full and children have to be refused admission for want of room. The fees paid vary according to the circumstances of the parents, but average about twopence per child. The children attend for about two hours each evening. Classes at the *Talmud Torah* are much larger than at a *cheder*. A single master has often to teach forty pupils, and of course cannot give much individual attention. The teaching given, however, is very efficient, and has met with the approval of many educational experts. The results of the instruction, as measured by the progress made by the scholars, must be pronounced satisfactory. The subscriptions obtained for the support of both institutions are derived almost exclusively from the East End.

I have perhaps given details of the *cheder* and *Talmud Torah* to too minute an

extent, but these facts are instructive as showing the sacrifices which the foreign Jew is willing to make for his children. It is quite true that complex motives are at work. Even when the Polish Jew is not religious he wishes to see his child grow up amongst Jewish surroundings. Quite unobservant persons frequently send their children to *cheder*. In one instance which has come under my notice, a child at *cheder* was rebuked by his master for not wearing *tsitsith*.* On the next day the father called and stated that he was an atheist who did not wish his boy to become religious, but sent him to *cheder* for the sake of the knowledge which he acquired there. This is an extreme case, but undoubtedly many children sent to *cheder* witness much laxity of religious practice in their homes. I do not agree

* *Tsitsith*, *i. e.*, fringes worn in accordance with the Mosaic precept in Numb. xv. 38-39. They are attached to the *tallith* or praying shawl worn in the synagogue, and to the *arba canfoth*, or garment of four corners, worn under the ordinary clothing.

with Mr Russell, who denies altogether that the *cheder* has any permanent religious influence. This statement contains, however, an element of truth, as many of the *cheder* teachers would themselves admit. Remembering what they see at home, some children, on being told that Judaism requires them to say their prayers and to keep the Sabbath, will retort, 'Is my father not a Jew?' On the other hand, many boys remain faithful to the lessons which they have learnt at *cheder*, especially when home influences have tended in the same direction. A *cheder* teacher has told me that one of his old pupils, on going to a remote part of Australia, was able to organise the religious life of the community there and to establish public worship. In some cases an irreligious parent is brought back to orthodoxy by his child's example.

I do not wish to say much about efforts directly anti-Jewish, such as those brought to bear by conversionist agencies. Their

influence is undoubtedly small, although many poor people are willing to accept from them material benefits. In order to induce Jews to be converted to Christianity, they are offered medical missions and soup kitchens, Sunday-school treats and mothers' meetings. I cannot think that this is a right policy from any point of view. There is nothing more noble than the missionary spirit, but men and women cannot be bribed into the way of salvation. Whilst giving the promoters of these missions credit for honesty of purpose, I deplore their tactics in encouraging hypocrisy and double-dealing. It is indeed sad to detect families where young and old alike play the part of good Jews to their own people, but are 'Christian inquirers' when the district visitor calls from the parish church. If they were genuine converts, moved by real enthusiasm for Christianity or any other ennobling religion, one could view the situation with far greater acquiescence. Mr Russell's

idea that the missionaries check assimilation seems to me somewhat far-fetched. The antagonism which they excite has very little influence on the relations between Jews and Christians generally.

Socialism represents revolt against the injustices of society, and although it does not necessarily involve hostility to the accepted forms of religion, it frequently co-exists with such hostility. The Socialism of the foreign Jews is peculiarly apt to assume this anti-religious form. In common with the Latin races, the foreign Jews who are Socialists usually prefer anarchy to collectivism. An Anarchist paper, printed in Yiddish, called the *Arbeiter Freund*, is published weekly in London. The Trades Unions of the foreign Jews are often directed by Socialist leaders—a fact which is due to the weakness of these organisations rather than to the attractive force of Socialism. I am inclined to think, although I make the statement with some hesitation,

that foreign Jewish Socialists, as they become Anglicised, drop their Socialism. However this may be, Socialism has so little influence amongst the foreign Jews that it need not be reckoned amongst the forces of disintegration which seriously threaten Judaism.

