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# CRYPTO-JEWS IN THE CANARIES.

A PAPER

*Read before the Jewish Historical Society of England,  
in the Mocatta Library, University College,*

DECEMBER 12, 1910,

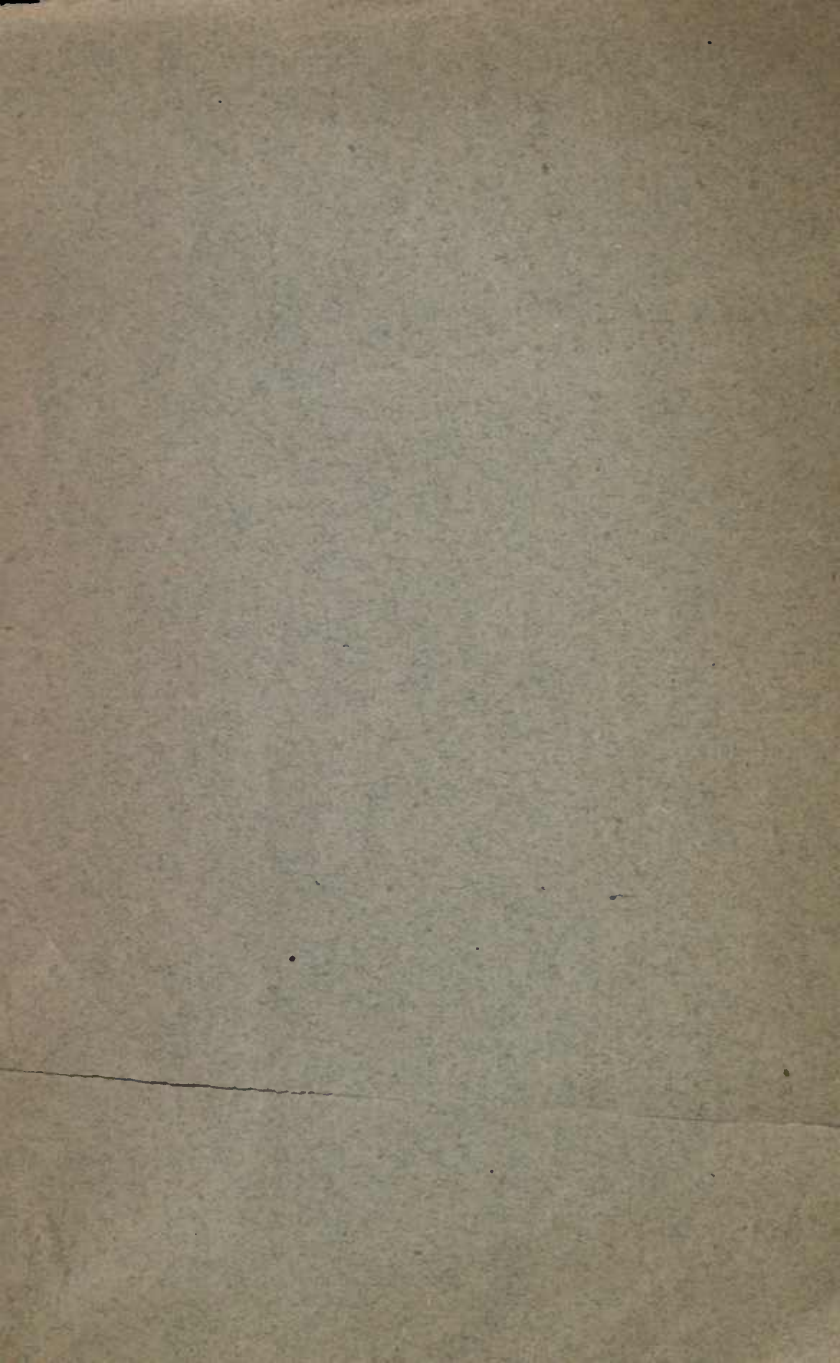
BY

## LUCIEN WOLF.

*President of the Society.*

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Bishopsgate Avenue, Camomile Street, London, E.C.



# CRYPTO-JEWS IN THE CANARIES.

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Some twenty years ago, while investigating the circumstances of the re-settlement of the Jews in this country under the Protectorate, I was struck by the curious fact that the chief figure in that movement, Antonio Fernandez Carvajal, and several of his fellow adventurers, hailed from a little archipelago in the East Atlantic, which had never before figured in Jewish history, and which, so far as I know, has not even yet found a place in that record. Carvajal had considerable property in the Canaries, and seems to have spent his early life at Santa Cruz. Duarte Henriques Alvares had been Royal Treasurer in the islands, and his nephew, Antonio Rodrigues Robles, whose sensational denunciation as a Spaniard on the outbreak of the Spanish war in 1656 first revealed the existence of the London Marrano community, and successfully established its rights of residence, had been his Deputy-Treasurer. There was also reason to believe that Carvajal's brother-in-law, Simon de Souza, and other relatives and co-religionists of his who had joined him in England, notably Domingo de la Cerda and Antonio de Porto, were Canariote immigrants. With a view to throwing further light on the personal histories of these men, and on the circumstances which determined their eventful migration, I planned a visit to Teneriffe in the autumn of 1894. By a fortunate accident I confided my project to the late Marquis of Bute, and was thus spared a bootless journey. Some years earlier Lord Bute had acquired the larger part of the original records of the Canariote Inquisition, of which a general calendar, dealing chiefly with Protestant and sorcery cases, has since been printed under the editorship of Dr. de Gray Birch. These valuable documents he was good enough to place at my disposal. Since then I have had them carefully examined, and I am glad to be able to tell you that

