Found in Rev H de Sola's papers
[No explanation or date]

PRAYER

TO BE RECITED BY THE MINISTER EVERY SABBATH MORNING

AFTER O-LY-NU.

Almighty God, Thou who hearest prayer, Thou to whom we, Thy children, come with the burden of our sorrows and the tribute of our thanksgiving, fully trusting that Thou wilt sustain us with Thy comfort, and accept our glad homage—listen to us, we beseech Thee, in this solemn hour. Bless our worship to-day. May the prayers we have uttered find their way to Thy Heavenly Throne and win for us Thy mercy and Thy love. May the gleams of Thy light, the visions of Thy truth, which have come to bless our souls this day abide with us when we have gone hence and are mingling with the world, so that, whatever our trials, we may still hold fast to our faith in Thee, and whatever our temptations, we may still feel the sanctifying influence of Thy presence.

O God, we beseech Thee to be with us in the coming days of toil. Shew us the way of life amid the labyrinth of the world. In storm and in sunshine help us to fix our hearts on Thee. Give us strength to bear our load of care; give us clearness of vision, so that we may see the wisdom and the love that has laid it upon us. Teach us to hallow our joys with thankfulness; may we ever look up to Thee as the gracious Source of all our blessings. Help us to be true to our better selves, to discern our real work in life, and to do it with all our might. Be by our side when we are struggling with our own hearts, when we are wrestling with temptation, when we seek to rise above the failings and the weaknesses to which we are prone. Help us to realise life's meaning, to understand its solemnity, so that each day we live may be yet another step leading us nearer and nearer to Thee. Amen!

A

SERMON

ON THE

EXCELLENCE OF THE HOLY LAW,

AND THE

NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE

OF

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION,

DELIVERED AT THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE CONGREGATION, IN LONDON,

ON SABBATH THE 12*th* OF NISAN 5591.
(26*th* MARCH 1831.)

BY

THE REV. D. A. DE SOLA,

(חזן) MINISTER OF THE ABOVE CONGREGATION.

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1831

לכבוד איש משכיל ויקר רוח

חזן דוד די סולא יצ"ו

שלום וישע:

נקרה נקרתי בתוך הבאים אשר התאספו בשבת הגדול, יום
אשר הבאת את פרי ארשך ובשרת צדק בשפת ארצנו,
שמעתי דבריך כי נעמו, בם הרוית נפש שקקה לשמע
מוסר השכל בלשון למודים, ויען כי אף אנכי טעמתי
ממתק מליך, והיו לי לעינים, אמרתי אגישה לך
את ברכתי מנחת אהבה ותודה והיתה לך
למזכרת מאת אהבך, איש בריטאני
ושמו פלאי:

אַחֶיךָ יוֹדוּךָ, יְשֻׁרוּן יְהַלֶּלְךָ
כִּי הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל שִׁמְעֲךָ אִמְרוֹתֶיךָ,
עֵת כִּי צֶדֶק בִּשַּׂרְתָּ בְּמַקְהֵלוֹת
לֶקַח טוֹב נָתַתָּ, הָלַכְתָּ בִּגְדוּלוֹת,
הֵן בְּרוּחַ בִּינָה, וּבְשִׂפְתֵי דַעַת
נֹעַם הֵטַפְתָּ, עֲלֵי אֹזֶן שֹׁמַעַת,
בְּמַחֲנֵה הָעִבְרִים, חֲדָשׁוֹת הִשְׁמַעְתָּ
נִפְתַּלְתָּ אָחִי, נִפְתַּלְתָּ—וְיָכֹלְתָּ:

הִקָּבְצוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב, וְשִׁמְעוּ נְאוּמוֹ
נְאֻם הַגֶּבֶר הַמְדַבֵּר, בִּלְשׁוֹן עַמּוֹ:

THAT it is necessary and important that all our brethren in faith should be well acquainted with the divine law given them as a guide for their actions. That in order to promote due order and decorum in our Synagogues, and religion and morality within the bosom of our families, some public instruction should be afforded by which the poor or the uninformed should be taught, and the worldly and careless reminded of their duties are propositions which I suppose will be readily granted, and therefore require no further proof or illustration.

The Gentlemen Elders of the Congregation, impressed with these truths, and ever ready to promote the temporal and spiritual improvement of the Congregation, whose interest they superintend, finding, that owing to the change of times and circumstances, the religious instruction hitherto given in the synagogue in the Spanish language had ceased to be useful, since that language is at the present day no longer understood by the greatest part of those members of the congregation, who are natives of this country, resolved, that in future, Sermons in the English language should be frequently delivered at the synagogue, in order to afford the congregation the necessary religious instruction in the *only* way it could prove useful, Some gentlemen of that body did me the honour to declare their opinion, that they considered me fit to execute their laudable intention, and

although I was deeply impressed with the arduousness of the task required of me, and justly diffident of my capacity to do it justice, yet hoping that the purity of my intention, and the beauty and holiness inherent in the subject on which I was to treat, might induce an indulgent audience of my brethren to look leniently upon the imperfections of a first attempt, joined to the desire of marking by a prompt obedience my sense of the honour conferred on me by their request, induced me to endeavour to surmount all difficulties; and the result was, that I found I had not miscalculated upon the forbearance and indulgence of my brethren, since the feeble sermon which I am now induced to offer to the public, was honoured with the general approbation of the audience. The reason which induces me to publish it is this:—A Gentleman of high character and respectability, a member of the congregation I have the honour to serve, whose solicitude for the welfare of his brethren is generally known and appreciated, and with whose protection and friendship I feel honoured, was pleased to express to me his opinion that what I had delivered ought to be made more useful by being printed. His desire was to me a sufficient motive for a prompt compliance, and accordingly I venture to present it to the public, premising, that I offer it only as a feeble essay, and trusting that the merit of good intentions may in some degree extenuate the faults and imperfections of the actual performance; and most happy and amply rewarded shall I consider myself, if I have assisted the sacred cause of religion among my brethren.

Yet it is impossible that any effort, however well meant, that any endeavour of the rulers of the congregation, or the pious and laudable exertions of any individual member, can have the desired effect, unless it be seconded by the zealous co-operation of the whole body of the congregation.—For what will it avail that sermons should be delivered in the

language of this country? if so many members of the congregation should persist in absenting themselves from the holy communion of their brethren, and but rarely visit the sacred place where we assemble to offer our united prayers to our common Father.

It is not my intention here to dilate upon this subject, yet I hope that its importance may excuse my mentioning here briefly, why public worship is preferable to private, and also indicate some of the advantages attendant and consequent thereon; particularly since the refinements of a false philosophy have armed with some specious arguments those who desirous of excusing their indolence and want of faith, are ready to grasp at any shadow which bears the appearance of assisting them.—" What need can there be (say they) for a constant attendance at the synagogue? Can we not worship our Creator every where?" &c. It is not difficult to expose the fallacy of this argument, for although it is undoubtedly true, that as the eloquent Prophet expresses it the whole universe is God's dwelling,[1] and the earth is filled with his glory;[2] and that, consequently, wherever we happen to be, we are always in his immediate and awful presence. Still let the immense advantages resulting from public worship be but for a moment considered, and all apparent, all false, and all selfish objections and subterfuges will disappear.

First, Because when we assemble in a place especially dedicated to the holy worship of the Eternal, we are there disengaged from the bustle and turmoil of the world, and freed from domestic cares, all of which do elsewhere occupy and distract our attention; for surrounded as we are in a synagogue by every thing calculated to recal wandering

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[1] Isaiah, lx. 1. [2] Ib. vi. 3.

thoughts, we are enabled to fix them entirely upon the holy purpose for which we meet.

Secondly, Because we are there *only*, enabled to acknowledge and thank, in the assembly of all our brethren, whom the bonds of a common faith unites, for all the goodness, blessings, and mercy which the Eternal has, and still bestows on us as a nation; and these favours being received in common, it follows that they can only be fitly acknowledged in the sacred place where all assemble to offer their joint prayers to the Throne of Omnipotence and Mercy, where past favours are *jointly* and publickly acknowledged, and where *together* we implore His further assistance and protection.

Thirdly, Because when we assemble in the synagogue, we are there, [or ought to be,] animated with different feelings as in the world; for all the divisions of rank *necessarily* introduced into human society, and which separate the different classes, cease when they appear before God.—In His presence all the distinctions of rank vanish, all the prerogatives of power or wealth become useless, and the advantages of superior wisdom are there vain and nugatory; for within the walls of the sacred "House of Prayer," *all* acknowledge their frailty and insufficiency, and total dependance on the Creator for life and support. Those in whom pride and self-sufficiency has stifled the voice of religion and reason, or those who continually plunged in the vortex of pleasure and dissipation, have become callous and indifferent to their duties, are there reminded or taught, that the privileges of birth, beauty, or rank, and all the glitter of this world, are esteemed as nought by the Eternal if they are unaccompanied by piety and virtue; whilst the poor and humble are there taught that the true distinction before God consists in what they may arrive at, provided they are virtuous.

Finally, Because of the good example it affords, not only to the adult, but also (and perhaps especially so) to the rising generation ; if, as it is said, we have (as a body) degenerated in the strict observance of our holy religion from the pious practice of our ancestors; if they had a greater attachment and veneration for our sacred rites, customs, and ceremonies; in short, if they had more faith, more nationality, then exists at present among their descendants, it is certainly in a great degree attributable to their more frequent attendance at the synagogue; for then, Example that powerful stimulus to all human actions, confirmed the well-disposed and deterred the vaccilating, and the dread of public censure effectually guarded the weak mind from yielding to evil temptation.—The rising generation early and constantly introduced into the public assembly of the worshippers of the Eternal, received there impressions of devotion, virtue, and nationality, and became familiarized and accustomed to those habits of piety (which, be it observed, they witnessed *at home* as well as in the synagogue), and were confirmed in them in maturer age, since nothing is more lasting, than the impressions received in early youth.—The effects of a contrary practice, as far as it prevails in the present age, are too well known, and too melancholy to dwell upon. Let us hope, and indeed there is good reason to expect, that since public religious instruction is now to be dispensed so as to be generally intelligible, we shall again see our Synagogue filled as "in the days of yore," with men, women, and children, all animated with one desire, viz. that of becoming instructed in the Law of God, in order to regulate their lives by its holy precepts.

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A SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE

SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE JEWS' SYNAGOGUE,

BEVIS MARKS,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 7th NISAN (24th MARCH), 5607, 1846

BEING

THE DAY APPOINTED BY HER MAJESTY AS A GENERAL FAST AND DAY OF HUMILIATION, ON ACCOUNT OF THE DEARTH NOW UNHAPPILY PREVAILING.

BY

THE REV. D. A. DE SOLA,

MINISTER OF THE ABOVE SYNAGOGUE.

Printed by the Express Desire of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad.

LONDON:

[illegible] CO., PRINTERS, 18, ST. MARY AXE.

[illegible]
parts of th[illegible]
and dearth, in a[illegible]
life. Thousands of our [illegible]
have, and are at this moment, su[illegible]

SERMON.

כי כאשר משפטיך לארץ צדק למדו יושבי תבל :

מסכת ברכות פ׳ חמישי ׳ אמר רב אמי אין מיתה בלא חטא ואין יסורין בלי עון :

"FOR WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE ON THE EARTH, THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD WILL LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS." Isaiah xvi. 9.

We read in the Talmud, treatise Berachoth: "*Death is the result of sin, so also are divine chastisements never inflicted, but as the consequence of transgression.*"

THE occasion of our present assembly in this holy place, must needs impress you with feelings of awe and devotion, and cannot fail to call forth the sympathy and best feelings of every reflecting and sensitive mind. Still more must it impress with awe, and appal him whose task it is to address you this day, even if better qualified for it, than I can presume to be. For devastation has gone forth through the land, Death stalks around, with disease in its train. The failure of an important vegetable production in various parts of this empire, and of Europe, has caused a scarcity and dearth, in articles constituting the first necessaries of life. Thousands of our fellow-men and fellow-subjects have, and are at this moment, suffering the indescribable

pangs of famine, and are perishing from want. Therefore are the portals of every house of prayer opened this day throughout the land, at the command of our most pious and beloved Queen, and numerous congregations are everywhere assembled, jointly to invoke the Universal Creator and merciful father of all mankind, humbly to supplicate Him that He may deign to behold our affliction, accept our penitence, stay His desolating hand, and remove from us the heavy judgments which our many sins and repeated provocations have so justly deserved. And surely, among the judgments by which the Almighty God asserts His sovereignty and providence over the children of man, there is none more grievous, none more awful than that which is the occasion of our present assembly. We have seen sufficient in this metropolis, and have heard and read still more of the dire effect of this calamity (in the sister island, in the north of Scotland, and in various parts of Europe), and they must needs present themselves so strongly to your mind, that I may spare myself the painful task of dilating upon it, and harrow your feelings by a reiteration of the miseries, the diseases, the acts of despair and of insubordination, and the many physical and social evils to which this calamity has given rise. It is certain, however, that so much misery is only the result of a visitation of the Almighty God; and that if we turn to Him, in humble contrition and penitence, He will withdraw His afflicting hand, and pardon our iniquities. For such is the infallible *dictum* of God himself, pronounced by means of His prophet Joel, on the occasion of a calamity, similar to the present, desolating the land of Israel, שדד שדה אבלה אדמה "The fields lay waste, the land mourneth." "The husbandmen are ashamed for the wheat and for the barley, because the harvest of the field is perished." "The trees of the field

are withered." חגרו וספדו הכהנים הילילו משרתי יי "Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests. Weep, ye ministers of the altar." קדשו צום קראו עצרה "Sanctify ye a fast-day, convoke a solemn assembly; gather the elders, assemble all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord, and cry unto God." הלא לעינינו אוכל נכרת "For is not the food cut off from before our eyes, and joy and gladness from the house of the Lord?" וגם עתה נאם יי שבו עדי "And now, saith the Lord, turn ye to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." וקרעו לבבכם ואל בגדכם "And rend your hearts, not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God; for He is merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents of inflicting evil." [1]

In the graphic description and impressive admonition I have read to you, the eloquent prophet at once states the true cause and the sole remedy for this affliction and judgment. Accordingly, I will, in this brief discourse, endeavour to show:—

First, that calamities like the present, are not accidental events of nature, but visitations of Providence in consequence of the sins of the world.

Secondly, That our sins have been ample to provoke that anger; and,

Thirdly, endeavour to point out the means most likely to avert these chastisements.

And ye, my dear brethren, join, O join me in my fervent invocation to our God, that He may enlighten my understanding, direct my words, and grant me His aid and favor, that these my words which proceed from my

[1] Joel i. 10—16. and ii. 12, 13.

heart may enter yours, and produce their intended effect.

יהיו לרצון אמרי פי והגיון לבי לפניך יי צורי וגואלי :

"May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart be acceptable before thee, O Lord! my Rock and my Redeemer."[1]

I.

The words of my text are too obvious in their meaning to require any explanation, except that the word משפט judgment is often applied in Scripture to those acts of divine justice by which God vindicates His Divine Providence and rule over the world, and for those acts of divine justice by which he manifests his wrath against those who have excited it. Although the calamities with which a considerable part of this realm has been visited, have not exhibited themselves in their more severe and desolating aspect in our immediate vicinity, still we have seen enough of their dire effects to make us shudder, inwardly reflect, and ask ourselves—

על מה עשה ה׳ ככה לארץ הזאת מה חרי האף הגדול הזה :

"Wherefore has the Lord done so to this land, wherefore this great anger?"[2] And I fear that the answer would be the same as that given in the quoted text—

על אשר עזבו את ברית יי

"Because the covenant and law of God has been forsaken."[3] At least, it were to be wished that either as Britons or Israelites we had some just ground to suppose ourselves exempt from the dire judgments now on this land, and, what is still more important, that the hope of such an exemption for the future could be founded in our state and condition as a people that acted righteously, and did not forsake the ordinances of their God."[4]

כגוי אשר צדקה עשה ומשפט אלהיו לא עזב

[1] Ps. xix. 15. [2] Deut. xxix. 24. [3] *Ibid.* v. 25. [4] Isaiah lviii. 2.

But let us not deceive ourselves. We cannot, alas! put this flattering unction to our soul. The open impiety and profligacy we see daily around us in this vast metropolis, the great corruption both of principles and manners, and the decay of religion among ourselves, give us but too ample cause to conclude, that this exemption is not owing to our righteousness, but to the long-suffering and mercy of our God, "Who did not deal with us according to our sins nor retributed to us according to our iniquities." [1]

לא כחטאינו עשה לנו ולא כעונותינו גמל עלינו:

But let us remember that the rod and judgment which are now only suspended over us, will descend with increased severity, if we persevere in our evil courses, and slight this fatherly admonition. For although as our holy law informs us, " God is all-merciful, most gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy and in truth."

ה׳ אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב חסד ואמת

Yet " he will not allow the guilty to go altogether unpunished." [2]

ונקה לא ינקה

Reason as well as revelation loudly proclaim to us the existence of a Divine and all-governing Providence. Whatever lives or moves on the earth or in the skies, and every event, are not only produced, but directed by Him, and are attributed in Scripture to his immediate agency. Thus it is said that God "shuts up the heavens that there be no rain, so that the earth yields not its produce ;"[3] or that "He opens the stores of heaven"[4] and commands Nature to yield its increase. " He maketh the barren wilderness fruitful," or "Through the wilderness of the inhabitants He renders a fertile land sterile."[5] He alone commands the elements,

1 Psal. ciii. 10. 2 Exod. xxxiv. 5. 3 Deut. xi. 17. 4 Ibid. xxviii. 12.
5 Ps. cvii. 33. 34.

and "raises or hushes at his pleasure the wild tempest and the raging billows of the ocean."[1] "He maketh peace"[2] or war, and "the heart of kings are at his command."[3] In short, there is no act, be it for the private or public benefit or calamity of man which does not originate or is guided by Providence. True, we think we see but the effect of natural causes, but God has invariably preferred to act by them, even in the operation of miracles. How the laws of Nature are guided by God; so as in every case to produce the various results He intends them to have, is far too recondite for our confined understandings. For, as the prophet truly says,—"God's ways are not like ours, nor his thoughts and acts like those of mortal man."[4]

Even the unhappy occasion of our present meeting affords us an apt illustration of this.

You all know that the present scarcity and dearth, with its usual train of calamity is mainly owing to the failure of an edible root which has long formed a considerable portion of the food of the people of this country, and the only support of the greater part of the Sister Kingdom and elsewhere. Now that destruction has been in so remarkable a way, as to baffle the investigations of science, and has set at nought all human wisdom and skill, either to detect the cause, or to prevent the recurrence for the future. Therefore, be it, that hosts of microscopic animalculæ were chosen by God as the ministers of his wrath, or that he employed other occult agents to devastate and destroy this and other valuable vegetable productions on which the food, and consequently the life of man in a great measure depends: it is certain, that this extraordinary fact ought to open the eyes of the most incredulous, and cause him to exclaim like Pharaoh. אצבע אלהים היא "The finger of God,"[5]

1 Ps. cvii. 25. 29. 2 Is. xiv. 7. 3 Prov. xxi. 1. 4 Is. iv. 8. 9. 5 Exod. viii. 15.

i. e., his immediate agency, is here visible in this extraordinary event, which so much deviates from the usual course of nature, but in this, as in every event of life, the all-directing hand of Providence is visible to every thinking mind. Reason, as well as revelation, incontestably proves this. For we know that God is the source and perfection of all wisdom; we are equally convinced that the purpose of our creation and sending us into the world, was both for his glory and for our happiness and perfection. Is it therefore not evident that neither of these ends could have been fully attained unless Divine Providence regulated and controlled events? How truly, therefore, and philosophically proved, are the expressions of the Psalmist—

ממכון שבתו השגיח את כל יושבי הארץ:

"From the place of his Divine residence He superintendeth all the inhabitants of earth," because "He who fashioneth all their hearts *must needs* understand all their doings." [1]

היוצר יחד לבם ומבין את כל מעשיהם:

Let us, therefore, be careful that we do not both foolishly and wickedly misapply to this calamity, and to similar occasions, the words "accidental events;" for truly nothing happens in the world by accident: in fact, there is no such thing as chance or accident; what we call so, is nothing else than that for which we cannot discover a cause. It was well remarked by a wise author, that the word "accident" is the reproach of our vocabulary, inasmuch as it is a term of no real meaning, but only invented to veil our ignorance. I trust, therefore, to have proved, that since what we term "accidental events" are but the effect of the mysterious interpositions of a Divine Providence, whose aim it is to promote our happiness, and since nothing does nor can happen without a cause, it therefore follows, that our reason, strengthened as it is

[1] Ps. xxxiii. 12, 13.

here by the direct and explicit words of Holy Revelation, cannot arrive at any other conclusion, than that the cause of this and similar calamities and judgments are only attributable to our sins, and are sent as incentives to our repentance and future improvement, as in the words of my text, "When thy judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world learned righteousness."

