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# THE JEW IN GERMAN LITERATURE

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AN ESSAY

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BY ALBERT M. FRIEDENBERG

Author of "Zionist Studies," etc.

PHILADELPHIA

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## NOTE

This is a revision and amplification of my earlier studies: "Two Mediæval Jewish Poets," and "The Jews as German Men of Letters,"—published in *The Jewish Exponent* in 1905.  
—A. M. F.

# THE JEW IN GERMAN LITERATURE.

By ALBERT M. FRIEDENBERG.

## I.

It is the purpose of the present essay to show what the Jews, regardless of their fidelity to or their desertion from the faith of their fathers, have done for German culture, what are the value and the extent of their contributions to German literature, what new ideas the Jews introduced by reason of their racial peculiarities into German life, and, finally, to how great a degree they were influenced by the spirit of their times.

Apart from the main purpose, but subsidiary to it, in the course of these remarks it will be necessary to consider the figure of the Jew in the works of some of the German poets, dramatists and novelists.

This study, in a measure, will reveal the Jewish literary attitude toward life. The Jewish men of letters lived primarily in the traditions of their glorious past, and sought to harmonize the spirit of Judaea with that of Greece. Their success in authorship depended upon the union in their writings of these divergent forces. The Jewish element was more or less subtly represented in their traditions and ancient history, and the lineal descendants of the old Hellenic strain were the German language and culture, which were plastic media to make their personalities dominant in German life and thought. Heine, in his book on Ludwig Boerne, has commented upon this connection between Judaea and Hellas, and Matthew Arnold, following Heine, has discussed the subject in some detail.

## II.

When Titus destroyed the Temple at Jerusalem and with this stroke instituted the Diaspora, the Jew lost his fatherland and became a wandering stranger.

Up to the year 1000 of the present era few Jews dwelt in Germany, although as early as the year 400 some had settled at Cologne. Most Jews—and the Graeco-Roman rhetor, Caecilius, of Calacte, may be mentioned as one of their men of letters—lived in the south of Europe. And even when the German Jews had grown strong in numbers, many years had to pass before their rabbis and the leaders of thought and learning among them grasped German notions and ideas—had, in a word, become thoroughly acclimated—and could take up sensibly their share of the burden of German culture.

No Jews, it may safely be said, took part in the development of the Old High German literature, and the period end-

ing in the massacres of 1096, when the Jews under the bishops of the Rhineland lived tolerably free from persecution, was one of preparation. Shortly thereafter, however, two representatives of the German Jews helped, in a small degree, to enrich Middle High German literature with some of its best poetry.

It seems strange, indeed, to find their work in the body of the writings of the German Minnesingers, for the spirit of the Semite finds its expression in gloomy moodiness, and in the direct appeal to the mind. Of the sweetness and the pain of love, of summer and its pleasures, of winter and its terrors, of all, in short, of which the Minnesinger sang, the Jewish poet did not breathe one word.

Of the poetry of Suesskind, the Jew of Trimberg, some two hundred lines are extant. They are preserved in the famous Ruediger of Manesse MS., which now reposes in Heidelberg, where the poet is pictured standing before the lord of the land, a Jew's cap on his head, in the act of recitation. He had learned the poet's art from the greatest of the Minnesingers—Walther, of the Vogelweide.

The Minnesingers were, as a rule, tolerant and humane. Wolfram, of Eschenbach, based his "Parzival" on the idea of the brotherhood of man, and Walther himself declared that Jews, Christians and Mohammedans were children of the one God.

Suesskind lived in the early part of the thirteenth century. Whether he was a physician of means (judaeus Suzkint is mentioned in a deed dated 1218, which runs to the Lepers' Hospital at Wurzburg), or a poor, wandering bard, the father of a family, or a bachelor, may be left in the realm of conjecture.

The year 1221 was the turning point of his life. Hitherto he had probably moved from court to court, performing feats of minstrelsy. Now, the laws against the Jews, promulgated by the fourth Lateran Council of the Church (1215) were strictly enforced, and Suesskind, as a German Jew, was compelled to live apart, wear the conical cap and forsake poetry.

In his verse Suesskind emphasized the vanity of human wishes, and spoke of death and immortality. Rich and poor ought to love, not hate, each other, and the crown of a man's life resides in a loving spouse. The best electuary for a life of virtue was made of five pigments or elements—fidelity, generosity, strength, discipline and above all

moderation in desires. He writes, too, of the glory of God:

"Almighty God! That shinest with the sun  
That slumb'rest not when day grows into  
night!  
Thou source of all, of tranquil peace and joy!  
Thou King of Glory and Majestic Light!  
Thou all-good Father! Golden rays of day  
And starry hosts Thy praise to sing unite,  
Creator of heav'n and earth, Eternal One,  
That watchest ev'ry creature from Thy  
height!"

More than a century after the death (1220) of Wolfram, of Eschenbach, two German poets, Claus Wisse and Philipp Colin, a goldsmith, of Strassburg, determined to add a German translation of "Percheval," the French version of the legend of the "Knight of the Grail" to Wolfram's "Parzival." In this work, completed in 1336, they had the assistance of Samson Pine, an Alsatian Jew. The name Pine is derived from Peine, a city near Brunswick. Samson was perfectly familiar with the languages, manners and thought of both France and Germany, and actively assisted the poets in their work. In their MS. he is mentioned by his name, and spoken of as a Jew. The completed poem is immoderately long, Wolfram's portion taking up only one-half.\*

### III.

Curiously enough, from the times of Suesskind and Samson Pine to the middle of the eighteenth century, no Jew wrote in the language of contemporaneous literary Germany.

Johannes Pauli (1455-1530), it is true, published "Jest and Earnest," a collection of short moral fables, in the early New High German language, in 1522, but he, although a Jew by birth, was converted to Christianity as a youth and became a Franciscan monk. Pauli's book, in which the Jews are pictured as observant Sabbatarians and vile desecrators of the host, became exceedingly popular and passed rapidly through thirty editions. But he is by no means an important writer, his violent anti-Jewish bias rendering him an unsafe leader.

During the period of which we are writing the Jews lived in Germany, but were almost insufferably persecuted and oppressed and had no opportunity to engage in literary labors. They were continually harassed by both opposing forces in the religious wars and the struggles of the peasants. The cultured Germans, as a rule, treated the Jews as beneath their notice.

Thus, in a broadside published at Munich early in the sixteenth century we are told:

"Trust these not! Beware!  
If you meet wolf on meadow,  
Jew who takes an oath,  
Dealer with a conscience—  
You'll be fooled by all."