a calendar of all the Jewish cases figuring in them has now been completed, and that one of my chief tasks in the office to which you have been good enough to re-elect me in this society will be to edit and publish this extremely valuable contribution to Jewish history

I propose to-night to give you a brief account of the hitherto unknown history of our co-religionists in the Canaries as revealed by these documents, reserving a more detailed study for the introduction it will be my duty and privilege to supply to the calendar in its published form.

## I.

Amador de los Rios in his "Historia de los Judios en Espana" mentions the "islands of the Oceanic Archipelagos" as having afforded a refuge to some of the Jewish victims of the great Iberian expulsion of 1492. That the Canaries were comprised in this vague generalisation is shown by the local historians, Viera y Clavigo and Del Castillo, who expressly state that the establishment of the Inquisition in those islands in 1504 was due to the large number of Jewish outcasts from Spain who had found an asylum there. From the Inquisition documents themselves, however, we obtain more than one glimpse of a community of Spanish Jews which had existed in the islands before the Expulsion. According to a deposition made by an aged female in 1525 a family named Beltran lived openly as Jews in Teneriffe as early as 1485, although the island was not finally conquered by the Spaniards until ten years later. In 1574 a record was discovered by the Inquisition stating that a "Jewish heretic," named Rodrigo de Leon, was prosecuted and "reconciled" by the ecclesiastical authorities at Los Santos in 1490. A deposition made before the Headquarters of the Holy Office in Seville and transmitted to the Canariote Inquisitors in 1520 shows that there was an early community in one of the islands—the name is not given—duly equipped with a synagogue, a Jewish butcher shop, and a Schochet ("*matador de la carne de los Judios*"), named Rabbi David, and that there was a brisk business in "*carne casser*" or "kosher" meat. Jewish funerals are also mentioned. For some years after the expulsion from Spain this community led a normal life, and the Jewish refugees seem to have remained unmolested. In 1499, however, the Bishop Diego de Muros, acting as an "Ordinary" or unofficial Inquisitor, set up an enquiry into heresy. No one seems to have been prosecuted, but evidence was collected establishing the existence of a considerable number of Marranos in the islands, and of at least one secret synagogue—at San Lucar.



The fact that no action was taken on this evidence is interesting as an early symptom of the difficulties with which the Inquisition had to grapple throughout its career in the islands. The Spanish settlers were from the outset a rough and motley company. Far from the centre of government, straddling the great maritime highways which led to the New Worlds of the East and West, they engaged in many prohibited enterprises. Very soon they were hand and glove with all the nondescript buccaneers and freebooters who made the Canariote creeks and channels a rendezvous and a refuge in their illegal traffic with the Spanish Main, and in their piratical forays against the richly laden Portuguese galleons from Hindustan and Cathay. On this traffic the commerce and agriculture of the islands soon began to depend, and hence it became a common interest to resist the monopolist policy of the Crown, and more especially the desolating persecution of the Inquisition. Probably the good Bishop found—as some of his successors avowedly found—that too close an enquiry into heresy was not calculated to swell the Church revenues, and with this view the secular authorities, both royal and local, were perhaps in accord, more especially as it applied with equal cogency to their own material interests.

Unfortunately the mischief had already been done. It was not long before an echo of the Bishop's discoveries reached the "Suprema" at Seville, over which the zealous Francisco Diego Deza was then presiding in his capacity of Inquisitor-General of Andalusia. A summons to appear before the Seville Tribunal was in due course issued to the chief of the offenders on Muros's list, an influential Marrano resident of Las Palmas named Gonçalo de Burgos. It appears that Burgos had been tried and acquitted by the Seville Court once before, and it was alleged against him in the Canariote depositions that he had boasted of having outwitted the Inquisitors. On this occasion the Tribunal was again cheated of its prey, for the caravel on which Burgos was conveyed to Spain was wrecked off Cadiz in October, 1502, and Burgos was drowned. About the same time orders were issued by the "Suprema" to arrest another Marrano of Las Palmas, Luis Alvarez, who was reported to be the Rabbi of the local secret synagogue, but when the Alguazils appeared at his house he had flown. One of his congregants named Mayorga was, however, seized and taken to Cordova, where he was convicted and burnt. These fiascos seem to have convinced Deza of the necessity of extending his net in a permanent form to the Canaries. Moreover, he was then smarting from the failure of his famous attempt to impose the Inquisition on the kingdom of Naples in the teeth of the Great Captain, Gonsalvo of Cordova, and it is not

difficult to understand that he should have been eager for compensations elsewhere. However that may be, in 1504 he sent Bartolomé Lopez Tribaldos as his deputy to establish the Holy Tribunal at Las Palmas, and the Commission was duly executed.