The question of Zionism is more fundamental than any which we have hitherto discussed. I do not propose to dwell on the details of this extraordinary agitation which has caused such searchings of heart throughout the Jewries of Europe; still less am I tempted to give any estimate of Zionist financial schemes. I agree, however, with Mr Russell that, if Judaism has a future, that future will be attained by pursuing an ideal substantially at one with that of the Zionists. I define that ideal as embodied in the watchword 'Israel a nation,' and it is nobly expressed by George Eliot's Jewish hero: 'The idea that I am possessed with is that of restoring a politi-

cal existence to my people, making them a nation again, giving them a national centre, such as the English have, though they too are scattered over the face of the globe.' *

The question of Jewish nationality is, in a sense, a more serious one for modern Israel than it was in mediæval times. Formerly, however sad might be the prospect without, the Jew knew no doubt and could rest his soul in the study of the Law and the performance of its precepts. The whole of life was governed by circumscribed rules, in the performances of which there was alone perfect freedom. It might be occasionally necessary to justify Judaism to the outside world, but the Jew himself knew full well that he must obey that Law, which was the divine emanation of the Supreme, existing before the world began, written in 'black fire upon white fire,' and embodying celestial mysteries in

* *Daniel Deronda*, ch. 69.

every stroke. So long as this conviction remained, assimilation with the Gentiles could only be regarded as the base surrender of a divine birthright. In our age, however, this belief has become impossible for most people. Simple believers (would that our portion were amongst them!) still retain the old sense of confident certitude, but most of us realise that the Bible and the traditions contain a human element, and that only gleams of divine light shine upon the 'dimmed mirror' of our hearts. Judaism still remains as an expression of pure monotheistic belief, but its centre of gravity has changed; its peculiar institutions are no longer completely divided in kind from those of other races. If Israel is a nation, the essential elements in our distinctive laws, such as the prohibition of intermarriage, are invested with a purpose which justifies their preservation. On any other hypothesis I doubt whether a continuation of separateness will be found.

desirable or possible. I do not undervalue the impulse given to true religion by a small band of English Jews who, taking little heed of ceremonialism or the racial tie, have emphasised the need for a deeper spiritual life. They have done good service in combating the comfortable materialism which is quite compatible with a theoretical orthodoxy. At the same time a spiritual monotheism, divorced from the principle of nationality, has so little in common with the old historical Judaism that it may well fail, in the long run, to keep a separate place in the commonwealth of religions.

It is hardly the object of this essay to express personal preferences, and I am therefore more concerned to show that the Jewish race is likely to cherish the national ideal rather than to discuss whether such an ideal is a desirable one. Now, however, when the principle of nationality, which was belittled by an older school of economists and politicians, has established

itself so firmly, it should be readily admitted that whilst every race should contribute to the common good of humanity, each should go forward in its own separate line of development, preserving its distinctive qualities. 'The strength and wealth of mankind depend on the balance of separateness and communication.'* The qualities of the Jewish race are worth preservation, and only require scope for free development. The world would be poorer without them.

But how is one to estimate the trend of Jewish feeling on this subject? The strength of the Zionist movement shows in itself how much Jewish national feeling has been lying latent. The growth of Zionism is the more remarkable because most of the leaders of the community have set their faces against the movement.† Many persons,

* *Daniel Deronda*, ch. 60.

† Mr Russell is not justified, however, in representing Zionism in England as deriving almost all its strength from the adherence of immigrants. The intellectual force of the movement is mainly furnished by English-born Jews.

also, who hold aloof or have seceded from Zionism, only differ on points of detail. It is after all a minor question whether Palestine should be at once made a 'legally assured home' for the Jewish race or simply a centre of Jewish colonisation. Political Zionism may be a passing phase; but the ideas on which Zionism is based are eternal. The sense of solidarity which unites Jew with Jew, which opposes inter-marriage, which is presupposed by such national festivals as the Passover, will remain after all the controversies provoked by Basle and London congresses have been forgotten.