The literature of these centuries is strongly anti-Jewish in tendency. Rab-

\*Prof. Ludwig Geiger is the author of an interesting study, "The Jews and German Literature," in Frankel's Monthly ("M. G. W. J."), of Breslau (v. 1, p. 351 ff., p. 426 ff., 1906; note The American Hebrew, December 7, 1906, pp. 5, 6. Prof. Geiger criticises the recent "Suesskind-appreciations."

binical disputations, passion plays in which the representative of the Church made the prophets of the Old Testament witnesses for Jesus, caricatures, farces with absurd Jewish characters, and the terrible blood accusations were used to discredit the Jews and fan the flames of superstition, and anti-Jewish rage. Sebastian Brant ridiculed them in his "Ship of Fools," and D. Meissner, in his "Political Treasure Casket" (1624), declared that the Jew cheats invariably.

Hans Folz, the barber-surgeon of Nuremberg, is rather an important figure in early modern German literature, and in several of his Shrove Tuesday plays there are Jewish characters. Folz had a reminiscent knowledge of Hebrew and his corrupt rendering of "Adon Olam," which he calls "the Jewish morning prayer," reads as follows.

"Adan holana ascher moloch pethorem,  
Koll Jhezir nifra bohot pathasa be  
Hefizo Kol asani meloch schemoukrah."

In his "Play of the Emperor Constantine," where the Jews are represented by a number of persons in the cast, and not merely by the archisynagogus, a divine court sits in judgment. The Jew declares his God alone is the true God, since all who pronounce His name must die. He proves the assertion by means of an ox, whom the Christian, however, restores to life by mentioning the name of Jesus. And, as is quite customary, the play ends with the baptism of the Jew. In Judaeo-German poetry Josel Witzenhauseu, who wrote on King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table, was of some importance.

Martin Luther, in producing his translation of the Bible into German, came strongly under the influence of the spirit of the Old Testament, and, indeed, through Nicholas de Lyra, of Rashi, the exegete. In his work, "The Proof that Jesus Was a Born Jew" (1523) Luther criticized the popes and the priests for not treating the Jews as men. Twenty years later he had changed front completely, for in "Concerning the Jews and Their Lies" (1543) an observant Jew is said to be the bitterest, most vehement enemy of the Christian.

This was the dark age in the history of the Jews in Germany; their mere numbers were not large, and they stood entirely without the sphere of influence of German culture. Still, in this period the speech of the German Jew, so far as grammar and diction were concerned, was most closely akin to that of the German Christian. Gerhart Hauptmann has preserved this fact for us. In the original version of his "Florian Geyer," a drama of the times of the Schmalcaldian wars, the Jew speaks the same language as every other member of the German Peasants' Union.

A few Ghettoes, where the majority of the Jews lived, were already in ex-

istence. In the Ghetto of Frankfort-on-the-Main the inhabitants were subjected to arbitrary imposts and taxes, to say nothing of actual physical oppression. Gryplius, in his "Horribilicribrifax," and Grimmelshausen, who like Hans Folz, knew something of Jewish literature, in his "Simplicissimus," while opposed to the Jews on principle, pictured most vividly their unfortunate condition. So, too, Folz spoke of the wretched, universally despised Jewish usurer in "The Account of Ruprecht Kolperger."

From the Black Death (1350) to the close of the Thirty Years' War (1648) the Jews of Germany were immigrating into Poland, their haven of refuge, lying east of the river Vistula. During this period hundreds of Jews suffered martyrdom as poisoners of the wells, recalcitrant usurers, unconscionable heretics and thieving rogues. In hordes they left the country. The ravages of the murderous Croats in the campaigns of Tilly and Wallenstein and Gustavus Adolphus, during the Thirty Years' War, so reduced the Jewish populations in the towns—in the open country no Jew was permitted to dwell—that the survivors were happy if they could flee with their lives.

The Jews who up to the thirteenth century had engaged in all branches of commerce, were looked upon as their natural enemies by the rough soldiery. As has been said, they had become the money lenders of the people. In the sixteenth century the Jewish usurer was already a well-known figure in German literature. In the "Descriptive Book of All Classes of the Nation" (1568) he is thus made to describe himself:

"Indeed I am a Jew.  
I pay but half of what is borrowed,  
And if the loans are not redeemed in time,  
I get all there is to be gotten.  
Thus I punish the mob—the merry gluttons.  
And my trade does not decrease,  
For like me are many of my brethren."

The Jews were repressed by the popes and the emperors; they were shut up within narrow Ghettoes and could engage only in changing money and dealing in clothing. The few who remained in Germany practised usury—a fact to which they owed their uninterrupted existence in the land. But this occupation doubled their unpopularity with the people, for the mediaeval and early modern view of usury made the payment of any sum of money as interest on a loan an illegal act.

When the Jews first entered Poland they could speak only Middle or New High German. They were bound by the strongest ties of attachment to the country from which they had been driven, and never wholly gave up the use of the German language. They had, even at this comparatively early period, become thoroughly assimilated with the Germans and intimately associated their own destinies with the fortunes of the Teutons. In time, of course, the German substratum of their

speech had to bear many a strange accretion, both of Hebrew and of Slavonic, and finally its character was completely changed. No longer German pure and undefiled, it had become Judæo-German and was written with Hebrew letters. Its basis was the Middle German dialect of Middle High German.

While the majority of German Jews lived in Poland, the dawn of the eighteenth century ushered in an era of tranquility for Germany. The people were worn out by long years of strife, and peacefully submitted to the despotic rule of hundreds of petty princelings. In Poland, on the other hand, Chmielnicki and his Cossacks had inaugurated a long series of terrifying anti-Jewish persecutions. Accordingly, many Jews returned to Germany, to the land which they had forsaken only when all seemed lost there. The golden age of toleration, existing at their first entry—one thousand years before—had passed away. They were still the clothing dealers, the usurers, the inhabitants of the Ghettoes (at Breslau and Frankfort-on-the-Main, for example), now and again subjected to cruel persecutions and enormous burdens of special taxes, and continually repressed by intolerable anti-Jewish statutes and edicts.

#### IV.

At this time German literature, as such, scarcely existed; writers slavishly fashioned their works after French models, and the stream of original inspiration had almost ceased to flow. Hence the German Jews had, on their return to Germany, no national culture of a distinct type to reacquire. The Luther of an earlier day, who changed a shifting dialect into a national tongue, was now succeeded by an Opitz, whose services to the literature of Germany were purely philological and who purged the language of its enormous quantities of foreign words. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was the greatest German writer of the day, and the pioneer of those who rendered justice to the Jew as man and as German. "The Jews," his early philo-Semitic play, was the first of its kind in German literature.