## II.

During the first twenty years of its existence the Canariote Office was exceedingly busy, but the results so far as discoveries and punishments were concerned, were meagre. Between 1504 and 1510 the number of Marranos or New Christians denounced to Tribaldos and his familiars was only thirty-four, and in none of these cases were the circumstances held to warrant a public *Auto da Fe*. It is true that two *Autos* were held, one in 1507 and the other in 1510, but they were private, and the punishments inflicted belonged to the minor categories of "Reconciliation" and "Penitence." Nevertheless the evidence showed that Marranism was widely and deeply rooted in the Archipelago. Luis Alvares was back in Las Palmas and no fewer than five informers denounced him as a Jew and as holding Judaical meetings in his house. Similar evidence was given against one Luis de Niebla, whose house was nicknamed "the little synagogue," and another Marrano, Gonçalo de Cordova, who was accused of maintaining a secret synagogue in La Laguna. No action appears to have been taken on these serious informations, and when in 1507 the Inquisitors found themselves under the necessity of doing something which should justify them at Seville their wrath fell upon a quite insignificant Portuguese Marrano named Juan de Ler, who, together with Ana Rodrigues, accused of witchcraft, was "reconciled" in the Cathedral. The *Auto* of 1510 was on a slightly more ambitious scale. Four heretics, of whom one was a Mahomedan, were "reconciled" with *sanbenito*, and one Jew, Juan Fernandez, was "penanced." The Jewish *Reconciliados* were Pedro Dorador, Alvaro Esteves and Beatrice de la Cruz, all accused of professing and teaching the Mosaic creed. Only one of the prisoners, Pedro Dorador, was a person of consequence, and his arrest for a time created a panic in the Marrano community. He was one of Bishop Muros's cases in 1499 and he was known as a disciple of Luis Alvares.

The panic soon subsided and during the next fourteen years very few Marranos were molested and none denounced. This does not seem to have been due in any way to the edifying lives led by the New Christians, or to a falling off in their numbers. In 1519 the Vicar of La Palma reported to the Bishop of Canary that the island was full of the so-called "converts." We hear of a secret synagogue in Santa Cruz and of another

belonging to one Alvaro Gonçales, a prosperous wine-grower of La Palma, of whom we shall hear more presently, which was frequented by many rich Marrano merchants. In 1520 it was reported that many Marranos sought to convert their slaves to Judaism, and one of them, Gutierrez de Ocana, a wealthy landowner nicknamed the "King of Fuerteventura," tried to make the people of his island keep the Saturday Sabbath. If the Inquisitors turned a blind eye to these grave malpractices it was probably because both the civil authorities and the local clergy feared the ruinous effects of a persecution. Quarrels between them were incessant, and in 1521 the Chapter even sent a deputation to Madrid to complain of Martin Ximenes, who had succeeded Tribaldos as Inquisitor. The indifference of the local clergy to heresy is amusingly illustrated by an incident reported to the Inquisition in 1525. Diego Frances, a "dog of a Jew," as the informer described him, was alleged to have been seen to break a figure of the child Jesus and throw the fragments into the fire. The wife of Anton de Madalena promptly complained of this act of sacrilege to Juan de Troya, the Parish priest. He, however, bundled her out of his house, saying: "Let him go to the Devil! What do you suppose I can do? I cannot arrest him or punish him. The time will come when he will pay for it."

Although Juan de Troya, good honest man, knew it not, the spirit of prophecy was upon him when he uttered these words. An evil time was indeed coming, not, perhaps, for Diego Frances—for we hear little more of him and his Judaical image-breaking—but for the whole heretical community to which he belonged. Between 1523 and 1532 the happy Canaries—the Fortunate Islands of the early voyagers—suffered a series of calamities as strange as they were appalling. Plague broke out in Grand Canary and ravaged the whole island, and in its wake followed the horrors of famine. The inhabitants fled to the neighbouring islands, where they created a panic which speedily took the form of religious exaltation. This was the opportunity for the Inquisitor Ximenes, who at last found a congenial public opinion to appeal to. The awful visitations were pictured by him as manifestations of divine wrath on account of the tolerance of Judaical and Mahommedan backsliders, who celebrated in secret the rites of the detestable heresies they had solemnly pledged themselves to abandon. To appease the Almighty Don Martin set out on the warpath against the heretics and laid his plans for a public *Auto da Fe* on the tragical model of the Mother Church in Seville. Towards the end of May, 1524, a batch of edicts were promulgated in his name and duly published in the Cathedral Church of



St. Ana in Las Palmas. The first was a general call for the extirpation of heresy and the confession of erroneous practices. The second was aimed specifically at Jews and Moors and gave an account of their religious and social manners and customs at great length. This document is exceedingly interesting as a record of the Jewish ceremonies and customs which had survived among the Marranos, and was, of course, very useful in enabling informers to detect the heretics. A third edict prohibited masters, owners and captains of ships, visiting and leaving the Canariote ports, from taking on board or giving passage abroad to "converts or New Christians, converted to our Holy Catholic Faith from Judaism" under pain of excommunication and confiscation of their ships and other property. The other edicts are not of specific Jewish interest.