II.

We are next to prove, "that we have given ample cause for this judgment." Her most gracious Majesty, in her Proclamation appointing this day of humiliation, truly states, "the many iniquities of this land" to be the cause of the present calamity. Indeed, no one who calmly views modern society, and observes the unceasing, the all-engrossing, and insatiable pursuit of wealth by all classes, and the lax morality and vices it has induced, can for a moment doubt the correctness of this assertion. It is the nature of sinful man in prosperity, to forget the Author thereof. Our own nation has proved an early example of this truth. [1] וישמן ישרון ויבעט was the reproach Moses made us, and often since his time have we continued to deserve it. It was, perhaps, not to be expected that our nation, living as it does in the midst of the present artificial society, could have escaped the faults or vices of the age; but it is to faults peculiar to us, as Israelites, that I feel it my duty this day more particularly to advert. I am aware that I am treading here on tender ground; but the paramount sense of this my duty silences all other considerations, and therefore "That which God shall put in my mouth, that will I speak;" [2] premising, however, in order not to be misunderstood or misconstrued, that the

[1] Deut. xxxii. 15. [2] Numb. xxiii. 1.

observations I am about to make, do not apply to either this or any other particular congregation, but to Israel and the state of Judaism in general.

In this and in other countries it is, alas! of that nature, as to give us cause justly to dread that the same retribution which has punished our ancestors, must also overtake us, unless we avert it by timely repentance. At no period of our history, excepting that immediately preceding the destruction of our Sanctuary, when Saducees, Pharisees, and other sects mutually destroyed each other, and caused our nationality to perish, has infidelity and abandonment of God's law shewn itself more strongly and more openly than during the last few years. Have we not seen in Israel not only some of the laity; but even some of those who should have been the shepherds and guides of their flocks, impiously and presumptuously, like Uzzah of old, extend their hand against the ark of the Lord, to alter and (according to them) reform and improve the law of the Omniscient, which He, to whom futurity is revealed, has declared to be eternal and unchangeable. How forcibly are we reminded of the words of the prophet Jeremiah,[1] when he predicted the approaching downfall of Israel:

תופשי התורה לא ידעוני והרועים פשעו בי

"The professors of the law knew me not, and the pastors rebelled against me."

How many, alas! there are in Israel who, having neither piety, nor mental energy, to enable them to emancipate themselves from the thraldom of the attraction of the world, know of no other way (to use their own phrase) "to make the law and life agree," than to lower the law to their level, and constantly to place it in the back ground whenever it interferes with their inclinations or convenience.

1 Chap. ii. 9. I more particularly allude here to the so called "Assembly of Rabbis" held at Frankfort last year.

2 Compare Ps. i. 16, 17.

Neither are those wanting, whose blind zeal and superstition, cause as much mischief as the preceding class, who, instead of friendly guiding and admonishing the erring brother, and giving him a helping hand to restore him to the right path, cast him forth with maledictions, and are thus the cause of his persevering in error and constantly falling into greater and more grave ones. True religion is thus brought to unmerited reproach, as if it prompted or sanctioned proceedings, so entirely opposed to its nature and best interest. Yes, my brethren, there are yet Pharisees, as well as Saducees among us. Both, as in the days of old, threaten the destruction of our sanctuary, and from neither can Israel expect much good.

If I further consult the holy writings and our ancient history, I find the cause of all our calamities attributed to עבודה זרה and שנאת חנם, i. e. rancorous and causeless enmity against each other. ע״ז means the abandonment of God's worship for that of idols. It is true that since the destruction of the first temple we do no longer, in the literal sense of the word, worship golden calves, the Moloch, or any other idols of our own invention or as adopted from other nations. But, would to God, we could hold ourselves equally guiltless of having abandoned the service of our God, and of having set up in our hearts, instead of Him, idols: in a figurative sense of the word indeed, but idols nevertheless, and devoted to them those powers and energies derived from, and due to our great Creator. In this figurative sense God's revealed will, and the duties we owe to Him, are but too often laid aside, to follow and worship the golden calf of filthy lucre, and to sacrifice our children, nay, our own lives and dearest affections, to the idol of insatiable avarice and ambition. But it may be said: Is it not lawful, nay, indispensable, that we should devote our best energies to obtain our daily bread, and even to improve our

condition, when we can honestly do so?—Undoubtedly this is our duty, and also the intention of Him, who gave us those energies and powers. But it is against God's intention, against His revealed will, and against our best interests, if we unnecessarily render ourselves such slaves of our ambition and to money-getting, that even the chance or pretext thereof, is held a sufficient excuse for the neglect of our sacred duties and the obligations of the law. Do the exertions to obtain our daily bread, *necessarily* occasion that so many Israelites cannot find time to worship and thank their Maker when "they rise up" or "lie down" [1] without תפלת שחרית or ערבית, or even a few words in lieu thereof? Will it justify the neglect of the great precept of תפילין and ציצית [2] by so many in Israel? And how many take that very daily bread without thanks or thoughts of the giver, like ungrateful children, who eat at the tables of their parents and take it as a thing to which they are entitled, and for which they *need* not be thankful. Business, all-engrossing business is the excuse. But is not the praise of God, the acknowledgment of His goodness, and the propitiation of His future favor, *at least*, as important a part of our business of life, as any other we can have?—Acknowledged as this may be in theory, yet, in practice, the all absorbing desire to procure riches and superfluities, engrosses all the thoughts, faculties, will, and feelings of mankind. Thus, for the chance of obtaining the fleeting goods and pleasures of this world, they neglect the certain and permanent bliss attached to the observance of God's will, as our sages remark: מניחים חיי עולם ועוסקין בחיי שעה

Many other derelictions of our duty I could specify, but one more must suffice, to which I request your particular attention.

[1] Deut. vi. 7.

[2] Ibid. 25, and Numb. xv. 37. 40.

None of the observances of our holy law is described as more sacred, and is oftener repeated, than that of the Sabbath.

"The Sabbath," say our sages, "is equal to all the other commandments of the law." שקולה שבת כנגד כל מצות שבתורה That great and eternal sign between God and Israel, which as men and Israelites we are bound to celebrate, on account of the cessation thereon of the action of the Creative power; שבת וינפש.—That day hallowed by God, and ordained unto Israel as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage.—That holy day given to us as a boon in this weary life, and as a type and foretaste of the eternal rest and bliss in this world to come—That *most* sacred day is but too often desecrated, the name of God prophaned, His commands contemned, and sacrificed to the idol of lucre and the worship of the golden calf. To that, the transgressors of the sabbath trust. For they will not believe God's promise that He will give them sufficient during the week if they observe the Sabbath. ראו כי יי נתן לכם השבת על כן הוא נותן לכם ביום הששי לחם יומים : Nay, they will not believe their own eyes and experience which tells them that those who do not work on the sabbath have generally as much as those that violate it. They shut their eyes to the great fact that their fathers and grandfathers who observed the Sabbath, and who had greater political difficulties to contend with, which hampered the development of their industry, than we have at the present day, did nevertheless prosper. The only allegation we hear from transgressors of the Sabbath, in justification of their conduct, amounts to this—"Its strict observance" they say, "would occasion loss of money." Would they not feel utterly ashamed to assign this as a justification for the breach of moral laws? And yet, how inconsistent are they, if they consider that the mere fact of the danger of losing

money, is a sufficient cause for the violation of this great and divine precept. But let them remember that this very golden calf they so assidiously follow, will no doubt grievously disappoint most of its worshippers. For thus God spoke by means of his prophet Hosea, זנח עגלך שומרון "Thy calf O Samaria! hath cast thee off, mine anger is kindled against thee." כי רוח יזרעו וסופתה יקצרו קמה אין לו צמח בלי יעשה קמח "For as they have sown the wind, so shall they reap the whirlwind, having no stalk, the bud shall yield no meal, and should it even yield; strangers shall devour it. [1]

אלי יעשה זרים יבלעהו

The application of this text is obvious. And so much I have thought it necessary to say on this head, in order that the judgment of God may be justified unto man, and that we may truly say as our ancestors did of yore on the occasion of their solemn fast and repentance, in the days of Nehemiah, ואתה צדיק על כל הבא עלינו כי אמת עשית ואנחנו הרשענו "But thou art just concerning all that is come upon us, for Thou art just, but we have acted wickedly." [2]

III.

If I have succeeded in proving to you the allegations of the two first divisions of this discourse, I need not in this last, enlarge to shew you, that the only remedy and preventive for this and similar judgments, consist in a perfect and immediate repentance, not however externally only, and limited to words, but, we must prove our sincerity by deeds. "Tear your hearts not your garments" [3] says the prophet, God did not accept the penitence of the Ninivites, and regarded neither their fast, nor the sackcloth they had put on, until they had changed their actions and turned from their evil ways." [2] את שקם ואת תעניתם לא נאמר אלא וירא

[1] Hosea viii. 5, 7. [2] Nehem. ix. 33. [3] Joel ii. 13.

אלהים אל מעשיהם כי שבו מדרכם הרעה וכ״ו "Let, therefore, he who knoweth repent, and God will turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish." [1] Let us remember, that the same power and mercy, which causes the humble grass to grow, as well as the lofty cedar to flourish, "provides for all, and for the meanest of His creatures," and assuredly, he could not design that man, the first of His creatures, whom he intended for happiness, should perish through misery and want, in the common course of nature, unless it be caused by his own act and misuse of the divine gifts. The poor, the orphan, and helpless will find "that God's mercies extend over all his works." [3] "For, lo! the eye of the Lord is upon those who fear Him, and hope for His mercy. To deliver their souls from death, and to preserve them alive in time of famine." [4] Finally let us remember, that divine chastisement has no other motive, than to bring about our amendment, and to promote our eventual good. Thus says the Lord in His holy law: "Consider in thy heart, that even as a father chastens his son (for his good), thus doth the Lord, thy God, chasten thee"[5] "to humble and try thee, and to do thee good at thy latter end." [6] And in the words of my text "When thy judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness." Then, if we repress our worldly desires and observe God's law, both the ceremonial and moral; if the holy Sabbath be called and esteemed a day of delight, dedicated to the honor of God לקדוש ה״ מכובד [7]; "if we, as in duty bound, think of Him and thank Him, when we lie down and when we rise up," and gratefully remember His benefits when we take our daily food, and on other occasions, then He also will observe His promise, as written in

[1] Jonah, iii. 10. [2] Ibid. v. 9. [3] Compare Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.
[4] Psalm xxxiii. 18, 19. [5] Deut. viii. 5. [6] Ibid. v. 16. [7] Is. lviii, 13.

the law." את שבתתי תשמרו וכו׳ אם בחקתי תלכו וכ׳ו ונתתי גשמיכם בעתם ... ואכלתם לחמכם לשבע "If ye observe my Sabbath, and reverence my sanctuary, if ye walk in my statutes and keep my commandments, then will I give you rain in due season, the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field their fruit; ye shall be satisfied with food, and dwell securely in your land."[1] Be then comforted and have good courage, O ye who trust in the Lord!"[2] for (as the prophet Joel says)[3] "The Lord will pity His people and say unto them: Behold, I will send you corn, wine and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; the threshing floors shall be full of wheat, ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord your God, that he has dealt wondrously with you, and my people shall never be ashamed." "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be delivered, for on mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance."

May this soon happen, Amen.

1 Lev. xxi. 25. 2 Ps. xxxi. 25. 3 Ch. ii. 18, 19, 24, 26, 32.

A SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE

SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE JEWS' SYNAGOGUE,

BEVIS MARKS,

ON

WEDNESDAY, 7th NISAN (24th MARCH) 5607,

BEING

THE DAY APPOINTED BY HER MAJESTY AS A GENERAL FAST AND DAY OF HUMILIATION, ON ACCOUNT OF THE DEARTH NOW UNHAPPILY PREVAILING.

BY

THE REV. D. A. DE SOLA,

MINISTER OF THE ABOVE SYNAGOGUE.

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5607.

1846

SERMON.

כי כאשר משפטיך לארץ צדק למדו יושבי תבל :

מסכת ברכות פ׳ המישי ׳ אמר רב אמי אין מיתה בלא חטא ואין יסורין בלי עון :

"FOR WHEN THY JUDGMENTS ARE ON THE EARTH, THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD WILL LEARN RIGHTEOUSNESS." Isaiah xvi. 9.

We read in the Talmud, treatise Berachoth: "*Death is the result of sin, so also are divine chastisements never inflicted, but as the consequence of transgression.*"

THE occasion of our present assembly in this holy place, must needs impress you with feelings of awe and devotion, and cannot fail to call forth the sympathy and best feelings of every reflecting and sensitive mind. Still more must it impress with awe, and appal him whose task it is to address you this day, even if better qualified for it, than I can presume to be. For devastation has gone forth through the land, Death stalks around, with disease in its train. The failure of an important vegetable production in various parts of this empire, and of Europe, has caused a scarcity and dearth, in articles constituting the first necessaries of life. Thousands of our fellow-men and fellow-subjects have, and are at this moment, suffering the indescribable

pangs of famine, and are perishing from want. Therefore are the portals of every house of prayer opened this day throughout the land, at the command of our most pious and beloved Queen, and numerous congregations are everywhere assembled, jointly to invoke the Universal Creator and merciful father of all mankind, humbly to supplicate Him that He may deign to behold our affliction, accept our penitence, stay His desolating hand, and remove from us the heavy judgments which our many sins and repeated provocations have so justly deserved. And surely, among the judgments by which the Almighty God asserts His sovereignty and providence over the children of man, there is none more grievous, none more awful than that which is the occasion of our present assembly. We have seen sufficient in this metropolis, and have heard and read still more of the dire effect of this calamity (in the sister island, in the north of Scotland, and in various parts of Europe), and they must needs present themselves so strongly to your mind, that I may spare myself the painful task of dilating upon it, and harrow your feelings by a reiteration of the miseries, the diseases, the acts of despair and of insubordination, and the many physical and social evils to which this calamity has given rise. It is certain, however, that so much misery is only the result of a visitation of the Almighty God; and that if we turn to Him, in humble contrition and penitence, He will withdraw His afflicting hand, and pardon our iniquities. For such is the infallible *dictum* of God himself, pronounced by means of His prophet Joel, on the occasion of a calamity, similar to the present, desolating the land of Israel, שדד שדה אבלה אדמה "The fields lay waste, the land mourneth." "The husbandmen are ashamed for the wheat and for the barley, because the harvest of the field is perished." "The trees of the field

are withered." חגרו וספדו הכהנים הילילו משרתי יי "Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests. Weep, ye ministers of the altar." קדשו צום קראו עצרה "Sanctify ye a fast-day, convoke a solemn assembly; gather the elders, assemble all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord, and cry unto God." הלא לעינינו אוכל נכרת "For is not the food cut off from before our eyes, and joy and gladness from the house of the Lord?" וגם עתה נאם יי שבו עדי "And now, saith the Lord, turn ye to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." וקרעו לבבכם ואל בגדכם "And rend your hearts, not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God; for He is merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents of inflicting evil."[1]

In the graphic description and impressive admonition I have read to you, the eloquent prophet at once states the true cause and the sole remedy for this affliction and judgment. Accordingly, I will, in this brief discourse, endeavour to show:—

First, that calamities like the present, are not accidental events of nature, but visitations of Providence in consequence of the sins of the world.

Secondly, That our sins have been ample to provoke that anger; and,

Thirdly, endeavour to point out the means most likely to avert these chastisements.

And ye, my dear brethren, join, O join me in my fervent invocation to our God, that He may enlighten my understanding, direct my words, and grant me His aid and favor, that these my words which proceed from my

[1] Joel i. 10—16. and ii. 12, 13.

heart may enter yours, and produce their intended effect.

יהיו לרצון אמרי פי והגיון לבי לפניך יי צורי וגואלי :

"May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart be acceptable before thee, O Lord! my Rock and my Redeemer."[1]

I.

The words of my text are too obvious in their meaning to require any explanation, except that the word משפט judgment is often applied in Scripture to those acts of divine justice by which God vindicates His Divine Providence and rule over the world, and for those acts of divine justice by which he manifests his wrath against those who have excited it. Although the calamities with which a considerable part of this realm has been visited, have not exhibited themselves in their more severe and desolating aspect in our immediate vicinity, still we have seen enough of their dire effects to make us shudder, inwardly reflect, and ask ourselves—

על מה עשה ה׳ ככה לארץ הזאת מה חרי האף הגדול הזה :

"Wherefore has the Lord done so to this land, wherefore this great anger?"[2] And I fear that the answer would be the same as that given in the quoted text—

על אשר עזבו את ברית יי

"Because the covenant and law of God has been forsaken."[3] At least, it were to be wished that either as Britons or Israeli tes we had some just ground to suppose ourselves exempt from the dire judgments now on this land, and, what is still more important, that the hope of such an exemption for the future could be founded in our state and condition as a people that acted righteously, and did not forsake the ordinances of their God."[4]

כגוי אשר צדקה עשה ומשפט אלהיו לא עזב

[1] Ps. xix. 15. [2] Deut. xxix. 24. [3] *Ibid.* v. 25. [4] Isaiah lviii. 2.

But let us not deceive ourselves. We cannot, alas! put this flattering unction to our soul. The open impiety and profligacy we see daily around us in this vast metropolis, the great corruption both of principles and manners, and the decay of religion among ourselves, give us but too ample cause to conclude, that this exemption is not owing to our righteousness, but to the long-suffering and mercy of our God, "Who did not deal with us according to our sins nor retributed to us according to our iniquities." [1]

לא כחטאינו עשה לנו ולא כעונותינו גמל עלינו:

But let us remember that the rod and judgment which are now only suspended over us, will descend with increased severity, if we persevere in our evil courses, and slight this fatherly admonition. For although as our holy law informs us, "God is all-merciful, most gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy and in truth."

ה׳ אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב חסד ואמת

Yet "he will not allow the guilty to go altogether unpunished." [2]

ונקה לא ינקה

Reason as well as revelation loudly proclaim to us the existence of a Divine and all-governing Providence. Whatever lives or moves on the earth or in the skies, and every event, are not only produced, but directed by Him, and are attributed in Scripture to his immediate agency. Thus it is said that God "shuts up the heavens that there be no rain, so that the earth yields not its produce;"[3] or that "He opens the stores of heaven"[4] and commands Nature to yield its increase. "He maketh the barren wilderness fruitful," or "Through the wilderness of the inhabitants He renders a fertile land sterile."[5] He alone commands the elements,

[1] Psal. ciii. 10. [2] Exod. xxxiv. 5. [3] Deut. xi. 17. [4] Ibid. xxviii. 12. [5] Ps. cvii. 33. 34.

and "raises or hushes at his pleasure the wild tempest and the raging billows of the ocean."[1] "He maketh peace"[2] or war, and "the heart of kings are at his command."[3] In short, there is no act, be it for the private or public benefit or calamity of man which does not originate or is guided by Providence. True, we think we see but the effect of natural causes, but God has invariably preferred to act by them, even in the operation of miracles. How the laws of Nature are guided by God; so as in every case to produce the various results He intends them to have, is far too recondite for our confined understandings. For, as the prophet truly says,—"God's ways are not like ours, nor his thoughts and acts like those of mortal man."[4]

Even the unhappy occasion of our present meeting affords us an apt illustration of this.