Lessing's friend and contemporary, and the intellectual, literary and religious leader of his people, was Moses Mendelssohn. He was a man of exalted ideals, and in "Nathan the Wise" Lessing raised his life and his views into the standard for all Jews.

Mendelssohn began to acquire fluency and grace, and with these came fame, as a German writer when with Nicolai at Leipzig (1757) he published the "Library of the Fine Arts and the Liberal Sciences." His style as a writer was above criticism and although this is not the place to discuss his work as a philosopher and religious reformer, his "Phædon, or the Immortality of the Soul," and "Jerusalem, or the

Power of Religion and Judaism," by their literary excellence, put his co-religionists, almost at one stroke, in complete touch with German culture. For with them his influence was boundless, and to the German men of letters he represented the Jews as a whole. So, when the poet Gleim wrote to the Swiss writer, Johann Peter Uz, that he derived much instruction and pleasure from reading Mendelssohn's essays, and when Lessing mentioned Mendelssohn as his friend by way of contrast to pastor Goeze, his arch enemy, it was as if the Jews of Germany, from being hated and despised, had come to take their due part in the intellectual life of the nation.

Of the Jewish contemporaries of Mendelssohn, two minor poets may be mentioned. Issachar Falkensohn Behr, a native of Courland, in Russia, wrote "Poems by a Polish Jew" (1772), which Goethe reviewed in the Frankfort Scientific Review for that year. Even for a Jew, Behr had a remarkably subjective temperament; he felt it keenly that the Jews were scarcely tolerated by the Germans, and that they had no legal rights or social position. Hence his poems express the woe of a sensitive Jewish soul. Goethe in his critical notice of the book spoke favorably of Behr's rhyming powers, but commented adversely on the use of "Jew" in the title. It tended to emphasize a religious distinction between this poet and his fellows which spiritually did not exist.

Ephraim Moses Kuh's "Epigrams," of slight worth as poetry, were preserved with their author for posterity in Berthold Auerbach's "Poet and Merchant" (1840), a tale of Jewish life in the time of Moses Mendelssohn, which shows us the gulf separating Judaism from Christianity.

## V.

Moses Mendelssohn, while both a German and a Jew, never failed to keep his Jewish obligations. He lived and died as a Jew. But his descendants, even his own children after his death, forsook the faith of their fathers.

At the commencement of the nineteenth century many "enlightened" Jewesses had literary aspirations. Dorothea, the daughter of Mendelssohn, married Friedrich Schlegel, the writer, and Rahel Levin, wife of Varnhagen von Ense, founded a "salon," the meeting place of those who sought fame in art or literature. Their literary productions were of very slight value, and consisted of subjective poems, impressionistic novels, morbid romances where no attempt at the delineation or the psychological analysis of characters was made, and incoherent autobiographies where Goethe's "Truth and Fiction" and "Werther" were followed.

Though these women of letters were a force for evil in Judaism, yet they

profoundly influenced the young German Jewish writers. Henriette Herz encouraged Ludwig Boerne to discuss the political, sociological and economic problems of the Jews of his native Frankfort-on-the-Main in a series of brilliant essays. Heine's "Rabbi of Bacharach" was the immediate outcome of his activity as a director of the Society for the Science of Judaism in Berlin, when he was the devoted disciple of Rahel Levin. Her influence, moreover, stimulated him to write his closet play, "Almansor." Sessa's "Our Trade" is an anti-Jewish dramatic piece of the day. The customs of the Jews and their assimilateness are held up to ridicule, and the names of the characters in the play describe Jewish foibles. Thus, Simon Ox is a cattle dealer; Isidorus Oriental, a student, and Loebel Pennygrabber, a collector.

At the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century the intellectual element among the German Jews had come quite fully under the influence of the notions first advanced by Mendelssohn's over-zealous followers. They were primarily Germans, and Jews only in a secondary sense. In the field of letters, too, these ideas found wide acceptance. Jewish writers aimed to be Germans in their thought and rarely wrote on topics of a Jewish nature. Karl Spindler's "The Jew" (1827), an historical novel of the Council of Constance, held in the first half of the fifteenth century, is one of a few exceptions which enforce the validity of this rule. Of course, only a small number of Jews wrote literary German, and then, as in Heine's "Book of Songs," gave no prominence to the Jews or their religion in their books.

## VI.

We find that nearly all that is Jewish in the German literature of the early nineteenth century is contained in the writings and personalities of Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Boerne. They regarded German culture in much the same spirit as the knight in the days of chivalry looked upon his lady love—the blessed vision hallowing and protecting his adventurous soul—for whom he died willingly. Heine and Boerne had slight sympathy with the German Jews, however, and their disparaging criticism is reflected in the anti-Jewish leanings of "Suess the Jew," a tale by Wilhelm Hauff, and in the works of other writers. Hauff's prejudiced account of the Jews of Bornheim, near Frankfort, whom he described as avaricious, ignorant and fond of display, is directly traceable to Boerne's influence.

At first Heine and Boerne, the second of whom excelled mostly in polemical discussions, were looked upon with severe displeasure by German writers, and this because of their Jewish origin. Karl Gutzkow was the first Chris-

tian author to undertake their defense. A student of their writings, the author of "Uriel Acosta," the Jewish drama of German literature, acquired habits of toleration for them.

Yet around Heine and his works a storm of controversy has continually raged. Adolf Bartels convicts him to his own satisfaction of every crime a man of letters can commit; Wiesinger, a recent critic, is fairer to his memory, but finds Heine lacking the ideal inspiration of a Messianic leader like Theodor Herzl. He regards Heine, however, as the creator of the Ghetto novel in German fiction.

Boerne did not possess Heine's powers of imagination, poetic description and stinging satire. The wounds which he inflicted have hence had time to heal completely.

As a German author Heine was neither philo-Jewish nor anti-Jewish in his sentiments. He did not concern himself with speculations on the future of the Jews; he considered the Jewish people to be simply a factor—an important one, it is true—in human development. Georg Brandes says of him: "In Germany he is looked on and judged as the stinging nettle in the garden of literature; he stings the historians' fingers and they curse him."

Heine was profoundly influenced by his mother. Although brought up in an observing Jewish home, he did not feel himself bound by any exacting ceremonial system, and looked with equal interest and satisfaction on his Jewish and his Christian environment. In common with many German Jews, he was an ardent admirer of Napoleon, the great leveler of class distinctions; his friends and teachers were all men of a different faith from his own. He achieved finally so great a degree of objectivity that he declared proudly: "I am a Jew; I am a Christian!"