The effect of this appeal to the religious maniacs was soon made apparent by the large number of denunciations which poured into the Holy Office between 1524 and 1526. On these denunciations formal prosecutions were founded, and eventually eight of the accused were condemned to be "relaxed" or burnt alive, ten were "reconciled" and two were "penanced." Eleven of these unhappy creatures were Jews or Jewesses, six figuring among the *Relaxados*, four among the *Reconciliados*, and one among the *Penitenciados*. The Jewish *Relaxados* were Alvaro Gonçalves, his wife Mencia Vaes, and his eldest son, Silvestre Gonçalves, Maistre Diego de Valera, Pedro Gonçalves and Alonzo Yanez; the *Reconciliados* were Ana and Duarte Gonçalves, son and daughter of Alvaro, Hector Mendes and Hernan Rodrigues. The *Penitenciado* was Fernando Jaryam.

### III.

Augustin Millares states in his "Historia de la Inquisicion en las Islas Canarias" that all these people suffered their penalties on the same day—February 24, 1526. This is an error. There were two solemn burnings, one on February 24 and the other a month later, while the non-capital sentences were executed at intervals between the major functions. In the first batch of *Relaxados* were Alvaro Gonçalves and his son Silvestre, Alonzo Yanez and Pedro Gonçalves. Alvaro Gonçalves was the most important of the convicts. He had long been a marked man in the Archipelago. As far back as 1506 he had been denounced to the Inquisitors, and two further informations against him were filed in 1519. He was born at Castil Blanco, in Portugal, and was 70 years old when he was arrested. In his native Jewry he had acted as Rabbi, or *Chazan*, and he appears to have been a person of some theological learning. In 1496, when, in celebration of Don Manuel's marriage with the Spanish Infanta



Isabella, the expulsion of the Jews from Portugal was decreed, Gonçalves joined the Roman Catholic Church with all his family. The simulations of Marranism were, however, difficult for him, and he soon found himself compelled to fly the country. For three years he lived at Gibraleo, and then migrated to San Miguel, in the Azores. Here he was arrested for sacrilege, but, together with other imprisoned New Christians, managed to break gaol and escape. He arrived in the Canaries in 1504, and settled in La Palma, where he carried on a shoe-making business, and acquired some vineyard property. According to the evidence given at his trial, he and his family lived as orthodox Jews. He killed his meat in the Jewish fashion, observed the fasts and festivals, and kept open house for the other Marrano residents in La Palma on Friday evenings, when he inaugurated the Jewish Sabbath in orthodox fashion. He refused to allow his slaves to be baptised, and he did not scruple to speak his mind of Christianity. When one of his "Old Christian" neighbours taunted him with being a Jew, he replied that it was "better to be a good Jew than a bad Christian." After a trial lasting from October, 1524, until January, 1526, he was convicted of heresy and perjury, and sentenced to be handed over gagged to the civil power, and to confiscation of his property. Although throughout the trial he denied the charges alleged against him, he made no secret of his fidelity to Judaism when he was being led to the stake.

The trial of his son Silvestre followed a similar course, with the exception that he was submitted to torture in order to extract from him a confession that would incriminate his father. This cruel device failed, and Silvestre also was "relaxed" as an impenitent heretic and perjurer.

The third Gonçalves, who suffered death on February 24, was not a relative of the other two. Pedro or Solomon Gonçalves was the public executioner, and we are told that he was in receipt of a salary of 2,000 maravedis per annum from the Crown. He made no secret of the insincerity of his Christianity. A Jew of Castile, he had accompanied his father into exile in 1492, but he returned six years later and was baptised. In 1505 he settled in the Canaries, where he soon became known as a Judaiser. He had a taste for theological controversy, and he once expounded the Jewish view of the Crucifixion to a prebendary of the Cathedral with a good deal of learning and outspokenness. At his trial he denied nothing except that his outward demeanour had been in any way contrary to the requirements of the Church. Asked whether since his conversion he had entertained doubts concerning Christianity, he answered frankly: "Sometimes, in seeing Christians act contrary to the laws of their Church, I remember

how faithfully the Jews kept the commandments of their Church, and I remember that a Jew is allowed but one wife and should know no other woman, while Christians have one, two or more, and that in other matters the Jews are more faithful to their teachings than the Christians to theirs. Moreover, the Jews are honest, while the Christians, like the beasts of the field, prey upon one another." After this avowal, of course, his doom was sealed.