You all know that the present scarcity and dearth, with its usual train of calamity is mainly owing to the failure of an edible root which has long formed a considerable portion of the food of the people of this country, and the only support of the greater part of the Sister Kingdom and elsewhere. Now that destruction has been in so remarkable a way, as to baffle the investigations of science, and has set at nought all human wisdom and skill, either to detect the cause, or to prevent the recurrence for the future. Therefore, be it, that hosts of microscopic animalculæ were chosen by God as the ministers of his wrath, or that he employed other occult agents to devastate and destroy this and other valuable vegetable productions on which the food, and consequently the life of man in a great measure depends: it is certain, that this extraordinary fact ought to open the eyes of the most incredulous, and cause him to exclaim like Pharaoh. אצבע אלהים היא "The finger of God,"[5]

1 Ps. cvii. 25. 29. 2 Is. xiv. 7. 3 Prov. xxi. 1. 4 Is. iv. 8. 9. 5 Exod. viii. 15.

i. e., his immediate agency, is here visible in this extraordinary event, which so much deviates from the usual course of nature, but in this, as in every event of life, the all-directing hand of Providence is visible to every thinking mind. Reason, as well as revelation, incontestably proves this. For we know that God is the source and perfection of all wisdom; we are equally convinced that the purpose of our creation and sending us into the world, was both for his glory and for our happiness and perfection. Is it therefore not evident that neither of these ends could have been fully attained unless Divine Providence regulated and controlled events? How truly, therefore, and philosophically proved, are the expressions of the Psalmist—

ממכון שבתו השגיח את כל יושבי הארץ:

"From the place of his Divine residence He superintendeth all the inhabitants of earth," because "He who fashioneth all their hearts *must needs* understand all their doings." [1]

היוצר יחד לבם ומבין את כל מעשיהם:

Let us, therefore, be careful that we do not both foolishly and wickedly misapply to this calamity, and to similar occasions, the words "accidental events;" for truly nothing happens in the world by accident: in fact, there is no such thing as chance or accident; what we call so, is nothing else than that for which we cannot discover a cause. It was well remarked by a wise author, that the word "accident" is the reproach of our vocabulary, inasmuch as it is a term of no real meaning, but only invented to veil our ignorance. I trust, therefore, to have proved, that since what we term "accidental events" are but the effect of the mysterious interpositions of a Divine Providence, whose aim it is to promote our happiness, and since nothing does nor can happen without a cause, it therefore follows, that our reason, strengthened as it is

[1] Ps. xxxiii. 12, 13.

here by the direct and explicit words of Holy Revelation, cannot arrive at any other conclusion, than that the cause of this and similar calamities and judgments are only attributable to our sins, and are sent as incentives to our repentance and future improvement, as in the words of my text, "When thy judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world learned righteousness."

II.

We are next to prove, "that we have given ample cause for this judgment." Her most gracious Majesty, in her Proclamation appointing this day of humiliation, truly states, "the many iniquities of this land" to be the cause of the present calamity. Indeed, no one who calmly views modern society, and observes the unceasing, the all-engrossing, and insatiable pursuit of wealth by all classes, and the lax morality and vices it has induced, can for a moment doubt the correctness of this assertion. It is the nature of sinful man in prosperity, to forget the Author thereof. Our own nation has proved an early example of this truth. [1] ויִשמן ישרון ויבעט was the reproach Moses made us, and often since his time have we continued to deserve it. It was, perhaps, not to be expected that our nation, living as it does in the midst of the present artificial society, could have escaped the faults or vices of the age; but it is to faults peculiar to us, as Israelites, that I feel it my duty this day more particularly to advert. I am aware that I am treading here on tender ground; but the paramount sense of this my duty silences all other considerations, and therefore "That which God shall put in my mouth, that will I speak;" [2] premising, however, in order not to be misunderstood or misconstrued, that the

[1] Deut. xxxii. 15. [2] Numb. xxiii. 1.

observations I am about to make, do not apply to either this or any other particular congregation, but to Israel and the state of Judaism in general.

In this and in other countries it is, alas! of that nature, as to give us cause justly to dread that the same retribution which has punished our ancestors, must also overtake us, unless we avert it by timely repentance. At no period of our history, excepting that immediately preceding the destruction of our Sanctuary, when Saducees, Pharisees, and other sects mutually destroyed each other, and caused our nationality to perish, has infidelity and abandonment of God's law shewn itself more strongly and more openly than during the last few years. Have we not seen in Israel not only some of the laity; but even some of those who should have been the shepherds and guides of their flocks, impiously and presumptuously, like Uzzah of old, extend their hand against the ark of the Lord, to alter and (according to them) reform and improve the law of the Omniscient, which He, to whom futurity is revealed, has declared to be eternal and unchangeable. How forcibly are we reminded of the words of the prophet Jeremiah,[1] when he predicted the approaching downfall of Israel:

תופשי התורה לא ידעוני והרועים פשעו בי

"The professors of the law knew me not, and the pastors rebelled against me."

How many, alas! there are in Israel who, having neither piety, nor mental energy, to enable them to emancipate themselves from the thraldom of the attraction of the world, know of no other way (to use their own phrase) "to make the law and life agree," than to lower the law to their level, and constantly to place it in the back ground whenever it interferes with their inclinations or convenience.

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2 Compare Ps. i. 16, 17.

Neither are those wanting, whose blind zeal and superstition, cause as much mischief as the preceding class, who, instead of friendly guiding and admonishing the erring brother, and giving him a helping hand to restore him to the right path, cast him forth with maledictions, and are thus the cause of his persevering in error and constantly falling into greater and more grave ones. True religion is thus brought to unmerited reproach, as if it prompted or sanctioned proceedings, so entirely opposed to its nature and best interest. Yes, my brethren, there are yet Pharisees, as well as Saducees among us. Both, as in the days of old, threaten the destruction of our sanctuary, and from neither can Israel expect much good.

If I further consult the holy writings and our ancient history, I find the cause of all our calamities attributed to עבודה זרה and שנאת חנם, i. e. rancorous and causeless enmity against each other. ע״ז means the abandonment of God's worship for that of idols. It is true that since the destruction of the first temple we do no longer, in the literal sense of the word, worship golden calves, the Moloch, or any other idols of our own invention or as adopted from other nations. But, would to God, we could hold ourselves equally guiltless of having abandoned the service of our God, and of having set up in our hearts, instead of Him, idols: in a figurative sense of the word indeed, but idols nevertheless, and devoted to them those powers and energies derived from, and due to our great Creator. In this figurative sense God's revealed will, and the duties we owe to Him, are but too often laid aside, to follow and worship the golden calf of filthy lucre, and to sacrifice our children, nay, our own lives and dearest affections, to the idol of insatiable avarice and ambition. But it may be said: Is it not lawful, nay, indispensable, that we should devote our best energies to obtain our daily bread, and even to improve our

condition, when we can honestly do so?—Undoubtedly this is our duty, and also the intention of Him, who gave us those energies and powers. But it is against God's intention, against His revealed will, and against our best interests, if we unnecessarily render ourselves such slaves of our ambition and to money-getting, that even the chance or pretext thereof, is held a sufficient excuse for the neglect of our sacred duties and the obligations of the law. Do the exertions to obtain our daily bread, *necessarily* occasion that so many Israelites cannot find time to worship and thank their Maker when "they rise up" or "lie down" [1] without תפלת שחרית or ערבית, or even a few words in lieu thereof? Will it justify the neglect of the great precept of תפילין and ציצית [2] by so many in Israel? And how many take that very daily bread without thanks or thoughts of the giver, like ungrateful children, who eat at the tables of their parents and take it as a thing to which they are entitled, and for which they *need* not be thankful. Business, all-engrossing business is the excuse. But is not the praise of God, the acknowledgment of His goodness, and the propitiation of His future favor, *at least*, as important a part of our business of life, as any other we can have?—Acknowledged as this may be in theory, yet, in practice, the all absorbing desire to procure riches and superfluities, engrosses all the thoughts, faculties, will, and feelings of mankind. Thus, for the chance of obtaining the fleeting goods and pleasures of this world, they neglect the certain and permanent bliss attached to the observance of God's will, as our sages remark: מניחים חיי עולם ועוסקין בחיי שעה

Many other derelictions of our duty I could specify, but one more must suffice, to which I request your particular attention.

[1] Deut. vi. 7. [2] Ibid. 25, and Numb. xv. 37. 40.

None of the observances of our holy law is described as more sacred, and is oftener repeated, than that of the Sabbath.

"The Sabbath," say our sages, "is equal to all the other commandments of the law." שקולה שבת כנגד כל מצות שבתורה That great and eternal sign between God and Israel, which as men and Israelites we are bound to celebrate, on account of the cessation thereon of the action of the Creative power; שבת וינפש.—That day hallowed by God, and ordained unto Israel as a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage.—That holy day given to us as a boon in this weary life, and as a type and foretaste of the eternal rest and bliss in this world to come—That *most* sacred day is but too often desecrated, the name of God prophaned, His commands contemned, and sacrificed to the idol of lucre and the worship of the golden calf. To that, the transgressors of the sabbath trust. For they will not believe God's promise that He will give them sufficient during the week if they observe the Sabbath. ראו כי יי נתן לכם השבת על כן הוא נותן לכם ביום הששי לחם יומים : Nay, they will not believe their own eyes and experience which tells them that those who do not work on the sabbath have generally as much as those that violate it. They shut their eyes to the great fact that their fathers and grandfathers who observed the Sabbath, and who had greater political difficulties to contend with, which hampered the development of their industry, than we have at the present day, did nevertheless prosper. The only allegation we hear from transgressors of the Sabbath, in justification of their conduct, amounts to this—"Its strict observance" they say, "would occasion loss of money." Would they not feel utterly ashamed to assign this as a justification for the breach of moral laws? And yet, how inconsistent are they, if they consider that the mere fact of the danger of losing

money, is a sufficient cause for the violation of this great and divine precept. But let them remember that this very golden calf they so assidiously follow, will no doubt grievously disappoint most of its worshippers. For thus God spoke by means of his prophet Hosea, זנח עגלך שומרון "Thy calf O Samaria! hath cast thee off, mine anger is kindled against thee." כי רוח יזרעו וסופתה יקצרו קמה אין לו צמח בלי יעשה קמח "For as they have sown the wind, so shall they reap the whirlwind, having no stalk, the bud shall yield no meal, and should it even yield; strangers shall devour it. [1] אלי יעשה זרים יבלעהו

The application of this text is obvious. And so much I have thought it necessary to say on this head, in order that the judgment of God may be justified unto man, and that we may truly say as our ancestors did of yore on the occasion of their solemn fast and repentance, in the days of Nehemiah, ואתה צדיק על כל הבא עלינו כי אמת עשית ואנחנו הרשענו "But thou art just concerning all that is come upon us, for Thou art just, but we have acted wickedly." [2]

III.

If I have succeeded in proving to you the allegations of the two first divisions of this discourse, I need not in this last, enlarge to shew you, that the only remedy and preventive for this and similar judgments, consist in a perfect and immediate repentance, not however externally only, and limited to words, but, we must prove our sincerity by deeds. "Tear your hearts not your garments" [3] says the prophet, God did not accept the penitence of the Ninivites, and regarded neither their fast, nor the sackcloth they had put on, until they had changed their actions and turned from their evil ways." [2] את שקם ואת תעניתם לא נאמר אלא וירא

[1] Hosea viii. 5, 7. [2] Nehem. ix. 33. [3] Joel ii. 13.

אלהים אל מעשיהם כי שבו מדרכם הרעה וכ״ו "Let, therefore, he who knoweth repent, and God will turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish." [1] Let us remember, that the same power and mercy, which causes the humble grass to grow, as well as the lofty cedar to flourish, "provides for all, and for the meanest of His creatures," and assuredly, he could not design that man, the first of His creatures, whom he intended for happiness, should perish through misery and want, in the common course of nature, unless it be caused by his own act and misuse of the divine gifts. The poor, the orphan, and helpless will find "that God's mercies extend over all his works." [3] "For, lo! the eye of the Lord is upon those who fear Him, and hope for His mercy. To deliver their souls from death, and to preserve them alive in time of famine." [4] Finally let us remember, that divine chastisement has no other motive, than to bring about our amendment, and to promote our eventual good. Thus says the Lord in His holy law: "Consider in thy heart, that even as a father chastens his son (for his good), thus doth the Lord, thy God, chasten thee" [5] "to humble and try thee, and to do thee good at thy latter end." [6] And in the words of my text "When thy judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness." Then, if we repress our worldly desires and observe God's law, both the ceremonial and moral; if the holy Sabbath be called and esteemed a day of delight, dedicated to the honor of God לקדוש ה״ מכובד [7]; "if we, as in duty bound, think of Him and thank Him, when we lie down and when we rise up," and gratefully remember His benefits when we take our daily food, and on other occasions, then He also will observe His promise, as written in

[1] Jonah, iii. 10. [2] Ibid. v. 9. [3] Compare Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.
[4] Psalm xxxiii. 18, 19. [5] Deut. viii. 5. [6] Ibid. v. 16. [7] Is. lviii, 13.

the law." את שבתתי תשמרו וכו׳ אם בחקתי תלכו וכ׳ו ונתתי גשמיכם בעתם ... ואכלתם לחמכם לשבע "If ye observe my Sabbath, and reverence my sanctuary, if ye walk in my statutes and keep my commandments, then will I give you rain in due season, the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field their fruit; ye shall be satisfied with food, and dwell securely in your land."[1] Be then comforted and have good courage, O ye who trust in the Lord!"[2] for (as the prophet Joel says)[3] "The Lord will pity His people and say unto them: Behold, I will send you corn, wine and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; the threshing floors shall be full of wheat, ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord your God, that he has dealt wondrously with you, and my people shall never be ashamed." "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be delivered, for on mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance."

May this soon happen, Amen.

[1] Lev. xxi. 25. [2] Ps. xxxi. 25. [3] Ch. ii. 18, 19, 24, 26, 32.

להבדיל בין הטמא ובין הטהר

" To make a division between the impure and the pure."

(LEVITICUS, XI, 47.)

THE DUTY OF ORTHODOX CONGREGATIONS.

A Sermon

PREACHED BEFORE THE CONGREGATION "SHEARITH ISRAEL," NEW YORK, IN THE SYNAGOGUE, WEST NINETEENTH STREET, ON SABBATH SHEMOTH, TEBETH 23d, 5648,

(1887)

BY THE

REV. MELDOLA DE SOLA,

MINISTER OF THE CONGREGATION "SHEARITH ISRAEL," MONTREAL.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

THE DUTY OF ORTHODOX CONGREGATIONS.

ויאמר אל משה קול מלחמה במחנה: ויאמר אין קול
ענות גבורה ואין קול ענות חלושה קול ענות אנכי שמע:

"And he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. But he "said, It is not the voice of those who shout for mastery, neither is it the "voice of those who cry for being overcome; the sound of (antiphonal) "singing do I hear."—EXODUS, XXXII, 17, 18.

Turning back thirty-two hundred years, we see encamped at Sinai our ancestors recently emancipated from Egyptian bondage. Theirs had been no ordinary servitude. All that human ingenuity could devise for their extirpation had been resorted to; every plan that fiendish cruelty could suggest for their destruction had been invoked; but He who shapes the destinies of nations had willed their preservation, and by the might of His right hand had they been redeemed. If ever there were a demonstration of the futility of man's attempts to thwart the designs of Providence, it was in the punishment meted out to the tyrant who had refused to release the children of Israel. Unwilling to lose the services of slaves so useful, he had dared in his insolent arrogance to array himself against their Heavenly Protector; but "on eagles' wings" had they been borne מכור הברזל "from the iron furnace" of their oppression, even though a sea had to be divided to permit their escape. Nor had the watchfulness of their Divine Guardian ceased with the performance of the wonders that had signalized their emancipation. By the exercise of a power no less marvellous, He had sustained that vast multitude during their subsequent journeyings—in the desert food and drink had been miraculously provided for them, and when assailed by a formidable enemy under conditions which would otherwise have rendered the attack most disastrous, victory had been granted to them. That such manifestations of peculiar favor should have a fitting culmination, they had been led to Sinai to receive a crowning proof of God's love —their commission as the priestly custodians of that unequalled code, which, notwithstanding the sneers of criticizing scoffers, remains

to-day an imperishable monument to the infinite wisdom of its Heavenly Author. Having cheerfully undertaken the obligations which such a commission involved, our ancestors had been made the witnesses of a scene awful in its sublimity, of a spectacle without precedent, without parallel. Descending in fire upon the quaking mount, with terrible thunders, and lightnings, and cornet sounds, as His ushers, the Almighty Sovereign of the universe had proclaimed to them those immortal words which have formed ever since the basis of all morals and improvement in the civilized world. So awe-inspiring had been the scene, that the terror-stricken people had drawn back from the mountain, imploring Moses, their devoted leader, to intervene, so that they might not again hear the dread voice of the Omnipotent. And when, in compliance with their entreaty, Moses had approached the cloud which signalized the Divine Presence, and had subsequently returned with various laws, which he inscribed in a book and read to them, they had solemnly promised: "All that "the Eternal hath spoken נעשה ונשמע, we will do, and we "will hearken." Not "נשמע ונעשה," "we will listen, and, if "it seem right in our eyes, we will do" *(as some of the enlightened liberals of the present age migh condescend)*, but "נעשה ונשמע," "having absolute faith in Thine infinite wisdom, we will first yield "unquestioning obedience to Thy commands, and then, in a reverential spirit, contemplate their excellence." After the formal ratification of the covenant thus entered into, Moses had been called to the clouded summit of the mount to receive the Decalogue inscribed upon two tablets, and certain other laws, remaining there forty days and forty nights.

It would be a natural inference that the recent occurrence of events so stupendous would have created in the hearts of our ancestors a wholesome dread of the might and majesty of their Deliverer, a sense of profound gratitude for His unfailing protection so marvellously displayed, and a commendable pride in the glorious distinction it had pleased Him to confer upon them. It would be reasonable to suppose that, notwithstanding the absence of Moses for a few short weeks, they would have had sufficient faith in the beneficence of the Being who had already given them so many signal proofs of His love, to have awaited with patience and confidence the return of their leader with the tangible evidence of the covenant so recently entered into.

Picture to yourselves, then, the dismay of Moses when he received the Divine intimation—

לך רד כי שחת עמך אשר העלית מארץ מצרים

"Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou hast brought up "out of the land of Egypt, hath corrupted itself. They have turned "aside quickly from the way which I have commanded them; they "have made unto themselves a molten calf; and they have pros-"trated themselves to it, and have offered sacrifice unto it, and have "said, These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee up out of "the land of Egypt"! Inconceivable as it appears, the people who, less than two months before, had tremblingly witnessed the revelation of the God who declared that He had brought them forth from Egypt, had now deliberately violated their solemn promise to obey His commandments, the very first two of which prohibited the worship of other gods and the making of any graven image. Yes; notwithstanding the extraordinary distinction that had been conferred upon them as God's chosen, they had, in the words of the Psalmist, "exchanged their glory for the similitude of an ox that eateth grass" (1).

Thus it was that when the noise made by the idolatrous revellers reached the ears of Moses, as he approached the people, accompanied by Joshua, he had been enabled to reply to Joshua's exclamation, that there was a noise of war in the camp, by informing him that it was not the voice of those who shouted for mastery, nor the voice of those who cried for being overcome, that reached his ears, but that it was the sound of singing, or, more accurately, antiphonal singing, that he heard.

My friends; to one who closely observes the course of events in this great country, and whose settled residence in another land removes him from the sway of local influences and personal interest, there appears a startling parallel between the condition of Israel's camp at Sinai thirty-two centuries ago, and that of Judaism in the United States of America to-day. Recent controversies would certainly seem to justify the exclamation, קול מלחמה במחנה "There is a noise of war in the camp." On the one hand we have the followers of positive traditional, or orthodox, Judaism—that which

(1) Psalm CVI, 20.

teaches the future restoration of Israel's political nationality in Palestine, with all that that implies, and which consequently insists upon the perpetuation of those time-honored and hallowed institutions which have been the means of preserving the national sentiment of our people and preventing the extinction of their identity during centuries of persecution through which no other nation could have lived. On the other hand we have the followers of what is so sadly misnamed "Reformed" "*Judaism*"—a system which, under the cloak of liberality and enlightenment, has abandoned, in an era of material prosperity, that which our fathers preserved with their life's blood; a system which assails not only the fundamental doctrines of Judaism, but the foundations of all religion; a system which permits blasphemous utterances in its pulpit; a system whose chief aim seems to be legislation for the convenience of the irreligious; a system whose sole successes have been to carve the ritual and mutilate the form of worship of our fathers beyond all recognition, to banish devotion from public worship, to destroy the sanctity of the Jewish home, and to scatter infidelity far and wide.

That this is no overdrawn picture may readily be proved. Reform gives us in place of the personal God we adore, a "God Idea" (1). Reform denies supernatural revelation and the divine origin of the Mosaic law (2). Reform degrades the Bible to the level of any ordinary uninspired good book (3). One of its foremost representatives dares to ask if we must yet be cowed down by fear of the. thunders of Sinai (4), and has the insolence to put the question whether reformers are not justified in asking for a Bible purified from all its offensive and obnoxious elements (5). He also alleges that the personal revelations of the Deity recorded in the Bible are mythical (6). Another exponent of reform has the presumption to

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(1) Pittsburg Conference, "Jewish Messenger," December 11th, 1885 Note also protest in same newspaper, July 7th, 1871.

