

LILIENBLOOM THE ZIONIST

BY

A. L. BISCO

WITH A LETTER BY

Dr. MAX NORDAU

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A LETTER
FROM
Dr. MAX NORDAU(*)

8 Rue Hener,
Paris, Dec. 6th, 1911.

Dear Sir,

I have perused with considerable interest the manuscript you have *kindly* forwarded, and which I return by the same mail. The author of the essay on Lilienbloom evidently masters completely his subject, and treats it with winning warmth. I have no doubt it will favourably influence the opinion and attitude towards Judaism of its readers; and all I can wish is that it may find many readers in Anglo-Jewry.

I congratulate you on the constitution of
your Society and on its aims and methods,

and remain,

With Zion's Greetings,

Yours truly,

DR. MAX NORDAU

**) The Manuscript of "Lilienbloom the Zionist" was sent to Dr. Max Nordau by Mr. L. Rifkind in the name of the Edinburgh Young Men's Zionist Culture Association. As we wished to be sure of our attempt, from a literary point of view, we were anxious to hear first the opinion of one of the greatest Jewish thinkers. We are, of course, very grateful both for his favourable opinion, and his cordial encouragement.*

THE name of Moshe Leib Lilienbloom will without doubt be handed down to posterity on account of his masterpiece "Chatos Neurim" (Sins of Youth), which is a sort of an autobiography under a fictitious name; and by his being one of the most fervent Zionist pioneers. Yet, however prevalent the zest of literature is upon us, the present forlorn state of the Jews everywhere impels us to devote all our intellectual power to Zionism, examining it from all points of view, and when found to be really sound, to ratify it as the sole remedy for the Jewish welfare. Therefore we shall reluctantly pass by in our present essay Lilienbloom the writer, and devote our sole attention to Lilienbloom the Zionist, who not only dedicated his pen to Zionism, but till he breathed his last—there is no flourish in this phrase—took an active part in the Zionist movement. But as the keynote of the present essay is a lengthy, posthumous letter written by Lilienbloom to the poet Gordon, we find it necessary, from a psychological point of view, to furnish here some characteristics of the lives of these two eminent men of letters.

At Wilna J. L. Gordon was born on the 21st October, 1832. There was but little likelihood of his becoming in after years the greatest poet of his time, as his parents, after the manner of all orthodox Jews in Russia, brought him up with a view of becoming a Rabbi; consequently he was forced to dedicate his boyhood to the study of the Bible and the Talmud. But, as stated above, Gordon was fortunate enough to look first upon God's world at "Jerusalem of Lithuania" (a term applied to Wilna as a mark of distinction for its famous Jewish scholars), where he had the opportunity to become acquainted in his youth with the two great Hebrew poets, Adam and Michael Lebenson, and other well-known writers who influenced him to acquire the knowledge of a few foreign languages. Gordon followed the good advice of his literary friends, and before long he entered the then existing Rabbinical institution where he was qualified as teacher of the Russian language, at the age of twenty two. To a certain extent fortune smiled upon him: he was appointed teacher in a small country-town, and there he got married.

It is in truth a remarkable trait of a real poet. Though being overwhelmed with ungrateful work as a teacher among bigots

and fanatics who harrassed him every now and then, and devoting assiduously his spare hours to the study of several literary subjects, he produced splendid poems, idyls, various lyrical dainties, all of them sparkling here and there with acute insight, shrewd wit, and hundreds of honey-sweet and charming utterances, as graceful many-coloured butterflies hovering about a flower-bed. But in his literary pursuits, either in poetry or prose, he strove earnestly for two significant objects: he acrimoniously derided the rigid routine of the orthodox faith, and constantly promoted progress of knowledge. But the embittered and enraged orthodox class would not leave him with impunity, and after he took residence in St. Petersburg as secretary to the Jewish congregation, they charged him with treason against the Government. Thus he was put into prison where he was confined for some time.