Heine was extremely cynical. The battle of his life was long-drawn and severe, and for eight weary years he was buried in a mattress-grave. He was vacillating in his point of view, and never accorded consistent treatment to any subject which he touched on often in his writings. From his perverse love of contrariety for its own sake he was one day a Jew, the next a Hellene, now a German, and again an enemy of the Fatherland. To Boerne Judaism was one of many religions of equal worth; the Jews were "that bit of the Occident transplanted to the Orient." In the end he became thoroughly identified with the German patriotic cause.

## VII.

The Ghetto novelists, who took the lead among German Jewish authors toward the middle of the nineteenth century, did not share Heine's and Boerne's views of Judaism and the Jews. They decided to be both Jews and Germans, liberal in their political notions, yet not favorably inclined to

Socialistic propaganda. Their views and thoughts were, in short, those of the average German of the time, although their Jewish affiliations were strong and sincere. After the revolutions of March, 1848, which opened the door of religious, political, and, for a time at least, social equality to Jews in the countries of Europe, the German Jews were able to take up the active work of spreading German culture and ideals, and wholly to do away with the distinctions existing between them and the Germans.

To achieve this result in part the Ghetto novels were written. Their readers saw that much of the humor and the pathos of life were present in the isolated world of the Ghetto, and that, after all, the dwellers in the Jewish quarter of the towns and villages were like other men, possessing the same virtues and evincing the same faults as the Christians. Thus, Leopold Kompert, Moritz Hartmann, Ludwig August Frankl and the authors of "Sippurim" wrote of the Bohemian Ghetto, Salomon Kohn, B. Auerbach, Em. Emil and Michael Klapp of that of Prague; Hieronymus Lorn, Eduard Kulke, Emanuel Bondi and J. S. Tauber told the story of the Jews of Moravia, and Karl Isidor Beck and S. P. Rosner were the poets of Hungarian Jewry. Karl Emil Franzos, Nathian Samuely and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, a Christian, wrote of "Half-Asia," the Ghettoes of Galicia, while Leo Herzberg-Fraenkel and the Gentile Eliza P. Orzeszko described the Jews of Poland. J. Herzberg and Aron David Bernstein wrote some interesting tales (the latter's "Voegele the Maggid" is to be particularly noted) of Posen, and David Honigmann ("Berel Grenadier," a tale of the seven years' war of Frederick the Great), and Ulrich Frank (Ulla Wolff) of Silesia. Besides Heine and Boerne, whose "Novel" is a tale of the Jew's love of the Christian maiden, only B. Hause, Salomon Hermann Mosenthal and the Christian authors, Annette von Droste-Huelshoff ("The Jewish Beech," a tale of the Westphalian Ghetto), and Wilhelm Jensen ("The Jews of Cologne," an historical romance of the massacres of 1096), wrote of the Jews of modern Germany. But all of these writers were Germans in their ideals and outlook on life.

The first Ghetto novel in point of time was Heinrich Heine's "The Rabbi of Bacharach." Here we are presented with an intimate, yet inimitable picture of mediaeval German Jewish life. The scenes at the ancient Passover table are described so faithfully that this portion of the book is extremely valuable for the study of the religious customs of the Jews. Heine pictured the constant oppression of the Jews by the Christians, of whom they stood in fear; their half-ludicrous, half-

pathetic terror of the savage soldiery is carefully set forth.

The book consists of three chapters, the first and second written in 1824 and 1825, the last in 1839. It is my belief that Heine consciously gave the story this fragmentary character, for he had, in the first place, said all that he could say on the subject, and secondly, as a novel the book lacked dramatic action.

Berthold Auerbach, under the influence of Bitzius, first made the German village tale a notably successful form of literary endeavor. His "Black Forest Village Stories" (1843 and subsequently) combines poetry with prosaic details of real life. Auerbach shows us the true conditions in the peasant life of the South German Black Forest. Here, and in "On the Heights" he opposes to the unnatural and artificial in both Church and State the simple Christian life of the quiet country side, so complete was his assimilation with German culture and patriotic ideals. At the outset of his literary career Auerbach wrote a review entitled "Judaism and the Newest Literature." His novel "Spinoza," a romance woven about the life of the great Dutch Jew, although valuable as a study in psychological analysis, dealt too much with the conflict between reason and superstition. The story contains a love-episode, but Spinoza's long speeches, in which he sets forth the principles of his system of philosophy, are very discursive and excessively unromantic. Toward the close of his life, and until the attacks of the anti-Semites put an end to his remarkable literary productivity, Auerbach worked on a Jewish novel, to be called "Ben Zion," which was to indicate the identity of purpose and the common origin of both the Jewish and the German culture. His self-imposed task still remains to be done!

Salomon Hermann Mosenthal's Ghetto novels are brief, but well written, full of the quaint and charming details of South German Jewish life, seventy-five years ago, and deftly mingling humor and pathos. We shall summarize in part the stories which make up his "Tales of Jewish Family Life," for they are typical products of the pens of the Ghetto novelists. Yet, Mosenthal had nothing of the bitterness of Franzos; he did not offer sociological studies to his readers like Herzberg-Fraenkel, or propound problems in Jewish education like Kompert.

In "Aunt Guttraud" he tells the story of a poor woman, one of the silent martyrs of private life. Her marriage to a besotted Alsatian Jew, in the days of King Jerome Bonaparte, proved disastrous. Not only did her husband make life a burden to her, but he lost his business and her money, and finally became the leader of a

gang of smugglers. On his capture and sentence to the pillory his Jewish fellow-townsmen feared that his disgrace would seriously endanger their position in the little community on the river Fulda.

When the husband was strapped in the pillory, Aunt Guttraud, for the title of the story is derived from the name of the heroine, stood by his side, deliberately exposing herself to the insults of the mob. But it kept silence, recognizing in her presence that the despised Jews possessed more than their share of the elementary domestic virtues. The priest passing before her doffed his hat to her—she represented the supreme sufferer of his own faith. Ever her husband's willing slave she was true to him in the long years of his imprisonment, and tenderly nursed the incurable invalid when he returned home to die. "Raaf's Mine" is the sad story of the self-sacrificing Mine, who grew old in caring for others' children. The brilliant daughter of a famous and learned rabbi (Raaf), she never married, but became the mother of all the orphans in the little Hessian community. Mosenthal rose to his highest flights of fancy and genius in this touching study of an idealized altruism.

Mosenthal embodied many of the reminiscences of his own youth in the tale of the maiden who agreed to marry her aged suitor, simply because her father willed it. And he was always at particular pains to emphasize the Jew's high sense of duty and filial respect.