(2) Pittsburg Conference, "J. Messenger," Nov. 20th, 1885. Dr. Kohler, ditto, June 26th, 1885. Dr. Kohler, "Am. Hebrew," June 19th, 1885. Ditto, ditto, Nov. 18th, 1887. Rev. J. Krauskopf, "Israelite," March 4th, 1887. Rev. R. Benjamin, "Am. Hebrew," September 30th, 1885.

(3) Rev. J. Krauskopf, "Israelite," Nov. 12th, 1887. Pittsburg Conference, "J. Messenger," Nov. 20th, 1885. Rev. S. Schindler, ditto, Jan. 21st, 1887.

(4) Dr. Kohler, "Am. Hebrew," June 12th, 1885.

(5) Ditto, "J. Messenger," June 26th, 1885.

(6) Ditto, ditto, Nov. 20th, 1885.

assert that there are deficiencies and inaccuracies in the Bible, and that it contains much which no longer satisfies the requirements of truth (1). A third states the belief that God did not give the Bible to Moses and the Prophets, and that the Decalogue did not come from Sinai, but that it is merely the embodiment of great truths wrought out in the march of ages (2). Another ridicules the miracles related in the sacred volume (3). And yet another, evidencing the disbelief in supernatural revelation, has the temerity to declare that the Almighty reveals Himself to him just as to Moses (4)!

It is only in accordance with such infidel heresies that reform has assumed the right of rejecting all laws which, in the opinion of its leaders, are not adapted to the views of modern civilization (5); for, once denying the Divine authority of the Bible, it can quite consistently give full rein to the desires of its followers. Thus, one of its prominent representatives exclaims, "Thanks to reform we "are more enlightened now-a-days. We light and burn, we ride "and trade, as much on Saturday as we please. Old-time notions! "We have cast them aside and almost forgotten them. As to "eating and drinking, I eat and drink what I please. For this I "am a reformed Jew" (6)!

In short, were I called upon to define this "Reformed" "*Judaism*," I should sum it up as *a system which, in denying the God-given authority of the Bible, has placed itself in a position to justify and legalize the abolition of every restraint which positive revealed religion imposes, and to pander to the desires of its followers, however monstrous they may be.*

But, my friends, in all this we see merely an illustration of the words of Koheleth, "What hath been, is that which will be; and "what hath been done, is that which will be done; and there is "nothing new under the sun" (7). Two thousand years ago there

(1) Rev. J. Krauskopf, "Israelite," Nov. 12th, 1886.

(2) Binswanger, "Heb. Standard," March 11th, 1887.

(3) Voorsanger, ditto, Nov. 4th, 1887. See also Krauskopf, "Israelite," March 4th, 1887.

(4) Illowizi, "J. Messenger," April 8th, 1887.

(5) Pittsburg Conference.

(6) Dr. Moses, "Louisville Commercial," Nov. 28th, 1885.

(7) Ecclesiastes, I. 9.

was a renegade movement by a faction of our people, which, as far as it extended, completely erased all lines of division between Judaism and the dominant creed. Emulating the example of that renegade party, modern reformers are so excessively "liberal," as they term it, that they would practically obliterate all distinction between Judaism and the prevailing religion, and thus they renounce all doctrines, such as those of the Restoration and the future advent of a *personal* Messiah, which preserve Jewish distinctiveness. We find among their leaders men who favor intermarriage with non-Jews (1); we see their places of worship surrendered to non-Jews for non-Jewish service (2), and their ministers occupying non-Jewish pulpits (3). Indeed it will hardly be doubted that reform practically means a renunciation of Judaism when one of its prominent exponents tells us that *there is no difference between Judaism and Unitarianism* (4)!

Two thousand years ago, the renegade party, delighting in the ease and loose morals of Grecian heathenism, gladly hailed the abolition of the restraints imposed by the Mosaic law, and, to quote the language of the chronicle, "made their souls abominable with "all manner of uncleanliness." To-day, reform, giving full license to the gross appetites of its followers, assails the Divine authority of the Bible and terms respect for its dietary laws "culinary fanaticism" (5), and rejects those hygienic enactments whose marvellous excellence it has been reserved for non-Jews to discover and laud.

The old-time renegades neglected the rite of the Abrahamic covenant, and strengthened the hands of those who abolished the observance of the Sabbath. Modern reformers evince a similar contempt for the "perpetual covenants" between God and Israel, by denouncing the divinely ordained sign of the covenant made

(1) Dr. S. Hirsch, "Jewish Law of Marriage and Divorce," page 52. Dr. Sonneschein, "Am. Hebrew," May 14th, 1886. Isidor Bush, "Heb. Standard," Jan. 21st, 1887. Dr. Sale, "Am. Hebrew," July 1st, 1887.

(2) Temple Emanuel, New York, "Easter," 1882. Waco Congregation, "J. Messenger," Sept. 24th, 1886. Bene El Congregation, St. Louis, "Israelite," Sept. 2nd, 1887. See also "Israelite," Nov. 18th, 1887. Wilmington Congregation, "J. Messenger," Aug. 20th, 1886.

(3) Dr. Sonneschein, "J. Messenger," June 26th, 1885. Dr. Mendelsohn, ditto, August 20th, 1886. Dr. Landsberg, "Israelite," January 8th, 1886.

(4) Dr. Schindler, "Israelite," October 28th, 1887.

(5) "Israelite," August 12th, 1887.

with Abraham as a barbarous practice and " a disgusting relic of barbarism " (1), and by trying to legislate the Sabbath out of existence (2), informing us that it has died of consumption, and that the festivals should merely be kept as a memento of Jewish history (3).

Formerly a renegade high-priest bribed Antiochus Epiphanes for permission to make apostates of his coreligionists. Modern reform ministers wean their followers from Judaism by the less costly method of encouraging their propensity to imitate non Jews in all things, and by preaching infidelity pure and simple.

Two thousand years ago the renegades evidenced the depth of their degradation by leaguing themselves with those who polluted God's sanctuary. In the present day, the leading reform congregation in this city of New York (4) has shown how low it has fallen, how far it has swerved from loyalty to the God of Israel, so jealous of His unity, by permitting within the building it is presumed to have dedicated to His worship, what is termed an " Easter " service —*an institution which emphasizes a denial of His unity!* So low can reform stoop!

Formerly the renegade priests, seducing the people from the true worship of the Almighty to the more fashionable Grecian sensualism, neglected the altar and hastened to partake of unlawful allowance. Modern reform ministers prove similarly negligent of God's altar by compromising with irreligion and pandering to it, instead of standing in the breach and denouncing it. And they, too, hesitate not to partake of unlawful allowance.

In the days of the old renegade movement the abominations were commanded, we are told, in order that the people might forget the law and that all the ordinances might be changed. Does not reform to-day accomplish the same end?

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(1) Dr. E. G. Hirsch, " Am. Hebrew," April 10th, 1885. Dr. Kohler, " J. Messenger," Nov. 20th, 1885. Dr. Moses, " Am. Hebrew," October 8th, 1886. Binswanger, " Heb. Standard," March 11th, 1887.

(2) Sunday services in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, &c. Dr. Moses, " Am. Hebrew," October 8th, 1886. Isidor Bush, " Heb. Standard," January 21st, 1887. Dr. Sale, " Am. Hebrew," July 1st, 1887. See also account of proceedings at meeting of Dr. E. G. Hirsch's congregation, April 9th, 1885.

(3) Dr. E. G. Hirsch, " Heb. Standard," Sept. 10th, 1886, and " Israelite," October 28th, 1887.

(4) Temple Emanuel, " Easter " (*during Passover*), 1882.

In the time of Antiochus Epiphanes the renegade priests preferred heathen favor to the honor of their fathers ; and the apostate high-priest, to whom we have already referred, even went so far as to send an offering to a pagan deity. To-day we find a parallel in the sacrifice of principle which reform ministers make when they seek to win the favor of the followers of the dominant faith by such exhibitions of pseudo-liberality as the employment of non-Jewish choristers and the permiting of non-Jewish services within their places of worship.

Now, my friends, the devotees of the pagan deity did not employ the offering of the apostate high-priest as he had designed, but applied it to a secular object instead. And to-day we find that non-Jews refuse to receive with favor reform's sacrifice of principle. Thus a non-Jewish journal declares: "Our sympathies are with "those who defend the faith of their fathers. Christianity is so re-"lated to Judaism that we have a deep interest in seeing the latter "maintained in its purity" (1). The same journal also asserts: "It "is immeasurably better for them (the Jews) to be orthodox Jews "than 'liberal' infidels" (2). Another non-Jewish newspaper remarks with reference to reform Jews: "They are out-and-out "infidels, and carry their scepticism further than recreant Christians "are apt to do" (3). Yet another non-Jewish journal observes: "Is "there enough left of Judaism among these reformers to make it "worth while to hold conventions and maintain colleges? It is a "singular development of religious history that in the nineteenth "century millions of Christians are far more devout believers in the "writings of Moses and the Prophets than thousands of the most "prominent Hebrews" (4).

Again, we are informed that sore calamity overtook the old-time renegades because of their apostacy, and that those whose customs they followed so earnestly, and whom they desired to be like in all things, became their enemies. Now, is it not notorious that where our people respect their religion to-day they are respected, and that where they do not, strong anti-Jewish feeling exists? Witness the sentiment that prevails at certain American summer resorts!

(1) Pittsburg "Christian Advocate," August, 1886.

(2) Ditto, January, 1886.

(3) New York "Sun," November, 1885.

(4). "Observer," July, 1887.

But let us carry this parallelism a little further. The renegades of two thousand years ago have disappeared, and still Judaism lives. Then as now, those who broke away from the faith of their fathers were of the influential class. And if we go back to a still more remote period, we find that Korah and his rebellious party were נשיאי עדה קראי מועד אנשי שם "princes of the congregation, called to the assembly, men of renown" (1). Indeed *it would seem to be the design of Providence to demonstrate the immortality of Judaism by preserving it notwithstanding the loss of those who ought to be its brightest ornaments.* That history is repeating itself is very evident; for although they may possess much of the influence which wealth confers, *it is an incontrovertible fact that the followers of reform are being rapidly placed beyond the pale of Judaism*—even their own champions admit the low state of religion among them (2). That the future chronicler will have to record of them a fate similar to that of those who were traitors to the cause of Judaism in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, it requires neither a Moses nor an Isaiah to predict.

Speaking of the old renegade movement, an eminent contemporary observes: "It has left in Jewish history no memorial excepting "the ignominious contempt which naturally rests on an undertaking "that commenced with fickleness and ended in treason to religion "and nationality" (3). Will not the future historian write in similar terms of that which is so wrongly styled "Reform"?

But, my friends, אין קול ענות גבורה ואין קול ענות חלושה "it is not the voice of those who shout for mastery, nor "the voice of those who cry for being overcome," that attracts our attention in a survey of Israel's camp to-day—we detect no shout of

(1). Numbers, XVI, 2.

(2). Dr. Kohler, "Hebrew Review," January 1st, 1881, page 113.
Dr. Gotthiel, "Am. Hebrew," May 16th, 1884.
"Am. Hebrew," July 25th, 1884, page 9.
"J. Messenger," July 24th, 1885, page 4.
"Am Hebrew," July 30th, 1886, page 11.
President's semi-annual report, Dr. S. Hirsch's congregation, July 25th, 1887.
Circular of Dr. Kohler's congregation, October, 1887.

(3). Graetz-Jastrow.

victory by Reform, for its best friends admit its failure (1), nor do we perceive a cry of defeat or weakness from Orthodoxy, for Judaism has not been preserved through all the dangers and trials of the past thirty-two centuries for so ignominious an end as death at the hands of the so-called "reformed rabbis" of America. Providence will never permit them to accomplish that in which a Pharaoh, a Haman, an Antiochus, a Hadrian, a Torquemada, and other would-be destroyers of Israel failed!

What really does concern us in the condition of American Judaism to-day is קול ענות, literally *the sound of antiphonal singing*, but which we may render, in accordance with the paraphrase of the Jerusalem Targum, *the voice of those who praise in strange service*,—קל מקלסין בפולחנא נוכראה.

When the Almighty informed Moses of Israel's sin, He said שחת עמך, "*thy* people hath corrupted itself." But why עמך, "*thy* people"? When Moses stood before Pharaoh it was שלח את עמי, "send forth *my* people." Rashi informs us (2) that the expression עמך, "*thy* people," applies to the ערב רב, or mixed multitude, who accompanied our forefathers from Egypt, and who were the cause of their corruption.

Now, my friends, in support of my contention that there is a startling parallel between the condition of Israel's camp at Sinai thirty-two centuries ago and that of Judaism in the United States of America to-day, we, too, have a "mixed multitude" "who praise "in strange service"—a third party which has not sufficient love for the faith of our fathers to remain orthodox nor sufficient honesty to style itself "reform," but which seeks refuge in the conveniently ambiguous term "conservative," and bends the knee "in strange service" to the popular idol—fashion. Thus, it is fashionable to introduce an organ and family pews in places of worship; it is fashionable to have prayers recited in the vernacular; it is fashionable to ape un-Jewish customs; and this fashionableness "conservatism" endorses and encourages.

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(1). Dr. Kohler, "Am. Hebrew," Feb. 27th, 1885, page 37.
" " June 19th, 1885.
"American Israelite," October 21st, 1887, page 8.
See also all the preceding notes on the low state of religion among reformers.

(2). Rashi on Exodus, XXXII, 7.

Until quite lately such bending of the knee "in strange service' was termed "reform;" and a congregation that introduced an organ, or family pews, or prayers in the English or German language as part of its ritual, was understood to have deserted orthodoxy and to have become "reformed." But recently the utterances of the radical section of the reform party have made the more moderate so ashamed of the term "reform" that they have quietly assumed the designation "conservative"—*not that their attitude towards orthodoxy has changed in the least; not that they have receded from the position which they assumed when, in their superior enlightenment, they turned their backs upon orthodoxy; not that they are less "reformed" now than they were then,* BUT THAT THEY DO NOT LIKE TO BE BRANDED WITH THE STIGMA WHICH ATTACHES TO THE TERM "REFORM" NOW THAT THE REAL TENDENCY OF THE MOVEMENT HAS BEEN EXPOSED!

In plain language, then, reformers have fallen out among themselves; and as the more moderate among them wish to be distinguished from the extremists, they term themselves "*conservatives.*" But let us not be deceived by such juggling with words. It is true that moderate reform is conservative when contrasted with radicalism: but it is equally true that orthodoxy is conservative; and thus the assumption of this designation "conservative" by moderate reformers is at once most deceptive and most dishonest, for it is calculated to cause many to lose sight of the fact that while there is an ever widening chasm between orthodoxy and radicalism, *there is also a gulf between orthodoxy and moderate reform, which nothing short of negation of principle can bridge over.*

AND IT IS IN THIS MODERATE REFORM, NOW SO OFTEN STYLED "CONSERVATISM," THAT OUR REAL DANGER LIES. Radicalism goes so far that it destroys itself. But moderate reform, whose various graded stages are but *so many stepping-stones from orthodoxy to radicalism,* and whose assimilation of its form of worship with that of non-Jews evidences that same slavish imitation of un-Jewish forms that characterizes radicalism, does not shock us by assailing fundamental doctrines, a course which would prove fatal to its success, but makes its changes in an insidious manner, *so that the unwary are gradually led away from the faith of their fathers.*

Now, we have already remarked that the old renegade movement "commenced with fickleness and ended in treason to religion and nationalty." As history is repeating itself, we have in moderate

reform to-day, with its changes made so often merely for the sake of change, the fickleness which develops into the treason of radicalism. *We must therefore guard with the utmost diligence against the first symptoms of this fickleness, against the first evidences of a desire for change; for while* THERE NEED BE NO FEAR FOR THE FATE OF ORTHODOXY AS A SYSTEM, *while the Providence that has protected Israel in the past will never permit a shout of victory by the traitorous nor a cry of defeat from the faithful,* INDIVIDUALS *and* CONGREGATIONS *cannot be too careful lest, by countenancing that "praising in strange service" which moderate reformers mask with the term "conservatism," they place themselves under the operation of that inexorable law which, while preserving Judaism against all dangers, has cast from it those whose love of un-Jewish customs rendered them unworthy of the honor of being Jews.*

There is a dangerous tendency to-day to belittle the difference between orthodoxy and moderate reform, and, by familiarizing the members of one party with those of the other, to gradually efface the distinction between them. We hear a great deal about "brotherly love," and "an era of good feeling;" as if concession and peace at any cost were a first consideration and principle a very secondary one. The prophet's injunction against crying "Peace," where "there is no peace" (1), is thus deliberately ignored. But, my friends, the folly of making the slightest concession in matters of principle has been demonstrated by the extremes to which radicalism has run only through such concession. Rest assured, then, that we can do no better than emulate the example of Moses when he had to deal with those who "praised in strange service." Although the meekest of men, he hesitated not to treat with the utmost severity those who had proved disloyal. מִי לַה׳ אֵלַי "Who is on the Lord's side, "let him come to me" (2). There was no concession, no compromise of principle then; there must be no concession, no compromise of principle now. As Orthodox Jews, gratefully bowing to the Almighty's design that we be distinct from all others in matters of religious observance—as men and women who reverently cherish the time-honored customs that have given effect to that design, customs that are endeared to us by the most hallowed associations—*it becomes our sacred duty to protest with all the energy of which we are capable against the abolition of any of the*

(1). Ezekiel, XIII, 10.

(2). Exodus, XXXII, 6.

old distinctive institutions, and to emphasize that protest BY DRAWING A SHARP LINE BETWEEN ORTHODOX CONGREGATIONS AND THOSE THAT HAVE SO DEGENERATED AS TO INTRODUCE IN THEIR PLACES OF WORSHIP FORMS THAT ARE ESSENTIALLY CHARACTERISTIC OF NON-JEWISH SERVICE.

It is not necessary that a congregation go the whole length of denying supernatural revelation to merit censure. *From the moment that it has introduced what are known as* "MODERATE REFORMS," *it has turned its back upon orthodoxy, and henceforth* ALL ASSOCIATION WITH IT IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS BECOMES AS DANGEROUS TO ORTHODOX CONGREGATIONS AS CONTACT WITH A MAN SMITTEN WITH A DEADLY CONTAGIOUS DISEASE IS TO ONE IN THE ENJOYMENT OF HEALTH.

I know, my friends, that at a time when unprincipled compromise and weak concession are only of too common occurrence, those who stand in the breach and manfully uphold the glorious banner of Orthodox Judaism are ridiculed and denounced as bigots and fanatics. But with the proud consciousness that we are doing our duty and following in the footsteps of our sainted predecessors, who, if they could return to earth, would range themselves on the same side as that on which we "bigots" and "fanatics" are battling, we need care but very little for the taunts of the unprincipled.

It is because the ministers and members of this congregation have ever had the manliness and true Jewish spirit to be intolerant of wrong, it is because they have always refused to compromise in matters of principle, that "Shearith Israel" has remained firm as a rock, while congregation after congregation has drifted into the stream that leads from Judaism. So worthily has it fulfilled its duty as the oldest Jewish congregation in this great country, so truly has it exemplified the virtue of unswerving loyalty to the traditions of historical Judaism, that its fame has spread to other lands, where its name is synonymous with fidelity and consistency. With such a record and with such a reputation, we do not hope for too much when we give expression to the belief that, with the Almighty's blessing, it will ever continue to lead nobly in the future, as it has led most nobly in the past; so that even though other bodies prove disloyal, שארית ישראל לא יעשו עולה (1), "Shearith Israel will not do wrong," will not prove unworthy of its position, of its sacred trust.

אמן ואמן:

(1) Zephaniah, III, 13.

ZIONISM.

A SERMON DELIVERED

BY THE

Rev. Meldola de Sola,

OF MONTREAL,

ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF PASSOVER,

5660.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST,

and dedicated to

THE MONTREAL ZIONIST SOCIETY.

ZIONISM.

SERMON DELIVERED IN THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGÒGUE, MONTREAL, ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF PASSOVER, 5660,

BY THE REV. MELDOLA DE SOLA.

כי לא בחפזון תצאו ובמנוסה לא תלכון כי הלך לפניכם ה׳
ומאספכם אלהי ישראל:

"For not in haste shall ye go forth, and not in flight shall ye go; for the Eternal goeth before you, and the God of Israel will be your gatherer."

—Isaiah, LII, 12.