Yes, we are sincerely bound in gratitude to give credit to all harbingers and torch-bearers and champions of civilisation; but in one respect Gordon was greatly mistaken. He threw himself headlong into the light of civilisation, as a moth into the light of a burning candle, unconscious of the fatal consequences. Moses Mendelssohn, the precursor of the Jewish renaissance in Germany, made the same mistake.

Mendelssohn "strove valiantly for the moral and political elevation of the Jews," and his efforts were crowned with success first in Austria, where, by the sanction of the gracious king Joseph II, schools for Jewish children were opened. Mendelssohn and his friends triumphed; but how long did their triumphant exultation last? Mendelssohn alone was spared by his death from seeing the mortifying results of the commencement of the Jewish Assimilation. His two daughters, as well as his best friends, were the first to desert the Jewish camp; and ever since the Jews in Germany are so proud, their mind so rapturous for European civilisation that they continue almost *en bloc* to shake off from themselves the sacred ties which held them steadfastly to the Jewish Nation, and in their ecstasy of this will-o-the-wisp they sacrifice their heart and soul to Christianity.

And the passion for European civilisation was so deep-rooted in Gordon's soul that he was merely surprised and disappointed at the first pogroms in Russia. His very soul, though he was the greatest poet of his time, was neither shaken enough to make him strike on his lyre a Jeremiad of the mournful fate of his nation, nor to cause him to give himself up wholly to Zionism as Lilienbloom did, for—how strange and sad the fact is!—Gordon

had an immense affection for the national language—Hebrew, but not for the nation itself. In one of Gordon's letters to Lilienbloom there occurs the following: "If I did not write and sing much about the idea of "The Colonisation of Palestine," it was not because of my dislike to it, but because I did not believe in it, and where there is no belief, there is no enthusiasm." These words pronounce him an utterly indifferent Jew, for he who is deep in love with his people, and more so if he be a poet, cannot help believing blindly in a movement to emancipate his people.

But enough of Gordon as a contrast to Lilienbloom. Now let us begin with the chief object of our essay—Lilienbloom.

At Keidany (Kovno gov.) M. L. Lilienbloom was born in October, 1843. Unlike Gordon he spent his youth in a small country-town, and did not have the good fortune to come in contact with any of the eminent writers of his time. With the exception of his extraordinary search after truth and knowledge, and his passionate sentiment for the reform of the Jewish religion, as well as his illimitable love for the Hebrew language, Lilienbloom could be diametrically opposed to Gordon. In his seventeenth year Gordon acquired the knowledge of some foreign languages, in his

twenty-second he got his certificate as teacher which rendered him independent; a few years afterwards he married and his domestic affairs were sufferable enough. But Lilienbloom was in his youth a profound scholar in the Talmud only, and owing to his erudition, which was a source of pride to his fond parents, they made what they considered a good bargain in marrying him early to a girl of a well-to-do family. Whilst Gordon at that period of his life enjoyed the intimacy and encouragement and tuition of eminent writers and qualified teachers, and, in addition, had a good selection of books at his disposal, Lilienbloom read by sheer chance a few Hebrew works of the modern literature which were the incentives of a tremendous revolt in his soul.

Lilienbloom himself found the fittest term to characterise this phase of his life by calling it a "Hebrew tragi-comedy". Shortly after his marriage he had to engage in the battle of life and procured a livelihood for his family as a Hebrew teacher. For a short space of time he also delivered in a certain Beth-Hamidrash a series of Talmudic lectures to an audience of young scholars. But all the wrestlings and struggles for the subsistence of his family seemed to be trivial in comparison with the vehement revolt which arose in his