Hermann Schiff, in his stories of North German Jewish life, and Kompert gave us splendid pictures of the Jewish mother, the faithful house-wife of the Ghetto. Wilhelm Herzberg's "Jewish Family Papers" was translated into English by the Rev. F. de Sola Mendes, and Hieronymus Lorn's rather fanciful "Gabriel Solmar," the story of the lad who gained his heart's ease only within Ghetto walls, minimized the influence of the Christian enlightenment. The rabbi novelists, Markus Lehmann and Ludwig Philippson, wrote on Jewish historical themes, but none of their works rises above patient, plodding mediocrity. Philippson's collection "Saron" and his "Sephoris and Rome," a tale of the Christian emperors of Rome in the fourth century of the present era, deserve individual mention.

Now and then quaint bits of humor and Judaeo-German expressions are found in the pages of the Ghetto novel. Unintelligible to the Christian, they unlock a hidden door to old-world traditions, delightful reminiscences, and comforting delights to the Jew. Aron David Bernstein, whose tales of Posen point the same moral as Mosenthal's, has preserved in "Mendel Gibbor" a splendid example of the humorous possibilities of Talmudic dialectics.



"We pious children of the K'hille," cried Reb Abbele, his whole body swaying all the time, "cannot break stones on the highway! Why?—Because the Midrash tells us when Jacob our ancestor journeyed from Beerseba to Haran, he struck Beth-el at nightfall and lay down to sleep on a number of stones. But the stones began to quarrel for the honor of being the resting-place of his pious head. So the Holy One, blessed be He, formed all the little stones into a big pillow, and this our ancestor used as an altar the following morning.—Now, if our pious children of the K'hille would break stones on the highway, and one of them grown weary lies down to rest, a miracle like that which befell our ancestor may occur: all of the broken stones will re-unite and the highway never get done."

Mosenthal, too, criticized the reform movement in Judaism in this comment on a new rabbi:

"It is surprising that so old a K'hille as Frankfort listens to the new-fangled Schmus: a loafer darshening in High German. 'Tis a Charbe and Bushe for a Jewish K'hille."

In the newest works of the Ghetto novelists a psychological element has been added. The dominant note of Ulrich Frank's "Simon Eichelkatz and Other Tales" may be discerned in the sentence: "There is neither good nor bad in us; the moral value of things is determined by our deeds." On the one hand we have the unquestioning faith of the old, orthodox Jew, on the other the son's enthusiasm for Nietzsche's system and all that is liberal and modern. Arthur Kahn's "Fading Forms" strikes the same note. There we have the same conflict between the Talmud and the modern Jew. The latter is not only indifferent to all religious appeal, but strongly material in his inclinations, for he discovers that in leaving his faith he may vastly improve his social position.

In Kahn's tale, "Jachet the Penitent," Jachet is the daughter of a pious Jew who brought her up in accordance with orthodox tradition. On a visit to "emancipated" relatives in Mayence, where the Talmud and its laws are never mentioned, she succumbs to an attractive Austrian officer. Their marriage is out of the question, and Jachet refuses baptism, as this would imply an absolute break with the past on her part. Accordingly she returns home, is repulsed by her father, and spends the remainder of her life as a penitential visitor to the dead. "His Wedding Song" presents similar features. The Jewish cantor's son, a genius on the violin, cannot marry the girl he loves because he is a Jew of the Ghetto, and she a Christian maiden of an ancient line. He remains true to his faith—an inmate of an insane asylum.

The Ghetto novelists in one word

were creators. They excelled in depicting the gorgeous historic past of their race. Thus, Salomon Kohn's "A German Minister of State" is an accurate, carefully-drawn, yet interesting portrait of Joseph Suess Oppenheimer, the celebrated finance minister of the dukes of Wurtemberg, superior in every respect to Hauff's treatment of the same subject. These writers laid bare the misery and tragedy of Ghetto life, and sought to implant in Jewish minds the lesson that the spirit of the law is infinitely to be preferred above its letter. In striking sentences they suggested to the Jews the applicability of the Talmudic phrase to modern conditions: "Be Jews at heart, but in the world take up your share of the general burden of culture and human advancement." When all the Ghettos will have passed away—and it is incumbent upon us to hope that the time for this is not far distant—the writings of these Ghetto novelists will be read with renewed interest; they hold the mirror up to a self-centered, half-barbarous world, one, however, peopled with those who drank the cup of the bitterness of life to its dregs, who were for all that a race of men.\*

## VIII.

Heine is the greatest German lyric poet after Goethe, and the first name among the Jewish men of letters in Germany. Yet, few of his poems—admirably translated by the gifted Emma Lazarus, an American Jewess—have an absorbing Jewish interest, and of these unquestionably the best are the three called "Hebrew Melodies," in his "Romancero."

These poems were written, it is safe to say, to illustrate a notion that had possessed itself of their author's mind and longed for free expression: Heine felt subconsciously that the Jews are human beings, neither more nor less. George Eliot, it need not surprise us, had the same thought, and she has said in a letter to a regular correspondent: "If art does not enlarge men's sympathies, it does nothing morally. . . . The only effect I ardently long to produce by my writings is that those who read them should be better able to imagine and to feel the pains and the joys of those who differ from themselves in every-

\*The following is a list of some English translations of German Ghetto novels:

- Auerbach, Berthold: "Poet and Merchant." Macmillan.  
 Franzos, Karl Emil: "For the Right." Harper. Contalus a preface by George Macdonald, LL.D.  
 "Judith Trachtenberg." Harper.  
 "The Jews of Barnow." Blackwood. Out of print.  
 Kompert, Leopold: "Christian and Lesh and Other Ghetto Stories." Macmillan.  
 "Scenes from the Ghetto." Remington.  
 Kulke, Eduard: "Pitsche-Patsche, or the Life Story of Frolmel." Bloch.  
 Sacher-Masoch, Leopold von: "Jewish Tales." McClurg.

thing but the broad fact of being struggling, erring human creatures."

"Princess Sabbath," the first of these poems, shows that throughout the centuries, in spite of innumerable persecutions, the Jews have remained strong and firm in their ancestral faith, for the "sweet Sabbath rest" has ever turned "the Jewish dog" into a prince among men. "Jehuda ben Halevy" is a splendid appreciation of Jehudah Halevi, the sweet singer of Israel; in "Disputation" Heine has described a theological debate between the rabbis and the priests of the Middle Ages.