The Passover festival, which we are now celebrating, is essentially our national festival. Not only does it commemorate that wondrous night when the angel of destruction swept over the homes of Israel's cruel taskmasters; not only is it the anniversary of the birth of our nationality, that glorious culmination of the series of marvels wrought in Israel's behalf; but, with that beauty of design which ever characterizes the ways of an all-wise Providence, it is associated with nature, and thus preaches to us in manner most eloquent, Faith, Hope: faith is the ability of the Almighty to fulfil the words of His prophets, hope in the glorious future which they promise to our nation. Celebrated by divine command in the spring of the year when nature is reviving, Passover bids us study nature, bids us contemplate nature's return to life after the death-like sleep of winter, that in this return to life we may recognize

a type of Israel's revivals in the hoary past and in the days yet to come.

When our ancestors groaned under the tyranny of the Egyptians, to look forward to deliverance seemed to be hoping against hope. And yet even if at one time they did doubt the accuracy of the glad tidings that deliverance was actually at hand, they never abandoned hope in its ultimate accomplishment. In the regular recurrence of nature's seasons they beheld a literal fulfilment of the Divine promise to Noah that while the earth lasted harvest should follow seed-time and heat follow cold, that summer and winter and day and night should not cease; and by this regular recurrence of light after shadow, of life after apparent death, they were confirmed in the faith which impelled them to believe that the God who had promised to deliver them would fulfil His word even as He redeemed the promise made to Noah.

To us who live thirty two centuries later, with what additional significance is nature's revival fraught! We have seen all the power and ingenuity of man exercised since the destruction of the Temple to effect our extermination. But as nature simply sleeps during winter to burst forth into all the splendor of spring, so has our nation merely slept during the long winter of its dispersion, bearing within it, even as it did at the time of the Egyptian bondage, those germs of national life which but await the fiat of the Almighty to break forth into all the glory of revived nationality.

To emphasize a fact upon which we have repeatedly dwelt, Israel, the smallest and least powerful of ancient nations lives to celebrate this the 3212th. anniversary of its birth, while all the mighty empires of antiquity, without exception, have been swept off the world's stage by the relentless hand of time. In this miraculous circumstance (for it is in very truth the miracle of miracles) not only have we irrefutable testi-

mony to the over-ruling providence of the Almighy, but we have a literal fulfilment of the prophecies relating to our dispersion and preservation.

ואף גם זאת בהיותם בארץ איביהם לא מאסתים ולא געלתים לכלתם להפר בריתי אתם כי אני ה׳ אלהיהם.

"And yet for all this, though they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I loathe them, to make an end of them, to break my covenent with them. for I am the Eternal their God."

Not only, then, does the circumstance that our marvellous survival evidences the work of an almighty and all-wise Being lead us to conclude that this all-wise Being would not have preserved us through all the trials and dangers of thousands of years except for an end whose glory will be fully commensurate with so stupendous a miracle, but this literal fulfilment of the prophecies relating to our dispersion and preservation compels us to infer that the prophecies foretelling our restoration in the land given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants will be fulfilled with the same fidelity; for it is inconceivable that the word of God can be true in the one instance and false in the other.

And what is the character of these prophecies relating to our future? Is there any ambiguity, any uncertainty about them? Do they leave room for doubt, for difference of construction, difference in interpretion? On the contrary, the are expressed with the utmost clearness. By way of illustration, let us cite the words which Moses addressed to our ancestors immediately after he had foretold the very dispersion which we are now experiencing.

אם יהיה נדחך בקצה השמים משם יקבצך ה׳ אלהיך ומשם יקחך והביאך ה׳ אלהיך אל הארץ אשר ירשו אבתיך וירשתה והיטבך והרבך מאבתיך.

"Even though thy outcasts be at the uttermost part of the heavens, from there will the Eternal thy God

gather thee and from there will He take thee, and the Eternal thy God will bring thee unto the land which thy fathers possessed and thou shalt possess it, and He will do good unto thee and multiply thee above thy fathers." In this inspired message of our great legislator, we have a perfectly clear, perfectly explicit statement of the future in store for us. The Almighty Himself declares that our nation shall again possess its ancestral home, and not all the power and ingenuity of man, nor all the scepticism of our own degenerates, can prevent the literal and complete fulfilment of this promise.

In the dreary ages of our dispersion it was faith in the fulfilment of this promise, and consequent hope in the restoration of Israel's glory, that fortified our fathers to withstand trials and persecutions under which any other people would have sunk. Sustained by this hope and faith, they were enabled to defy a world combined against them, enabled, phoenix-like, to rise into new life from the ashes of devastated homes and ruined fortunes, enabled to outlive those who plotted their extermination. And if there were anything that could strengthen this faith and hope, it was their celebration of the Passover. Assembling in their Ghetto homes, and often even in subterranean crypts, to observe the Seder, they felt that even though sorely tried by persecution they had not been entirely abandoned by Heaven, for they realized that their very celebration of the festival was evidence of providential protection and guidance, and thus inspired with faith and sustained by hope, they looked forward confidently to the future, exclaiming with implicit trust in the fidelity and immutability of the Almighty :

השתא הכא לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל.

"At present we celebrate the festival here, next

year may we celebrate it in the land of Israel."

And we who can celebrate the Seder without dread of the intrusion of a bloodthirsty mob as in former times, we who can assemble at that time-honoured and beautiful ceremony without fear of the diabolical "blood accusation" heard in certain parts of Europe to-day, we whose lives and liberties are protected and safeguarded in this glorious British Empire: Shall we allow ease and prosperity to render us indifferent to our nation's future? Shall we permit our faith in Israel's destiny to degenerate into empty words of admiration for our people's history—"empty words" because stamped with indifference as regards the hastening of our national restoration? Shall we pray daily for the revival of Zion's glory, but inwardly hope that it may not occur in our time because of the ease and comfort of present conditions?

Not only would this be the very acme of selfishness (for it would ignore the fact that some seven millions of our brethren are the victims of persecution more or less virulent), but it would evidence a gross materialism utterly at variance with the spirit of Judaism. It would prove that we failed to appreciate the splendor of our promised future, that we were incapable of understanding the glory of Israel's predicted restoration.

And here let me observe with all possible emphasis, that hope for the rehabilitation of our people in the Holy Land is not in any way inconsistent with our duty as loyal citizens of the British Empire, nor with the love we bear the land that gives us a happy home. An eminent English Zionist, who has proved that loyalty to Zion and loyalty to England are not incompatible by serving as Chief of Staff to one of the British generals in the present war, once observed: "A man may love both his father and his mother. Palestine is my fatherland, England my motherland." This is a per-

fect definition of our position as British Jews. Palestine is our fatherland; England, the British Empire, our motherland. Our motherland is prosperous and mighty; our fatherland, alas, has been prostrated by centuries of misrule, and is debarred from prosperity by the survival of mediæval conditions. Now love for our motherland does not demand that we stifle love for our fatherland. Nay, if we were so materialistic as to be incapable of loving the land of our fathers and interesting ourselves in its welfare because we did not happen to be domiciled within its borders, our affection for the motherland might well be regarded with suspicion. For of what ideal sentiment are materialists capable? As selfish materialists, our love for England would not be a genuine sentiment inspired by admiration for the nobility of British institutions and the uprightness of the British government, it would simply be a feeling based upon material prosperity which would vanish the moment that prosperity disappeared. It follows, therefore, that the very idealism which impels us to love our fatherland, a country in which we have not the slightest material interest, is a guarantee that our love for England is not a feeling merely based upon self-interest, but a genuine sentiment of affection inspired by the nobility of British laws and British institutions, and the fidelity with which England champions the eternal principles of justice and righteousness.

But how is love for our fatherland to be attested? By simply praying for its restoration to the glory of former times? By sitting with folded hands, and leaving it entirely to Providence to effect this revival? That a large and influential and rapidly increasing number of our co-religionists in every part of the globe do not hold such an opinion is shown by the extraordinary growth of the Zionist movement. Zionism, in the present accepted sense of the term, yields to no school of thought in reverence and profound admiration for

the marvels wrought by Providence. But Zionism maintains that Providence expects us to employ the faculties, the powers and the opportunities with which we have been blessed in the furtherance of the end for which we pray. Zionism does not underestimate nor undervalue the efficacy and potency of prayer. But Zionism protests that prayer and trust in Providence must not be used as a cloak to cover indifference and apathy as regards the hastening of our national restoration.

On former occasions, in addressing you upon this subject, I have dwelt almost exclusively upon what has been termed "the first plank in the Zionist platform;" that is, the securing in Palestine of "a publicly legally assured home" for those of our people who are the victims of a fanatical intolerance more in keeping with the dark ages than with the period in which we live. The mere fact that Zionism has prepared an elaborate plan for their relief—a plan involving the conversion of the desolate areas in Palestine into smiling centres of agricultural activity, and the transformation of the impoverished cities of our fatherland into busy hives of mechanical and commercial industry—is in itself an all-sufficient reason why the movement should receive the sympathy and support of every Israelite who is not indifferent to the welfare of his brethren, and who loves the home of his ancestors.

These may be termed the economic, the philanthropic and the sentimental aspects of the movement. But there is also the religious phase of Zionism; and it is to this that I would more especially direct your attention to-day.

The more I contemplate this extraordinary movement, the more I reflect upon the wonders it has wrought since its inception; uniting our people as they have not been united since the destruction of the

Temple; bringing them together from every part of the globe, to meet in what is really a Jewish Parliament, as they have not been gathered in representative assembly since the downfall of Jerusalem; interesting in Jewish affairs, and reclaiming to religious observance men to whom Judaism had become a dead letter; the more I ponder over these marvels accomplished by the movement within a few years, nay, within a comparatively few months, the more firmly do I become convinced that Zionism is an instrument in the hand of Providence *to pave the way* for that restoration for which we pray, and which He in whose hands are the destinies of nations has so emphatically declared shall be fully accomplished.

In reviving the material prosperity of Palestine, Zionism will create the economic and social conditions which must necessarily precede the final restoration. In uniting our people, otherwise kept apart by conflicting local interests, and in winning back to religious observance men who have hitherto regarded religion as a thing not to be thought of seriously, Zionism is propagating those sentiments of brotherhood and fostering that reverence for the Torah which, our religion teaches, will be indispensable to the ultimate restoration of our nation's glory.

That the complete achievement of the aims of Zionism cannot be affected in a few years, nor even in a few decades, does not detract from the merit of the movement, nor from its claim to our sympathy and support. Great movements of world significance are not consummated with the suddenness of magic; and Zionism, which has to undo the evils and wrongs of nearly two thousand years, which has to reclaim a country subjected to every baneful influence for ages, and which has to elevate myriads of people whose manhood has been crushed by diabolical persecution extending over centuries, cannot in reason be expected

to achieve complete success within a brief period of time.

In anticipation of these difficulties, and with the knowledge that such obstacles would stand in the way of Israel's ultimate restoration, the Almighty has forewarned us:

כי לא בחפזון תצאו ובמנוסה לא תלכון

"For not in haste shall ye go forth, and not in flight shall ye go." Our final restoration, it is thus divinely declared, is not to be effected suddenly. We may pray (and we shall continue to pray) for the revival of Zion's glory; but our prayers, we are here given to understand, will not be answered by any sudden revolution in the policy of nations, nor by any magical transformation in the world of thought. *Gradually*, but none the less surely on that account, is the restoration to be effected. *By progressive steps* is our journey Zionward to proceed. ילכו מחיל אל חיל יראה אל אלהים בציון "They shall proceed from strength to strength to appear before God in Zion," exclaims the Psalmist. And when the way has thus been paved, and the conditions demanded by the Torah have been fulfilled as far as it is within human power to fulfil them, then will come the Prince of the House of David who will gather our outcasts from the four corners of the earth, and complete the restoration of our nation's glory as in days of yore.

We have said that the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt is a type of the redemption to come; and in so far as the former followed a long period during which redemption seemed hopeless, the analogy between the two is perfect. But in other respects there is an essential difference between them. The deliverance from Egypt was accomplished suddenly, כי בחפזון יצאת מארץ מצרים "For in haste didst thou go forth from the land of Egypt." But of the redemption of the future we are told: כי לא בחפזון תצאו "For

ye shall not go forth in haste." The reason for this difference may be readily explained.

Scarcely had the Egyptians driven our ancestors forth when they repented of the act, and wished to re-capture and re-enslave them. The redemption of the future will be permanent and undisputed. The deliverance from Egypt affected only one country, and our people dwelt exclusively in that country. The redemption of the future will influence the destinies of our people in every part of the globe, and it will affect the whole world. It will be the most significant event in the annals of the human race. In the words of the Talmud: גדול יום קבוץ גליות כיום שנבראו בו שמים וארץ "The day of the gathering of the exiles (of Israel) will be as great as the day on which the heavens and the earth were created." With this essential difference between the redemption of the past and the redemption of the future, we can readily understand why the latter is not to be accomplished with the haste which characterized the exit from Egypt.

While we know that nothing is too difficult for the Almighty, we also know that He does not employ supernatural agencies where natural means will suffice; and in the text we are given very clearly to understand that it is by natural means that the way is to be paved for that stupendous event which will bring to a close the dreary ages of our dispersion, and terminate forever the wrongs, the persecutions and the unspeakable miseries that were inaugurated with the destruction of our national sanctuary.

In days of yore, when Gideon was summoned to deliver our ancestors from the Midianites, he asked the angel who appeared to him for a sign to convince him that he had really been divinely commissioned to effect the deliverance; and the sign was graciously vouchsafed to him. We need not ask for a sign to assure us of the merit of Zionism, for one has been

already granted. In the inspired message of Moses predicting the gathering of our outcasts from all parts of the world, we are told that at the time of the restoration we are to be more numerous than in former days. והרבך מאבתיך "And He will multiply thee above thy fathers." Now if we reflect that the Jewish population of the world to-day is about twice as great as it was in the time of King David, the most glorious period in our history; and this notwithstanding the unknown fate of the ten tribes, and the centuries of ruinous persecution to which we have been subjected; we cannot fail to recognize in this most significant circumstance a veritable sign that Providence is preparing us gradually and in a perfectly natural manner for the long hoped-for and long prayed-for restoration. And as Providence has given us this sign of gradual and natural preparation for the revival of Zion's glory, we need have no fear that we shall be irreverently attempting to encroach upon the domain of Providence when we employ the faculties, the abilties and the opportunities with which we have been blessed in laboring, in our humble way, for the same glorious end.

From a purely religious point of view, then, Zionism has a most sacred, most imperative claim upon the sympathy and support of every member of the Congregation of Jacob.

By a monstrous but characteristic perversion of the truth, an apostate from Judaism, who wished to save our souls by converting us into renegades from Israel's sublime faith, recently stated in this city that Zionism was a sign of the times foreshadowing a general adoption by the followers of Judaism of the religion of their neighbors. Zionism has been frequently misrepresented, but the misrepresentation has yet to be coined that can vie with this in unblushing and insolent falsehood.

Zionism is the Jew's declaration to the world that he has not lost faith iu the power and unalterable determination of the Almighty to fulfil His reiterated promise to restore the children of Israel to the land of their fathers. Zionism is a vigorous expression of the Jew's belief that his people have not been preserved for thousands of years, while oppressor after oppressor has been crushed, for so inglorious an end as gradual disintegration at the hands of conversionist missionaries, who, being powerless in manly, straightforward and logical argument, resort to tactics that place a premium upon deceit, falsehood and hypocrisy. Zionism is a proclamation of the Jew's conviction that while England, the United States, and one or two other enlightened countries uphold the principles of justice and righteousness, the "peace and good-will" preached elsewhere in the name of religion is practised in the form of fanatical intolerance and persecution, and that the only remedy for this survival of mediæval bigotry is to secure for the Jewish people "a publicly legally assured home" in the land of their fathers.

Can any one of you be indifferent to the success of such a movement? Can you allow the noble men who are devoting every energy to this sacred cause to labor and struggle on without your sympathy? Prove that you can rise above the materialism which concerns itself only with the welfare of the individual, prove that you are not deaf to the appealing cries of your less fortunate brethren, prove that you are worthy of your nation's glorious past and of its still more glorious future: prove this by supporting as far as lies within your power the great Zionist organization, which, from the very nature of its constitution, is THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE, the one body in existance which speaks and is acting for the Jews of every part of the globe.

And if the complete fruition of the aims of Zionism

come not in your day, remember that your people's redemption is not to be accomplished suddenly, כי לא בחפזון תצאו that "not in haste will ye go forth," ובמנוסה לא תלכון that "not in flight will ye go;" but that even though the restoration for which you pray be yet distant, and the preparation for it by such natural agencies as Zionism be apparently slow, it will none the less surely be effected, כי הלך לפניכם ה' "for the Eternal goeth before you,"—He who maketh straight the crooked ways will smoothen your path, ומאספכם אלהי ישראל "and the God of Israel will be your gatherer" —He who hath preserved you so wondrously will assemble you or your posterity to worship Him בהר הקדש בירושלם "on the holy mountain in Jerusalem." Amen. Amen.

1905?

Noble examples.

Sermon in memory of Uncle Jesse and Aunt Sara Gratz, ז"ל, (wife of Jacob Gratz)
delivered Adar 18th (March 5th) 5664 = תרס"ד
שבת כי תשא פ' פרה

דרש טוב לעמו ודבר שלום לכל זרעו "Seeking the good
" of his people, and speaking peace unto all its seed."
(Esther, X, 3.)

These, the concluding words of the Book of Esther are applied to Mordecai, the hero who, in the hands of Providence, had been so instrumental in saving his people from the machinations of their arch-enemy. The occurrence of the feast of Purim during the week now closing has naturally directed our thoughts to the Book of Esther, and it is impossible to read the book without being impressed with the grandeur of Mordecai's character. At the beginning of his career he displays his benevolence by bringing up the orphaned Esther. Then he manifests his loyalty by exposing a deadly conspiracy against his sovereign. We next perceive him manfully refusing to fawn upon an arrogant and consequential courtier, and zealously interesting himself in the preservation of his people. When made the recipient of an extraordinary token of the king's esteem and favor his head is not turned by the homage

rendered him, but he unaffectedly goes back to the simplicity of his former life. And when, finally, he is elevated to the highest position in the gift of Ahashverus, and becomes exceedingly great in the land, he is still the same unassuming, plain, true man, דורש טוב לעמו "seeking the good of his people".

It is not customary to deliver a "hesped", or mourning discourse, on the Sabbath; and therefore I may not dwell to-day upon the irreparable double loss we have sustained in the passing away of the venerated president of our congregation, and in the death only two days later of the wife of our senior member. But if the character of the Sabbath forbids a mourning discourse, it will not be inconsistent with the proper observance of the day of rest to speak of the noble qualities of those who have but gone to their rest, and to the reward which life illumined by numberless deeds of goodness and kindness must ensure.

דרש טוב לעמו "Seeking the good of his people" sums up the merits of Mordecai. Like Mordecai, our lamented president sought the good of his people. He sought their good quietly, unostentatiously; he did not make a parade of his concern for their welfare. In the sphere of philanthropy, it was sufficient for him to hear of a case of distress; his sympathy and generous assistance were immediately enlisted. Now that he has passed away from us, we may testify publicly to his benevolence. When he was in our midst, even his most intimate friend dare not comment upon his liberality, for he would resent as a wrong, as an affront, any words of praise for a kindly act. He cared not for the distinction of having his name appear upon lists of contributors; he chose to do good privately, secretly; and let me assure you, my dear brethren, that in his quiet, unobtrusive way he did more good than the great majority of you can possibly realize, more good than many whose names are constantly before the public.

Like Mordecai, he befriended the orphan.

His ripe experience and sage counsel were readily and gladly given to people who had lost their natural protectors, and many an orphaned one now has cause to bless his memory.

Occupying a position of commanding prominence in both the commercial and social worlds, he was approachable even to the most lowly, he was as simple in his ways and as unassuming in his manner as the most humble; for, like Mordecai, he estimated at their true value the pretensions of the arrogant, and, like Mordecai, he was too much of a man to fawn upon any human being.

He was the recipient of two honorable distinctions from the King of the Belgians. He justly valued the honor, but he is not known ever to have worn the insignia of his distinctions. Like all men whose greatness is real, genuine, not assumed, Jesse Joseph disliked anything that savored of display and ostentation — that display which, in the case of people of smaller calibre, so frequently degenerates into absurdity, rendering them ridiculous even in the eyes of the very ones whose favor they court.

דרש טוב לעמו He sought the good of his people, not by officiously championing their cause in public, but by proving to the world that sterling integrity, honorable dealing, broadness of view, unimpeachable patriotism, and public spirit are attributes of the Jew as well as of his neighbor. And the result proved that his course was the true one; for the esteem in which Jesse Joseph

was held universally did more to elevate our community in the eyes of the world, more to make the name of Jew honored and respected in Canada than ten thousand resolutions upon the rights and the wrongs of our people. A community that can point to men of his calibre and consequent influence as its representatives need not assert itself upon the public platform.