The fourth *Relaxado* on February 24 was Alonzo Yanez, a native of Villaviciosa, in Portugal and a farmer in Teneriffe. The documents relating to his case are scanty, and Millares in his list excludes him from the Judaisers. It is true that in the first instance he was arrested only on a charge of heresy, but the sentence on him expressly states that he was found guilty of "professing and teaching the deadly creed of the Jews."

In the second execution on March 24 the *Relaxados* were Mencia Vaes, the wife of Alvaro Gonçales, and Maistre Diego de Valera. Like her husband, Mencia Vaes was a native of Castil Blanco. Her life story was similar to his, and her trial pursued very much the same course. Diego de Valera was a friend of Alvaro Gonçales. Although he had been long suspected of heresy, it was not until he publicly showed his sympathy with Gonçales during the *Auto da Fe* on February 24 that he was arrested and prosecuted. It was then discovered that he was a Lisbon Jew, who before the expulsion of 1496 had been known as Isaac Levi. On his baptism he received the name of Diego de Valera, and for a time was in the King's service as a surgeon. He accompanied the expedition of Diogo d'Azumbuja to Morocco in 1507, and, after the annexation of Saffi, was given a post in the administration of that town. Why and when he settled in the Canaries we are not told. His trial lasted only a few days, the charges against him being that he was a regular frequenter of the Jewish conventicle held at Alvaro Gonçales's house, and that at the *Auto da Fe* of February 24 he went up to Gonçales and congratulated him on dying a Jew. On March 21 he was found guilty of reverting to "the deadly creed" and duly sentenced.

Of the four *Reconciliados* and one *Penitenciado* little need be said. Indeed, in the cases of two of the *Reconciliados*, Hector Mendes and Hernan Rodrigues, all the documents are missing, and all we know of them is that they were condemned to a public abjuration of Judaism with confiscation of property, and the attendant civil disqualifications. The other two, Duarte and Ana Gonçales, were children of Alvaro. Ana was the wife of an "Old Christian" named Pedro Hernandez, who had long been at feud with her father, and was largely

responsible for his prosecution. She and her brother both confessed after their father's death and when a confession could no longer compromise him. The following paragraph in the record of Duarte's examination throws an ironic light on the methods of the Inquisition in extorting confessions:

Asked why he had not confessed before he replies that he had always believed what his father had taught him until two days ago when he was present at the *Auto* in which his father and his brother were burnt, and learnt then that the faith of Jesus Christ is the true faith, and that this witness has been in error.

How enduring this lesson was is shown by another *Auto da Fe* to which I shall refer presently.

The one Jewish *Penitenciado* Fernando Jaryam was a choleric Spanish notary whose habit of blasphemous language had long been the scandal and wonderment of the saintly people of Las Palmas. All was explained when one day in May, 1525, Sebastián Valera came forward and declared that while travelling in Morocco he had met a Jew named Jaryam who had told him that Fernando was his brother, and that both had been born as Jews at San Lucar de Barremeda. How he had brought himself within the clutches of the Inquisition, however, does not appear.

#### IV.

Contented with his tragical act of propitiation Ximenes retired from the post of Inquisitor in the following year and was succeeded by Luis de Padilla. The plague still raged in Canary, and the extirpation of heresy consequently remained necessary as an antidote to the scourge. Padilla followed zealously in Ximenes's footsteps, and held two more public *Autos*, one in 1530 and the other in 1534. In comparison with the great *Auto* of 1526, however, they were poor affairs. Victims were no longer easy to find. Marranism had been taught a terrible lesson. The leading *Nuevos Christianos* had disappeared, and those who remained took care to give no offence to the Holy Office. Denunciations of Jewish practices were still forthcoming but they were few and trivial. The sort of information with which Padilla had to deal is illustrated by the following note of a deposition dated May, 1527:—

Aldonça de Vergas y Vargas smiled when she heard mention of Our Lady the Virgin Mary, which caused her to be suspected of being a *Christiana Nueva*.

Nevertheless three Jewish *Reconciliados* were obtained for the second *Auto*, and there would have been one *Relaxado* in person, a certain Juan de Tarifa, had he not cheated the stake by



hanging himself in prison the night before. The *Auto* had to be content with his dead body. None of these cases present any features of special interest. In the third *Auto* were two Jewish *relaxados* who were burnt in effigy and one *Reconciliado*. The *Relaxados* were Duarte Gonçales, the younger son of Alvaro Gonçales, who, it will be remembered, was converted to Christianity by the edifying spectacle of his father and brother at the stake in the *Auto* of 1526, and his uncle Duarte Perez. Both had managed to escape to Cape Verd, where they had rich relations. In the case of the *reconciliado*, Pedro Berruyo, no documents have been preserved.