His early poem, "Belsazer," mirrors the idea expressed in the Bible by the verse, "And it came to pass at midnight." "Edom" and "With a Copy of the 'Rabbi of Bacharach'" are the fruits of his youthful studies in Jewish history. Heine's references to Moses Mendelssohn in "Germany, a Winter's Tale" are biting satirical, but this bitterness is due to the poet's intense hatred of the Fatherland and of everything German during his Parisian exile. He considered Mendelssohn, who typified German Jewry, an integral, indeed a necessary part of German culture.

The lesser poets, Theodor Creizenach, Karl Isidor Beck, Leopold Stein and Ludwig Wihl were servile imitators of Heine. Beck, indeed, aimed to follow Boerne as a man of letters, and evinced a love of democratic, even radical notions. Ludwig August Frankl was the author of weak poems, based in part on Heine's "The North Sea," and Moritz Hartman, author of the otherwise highly original "Rhymed Chronicle of the Pastor Mauritius," and Moriz Rappaport followed somewhat closely the models of Heine.

In 1849 a fanciful Jewish poem in eleven songs, "Assaf and Tirza," by J. Schwarz, was published at Heidelberg. Its verses are stilted and often commonplace, but the moral tone of the piece resides in its broad applications of the virtue of the fifth commandment to Jewish life. Assaf and Tirza were betrothed in Spain, just before the expulsion of the Jews from that kingdom. Condemned to death by the Inquisition, Assaf accepted Christianity, thus almost breaking the heart of Tirza, his beloved. She refused to join Assaf in his new faith, and with her family emigrated to the Holy Land. Assaf, too, the leader of a popular revolt, came to Palestine with his aged father, returned to Judaism, and was reunited with Tirza; the lovers found each other at prayer before the tomb of Rachel in Bethlehem. The poem concludes with a vision of the millennium when Judaism shall triumph.

Some of the minor writers wrote inspiring poems on Jewish themes. They sought to bring about an uplifting of the Jews—spiritually, intellectually, morally, to secure a full ap-

preciation of life's ideals, of German and Jewish culture among them. Thus, Beck, although in private he had turned Protestant, appealed in his poetry to the Jew's love of Zion—in "New Palestine" he besought him to return to the land of his ancient glory.

"Land of wonders! Land of dreams!  
I greet thee; hear my song!  
Thy mighty cedars stand.  
The sea doth beat against thy shore.  
But thy heroes are no more,  
And thy prophets speak no grace;  
E'en the last song of the harpists,  
Faded, vanished, has flown away.

"Land! Thou hbiest of all,  
Thou, the lovely bride of heaven,  
Thou art fallen in the dust  
And thy people wail aloud.  
Torn apart now are their garments,  
Dust and ashes their sole crown;  
And the earth is their hard pillow  
As they weep—and still have faith.

"Will a saviour lead the Jews?  
Will he break their bonds and chains?  
There are millions who believe  
That he was, and lived on earth.  
Should he come now—let him sever  
Heavy, odious gives of woe;  
Should he come now—let him lead us,  
Lead us to the Promised Land."

In "The Jewish Peddler" he told the story of the base and humiliating repression of the Jew of 1830. Ludwig Wihl, whose poetry was strongly socialistic in tendency, preached to Jews the doctrine of the simple life. Theodor Creizenach wrote "The Jewish Immigrants in America," and declared that, when the Jewish State fell, the task of the Jews in this world was accomplished; now they had no need to preserve their separate, racial identity, and should become Germans for all purposes. Mosenthal in "Deborah" spoke of the new home and glorious future the Jews would surely find in America. But, as is usually the case with Jewish writers, many of the poets were savage pessimists, and beheld in the sad state of the Jew only the impending dissolution of modern civilization: Joel Jacoby, before his conversion to Catholicism and under such an influence, wrote his morbid "The Sorrows of a Jew," in which God was looked upon as a paternalistic ruler, who intervened directly to guide his creatures.

In an epic poem, "Jerusalem" (1858), Adolf Stern dealt with the fall of Zion in 70, a favorite subject with many a Jewish poet and novelist. Mirra, the Jewess, the heroine, was finally rescued from the victorious Roman legions by Philippus, the Christian, her lover. In gratitude to him she adopted his religion. The story of Beruriah, the faithful spouse of Rabbi Meir, and that of the wonder rabbi of Prague are told in fascinating, yet simple rhymes by Abraham M. Tendlau in his "Jewish Legends of Olden Times" (1842, again in 1873). Ludwig

Philippson's poems are labored, artificial and wholly lacking in spontaneity. "The Ego," a didactic poem, is in reality a study in verse of Jewish psychology, and thus something of a literary curiosity.

Ludwig August Frankl's descriptive verse was uniformly excellent, and his historical poems by the accuracy of their scenes compensated the reader for their lack of original ideas. "Rachel" and "Moses" are series of short, beautiful, spiritualized pieces. The best of all his poems is "The Primator," an epic of the Jews of Prague, which passed through five editions in 1861 and 1862. The descriptions which Frankl gives of the drunken mob at the royal castle forcing the Primator, the leader of the Jews, to accept baptism so that he may be crowned King of Bohemia, of the father who then accused his wayward son of having offended against the Jewish law and how that father was consumed by remorse for his son's death are all excellent. In the "Epilogue," where he predicts the early approach of the millennium, when all religious distinctions shall disappear, Frankl is not so satisfactory.

At this place in our discussion the German translators of the Spanish Hebrew poetry of the Middle Ages deserve to be briefly considered. While these writers were scholars above all else, their versions were notable alike as poetry and as faithful and accurate reproductions of the sense and spirit of the originals. Abraham Geiger, S. J. Kaempf, Seligmann Heller, Abraham M. Tendlau, Leopold Dukes, Moritz Steinschneider, M. J. Letteris, J. Lowenberg, A. Sulzbach, B. Loewenstein and Leopold Zunz kept the names of Jehudah Halevi, Abraham ibn Ezra, Kalir, Jehudah ben Salomo al-Charisi and Salomon Gabirol alive in men's minds and hearts. The generations of Jews who know no Hebrew have come to cherish these poets of gladsoone days in Spain through the efforts of these translators. To give an example, Geiger has put Jehudah Halevi's thoughts on beholding mediæval Egypt into these words:

"Wondrous is this land to see,  
With perfume its meadows laden,  
But more fair than all to me  
Is yon slender, gentle maiden.  
Ah, Time's swift flight I fain would stay,  
Forgetting that my locks are gray."