It should be added that the growth of Jewish national feeling is not out of harmony with the claims of English citizenship. It may be a curious question for casuists whether a conflict between the two obligations might arise in any conceivable circumstances. For practical men it is enough that our adopted country, to which we owe so great a debt of gratitude, does

not require us to be worse Jews in order that we may be better Englishmen. We will not conceal the fact that our ultimate aspirations are fixed on the home of our fathers and that we believe that the genius of the Jewish race will be best developed on Jewish soil. But, for many generations to come, migration to Palestine must be a slow process, and perhaps the Holy Land can never be more than the centre of Jewish life. Meanwhile our home is here, and we have to show ourselves worthy of the hospitality which we enjoy. The distinct but not divergent claims of citizenship and Jewish nationality may be exceptional, but so is the whole history of Israel.

After all, however, Zionism is only one side of Judaism, and although it may prove of supreme importance in shaping the history of our race, it has not become, as yet, the determining factor in Jewish life and thought. Present-day Judaism owes much to those who regard their faith as a lofty

spiritual influence and not as the rallying-ground of a nation. All honour to the faithful service rendered to the community by many who hold this view!

There are indeed many indications of strong vitality within our community, refuting the charges of materialism and spiritual stagnation so often brought against us. The success of Jewish social and philanthropic institutions is not due only to their excellent financial management. There is more personal service and more social work amongst the poor than there was a generation ago. Materialism and indifference are common enough, alas! but there are also abundant signs of religious zeal displayed by the unorthodox, as by the orthodox sections of the community. Even the unrest apparent in many quarters is a healthier sign than the spiritual stagnation of a generation back. In the past, when communal life was more compact and Jews were solely dependent on each

other for social intercourse, a mechanical conformity was preserved without there necessarily being any sense of conviction. That censorship which one Jew exercised over another has become impossible, and he has now to be guided in his religious observance by conviction rather than by the dictation of others. This is a much healthier state of things, and although it involves more heterodoxy, it is calculated to produce a worthier religious life. If absorption comes it will only be through indifference; by cultivating active and elevating ideals of national and religious life we shall avoid all risks of mere selfish isolation and make our race indeed 'a blessing in the midst of the earth.'

APPENDIX B

HOURS OF ATTENDANCE AT CHEDER

The following facts with regard to three typical *chedarim* may be of interest :—

(a) *Cheder* attended by thirty-five pupils, taught by two teachers. Three pupils come at various times before morning school and remain for about half an hour to say their prayers. Six come at dinner-time, either to say the short afternoon service, to read a psalm or two, or, being backward, to receive individual attention in reading. None remain for more than a few minutes. In the evening the pupils are divided into two classes, one of which is held from five until a quarter to seven, and the other from a quarter past six until half-past seven, a few of the older pupils remaining until a quarter past eight. The pupils do not attend on Friday or Saturday, but come for two hours on Sunday afternoon.

(b) *Cheder* attended by forty pupils taught by one master. About six come for half an hour in the morning, and one or two others come for half an hour at dinner-time. In the evening the pupils are divided into three classes, attending respectively

from five to six, six to eight, eight to nine. On Fridays some boys come for a short time; none attend on Saturday; they all come for two hours on Sunday afternoon.

(c) *Cheder* attended by fifty pupils taught by a master and his grown-up son. Three children attend for half an hour in the morning to say their prayers. None attend at dinner-time. In the evening they are divided into four classes, attending respectively from four-thirty to five, five-fifteen to seven, four-forty-five to six, six-thirty to eight-thirty. They do not come on Friday or Saturday, but receive some instruction on Sunday afternoon.

Similar figures hold generally good elsewhere; but in some cases children attend for two hours on Saturday, and twice on Sunday—from eleven to one, and four to six. The time in the evening when instruction closes may be gathered from the fact that when meetings of the society of *cheder* teachers are held, members are all present at half-past eight. The existence of exceptional cases of over-pressure, especially in some of the smaller *chedarim*, cannot be denied; but even in the worst cases that have come under my notice, children do not remain at *cheder* more than three hours in an evening.