The ensuing hundred years were comparatively uneventful so far as the crypto-Jews were concerned. All traces of the permanent community had been uprooted by the great *Auto*, and although Jews never ceased in the islands, they were more or less birds of passage, who recognised that the old immunities were gone, and that the same vigilant prudence and dissimulation were required at Las Palmas or Santa Cruz as in Seville or Lisbon. The plague finally disappeared in 1532, and the islands resumed their normal easy-going life. For twenty-three years the Inquisition remained idle, and during the whole of that period not a single case of Judaism was reported to it. When, in 1557, it ventured on another *Auto*, it had only Mohammedans and Dutch Lutheran sailors to deal with, and even then the majority were condemned *in contumaciam*. But even this proof of solicitude for the orthodoxy of the islands does not seem to have been relished by the inhabitants, for it was followed in 1562 by a violent conflict between Padilla and the municipality. This state of affairs gave great dissatisfaction at Seville, and the "Suprema" ordered the reorganisation of the local Inquisition with larger powers. An independent inquisitor was appointed in the person of Diego Ortiz de Funez, who, with 20 noble familiars, landed at Las Isletos in 1568, and at once promulgated the Royal letters commanding obedience to him. In the following year a fifth *Auto* was held, and one Jew named Pedrianis, who had been denounced in 1524, was penanced with ten years in the galleys. There were also three non-Jewish *Relaxados* in effigy and a score of other *Penitenciados*.

With all Funez's energy, the supply of Judaisers remained exceedingly scanty. In 1570 he sent Bravo y Zayas on a tour of the Archipelago to hunt up heretics and collect denunciations, but the offences reported to him were for the most part ludicrously trivial, and although he transmitted six cases of suspected Marranism to Las Palmas, not one of them was found qualified for the sixth *Auto*, which was held in 1574. At the seventh *Auto*, in 1576, one Jew, Juan Yanez, was relaxed in effigy, and at the eighth, in 1581, a crypto-Jewess, Catalina



Nunez, was penanced, but here the list ends. In the remaining three public *Autos*, in 1587, 1591, and 1597, no Jews or Marranos figured. Sixty years later there was a Jewish case, to which I shall refer presently, but technically it was not one of the ordinary public *Autos*, of which none were held after 1597.

## V.

The revival of Marranism in the Canaries dates from the first quarter of the seventeenth century. The peace between England and Spain in 1604 gave a great impetus to the sugar and wine trades of the Archipelago, in which the Marranos of Lisbon, and the Jews of Bayonne, Nantes, Rouen, Bordeaux, Rochelle and Amsterdam were largely interested. It became necessary for these Jewish merchants to pay occasional visits to the islands to look after their interests, and gradually some of them resettled in Teneriffe and La Palma. The immigration was vastly increased by the outburst against the New Christians in Portugal, and especially at Coimbra, where between 1612 and 1630 no fewer than ten great *Auto da Fes* were held. In 1631 the Inquisition took action against the immigrants, and a number of denunciations were collected during the ensuing six years. The investigation disclosed the existence of quite a colony of rich Jewish merchants in La Laguna. Most of them were refugees from Portugal who had narrowly escaped the clutches of the Inquisition, and whose relatives in many cases had perished at the stake in Lisbon and Coimbra. The depositions give detailed accounts of their family history. The most conspicuous of them was Fernan Pinto, who exported wine in his own ships to Holland, receiving British manufactures in return. He eventually escaped to Amsterdam. It was probably this investigation and the persecution it threatened which drove Carvajal to emigrate to England, for we find the name of his brother Jorge Fernandez in the list of suspects for 1631, and in his petition for Denization in 1655 he states that he had then been resident in England "for 20 years and upwards."

In 1641 a fresh immigration of Marranos arose out of the abortive Lisbon conspiracy of that year to re-establish the Spanish domination in Portugal, in which many rich and influential New Christians were involved. It will be remembered that when Duarte Henriques Alvares gave evidence in the Robles case in London in 1656 he was asked how it was that his nephew being a Jew could venture to live in the Canaries, whereupon he replied that "the Portugalls who took part with the King of Spain were free to live in his territories." This does not seem to have been true of Robles, but it was true of Alvares himself and of many others, for about this date we

find numerous references in the Canariote documents to New Christians who were living in the islands "on licence" and consequently were free from the attentions of the Inquisition so long as the spuriousness of their Christianity was not openly flaunted. The Inquisition, however, still tried to make itself disagreeable to the Marranos, but its action was limited partly by public opinion, which would not tolerate any serious interference with the flourishing trade then growing up with England and Holland, and in which the Jews were an important element, and partly by a shrewd sense of its own material interests which, as it explained in 1654 in a petition to the King against restrictions on the wine trade, were bound up with the prosperity of the vineyards on the ground-rents of which its revenues largely depended.