### IX.

The Jews, in recent times, have been successful writers of German farces and comedies which have, of course, little or no Jewish interest. In plays with scenes drawn from the historic Jewish past, or founded on incidents narrated in the Bible, Christian dramatists have had a greater measure of good fortune. The times of Herod and the destruction of the

Herodian Temple are subjects which possess an abiding dramatic appeal, yet what work by a Jewish writer can be named in the same catalogue, even with Stephen Phillips' "Herod"? The latter is weak in its action, but strong poetically, and Mr. Phillips gives evidence of flights of superior fancy in the development of a theme which Jewish authors treat didactically.

To speak more generally, no Jewish dramatist has yet arisen to take his place with Lessing, Grillparzer and Klopstock. Lessing's "Nathan the Wise" and "The Jews" are classics in the world's literature. Grillparzer, in "The Jewess of Toledo," tells in highly poetic language the story of King Alfonso of Spain, a wise monarch and just to the Jews of his land, whose jealous queen consummates the murder of Raebel, the beautiful Jewess, whom Alfonso had seen and loved. Klopstock in "The Death of Adam," in "Solomon" and in "David" wrote interesting poetry around the lives of some of the heroes of the Bible.

Heine's "Almansor" and Michael Beer's "The Pariah," the earliest dramas of some importance written by Jews, were plays for the closet, not the stage. Their characters were too strongly idealized, and there is a flavor of unreality in speech and action. Moreover, these dramatists did not openly address themselves to the solution of the Jewish problem of their time, but simply attempted to show how the Jews, disguised as Moors or Pariahs for theatrical purposes, were oppressed by the enemies of their race, figuring, similarly concealed, as Christians or Hindoos. The scene of Heine's drama is set among the Moors and Christians in fifteenth-century Spain. Gadhi, the Pariah, whom Beer makes the vehicle of Jewish protest, speaks as follows:

" . . . . . Could I but be a man  
among men!—Ah!  
I want so little here below, so very little!  
Men lap their dogs, caress their steeds,  
But shun our sight, as if Dame Nature  
Had masked us in a mocking human  
shape.  
Make me your equal; see, am I not like  
you?  
(With increasing fervor).  
I, too, have a country, I will protect  
it. . . . ."

In the times when Karl Gutzkow wrote "Uriel Acosta," Otto Ludwig "The Maccabees," and Friedrich Heibel "Judith" and "Herod and Mariamne," Mosenthal pleaded for toleration of the Jew. His drama "Deborah," known favorably in England and America as "Leah the Forsaken," was written with the purpose of picturing the treatment and condition of the Jews in Continental Europe, and its lesson is that the brotherhood of man will never be established on earth if

Jew and Christian cannot dwell together in love and peace. The play embodies a strikingly human appeal in spite of Grillparzer's criticism that the heroine should have been a real gypsy vagabond rather than a Jewess. Kossarski's "Titus" is a long drama dealing with the destruction of the second Temple. Ludwig Philippson wrote a number of labored plays on Jewish historical themes, none of which has any particular merit. Perhaps "Esterka," the tragedy of the simple Jewess who became queen of Poland in the days of King Casimir the Great (1370), is the best of all. Mention may be made here of the novel on this subject by Hugo Freund which achieved a fair measure of popularity.

The legend of the Wandering Jew has been extensively utilized in German literature by Goethe and Lenau and other great writers. Julius Moser's "Ahasuerus" (1838), and Robert Hamerling's "Ahasuerus in Rome" (1866), are interesting epic poems in this field. Of course, to some poets Ahasuerus is typical of Christianity; to others he represents the Logos, but to Auerbach, in "Spinoza," Ahasuerus is the incarnation of the widely-scattered, persecuted Jewish people. All of these theories are considered by Heller in "Ahasuerus: an Heroic Poem" (1868).

Finally, it may be said that the Jewish dramatists—none of whom has achieved great renown—lack true creative genius. The characters in their plays, while strongly moral, are vague. We may agree with Karpeles that Jewish writers for the stage possess marked subjectivity, which produces a singleness of purpose in the pursuit of their dramatic ideals, and, in a lower degree, cosmopolitanism. But Heinrich Heine's criticism, as set forth in the first book of "The Romantic School," applies to them with singular force. There we read:

" . . . Every person in his (Goethe's) romances and dramas is treated by him, whenever and wherever he occupies the stage, as if he were the most important character. This is the case, too, with Homer and with Shakespeare. Indeed, in the works of all great poets there are no minor characters; every one is, in his place, a person of consequence. Such poets are absolute monarchs attributing no independent merit to any man, but regarding him in accordance with their own judgment. . . ."

## X.

The modern hatred of the Jew, known as anti-Semitism and first fully developed in Germany, is an outgrowth and manifestation of man's warfare with and final defeat by the powers of darkness. The pessimistic outlook on life engenders natural passions in

a man's breast: he compares his fate with the more favored one of the optimist and allows his mind to be clouded to the demands of reason.

In the years succeeding 1848 the German Jew sought to sink his racial and religious identity in his national patriotism, which found expression as a rule in the fiercest chauvinism. During the wars of unification he fought and bled in the armies of his Christian countrymen.

Jews, moreover, bore a leading part in the struggles of German Protestants with the forces of Ultramontanist Rome and its instrument, the Jesuits. Ludwig Fulda, in "The Talisman," praised Bismarck, the protagonist of anti-Semitism, for this work and compared the Jesuits with heathens.

Bismarck, in his war with the Jesuits, relied at first on the support of Liberal, i.e., Jewish statesmen like Ludwig Bamberger and Eduard Lasker. But their followers were fluctuating in number and enthusiasm, and Bismarck finally saw himself forced to accept the aid offered by the Conservative party and to adopt their program. They had blind faith in the legend of a common descent for all Germans, and already began to dislike the Jews, the men of another stock, as the aristocracy of money, who aided France in recovering from the effects of the war of 1870-71 and exploited the theoretically ingenuous, German peasant. Accordingly, with the publication of the articles on the French loan financed by German Jewish bankers of Berlin—the so-called Bleichroeder - Camphausen - Delbrueck affair—the war of the anti-Semites may be said to have begun.

The struggle was bitter. Since 1848 the Jews had fully fancied themselves a part of the German nation, and their participation in the movement of German culture was absolutely untrammelled. The rise of anti-Semitism involved for them a break with their immediate past.

Hermann Sudermann has written a play, "Brother Socrates of the Storm," which is an excellent analytical description of the period we have just been considering. Unpleasant touches exist here and there: Dr. Markuse, the Jewish rabbi, a veteran of 1848, at once a Jew and a German, eats ham; and one of the characters tells him that modern German society needs the rabbi, for who else would supply the never-failing Jewish jokes?