דרש טוב לעמו He sought the good of his people, and, my dear brethren, if we would truly honor his memory we will seek the good of our people, even as he did, by proving to the world that the virtues which men revere are practised by us, that the qualities which men admire are possessed by us, and that our religion consequently imbues its followers with principles of the very highest type and most exalted character.

"דרש טוב לעמו ודבר שלום לכל זרעו" Seeking "the good of his people, and speaking peace unto "all its seed." As Jesse Joseph sought the good of his people, so did Sara Gratz Joseph speak peace unto all.

A woman of rare intellectual power and marvellous personal charm, her brilliance of mind found fitting counterpart in her goodness of heart. As with the virtuous woman to whom

Solomon pays his matchless tribute, the law of kindness was on her tongue תורת חסד על לשונה (1). Never did an unkind word pass her lips, never did an uncharitable or ungenerous expression receive her countenance. The law of kindness was the law of her life, moulding her every thought, her every idea, shaping her every action. The only unkindness of which she was capable was towards herself, for she never spared herself when it was within her power to help another human being. A devoted wife and mother, a staunch friend, a sympathetic protector of the unfortunate, she truly practised the virtues that ennoble womanhood. No one in distress ever sought her assistance in vain, no worthy cause was ever denied her aid. And not only was it her generosity that charmed the recipients of her bounty, but her kindly and sympathetic demeanor captivated the hearts of her beneficiaries. Nor was it merely in assistance of a material nature that her goodness was manifested. Her ear was ever open to the tale of trouble, and she would advise with profound wisdom,

(1) Proverbs, XXXI, 26.

speaking peace and promoting harmony, always honoring the law of kindness.

To occupy a position of prominence is not given to every one. To rise to eminence is the lot of comparatively few. Yet it is within the power of the humblest in our midst to advance the interests of our religion and to promote the welfare of our community by practising these virtues and developing these qualities which glorify us in the sight of God and man.

Let the example of our never-to-be-forgotten President and of the revered woman who passed away a week ago stimulate us to render the ethical teachings of the Torah that honor to which their Divine origin and profound importance entitle them. Let us keep before us as a noble model the sterling qualities and virtues of the departed ones upon whose lives we have dwelt to-day, and so shall we render a genuine tribute to their memory — "the memory of the righteous" which "shall" thus "be" in very truth "for a blessing" (1)

אמן · אמן אמן

(1) Proverbs, X, 7.

Address at the funeral of dear Uncle Jesse, ז"ל,
Adar 10th (February 26th), 5664. (Jesse Joseph.)

"With length of days אורך ימים אשביעהו וארהו בישועתי
"will I satisfy him, and I will show him my salvation"
(Psalm XCI, 16.)

There are moments when language fails utterly to convey an adequate idea of the thoughts that surge in the brain, or of the emotions that overwhelm the heart. Such a moment is this, when, summoned by duty, by love, and by gratitude, we assemble to offer a parting tribute of esteem and veneration to one whose like we shall not soon behold.

"To those who knew him not, no words can paint;
"And those who knew him know all words are faint."

How can I fittingly eulogise the career of such a man? Let me but lay a humble wreath on his bier, and dwell lovingly, if imperfectly, upon some of the attributes that ennobled him, and that have rendered his loss truly irreparable.

Jesse Joseph was spared many years beyond the threescore and ten mentioned by the Psalmist. He was truly granted "length of days". Yet, of what value length of days if those days be void of noble action, if they be devoted exclusively to selfish pursuits and to the worship of worldly vanities? Far better a brief career illumined with deeds of goodness than a longer one barren of all that is estimable and admirable. But the career of Jesse Joseph was noble and glorious even as it was prolonged beyond that of most men in this day. It was rendered noble and

and glorious not simply by the greatness of worldly distinction and social prominence, but by the truer and infinitely more abiding greatness of goodness. If ever a man ~~displayed~~ possessed a kindly and benevolent disposition, if ever one displayed the attributes of a tender and sympathetic heart, that man was the one whose mortal remains lie here before us. Always marvellously considerate even towards the most humble with whom he came into contact; always solicitous for the welfare and happiness of others, whether they were allied to him by the ties of kinship or not; always quick to forgive a fault, always incapable of harboring an uncharitable or unkind thought, his life was one long unbroken chain of deeds of goodness, generosity and sympathetic kindness.

If we admit, as admit we must, that the Almighty often permits us to comprehend His providence, we cannot but believe that He placed Jesse Joseph in this world as a messenger of benevolence and mercy, and that He "satisfied him with length of days" as a reward for the fidelity with which he employed his abilities and gifts in this mission of benevolence and mercy.

The sages of the Talmud declare that he who performs deeds of benevolence secretly is greater than Moses, because

was an essential characteristic of Jesse Joseph's benevolence. Not his the craving for public recognition. Not his the desire for philanthropic reputation. "He did good by stealth, and blushed to find it fame!" He shrank from anything approaching a demonstration of gratitude. Few things irritated him as much as being thanked for a service or act of kindness. His pleasure was to do good, not to be applauded or thanked for doing good.

And as he was phenomenally considerate towards others even in the most trivial matters, so was he simple, unassuming, and most unexacting in all that concerned himself. Nothing was further removed from him than vanity or pride, nothing more foreign to his disposition than love of ostentation. Like all men truly great and truly good, he was plain and unassuming. The simplicity of his life and manner typified the greatness of his goodness — that greatness of goodness which won our love and our veneration, and which we firmly believe has ensured to his immortal soul the exceedingly great reward of a life of goodness.

אורך ימים אשביעהו ואראהו בישועתי "With length "of days will I satisfy him, and I will show him my salvation." To Jesse Joseph was accorded length of days. May the Almighty now in very truth show him His salvation, vouchsafing

to him the unalloyed and eternal felicity of the higher sphere. There may he meet in blissful reunion the dear ones who have preceded him, those whom he loved so truly and whose departure from earth grieved him so deeply, that in happy companionship with them for evermore he may find surcease from the trials and anxieties of this vale of tears. God regard compassionately his human frailties, God reward exceedingly his deeds of goodness. A tear to his memory, a supplication to the Throne of Grace, a prayer for his eternal happiness are all that it is now within our power to offer: God heed our tears, God hearken unto our supplication, God grant our prayer. Amen. Amen

Filial Reverence.

Sermon delivered on Shabat Zachor, 5668 [MARCH 14]

שבת ויקרא פ׳ זכור תרס״ח

כבד את אביך ואת אמך למען יארכון ימיך על האדמה אשר ה׳ אלהיך נתן לך "Honor thy father and thy "mother, that thy days may be long in the land "which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

The near approach of the feast of Purim naturally turns our thoughts to the Book of Esther; for the feast owes its origin to the glorious deliverance recorded in that book, and the reading of the Megillah is therefore the most prominent feature in our services on Purim.

Queen Esther has been eulogised time and again for her heroic devotion to her people. Her willingness to risk her life in appearing before the king to plead their cause, her famous words ואם אבדתי אבדתי "and if I perish, I perish", have formed the theme of innumerable disquisitions upon feminine heroism and devotion to duty.

But there is another feature in the life of Esther that is equally worthy of laudatory comment; and that is her attitude of deference towards her uncle

The average reader of the Book of Esther usually finds its chief interest in the dramatic situations it presents. But if the book be perused carefully, it will be seen that these dramatic situations result from Esther's loyalty to the great principle of the 5th Commandment — that principle which led her to accord to Mordecai, who had adopted her as his daughter, the deference due her deceased parents, in whose place he stood.

We are told that at the very beginning of her career Esther did not disclose the identity of her people and kindred, because Mordecai had instructed her not to do so. And after she had become queen, when she might not unnaturally have considered herself emancipated from the authority of her former guardian, we again read that "Esther did not tell who her "kindred and people were, as Mordecai had "enjoined her; and Esther did the bidding "of Mordecai even as when she was being "brought up by him" ואת מולדתה ומולדתיה לא הגידה אסתר כאשר צוה מרדכי אתה כאמרה אתו עשה אסתר את מאמר מרדכי (1).

(1) Esther, II, 20.

If she had disregarded the prohibition of Mordecai, if she had disclosed the identity of her people and kindred, it is highly improbable that Esther would have become queen; for the Jewish people were exiles in Persia, and a monarch so proud and so haughty as Ahasuerus would not knowingly have placed a queen's crown above the member of a despised race. And if, after she had become queen, Esther had considered herself too high and mighty to take instructions from her former guardian, she would not have made the requests of Ahasuerus which led to the intensely dramatic situation that enabled her to save her people from extermination.

Esther is justly praised for her devotion to her people. But, my dear friends, it seems to me that the brightest gem in the diadem of her virtues was her devotion to filial duty. Elevated by a veritable miracle to a position of dazzling splendor, she did not allow the magnificence of that position to blind her to the great principle of the 5th Commandment. Father and mother had been taken from her, but as Mordecai had adopted her as his daughter, she realized that he was entitled to her deference, and not all the grandeur of her exalted station could render her oblivious to a daughter's duty.

And if Queen Esther displayed filial devotion to Mordecai simply because he stood in the pl

of her parents, how infinitely greater is the obligation of filial reverence in those whose parents are still with them.

Filial reverence has hitherto been prominent among the virtues of the Jewish people. In bygone times a son stood when in the presence of his father. To occupy a parent's seat was a thing undreamt of. When a father was called to the Torah in synagogue, his children reverently rose and remained standing until he had resumed his seat. This is a custom still observed in many synagogues following the Spanish and Portuguese ritual, and it is one that I should like to see honored here.

The Bible, the Talmud, the other writings of our sages, all emphatically enjoin the duty of reverence to parents — a duty which the Almighty Himself emphasised as one of fundamental importance by proclaiming it to mankind amid the thunders of Sinai. כבד את אביך ואת אמך "Honor thy father and thy mother."

But we are living in an enlightened age, and many young people now look upon the 5th Commandment as a dead-letter. "Honor thy father and thy mother" — that may have been very well in former times, but it does not apply to present conditions. These young people imagine that they know more than their parents. Their minds have been broadened by what is called

"higher education" — education for which their benighted parents have paid, however; and their social accomplishments, their musical [redacted] and other attainments, their "knowledge of the world" generally, constitute them the superiors of their parents — in their estimation. So the parents are flouted, the parents' wishes ignored, the parents' injunctions defied, the parents' God-given right to their children's obedience and deference repudiated.

My dear friends, this is an evil that is far more prevalent than is generally supposed, an evil that exists where it would never be looked for, and it's an evil that is fraught with grave consequences to the future of our religion and of our nation.

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee". Let us consider the true import of these words.

They do not signify that the virtue of filial reverence will necessarily be rewarded with long life to the individuals who practise it. Many dutiful sons and dutiful daughters have, alas, not reached old age, nor even adolescence. The 5th Commandment was addressed to Israel the nation as well as to individual Israelites and what it was really intended to imply was that if the virtue of filial reverence were generally practised in Israel, it would foster qualities and develop characteristics in the people which would render the nation worthy

the prolonged occupation of its ancestral land — the land which the Almighty had given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

And the principle thus enunciated applies with equal force to our nation to-day.

Irreligion has made, and is making, giant strides in our midst because so many young people refuse to be guided by their parents. Our very right to the designation of God's "witnesses", exemplifying in our lives the excellence of His Law, is being menaced by a rising generation of Jews and Jewesses who sneer at the religious views of their parents, and who are consequently drifting away from Judaism.

Filial reverence implies the preservation of our religion and, consequently, of our nation — for without Judaism there can be no Jews. Irreverence towards parents [redacted] means the destruction of our religion and [redacted] of our nation. It is an evil that strikes at the very root of Judaism and consequently, at the reason for our continued existence as a distinct people.

Our rabbis have an expression חומץ בן יין — literally, "Vinegar the son of Wine", and they apply it to the unworthy children of worthy parents. How often may we exclaim חומץ בן יין! How frequently

do we meet with young men and young women whose lives are characterised by ruthless disregard for religious duties and obligations cherished by pious parents!

In some instances, parents, otherwise estimable, are to blame for this irreligion, because they have made no attempt to imbue their children with their own religious principles. But in many instances parents will tell you that they can do absolutely nothing with their young people — that their grown-up sons and daughters consider themselves emancipated from parental authority, and refuse to bow to it. In ~~short~~ plain language we have a rising generation of Jews and Jewesses who have formulated a new version of the 5th Commandment: "Honour thy father and "thy mother only so long as thou art dependent "upon father and mother"!

More than one parent has complained bitterly of a son taking a college course who has therefore considered himself licensed to trample upon his parents' wishes. And this is "Higher Education"!

The old-fashioned Jew, the real Jew, honours father and mother, and bows reverently to their wishes even after father and mother have departed

to their everlasting rest; the new type of Jew limits the application of the 5th Commandment to the years of early childhood. The old-fashioned Jew has kept Judaism alive; the new type of Jew will destroy Judaism if his influence be not counteracted and neutralised by a vigorous assertion of the vital importance and still binding force of the 5th Commandment.

"If love alone can repay love, surely parental "love should be met with the warmest filial "affection. If gratitude is due for benefits "conferred, how great a debt of gratitude is due "by the child to his parents, through whom, "under the Almighty, he has received every "enjoyable blessing. Even if God did not "command reverence for parents, yet must "filial love and filial gratitude sway every "human heart not dead to all right feeling "and nobility of sentiment" (1).

What object have parents in placing restrictions upon their children, but their welfare? What reason have parents for urging their children to honor even the minor observances of Judaism? Is it not that experienced

(1) After J. L. Mocatta, "Hard Biblical Gleanings", P. 251.

has taught them that these so-called "minor" observances foster a strong Jewish sentiment, and that they wish their sons and daughters to be ever loyal to Judaism — to grow up as true Jews and Jewesses and not to develop into nothingarians or infidels?

Young people sometimes tell us that they must acquire their own experience; that they do not wish to rely upon the experience of others. This may sound very well; but experience is sometimes acquired at fearful cost.

A parent warns a child against some imprudence likely to result in disease, and forbids the child to commit it. The child thinks that he knows more than the parent and ignores the parental injunction. As a result there is a long and dangerous illness — perhaps terminating fatally. People of a philosophical turn of mind will say, "It serves him right; he should have listened to his father and mother." But this will bring small comfort to the parents. The parents have to suffer all the worry, all the anxiety, all the anguish caused by the son's or daughter's dangerous illness.

We hear a great deal about the tyranny of

parents. But what of the tyranny of children!

Irreverence toward parents, disregard for their wishes, indifference to their happiness, are not only a flagrant violation of the law of God, an offence which Bible and Talmud alike denounce with the utmost severity, but they are ingratitude of the basest character. We owe a debt of gratitude to our parents that can never be repaid — fully; and we must therefore labor unceasingly to discharge the obligation as far as lies within our power. If our parents are still with us, we can brighten their lives, we can cheer their declining years, by studying their wishes, and by sparing them trouble and worry, vexation and annoyance. If they have departed to their eternal rest, we can honor their memory by cherishing the principles they honored, by living and acting in all things as they would have wished us to live and act.

The approaching Purim will be observed

with the usual festivities, and our young people will gladly participate in the various entertainments in honor of the feast. It is quite right that they should do so, for our religion does not make a virtue of asceticism and gloom. But our observance of Purim will be invested with vastly increased importance and value if Queen Esther's notable example of loyalty to the principle of the 5th Commandment be made the subject of thoughtful consideration. Our young people to-day have not the excuse that Esther might have advanced as a queen whose adopted father was simply one of the ~~humble~~ humble crowd who frequented the gate of the royal palace. But even if they had, they would do well to remember the words which the Megillah applies to Esther after she had been crowned queen:

ואת מאמר מרדכי אסתר עשה כאשר היתה באמנה אתו

"And Esther did the bidding of Mordecai
"even as when she was being brought up
"by him".

אמן ואמן

A faithful handmaiden of the Lord.

Address at the funeral of Aunt Sarah, 26th July (1st) 1866.

(Aunt Sarah Joseph, my godmother)

"Thus He giveth His beloved sleep".

(Psalm CXXVII, 2.)

A life of singular beauty has drawn to a close. A soul purified by numberless deeds of goodness and piety has ascended to its Maker to receive the reward of goodness and piety.

"Life's work well done,
"Life's race well run,
"Life's battle well won,
"Then comes peace!"

At such a time our thoughts naturally turn to the noble disposition of her whose loss we mourn. Yet no words uttered here to-day can do justice to that disposition. Expressions of eulogy may be applied fittingly to an appreciable number of great and noble actions; but where shall we find language with which to do justice to a life that was one continuous performance of deeds of goodness and sympathy?

There are few virtues that rank with unselfishness, and Sarah Joseph was essentially an unselfish woman. She ~~lif~~ lived for others; she knew not what it was to consider self. She recognised no higher gratification in life than to further the happiness

of others, and she never spared herself in promoting their happiness. We who knew her best realise how truly it has been said that it is the little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness that are the noblest portion of a good woman's life. We cannot recall all her deeds of love, for they were countless; we only know, and feel to-day, that her life was ennobled by unceasing kindness, illumined with never-failing sympathy and goodness of heart.

A firm and staunch friend, she was not moved nor affected by changes of fortune. Once a friend, she was always a friend; for hers was too noble a disposition to be swayed by the ever varying currents of popular favor and disfavor.

Intensely ~~honest~~ honest ~~and~~ in thought, and upright in principle, she loved candor and singleness of purpose even as she despised time-serving; for as she was utterly unselfish and most kind-hearted, so was she absolutely sincere, absolutely true, absolutely without guile.

For more than five years it was her misfortune to be excluded from the activities of life. In those long and dreary years not once did a word of complaint escape her lips, not once did she murmur at ~~against~~ the decree of Providence. Imbued with a truly pious spirit, she never

wavered in her allegiance to the [illegible]
of trial and blessing. As she had been [illegible]
in the days of health, strength, and activity, so was
she loyal in helplessness and infirmity. Sarah Joseph
was in very truth a faithful handmaiden of the Lord.

We who were related to her by the ties of kinship
profess to honor her name and revere her memory.
There is but one real tribute ~~which~~ we can now offer
to her memory: ~~[illegible]~~ to honor that which she
honored, ~~and~~ to shape our actions as she would
have wished us to shape them. ~~That~~ This is the only
true tribute, the only genuine token of love ~~that~~ it
is now within our power to offer to her ~~memory~~
— to honor that which she honored, ~~and~~ to shape
our actions even as she would have wished us to
shape them.

And now that her earthly career has drawn to
a close, we exclaim with the Psalmist: [illegible]
"Thus doth He give His beloved sleep". ~~[illegible]~~ As
an innocent child lapsing into slumber, so did
she pass peacefully away from this world of
care and trouble. Her infirmity and helplessness
are no more, for death has set on her brow the
joyous crown of immortality. In a higher and
brighter sphere she will assuredly realise that

of others, and so much falls to the lot of no
their happi[illegible] earth; for, with implicit confidence
in the Almighty's infinite benevolence and boundless
mercy, we cannot but believe, when we pray, that
He will richly reward such a life as that of
Sarah Joseph.

May strength and abundant fortitude be vouchsafed
to the mourners. May they derive consolation from
the reflection that death is but a temporary
separation — that they who die here but precede
us to a better and happier world where we will
rejoin them in God's own time, nevermore to
suffer the pangs of separation and sorrow.

In death, God giveth His beloved sleep. But
it is the sleep whose awakening is life eternal,
whose end is bliss unalloyed and everlasting.
Amen. Amen.

A Good Name.

Sermon delivered Heshvan 20th(Nov.14th) 5669, in the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Montreal, by Rabbi de Sola.

"A good name is better than precious ointment."
Ecclesiastes VII.I.

It was my intention to address you this morning upon the subject of Science and Religion; but the sad event that has cast a gloom not only over the congregation, but over the entire community, leads me to defer it until next Sabbath. For the death of one of the oldest members and staunchest friends of our congregation, one who served as its President and as a Trustee, and who was a zealous member of the School Committee when he was taken from us, calls for more than a mere passing allusion.

The sanctity of the Sabbath forbids our dwelling upon the mournful aspect of the event to-day -- forbids our giving expressions to the sense of irreparable loss we experience in the death of this tried and devoted friend of our congregation -- a friend who, in the forty two years of his connection with the congregation, never once permitted a difference of opinion to weaken his attachment to the Synagogue he loved so well and served so loyally. It is a law of our religion, a very wise and proper law, that as the Almighty designed the Sabbath to be a day of brightness and happiness, - a "delight," as Isaiah styles it - it must not be made the occasion of a "hesped," or mourning discourse.