From this time forward the local Jewish interest of the Canariote documents becomes subordinate to their Anglo-Jewish interest. My hope that they would serve to throw some fresh light on the lives of the founders of our community and on the circumstances of the Resettlement in 1655-56 was not disappointed. Quite a number of members of the little congregation which worshipped in Creechurch Lane under the wardenship of Antonio Fernandez Carvajal, at the time of Menasseh ben Israel's visit to London, appear in these documents together with much information concerning their social and political status.

The first name we come across is that of Diego Rodrigues Aries, whose existence as a London Marrano was first revealed when he appeared as a witness in the Robles case in 1656. His name is entered on the prisons' register for 1653. It appears that Aries was a native of Marchena in Andalusia. After living for some years in Amsterdam he migrated to London in 1651 and was known there as a Jew. He was a shipowner and he came to La Cruz in January, 1653, in one of his own ships to take in a cargo of wine. While in the port he was denounced by a coloured man who had served him in London, and he was arrested in the house of his brother-in-law, Gonçale Rodrigues Vaez. He does not appear to have been kept in prison very long, for in the following year he was back in London, and there is no record of any punishment having been inflicted upon him.

The next names are those of Duarte Henriques Alvares and his nephew Antonio Rodrigues Robles. Alvares occupied a great deal of the attention of the Inquisitors owing to the high official position he had held in the Islands. As we know, he had been the local treasurer and Robles had been his deputy. He settled in the Canaries in 1641 and married a lady named de Rojas, apparently an "Old Christian," by whom he had two

sons, Tomas and Diego de Rojas. Left a widower he fell in love with a Jewess named Leila Henriques, while on a visit to Amsterdam. Returning to the Canaries he realised as much of his property as he could and then fled to Holland where he was married in the synagogue. In 1653 he settled in London, and sent to the Canaries for his two sons. Owing to the reports which were received of his life in London, where he was a model of Jewish orthodoxy, the Inquisition solemnly sentenced him to be relaxed in effigy in 1658, and a special *Auto da Fe* was held for the purpose. In 1665 his eldest son Tomas got into the hands of some Jesuit priests in London, who at his request sent him back to the Canaries. There he appeared before the commissioner of the Inquisition at Orotava and solemnly denounced his father as a Jew.

Concerning Robles, whose life was set out in detail in his case before the Admiralty Commissioners in London in 1656, no fresh facts of any importance are given. The other London Jews referred to in the various reports received by the Inquisition from London are Antonio Fernandes Carvajal, Domingo Rodrigues Francia and Jorge Francia, Domingo de la Cerda, Joseph Carrera y Coligo, Lourenço Rodrigues Lindo and Manuel Lindo. We also hear of two Jews in Dublin in 1662, Manuel Pereira and Jaques Faro. Some of these names are new to us. The most interesting of them is Lourenço Rodrigues Lindo. He was in London in 1653, but returning to the Canaries was arrested in 1656, together with his wife Perpetua and his wife's uncle and aunt, Gonçalo and Lucina Rodrigues Vaes. Lucina Rodrigues was a sister of Diego Aries, and all were residents in Teneriffe. After his release from prison, Lourenço Lindo emigrated with his wife to London, where, as Isaac Lindo, he founded a family which has ever since been honourably connected with the Anglo-Jewish community, and which is the only founder family that has perpetuated itself in the community in the male line. Lourenço Lindo was a nephew of Carvajal, his mother and Dona Maria Carvajal being sisters. These ladies were of the Nunez family of La Guarda, one of the hotbeds of Lusitanian Marranism, who had been known for generations as stiff-necked Judaisers. In 1660 one of Lourenço Lindo's brothers, Antonio Rodrigues Lindo, was a *Reconciliado* in the Lisbon *Auto da Fe*, and about the same time his maternal uncle, Antonio Fernandez Nunez—a brother-in-law of Carvajal—was awaiting his trial in the Inquisition dungeons at Lima.

With regard to the question of the date of the Resettlement of the Jews in this country—which, with every deference to Dr. Gaster and Mr. Henriques, I hope is no longer a question—the Canariote documents confirm the traditional view which



fixes it at 1655-56—that is the period which covers the White-hall Conference and the Robles case. On this point I will content myself with quoting only two documents. The first is a deposition made before the Inquisitors in the City of Canary on March 10, 1660, by Friar Mathias Pinto, a *definidor* of the Order of St. Francis for the province. He relates that during a sojourn in England in 1658 he had had occasion to visit Antonio Fernandes Carvajal in order to cash a letter of credit for 1,000 ducats. The deposition proceeds:—

Having seen him frequently, he on several occasions told this deponent that *he had been a Jew from the time that the Protector Cromwell had broken the peace with Spain*, and many times he was wont to take this deponent's hands in his and say: "Don Mathias, although I am a Jew, we shall all meet in Heaven."