Dr. Markuse's ideals of a fraternization between Jew and Gentile are shattered in a measure by the tales his son Siegfried tells him of life at the universities. There the modern German Jew is securely confined within the new Ghetto, the spiritual Ghetto, by his Christian jailer, and from it there is no escape for him. This is not the narrow, squalid street, nor the chains and the sentries of the old; it

consists in the scornful laugh, the excessively polite note, the unreturned visit. These react on the Jewish temperament in much the same way as Dr. Theodor Herzl has described in his drama, "The New Ghetto." But Sudermann makes the father reply in a cryptic passage embodying, in all probability, the dramatist's solution of the Jewish problem:

" . . . . If it be true that the German does not care to have us as Germans, the Russian as Russians . . . —in short, that the world would be well rid of us—we should become that which they, the races of men, do not wish us to become. We should preserve for mankind its most precious jewel—a jewel which it has unwittingly neglected—man. For this, our mission, we must ever be ready."

In the face of the anti-Semitic campaign many Jews pushed their German chauvinism to doubtful extremes. Ludwig Jacobowski, the author of "Werther the Jew," declared that he wished to be first a German and then a Jew. Hieronymus Lorm, the pen-name of the Moravian Heinrich Landesmann, a tuneful poet, but exceedingly pessimistic in his novels and popular philosophy, made subjective use of the main anti-Semitic arguments in "The Wandering Craftsman." In "Gorgonheads" Franz Held (Herzfeld in reality) told the story of Cheru, King of the ancient Cimbrl, and his Jewish wife. In consonance with Germanic customs she was sacrificed on her husband's funeral pyre. Recently, too, Stefan Zweig in "Life's Wonder" produced a fine psychological tale. The Jewess who was the model for a picture of the Madonna in fancy looked upon herself as one with the painted canvas. She met her death in the defense of the artist's creation—and by implication of that for which it stood—from the fury of an iconoclastic mob.

In the last ten years the reawakening of the Jewish consciousness, which finds its practical expression in the Zionist movement on the one hand, and the love of the Jewish past, historically and linguistically, on the other, has proved to be a powerful motor-force in the modern German literature of the Jews.

It is true that Leopold Freund's volume of poems, where expression is given to the Zionist hope, was published as long ago as 1882. But the modern Zionist was not heard of in the domain of poetry much before 1895, and Berthold Feiwel's anthology did not appear before 1903. Muenchhausen's "Juda" and Goldberg's "Light from the East," the latter of which contains glowing descriptions of Oriental life and scenes, saw the light of print in 1901, to be followed two years later by Theodor Zlocisti's morbidly pessimistic volume, "Homeward Bound." The poetry of these writers,

to whom Zion is more than a mere pious wish, is inspired by an intense love of their race, its history and religion; the attitude toward life of these poets is hopeful, in theory, and opposes to the distinctly German cultural forces a markedly Jewish ideal.

Thus, Leo Rafaels, a minor poet, sings:

"Through the land a breath is blowing  
softly, cooling,  
Striking slumb'ring hearts and waking  
young and old.  
Thy breath it is, thou ever young, thou  
old and mighty God."

And Israel Auerbach writes:

"'Know'st thou this people?' The Lord  
said unto me—  
'From gloomy graves I'll raise them to  
the light!  
Withal their bones lie deeply buried,  
I'll set them up, give them the breath of  
life;  
Withal their scatt'ring North, South,  
West and East,  
My call they'll heed in time!  
No corner so remote I cannot strike  
From them its binding, cruel chains;  
From North and South, from the most  
distant shore  
I'll bear them home on eagles' wings,  
To blessed Zion.—  
My people—Israel!' saith the Lord."

In recent days, barring all imaginative writing which finds its inspiration in Zionism, dramas based on the tragedy of anti-Semitism, or turgid historical novels represent all that is produced by German Jewish men of letters. Max Nordau's "Doctor Kohn" and O. E. Lessing's "Rebekka," with its scenes of New York life, are examples of this fact. Even the novelists—Rosa Pomeranz, Pruchanski and countless others—are obsessed by fears for the future of the Jews. They succumb, too, to the allurements offered by the plots and the literary material of Judaeo-German writers, and accept Russo-Jewish habits of thought and ideals. Accordingly, they content themselves at times with the office of the translator, and interpret Peretz, Spektor, Frug and Gordon for German readers. This work is useful and these authors are men of vast talents, but are we not justified in demanding original, creative work from the present-day possessors of literary and cultural traditions running back one thousand years?

In this place a brief reference may be made to Paul Lindau's "Countess Leah." This excellent acting play is the work of a Christian, and describes modern conditions in Germany with unerring accuracy. It demonstrates the hatred the upper classes in German society bear toward the Jew, and to what lengths they will travel—witness its theatrical court scene—in attempting to deprive him of justice. Scholz's, "The Jew of Constance," an historical drama of the fifteenth cen-

ture, has for its central figure Nasson, the baptized Jewish pantheist, who dies to save his people. A word, too, may be bestowed on Jewish humorists like Cronbach, and writers of tales for Jewish children like Fanny Neuda and Kosa Friedlaender.

### XI.

In the foregoing pages we have endeavored to present the figure of the Jew in German literature in its principal outlines. In German literature the Jew is unique because in no other division of the republic of letters has he been so fruitful and so constant a theme of discussion and exposition by writers of every shade of opinion, exhibiting in their works every degree of literary merit. His figure is particularly interesting because in German-speaking lands the Jew—even in the earliest days—sought to bear his share in the propagation of culture; and he thoroughly assimilated German thought and German ideas with remarkable facility.

The last remark yields a striking commentary on the position of the Jews in Germany and conversely explains the attitude of the governing powers toward them at every stage of German political development. During the period of preparation, when the Jews had not yet become imbued

with the German ideals, they lived in peace. Repression followed the first faint signs of a dawning culture among them. For quite a long period the Jew was but a name to the Germans and only at the commencement of the nineteenth century did he seek to make a place for himself among those of his Christian neighbors who cherished the literary pursuit. During the comparatively short epoch of revolutionary enlightenment—when the principle of the universal brotherhood of man was baptized in the fire of the days of 1848—the Jew was deemed the equal in every respect of the Christian, and Jewish writers attempted to prove that the differences between the race resided in the mere externals of worship. Anti-Semitism, the cause of so much change in the political life of the nineteenth century, produced remarkable results in German literature. It worked a change in the position of the Jew in German literature, not only from the point of view of Christian men of letters, but also from that of the Jews themselves. Finally, Zionism appeared upon the stage of the history of the world, and in its invitation to return to Palestine presented Jews of every shade of opinion with remarkable literary themes from their storied past.

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