But we do not violate this law if we reflect upon the moral to be deduced from the life of such a man as the one who worshipped with us here last Sabbath but whose soul has now returned to its Maker.

Of late years we have heard much of the spread of anti-Semitism in civilised lands. In its general aspect, anti-Semitism is simply a survival of the spirit of fanaticism which has inspired every persecution of the Jew since the destruction of Jewish political power. In bygone times it was manifested in periodical massacres, and in laws utterly humiliating to the Jew; in Russia, Roumania and other countries that cling to mediaeval methods, it is still displayed in pogroms and in enactments worthy of the Dark Ages. Where civilisation and liberal ideas have made substantial progress, the Jew of to-day undoubtedly enjoys the same rights and the same privileges as his fellow-citizens of other creeds. But it would be idle to close our eyes to the fact that even in the most enlightened lands, that even where the Jew need have no fear of ~~actual~~ active persecution, there is a vast amount of prejudice against him in certain directions. This anti-Semitic prejudice is primarily due to false religious teaching among our neighbours, and it is perhaps partially due to a feeling of jealousy inspired by the success which Jewish ability has achieved in the various walks of life.

But anti-Semitism has also received an undoubted impetus from men within our camp - from men who claim the name of Jew, but who disgrace and blacken the name of Jew by outraging the laws of honesty and righteousness. Fraudulent deeds and acts of sharp practice by men professing Judaism, and that morbid sentimentalism in some of our people which would shield the dishonest Jew from just punishment because, forsooth, he is a Jew; these, my dear friends, have done more to give an impetus to anti-Semitism, in this country at least, than any false religious teaching or feeling of racial jealousy among our neighbours.

When a non-Jew commits a crime, it is the individual who is censured. When a Jew is guilty of a fraudulent or reprehensible act, it is the Jewish people who are condemned. This may be most unjust; but it is the way of the world. And in contending with anti-Semitism we have to deal with facts, not with abstract principles.

But just as the dishonest Jew gives an impetus to anti-Semitism by furnishing our adversaries with a weapon for assailing our good name, so does the honorable and upright Jew disarm our opponents by proving to the world that the Jew who is loyal to the principles of his religion is an estimable citizen, an incarnation of the virtues that ennoble humanity. And in our departed brother we enjoyed the fellowship of such a Jew - of one who did in very truth promote "Kiddush Hashem", "the sanctification of the Divine Name", the glorification of Israel's faith in the sight of the world, by winning universal respect as a man of spotless integrity and unimpeachable morality. The life of such a man is the most powerful antidote to the venom of anti-Semitism, the most conclusive proof of the baselessness of anti-Jewish prejudice. If our community were composed exclusively of men of his calibre and high principle, anti-Semitism in our midst would be deprived of its most effective weapon.

He was not permitted to attain old age. He was called to his reward while yet in the prime of manhood. But, my dear friends, the value of a life is not to be guaged by its length. Some men who attain extreme old age leave this world without having accomplished any good in it. Others who pass away in their prime, have conferred inestimable benefit upon their fellow beings. Our departed friend was on of the latter. Not only was

his life a continual illustration of the baselessness of anti-Semitic prejudice, an illustration whose conclusiveness was fully recognised in the high esteem with which he was regarded by the followers of other creeds, but it will always serve as a model to those who believe that "a good name is better than precious ointment," that an honorable reputation is the most desirable of all earthly possessions.

Let us honor his memory by cherishing his example. Let us ever allude to him as a faithful and consistent exponent of the great principles of righteousness which shed lustre upon the Jewish name. So shall we prove the sincerity of our professed esteem for him, so shall we render his memory the most eloquent of all tributes.

Sermon delivered
at the service
to commemorate
the 125th Anniversary
of the foundation
of
K. K. "Shearith Israel",
of Montreal.
Tebeth 21st (Dec. 30th) 5654 שבת שמות
1894
by
Rev. A. D. Melchola de Sola

The 125th Anniversary

ויקח שמואל אבן אחת וישם בין המצפה ובין השן ויקרא את שמה אבן העזר ויאמר עד הנה עזרנו ה׳

"And Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah "and Shen; and he called its name Eben Ha-Ezer (stone "(of help), saying, Hitherto the Eternal hath helped us".

I Samuel, VII, 12.

כל כנסיה, שהיא לשם שמים סופה להתקים ושאינה לשם שמים אין סופה להתקים, "Every assembly that is for the sake "of Heaven will in the end be established; but one that "is not for the sake of Heaven will not in the end become "permanent".

Ethics of the Fathers, IV, 14.

To assemble in our houses of prayer from Sabbath to Sabbath, מדי שבת בשבתו, is a custom, nay, an obligation, honored from time immemorial. It is tangible evidence of our belief that all that is owes its creation and preservation to the Almighty One whom we worship, and that from Him alone proceed the manifold blessings we enjoy. In its ordinary aspect, therefore, the assembling of a congregation in its place of worship on the Sabbath does not call for remark; it is but the performance of a duty which devolves upon us every week during the year.

But, dear friends, our gathering here to-day is invested with far more than ordinary significance. One hundred and twenty five years ago a small but noble band of pioneers founded this congregation,

and, in establishing it, unfurled the standard of Judaism for the first time in what now constitutes the Dominion of Canada.

One of their earliest acts was to apply to the Spanish and Portuguese congregation of London, worshipping then as now in the venerable Sun at Bevis Marks, for ספרים. The two scrolls sent out in response to that appeal are treasured here in this Shekal, and out of one of them we read the Parashah this morning.

Our service to-day, then, as signalizing the completion of the one hundred and twenty fifth anniversary of the congregation's formation, and of the maintenance of Judaism in this country, is fraught with deep interest not merely to ourselves but also to the community of which we form part.

It is even as the stone which Samuel set up between the two places in the land of our fathers — an occasion upon which we may review the tikvah of the past and contemplate the Shem of the future, an occasion which is to us what Eben Ha-Ezer was to our ancestors; for, reviewing the record of the past hundred and twenty five years, contemplating the innumerable difficulties overcome, the almost insuperable obstacles surmounted since the arrival of our first Sephardim a century and a quarter ago, we may in very truth exclaim "עד הנה עזרנו יי", "Hitherto the Eternal hath helped us".

One hundred and twenty five years ago, there were but four other Jewish congregations on the North American continent; the Spanish and Portuguese synagogues of New York, Newport (Rhode

Island, Savannah, and Charleston. Our congregation therefore stands fifth on the roll now, thank God, ~~[illegible]~~ bearing the names of hundreds.

For nearly a century the history of "Shearith Israel" of Montreal was the history of Judaism in British North America; for during that long period it remained the only Jewish congregation in the land, the only body to bear aloft the standard of Israel's faith. For nine years after its formation its members worshipped in a room situated in the the street (1) upon which now stand our principal banking institutions. The first synagogue was then erected near the western end of the present Court House, the site being now marked by a marble tablet with suitable inscription. The coins, metal plates, and documents contained in the corner-stone of that first synagogue were similarly deposited in the Chenneville Street synagogue sixty years later, and, after the lapse of another fifty two years, they were, with the contents of the corner-stone of our last place of worship, deposited in the corner-stone of this synagogue.

~~[illegible]~~ Who but a person interested in stirring up strife and dissension in the community, ~~[illegible]~~ can fail to recognize that, apart from the ties of kinship, the ties of race and creed, the fact that the two first Sepharim ever sent to this country are enshrined in this Hekal, and that the contents of the corner-stone of the first

(1) St. James Street.

synagogue erected in Canada are deposited in the corner-stone of this building, should be a bond of harmony, sympathy and co-operation between this congregation and the other members of the community!

Seven years after the formation of our congregation the first [illegible] was purchased, and it was situated near the southern end of what is now known as Dominion Square; that is, about five minutes' walk from the site of this building. The first interment took place in the following year (1), and the gravestone is now standing in the large private lot at the lower end of our present cemetery.

Services were held in the first synagogue for nearly half a century. But it was a hard hard struggle to preserve the congregation's existence. In the end the old building had to be abandoned, and the services were once more held in a room — this time, however, in the residence of a prominent member of the congregation (2), who would not suffer the flame kindled so many years before to be extinguished, and who evinced his public spirit by issuing an earnest appeal to his co-religionists for reorganization and revival. One of the results of the revival which followed that appeal was the subsequent erection of the Chenneville Street synagogue, in which the

(1) That of Lazarus David, who died 22d October 1776.
(2) Benjamin Hart, in St. Helen St., corner of Recollet.

congregation worshipped for fifty two years.

But the struggle for existence did not cease with the completion of the second synagogue. Even after its erection the congregation was so small, that it was frequently impossible to secure a minyan for the Sabbath morning service; and so keenly was this felt that a letter was actually forwarded to the then Haham of London, the Chief Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of Bevis Marks (1), asking him to sanction the reading of the Sepher Torah without a minyan. It is needless to say that the request was not granted.

But it was not long before the growth of the congregation removed this difficulty. Eight years after the completion of the Chenneville Street synagogue my revered predecessor was appointed minister; and such was the increase in the membership of "Shearith Israel" during the thirty five years of his ministrations that in the year following his decease the agitation was commenced which resulted in the erection of our present place of worship.

A very noteworthy feature in the history of our congregation is the large number of prominent men who have been connected with it; and this is rendered all the more remarkable by the fact that in the early days our membership was anything but a long one. The congregation was founded by prominent men, by men who

(1) Rev. David Meldola.

came out to this country as officers in the British army, and that characteristic has been retained throughout its history.

It was a member (1) of a family that has played a very important part in our congregational affairs that was the means of securing for the Jews of Canada their full political rights. Being elected to the Legislature, he refused to take the oath in the ordinary form and was sworn in a manner harmonizing with his convictions as an Israelite. But his seat was declared vacant in consequence. Appealing again to the electors, he was triumphantly returned defeating three opponents by overwhelming majorities. But once more his seat was refused him. The ultimate result of the struggle which ensued was a vindication of the principles of justice, and the removal of Jewish disabilities in Canada a quarter of a century before they were abolished in the Mother Country.

Another member of the congregation (2) was one of the founders of the greatest banking institution in the Dominion. Another (3) was the first promoter direct shipping between this country and Great Britain, thus becoming one of the originators of Canada's mercantile marine. And yet another (4) became distinguished through his success in establishing trading posts in the Hudson Bay Territories, penetrating into the very heart of the wild Northwest in his enterprises.

The first water-works in Montreal were established

(1) Ezekiel Hart. (2) David David, one of the founders of the Bank of Montreal
(3) Henry Joseph (4) Jacob Franks.

by the member of our congregation (1) who designed and superintended the erection of the Chenneville Street synagogue. This public-spirited man was for a long time Chief Commissioner of Police. It is interesting to note that this important office was also held by a member of "Shearith Israel" (2) one hundred and fifteen years ago.

Another life-long member of our congregation (3), residing in the Ancient Capital, at one time filled the chief executive office of the most important representative commercial body in the Dominion, and occupied several other public positions of a most honorable character.

One of the presidents of "Shearith Israel" (4) was a member of the Montreal City Council; another (5) was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of one of our Universities; and a third (6) was the only Canadian coreligionist who has received the title of Queen's Counsel.

During the last war between Great Britain and the United States, and during the Canadian Rebellion, ~~a number~~ several members of our congregation served as officers of British troops, and rendered the Government valuable assistance. The names of some of them are honorably mentioned in a well-known work on Canadian history.

(1) Moses Judah Hayes. (2) Jacob Kuhn. (3) Abraham Josephat one time President of the Dominion Board of Trade. (4) Samuel Benjamin. (5) Dr. X. H. David, Dean in Bishop's College. (6) Gershom Joseph, Q.C.

At the time of the settlement between Great Britain and the United States of the now celebrated Alabama claims, and when humane arbitration had been substituted for bloody war, it was a significant act on the part of the rulers of the neighboring republic to invite for the first time a British subject to open one of the sessions of its House of Representatives with prayer. The significance of this act, which received additional emphasis from the circumstance that the British subject so invited was an Israelite, was ~~commented upon~~ most favorably commented upon at the time by the British Minister at Washington, and by the American, English and Canadian press. It was regarded not so much as a glorious triumph for the cause of religious liberty as a most suggestive proof of the good feeling existing between the great American Republic and Great Britain as a result of the friendly settlement of the Alabama dispute. The man upon whom this great distinction was conferred was my revered predecessor, your minister for thirty five years, the first Israelite in an English speaking country to receive the university degree of Doctor of Laws.

But I will not dwell upon his record, so well known to you; nor will I refer to those now happily living in our midst. I would rather ask you, my dear friends, to ponder upon this splendid record of the past, and reflect upon the devotion with which the many prominent men connected with our congregation served it in their day, so that, emulating their spirit, you may bear "Shearith Israel" to yet loftier heights.

עד הנה עזרנו "Hitherto the Eternal hath helped us". In the character of the men who have been prominent in the history of our congregation we trace the hand of Providence. In the long and difficult struggle during the first century of its existence, ordinary men would have often lost heart, and "Shearith Israel's" career would have come to an inglorious end. To perpetuate its existence it was necessary that its cause should be upheld by men of that ability and force of character which has led so many of the members of our congregation in the past to occupy positions of prominence and influence; and therefore the notable names in our congregational record, although naturally inspiring us with a pardonable pride in our annals, are above all an evidence of the over-ruling hand of Providence, a proof that עד הנה עזרנו, "Hitherto the Eternal hath helped us."

But while the eminent character of our predecessors was one of the secrets of "Shearith Israel's" preservation in days gone by, let us not forget that these men proved themselves worthy of success by the zeal which they displayed in furthering the congregation's interests. They were men who cherished a noble ideal; and that ideal was not only a synagogue prosperous in its material affairs, but a place of worship which should be in every sense of the term a house of God, a sanctuary whose benign influence should extend to their homes and illumine them with the sacred light of religion.

To the realization of this ideal they bent every

energy; and neither time, nor money, nor labor was spared when the interests of the synagogue were concerned. They were at all times animated with an ardent desire to uphold worthily the fame of their fathers, and as the congregation was founded and maintained upon this true basis it flourished; for כל כנסיה שהיא לשם שמים סופה לתקום, "every assembly that is for the sake of "Heaven will in the end be established".

Yes, my brethren, עד הנה עזרנו ה', "Hitherto the "Eternal hath helped us", hitherto Providence hath enabled us to overcome all difficulties, because, and I say it in all humility, we have labored לשם שמים, "for the sake of Heaven", because we have been willing to make sacrifices in the interests of our religion.

But let us not commit the fatal error of imagining that we may now rest upon the laurels of the past; that because we have a creditable record of a hundred and twenty full years no further exertions are necessary. Such a policy of inactivity, of fossilization, would deprive us of any claim to Divine protection. Relying merely upon the merits of our predecessors, we should not be laboring לשם שמים, and success would no longer bless us; for, in the words of our text, an assembly שאינה לשם שמים אינה סופה לתקום, which is not for the sake of Heaven, will not in the "end become permanent".

Our motto, then, should ever be, "Onwards and Upwards". While we have no sympathy with the policy which destroys the distinctive character of our

religious institutions — institutions sanctified in their origin and hallowed by innumerable associations; and while, adhering to the principles of the founders of our congregation, we have preserved from all innovation, and please God, will continue to preserve from all innovation, the form of worship handed down to us, let us not lose sight of the all-important fact that there are such things as real reform and genuine progress — the reform which amends every practice and every condition conflicting with our avowed principles, the progress which leads to more vigorous congregational life, to more scrupulous compliance with the demands of our God-given faith.

While, then, our principles must remain unchanged; while we must continue to jealously uphold the standard of positive historical Judaism unfurled in this land for the first time by the founders of our congregation a hundred and twenty five years ago, we must not lag behind in those things which relate to the administration of the affairs of the congregation, or to the furtherance of its purpose as a religious body.

The increase in the Jewish community of Montreal within the past few years, and the great changes that have taken place in consequence of that increase, demand more than ever energy on the part of ministers, officers and members of "Shearith Israel". The minister must not spare himself if he would prove worthy of the dignity of his office, the Board of Trustees must devote themselves unremittingly to their duties and keep pace with every improvement in synagogue management if the congregation is to retain the honored position it has so long occupied, and the members and seatholders must render it possible for minister and officers to accomplish success by extending to them at all times and in all things a whole-hearted support.

If this celebration inspire us with a determination to walk thus worthily in the footsteps of those who have shed so much lustre upon the name of "Shearith Israel"; if it induce each individual member and seatholder to do all that lies in his power to advance its interests, to elevate it to a yet higher plane of prosperity, we shall not have observed this one hundred and twenty fifth anniversary in vain, nor will our dwelling upon the splendid record of the past be open to the construction of self-glorification.

To "remember the days of old" and to "consider the years of former generations", to emulate all that was noble in those who have preceded us, is the part of wisdom. And if, displaying such wisdom, we constitute this anniversary the commencement of an era of activity and prosperity surpassing that which has gone before; if we inaugurate upon this holy Sabbath a revival in religious observance, a more scrupulous compliance with the demands of Judaism; and, moreover, if the members of our sister congregations, many of whom we are happy to have in our midst to-day, be impressed by this anniversary with the important part performed by "Shearith Israel" in upholding the standard of Judaism in this country for so many years before the formation of their congregations enabled them to participate in the privilege, so that we be drawn together yet more closely in the bonds of fellowship and friendship; — we may indeed thank God that we have been spared to celebrate such an occasion, we may in very truth re-echo the words of the inspired Psalmist (1), כה היום עשה ה' נגילה ונשמחה בו ;

"This is the day which the Eternal hath appointed, we "will be glad and rejoice thereon".

אמן אמן

(1) Ps. CXVIII, 24.

A Righteous Example.

Sermon in memory of the late Jacob de Sola Samuel ע"ה, President of the Congregation, delivered on 1st Heshvan (Oct. 12th), 5673,

a great friend of the Jewish Community and brother of Louis Phoseby is great and

זכרון צדיק לברכה "The memory of the righteous shall be for a blessing", Proverbs, X, 7.

In the concluding portion of last week's Parasha, and at the beginning of the Sidrah read this morning, the sacred historian describes the depravity of the world in the era preceding the Deluge. 120 years had been divinely promised as a period during which mankind should have an opportunity of reforming and so escaping impending doom. But corruption and violence had become so universal, and had acquired such sway, that the opportunity for reformation was utterly ignored, and the Almighty at last decided to blot out a generation that had sunk to the very lowest depths of depravity.

But there was one man who found favor in the sight of God. Noah, "perfect in his generations", had resisted the demoralizing influences of the time. Righteous and God-fearing, he was the one ray of light in otherwise universal gloom. With firm faith in God's purpose revealed to him, he constructed the ark as divinely commanded; and the strength of his faith will be appreciated if we reflect upon the derision, the ridicule to which he must have been subjected in undertaking such a task for such a purpose in such an age.

Noah was indeed, as the Torah declares, איש צדיק "a righteous man"; and the memory of his righteousness has been a veritable blessing to the world. It has been an incentive to men to resist evil even when evil has been universal, to practise the virtue of loyalty to the divine will even when such loyalty has been derided as evidence of a

visionary disposition.

Fortunately for mankind, the debauchery of the ante-diluvian era has had no parallel in subsequent ages. Corruption and vice have frequently been rampant, but at no time since the flood have they assumed universal proportions. Iniquity and crime are much in evidence in the present day, but the determined efforts put forth to suppress them prove that society has little sympathy with wrong-doing. Nay, the very outcry that is raised when wrong-doing is detected and exposed is conclusive evidence of the abhorrence with which society regards corruption and crime.

The world to-day is certainly very far from perfect, but, notwithstanding the jeremiads of pessimists, it is steadily improving. It is infinitely better than in the time of Noah; and, as we accept the teachings of the inspired writers of the Bible, we must believe that it will continue to improve until mankind shall universally honor the will of the God of the spirits of all flesh.

But if the world has materially improved since the days of Noah, that improvement has been due, directly or indirectly, to the example of righteous men — of men imbued with the spirit of God and with loyalty to His revealed will. It is not given to all men to rise to the eminence of the great characters that stand forth in history as the acknowledged exemplars of the divine principles of righteousness upon which the fabric of society rests. But it does lie within the power of all of us to honor the example of these models of righteousness; and it is because mankind has honored the example and teachings of an Abraham, a Moses, a Samuel and the other great exponents and types of righteousness that the world is infinitely

better to-day than in the time of Noah, and is progressing to a higher standard of excellence than yet attained. The memory of the righteous men has indeed proved a blessing.