The other is dated September 4, 1665, and runs as follows:—

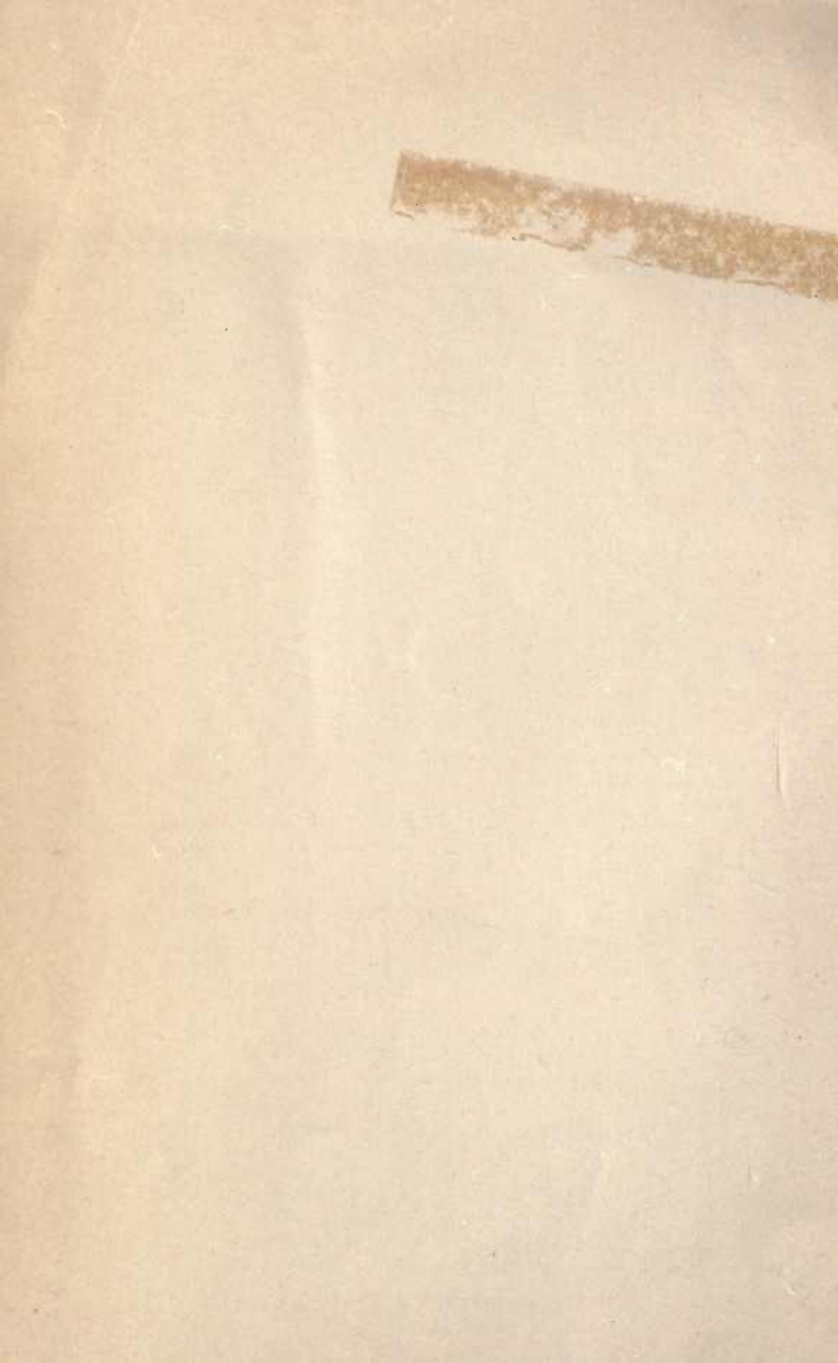
Letter from Don Francisco Porteros de la Vega to the Commissioner of the Inquisition at Garachico stating that because of information received, that *since the year 1655, when disturbances arose between England and Spain*, many Portuguese have left Spanish territory to establish themselves in England and follow the Jewish religion, it is advisable that the Catholics who have arrived at the islands in the ship which came there for Don Christoval de Aponte should be examined on the matter.

What this contemporary testimony means is quite clear. It fixes the outbreak of the war with Spain, in 1655—that is to say, the spring of 1656 N.S., when the Robles case was investigated—as the date when the Jews in England were able to throw off their mask and live openly as Jews. The facts that Carvajal himself says so, and that Jews had emigrated from Spain to England on the strength of it, seem to me conclusive. It will be noted that the author of the second document had apparently never heard of Charles II. in the matter, although, when he wrote, the alleged Carolian Charter to the Jews which has so beguiled Dr. Gaster was thirteen months o'd.

Let me add to this rapid survey of these interesting documents, which I give you only as a rough instalment of our programme for the coming session, that we shall also publish in connexion with them the lists of Jewish cases in the archives of the Lisbon Inquisition which were prepared for us some years ago by M. Cardozo de Bethencourt. The volume will thus, I am sure, prove a valuable contribution to Jewish history, but I am hoping that it will prove still more valuable as an incentive and guide to original research, for which there is an illimitable field in the Spanish and Portuguese inquisition, and of which I am afraid this society has had much too little during the last ten years.









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