It therefore behoves us in our turn and in our humble way to do all that we can to advance the cause of righteousness by presenting to our fellow-beings an example of righteousness. For as deeds are mightier than words, so is example infinitely more potent than precept. Discourses upon the practice of virtue, disquisitions upon the demands of religious duty serve their purpose; but far more effectual, far more powerful than any spoken discourse is a life ennobled by virtue, a life sanctified by devotion to duty. Such a life was that of the late revered and beloved President of our congregation.

Of a retiring and singularly unassuming disposition, his piety was none the less genuine, none the less deep, none the less a model to us, because it was never paraded. He knew full well that as a Jew it was his duty to honor the Torah and to lead a Jewish life; and his piety did not allow him to imagine that he was conferring a favor upon the Almighty because he performed his duty. And when I have said this, my dear friends, I have given you the key-note of his life.

Not only did he believe that in living a life characterized by spotless integrity he was simply doing his duty and therefore entitled to no praise, but it was a positive delight to him to be enabled to prove by tangible deeds that he wished to serve his Maker with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might.

You all know the prominent part he took in our synagogal services, a boon the congregation enjoyed for nearly six decades. But few of you realize

the zeal he displayed in the tedious and fatiguing labor of preparation for the services. During all the years he was connected with our choir, not once did I know him to absent himself from a rehearsal when asked to be present, not once did I hear him complain that too much was expected of him. And my association with him in the choir dates from my childhood. As an honorary officer of the congregation, he has left a record of unselfish devotion and unswerving loyalty to its interests seldom paralleled in the annals of any institution. No difficulty daunted him, no trouble discouraged him, no task however trivial was considered unworthy of his attention. He was as willing to show a child to a seat as to open the Hechal on Sabbath evening. No work for the synagogue was deemed too exacting, no demand upon his time regarded as unreasonable. He realized the sacredness and paramount importance of God's sanctuary, and he served the sanctuary with all the zeal, and with all the modesty, with all the disinterestedness of true piety.

During his long career as an officer of the congregation many things naturally occurred which he disapproved and which he condemned and sometimes necessarily opposed. But he never allowed these occurrences to withdraw him from active work for the congregation. He was incapable of descending to the level of a spoilt child that refuses to continue to play with its companions because it cannot have its way. He was essentially a man; and in nothing was his manliness more strikingly displayed than in his consistency — consistency revealed in the

Even when his rare voice increased in greatness and charm he never changed the idea that he was serving the congregation because he felt it his admirable privilege, but on the contrary, he accepted an honorary, a privileged title conferred to admonish the very important nature of public worship, and will be ever highly and affectionately in his heart of hearts.

perfect harmony between his actions and his professions.

He professed interest in the welfare and prosperity of this congregation, and a desire that its blended record should be perpetuable: half a century of indefatigable and self-sacrificing labor attest the reality of his interest and earnestness of his desire. He professed allegiance to the Torah: a life ennobled by all the virtues inculcated in the Torah evidenced the genuineness of his allegiance. He professed adherence to Judaism of his fathers: uncompromising loyalty to the laws and institutions of Judaism stamped his profession with the impress of absolute sincerity. May there be similar consistency displayed by all of us who profess to revere his memory.

The only true, only genuine tribute we can render his memory is to follow his example, is to practise the virtues which placed on his brow the diadem of righteousness.

When Judaism demands some sacrifice on our part, be it a sacrifice of comfort or of convenience or of material advantage, let us consider how readily and how cheerfully he would have made the sacrifice. When temptation would seduce us from the path of duty, let us remember how vigorously he would have resisted and have overcome the temptation. When the congregation requires our efforts for its maintenance and advancement, let us never forget how faithfully, how zealously and how unselfishly he served it.

In thus constituting him a model for our actions, in thus honoring the noble example he has bequeathed to us, not only shall we be proving the genuineness of our professed reverence for

his memory, but we shall be rendering his memory the ~~truest and greatest of all tributes~~ by investing it with the halo of benediction, by adopting for life the words of the wise king, "the memory of the righteous shall be for a blessing" [illegible]

Amen. Amen

My great-uncle.

Address at the funeral of Mr. Gershom Joseph, Q.C., President of the congregation, עי"ר. Tammuz 9th, 5653, June 23d, 5653.

הנאהבים והנעימים בחייהם ובמותם לא נפרדו

"They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their "death they are not parted." (II Samuel, I, 23.)

But two short weeks ago we stood here by the bier of her who had been the honored mistress of this home; to-day we have assembled to offer a parting tribute of respect to its master. How suggestive the proximity of these mournful events! As if thirty two years of happy wedded life had forged a bond which even Death was powerless to destroy, the husband tarried not on earth after the spirit of his faithful and devoted spouse had wended its way heavenward, for "he heard the voice another could not "hear which said he must not stay, he "saw the hand another could not see which "beckoned him away".

הנאהבים והנעימים בחייהם, "They were lovely and pleasant "in their lives", my dear friends we indulge in no mere figure of speech when we apply these words of the inspired writer to the master and mistress of this once happy but now desolate home. If she whose loss we deplored two weeks ago was an embodiment of those virtues which are woman's noblest crown, of those qualities which inspire with profoundest admiration, he who has so soon followed his life's companion hence possessed in

an eminent degree the faculty of winning a place in the affection of those with whom he was associated from which neither time nor change of circumstance could dislodge him. If she displayed genuine "loveliness" of character, he manifested a geniality of disposition which rendered him indeed "pleasant in his life" to those who knew him best, to those whom he greeted in his home. Nor was he "pleasant in his life" merely in geniality of disposition. He was "pleasant in his life" in the infinitely higher sense that he illumined his home with the light of religion, invested his domestic life with that beauty of character which can only be found where the flame on religion's altar is faithfully tended. The reading aloud of the prayers established by our ritual was an institution jealously upheld by him in his home, and the reverent manner in which he thus voiced his gratitude to the great Source of all blessing was evidence of that depth of religious feeling which enabled him not merely to bear with fortitude the suffering and distress of his last illness, but also to submit with patience to the terribly dispiriting conviction of the

last few years that his bodily vigor was gradually and surely ebbing, that his ability to withstand the intermittent attacks of disease was becoming less day by day.

Dear friends, heroism does not consist alone in recklessness as regards danger amid scenes of excitement and confusion. The man who is subjected to constantly recurring attacks of sickness and ~~feel~~ feels his physical powers waning, and who yet bears with patient the melancholy decline, displays heroism as great as, nay, greater than that of one whose courage is propped up and stimulated by excitement and prospective advancement. The marked manner in which the departed manifested this quiet but highest form of heroism was typical of the man; for throughout his life he turned from all that savored of display and pompous ostentation. No honor conferred upon him was ever sought. When the congregation of which he was so loyal a supporter, and whose ~~principal~~ highest lay office he held more than once, wished him to lay the corner-stone of its present place of worship as a recognition of his many services in its behalf, it was only after much persuasion that a consent was wrung from him, for in this as in everything else he desired not distinction.

And yet, my dear friends, with all his avoidance of ostentation, with all his indifference to the world's applause, he won a place in the hearts of those who knew him infinitely surpassing in value the temporary distinctions of those who live solely for the applause of the world, for worldly distinctions perish the moment the soul quits its earthly tenement, but, in the words of an eloquent writer, "to live in the hearts of those we leave behind, is not to die".

נעימים והנעימים בחייהם, "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives", they whose home here has now been rendered a void, ובמותם לא נפרדו, "and in their death they are not parted". May it please our Heavenly Father in His infinite mercy that as He has ordained that the husband should not tarry here after the departure of the wife, thus as it were emphasizing the indissoluble nature of the sacred tie that united them on earth, He may graciously decree that their souls shall not be parted in eternity, but shall unitedly realise that felicity which He confers upon those who like them have reposed implicit confidence in His boundless goodness and mercy. And as "He knoweth our frame", as "He remembereth that we are but dust" and that therefore "there are none on earth so righteous as always do good and sin not", may He compassionately blot out all record of their inherent human weakness, accepting as an atonement for any shortcomings the weary days of suffering that preceded their release. So may husband and wife, united here in life and parted not in death, be united through all eternity in peace and bliss perfect and unending. Amen.

Address at the funeral Mrs Gershom Joseph (25th Sivan, 5653) June 9th, 5653

כ"ה סיון תרנ"ג

כן יתן לידידו שנה

"Thus doth He give His beloved sleep".
(Psalm CXXVII, 2.).

In the sorrow which we experience when a beloved one has been summoned away, in the grief with which we reflect that the voice of one endeared to us by the ties of kindred and affection has been stilled for evermore, it is natural to us as human beings to look upon death with feelings of deepest gloom. And yet, calmer reflection in the spirit of religion must materially modify these feelings, must ultimately dissipate them. For, my dear friends, what is death — the death of the pious? A transition from earthly care to celestial peace; from weakness to strength; from infirmity to perfection; from doubt and expectation to certainty and bliss.

To the pious man and pious woman, then, death is a crowning proof of the Almighty's mercy, for "thus doth He give His beloved sleep" — sleep from the pains, the anxieties, the tribulations of earthly existence — sleep, the awakening from which is to realise "the plenitude of joy which is in "the presence of the All-merciful, the everlasting "happiness which is on the right hand of the "Most High".

If human reason may be permitted to judge of an earthly career and of its termination, we

cannot but declare that the death of her whose mortal remains now lie before us was indeed this "sleep" with which God blesses those who have served Him faithfully and lovingly.

אשה יראת ה׳ היא תתהלל, "The woman who feareth "the Lord, she shall be praised", said the wise king; and thus, while justice demands that we expose wrong-doing, that we condemn irreligion, that we refuse to lavish expressions of praise where they are undeserved, justice equally demands that we commend a bright example, that we praise one whose life has been an exemplification of those virtues which practical religion inculcates.

Those of you, my dear friends, then, who were privileged to know the departed intimately know how truly I speak when I say that the idea that was ever uppermost in her mind was the idea of duty. The thought of sparing herself, or of delegating the performance of exhausting labors to others even when she might reasonably have done so, never occurred to her, for she knew not what it was to consider self. A more devoted wife than she never lived. More than once, by exertions that were superhuman, did she literally snatch from the grasp of death her now afflicted husband. Nor did her idea of duty vanish when she passed beyond the threshold of her home, for to the poor and unfortunate in the community she was in very truth a faithful and self-sacrificing friend. As president

of our congregational Sewing Society, and as Directress of another benevolent association, not merely did she prove an indefatigable laborer in the sacred cause of charity, but she displayed in her contact with the poor a kindly and thoughtful consideration for their condition, an intense sympathy with their trouble and distress, which rendered her a veritable angel of mercy wherever her presence was required.

And as her life, when health and strength were yet here, was adorned by innumerable meritorious actions, so were her last days characterised by pious faith in the Almighty, by implicit confidence in His boundless mercy. And thus when the ablest medical skill was powerless to banish suffering, the voice of one engaged in prayer would soothe her, would cause her to absolutely forget the cruel pangs of disease.

Our sages teach that each meritorious action we perform becomes an advocate for us before the Throne of Grace. Oh, how many eloquent advocates plead for the departed at the bar of Divine justice and mercy! How many bright actions illumined the path for her spirit as it wended its way back to its maker!

May it please our Heavenly Father in His infinite mercy then to graciously remember her in her favor

these many meritorious actions, may He extend to her human frailties His compassionate forgiveness, and so grant to her soul that perfect and eternal felicity which He confers upon those who have delighted in the performance of His behests.

And as "He healeth the sick" — aye, healeth the sick even where human skill is utterly unavailing, and "supporteth those who are bowed down", may He grant to the bereaved master of this house vigor and vitality which shall yet triumph over disease, and vouchsafe to him abundant fortitude and comfort. May He uphold him with the hope of being reunited with the dear one who has been called away, and console him with the conviction that the death of a woman so truly good, so truly pious, is but the "sleep" with which the God of the spirits of all flesh blesses His beloved, the sleep through which He causes them to exchange the fleeting pleasures and innumerable cares of this life for the pure unalloyed bliss of eternity. Amen.

To strike an ordinary individual, may not be a praiseworthy act, but it is certainly not a very terrible one; and we do not read anywhere that it is to be treated as a capital offence. Neither are we taught that cursing, however reprehensible it may be, is to be punished with death — in ordinary cases. But parents are not ordinary individuals in the relations in which they stand to their children. And the two precedents just cited not only evidence this, but they illustrate the divine estimate of the heinousness of the sin of disobedience or irreverence to parents.

At the very beginning of our existence as a nation then, and with all the impressive sublimity of that awe-inspiring scene at mount Sinai, the Almighty enjoined the duty of filial reverence. This obligation was literally proclaimed in trumpet tones, was literally thundered forth to mankind.

And when Moses, the giant figure in the revelation at Sinai, was approaching the end of his career, when he was addressing his parting injunctions to our ancestors in the plains of Moab he elaborated upon the sin of disobedience to parents and prescribed the treatment to be meted out to a rebellious son. If you read the 21st chapter of Deuteronomy, you will perceive that in the publicity given to the punishment of a rebellious son his conduct was regarded as a direct offence

against the Almighty.

Nor did Moses simply preach filial reverence. He practised it. Deprived of the companionship of father and mother by his exile in Midian, where he lived until he was eighty years of age, he signally displayed the virtue of filial reverence in his treatment of Jethro, his father-in-law.

Ordinary men who have been very successful in life, but who have achieved infinitely less than Moses accomplished in leading the Israelites forth from the land of Egypt, are often imbued with an overpowering sense of their own importance. But Moses was not an ordinary man. He was the greatest of men. And not all the gratification he must have experienced in his ~~stupendous~~ extraordinary triumph over Pharaoh and the Egyptians could make him forget the duty of filial reverence. When only a few weeks had elapsed after the Exodus, he was visited by Jethro. Instead of assuming the airs of a man impressed with his personal greatness, he reverently prostrated himself before his father-in-law, and greeted him with every evidence of affection and respect. And when Jethro addressed advice to him — to the man who had just performed those stupendous wonders in Egypt and at the Red Sea Moses did not resent it, did not treat it as an impertinent

encroachment upon his prerogative as the divinely commissioned leader of the recently emancipated nation; but, in the words of last week's Parasha, "Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, "and did all that he had said" ויבא משה לחתנו ויעשו כל אשר אמר (1).

When the prophet Elisha was summoned to accompany Elijah, that he might become his successor, the Bible tells us that he begged Elijah to allow him to go and kiss his father and mother before he went with him (2). Not even the prospect of becoming the successor of probably the greatest of men after Moses could render Elisha oblivious of the duty of a son to his parents.

These instances will suffice as illustrations of Bible teaching. And if we turn to the writings of our Sages we find the duty of filial reverence enunciated with equal earnestness and with similar emphasis.

Referring to the two precepts, "Every man shall "fear his mother and his father" and "Honor thy "father and thy mother" (3), the Rabbis ask, "What "is Fear, and what is Honor? Fear thy mother and "thy father by sitting not in their seats and standing not

(1) Exodus, XVIII, 24. (2) I Kings, XIX, 20. (3) Lev. XIX, 3 & Ex. XX, 12.

"in their places, by paying strict attention to their
"words and interrupting not their speech. Be doubly
"careful not to criticise nor judge their arguments
"or controversies. Honor thy father and mother
"by attending to their wants, giving them to eat and
"to drink. Put their raiment upon them, and
"tie their shoes, if they are not able to perform
"these services for themselves."

Rabbi Eleazar was once asked how far
honor to parents should be extended. He replied:
"Cast all thy wealth into the sea, but trouble not
"thy father and thy mother".

Filial reverence thus stands pre-eminent among
the duties imposed upon us by our religion. But
even if Judaism did not enjoin the practice
of this virtue, it would be prompted by sentiment
in every man and every woman not dead to all
right feeling and generous emotion. A rebellious
son or daughter, a son or daughter who outrages
the feelings of a parent is in reality a freak of
nature, and should be treated as a freak of
nature; for the very instincts of nature
dictate the reverential treatment of parents.
In infancy and childhood who can fill the place

of father or mother? In youth whose guidance so faithful, whose advice so disinterested and loving?

The Mosaic Law has sometimes been criticised as ~~being~~ unduly severe in its condemnation of disobedience to parents. It has been stigmatised as cruel because it contains such ordinances as those which make the striking or cursing of a parent a capital offence. But the Mosaic Law was framed by divine wisdom, and therefore it is not tainted with morbid sentimentalism. The Mosaic Law deals with a sin in accordance with the effect of such sin. The Mosaic Law recognises that a bad son will become a bad man, and that a bad daughter will develop into a bad woman. And pity it is that these incontrovertible truths are so seldom considered by sons and daughters whose heads are turned by a little worldly applause or whose senses are captivated by worldly pleasures, and who consequently treat the fifth commandment with contempt. And it is because the Mosaic Law recognises the utterly demoralising effect of disobedience to parents that it declares

that a son or daughter who strikes or curses a parent is unworthy of life.

But does this striking of a parent only mean a physical blow? And is the cursing of a parent limited to words — of imprecation?

A son or a daughter who outrages a parent's feelings, who is guilty of conduct which causes a parent bitter sorrow, strikes that parent with infinitely greater force than can be concentrated in any physical blow. A physical blow smarts for a moment. But the blow administered by the conduct of a rebellious and ungrateful son or daughter may break a parent's heart, may send a parent to a premature grave. Ingratitude is ever a bitter wrong to endure; but of all the forms of ingratitude, the ingratitude of a child is the most bitter.

Nor is the cursing of a parent limited to words of imprecation. Children were intended to be a blessing to parents; but a son or a daughter who flouts the Almighty's commandments by trampling upon a parent's feelings ceases to be a blessing, and becomes a greater curse than can be framed by human lips.

And is the duty of filial reverence limited to

the lifetime of our parents? Does the obligation cease when father and mother have been taken from us?

שמע בני מוסר אביך ואל תטוש תורת אמך קשרם
תמיד על לבך "by son, heed the commandment of thy father,
"and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them upon
"thy heart continually." "Continually" means during our
lifetime, not merely during the lifetime of our parents. And
furthermore, not only are we to honor our father and
mother, as the fifth commandment enjoins, but we are
to honor their teachings. "by son, heed the commandment
"of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.
"Bind them upon thy heart continually". The wording of
this precept leaves no room for doubt as to the obligation
to honor our parents even after they have gone from
us by honoring their teachings, by adhering to their
principles, by acting in all things as they would have
wished us to act had they still been with us.

We have a recognition of this in the practice of having
the Kaddish recited by orphans or semi-orphans, and,
fortunately, this recital of the Kaddish is a beautiful
custom that is seldom neglected. But does the Kaddish
possess any talismanic power? What is the Kaddish?
Mainly a praise of the Almighty, without the slightest reference
to death or immortality, and repeated by every Hazan hundreds
of times each year even though his parents be living and

present in the synagogue when he is officiating. In many Sephardic synagogues, the Kaddish is sung by the entire congregation every Sabbath and Festival evening. In our own synagogue it is sung by the congregation on the evenings of Rosh Hashanah and Kipper.

But when the Kaddish is recited by an orphan, when, ~~well~~ notwithstanding his bereavement, he can then praise the Almighty, it proves that he acknowledges the wisdom and justice of the Divine decree, and bows to that decree in pious resignation. And, moreover, the recitat of the Kaddish by an orphan evidences that his parents cared for his religious education, and this alone is a tribute to their memory.

This recitat of the Kaddish is a beautiful and touching custom, and it has been sanctified by centuries of usage. When we recite the Kaddish in memory of our parents, it proves that we do not and cannot forget them.

Yes, my dear friends, we honor our parents when we recite the Kaddish in their memory. But we honor our parents still more when we honor their teachings. The son who has sometimes neglected to say the Kaddish, but who can stand at his father's grave and truthfully say there that he has honored his father's teachings, that he has upheld his father's principles,

that he has lived as his father would have wished him to live: that son pays an infinitely greater and infinitely nobler tribute to his father's memory than the son whose filial reverence begins and ends with saying Kaddish. We have the Judaism which consists solely in observing Yom Kippur. And we have filial reverence which consists solely in saying Kaddish. Such a Kippur is a mere superstition, and such a Kaddish is a mere superstition. Men may deceive themselves, but they cannot deceive God. Of all the inconsistencies that confront us from time to time there is none more lamentable than that displayed by some people who seem to imagine that they honor their parents' memory in saying Kaddish and observing a Yahrzeit while they utterly ignore those religious duties which their parents held sacred.

In honoring our parents, as in all our religious obligations, words are valueless if they are not accompanied by consistent actions. אין מדרש אלא מעשה (1) "Not theory but practice is the essential."

אמן ואמן

(1) Aboth, I, 17.