soul: he could no longer tolerate the trite and cumbersome formalities of our religion. He fought with himself for years, concealing from his family and the townsfolk his inward struggle. But when the fermentation of his thoughts reached the climax, he gave vent to them, and published an article in which he persuasively pleaded for a radical reform. That article, and others of the same nature, roused the anger of all the orthodox class throughout the country, and particularly of his fellow-citizens. Their anger soon turned into such a fury that they, in their frenzy, would no doubt have done with the "heretic" (he was then so nicknamed) the same what all fanatics would have done in such a case. But not all great reformers and inventors are doomed to ordeal: a good many of them were saved by the intervention of some open-minded man, and Lilienbloom also was rescued by the kind-hearted Dr. A. Shaffir of Kovno, who advised him to take refuge at Odessa where he would begin a new life by preparing himself for entrance to the university, there to take up a course of studies. Lilienbloom in desperation followed the good advice of his friend and betook himself to Odessa; where the refugee went through a series of harrowing trials: he had for a long time to suffer the pangs of

hunger and humiliation.

One of his letters to his wife—he had sent her back to her native town—proves the best illustration of his heart-rendering sorrows. In that letter he bitterly bewails and explicitly describes every detail of his miserable life; you hear in it a deep moan, and a bitter complaint; it is, in a word, a Jeremiad. It is, however, a little too long, and too dull to be given here. We will, therefore, only make use of two details mentioned therein. One of them is, that he had of necessity sold the works of Pisarev, a Russian critic and dry-as-dust materialist, who had in his time morbidly infected the young generation, and Lilienbloom was also under his spell. The followers of Pisarev would naturally rather sacrifice anything in the world rather than the works of their admired master, and Lilienbloom's wife probably knew well how great was her husband's attachment to those works. The other detail is his irrevocable determination to devote all his energies to study. But his ignorant wife did not in the least care for his persuasive letter, and she returned to him with her children, and thus all the more encumbered his mind with cares. Although he boasted in the above mentioned letter that he had an inflexible will, it was either only to frighten his wife, or he really believed himself

to be endowed with such. The fact is that his moral disposition, his honesty and tender heart were always the leading forces in all his actions.

While Lilienbloom was strenuously exerting himself to earn a livelihood for his family, and at the same time prepared himself for a course of study at the university, he was unaware of the great literary fame he had won by his work "Chatos Neurim" (Sins of Youth). This book is a kind of a confession, or autobiography, of a young Jew who has become conscious that he had wasted his youth in devoting himself to the study of the Talmud which is a curse and not a blessing, a mass of trite, mawkish, subtle sophistry. The style of the book is fluent and simple, the incidents, the vicissitudes, the arguments, every line of it, is so natural, so candid, that during his eager perusal the reader is entirely under the spell of the book. And yet, excepting the deep gratitude, respect, veneration from the advanced readers on one hand, and contempt, execration, and malediction from the orthodox class on the other hand, Lilienbloom had materially gained very little by his book. He only received, as was till of late the custom with Hebrew publishers, a few hundred copies which he himself sold to his near and far

acquaintances.

Lilienbloom thus dragged on a martyr-life, endeavouring to procure a sort of living for his family, and to fight for the promotion of knowledge. But—I cannot help it: the adage must be altered a little—man proposes, Satan disposes: Lilienbloom on a sudden became an iconoclast—he entirely abandoned his ideal of reform and his burning desire for knowledge. That significant change was the result of an external intervention. In the end of the sixties Russia perpetrated, in broad daylight, tremendous plunder and brutal massacre against the Jews. That bestial action was then termed “pogrom”, and ever since it has become in Russia a custom to repeat this bloody action from time to time. But the first pogrom threw all the civilised world into consternation, and Lilienbloom was one of those who got the greatest shock. Recording that bloody event in his diary, he writes: “The agony has done me much good. The ravagers were approaching the house of my residence. The women screamed and lamented, and seized the little ones in their arms without knowing where to fly; the men stood stunned. All of us thought that within a few moments we would become the prey of the furious ravagers; but, heaven be thanked, they

fled for fear of the soldiers, and thus we were spared. The agony has done me much good. At least once in my life I happened to have the same feeling that my ancestors have felt all their lifetime. Fear and dread overfilled their lives, and why should I, even for a while, be exempted from that dreadful feeling which they felt all their life? I am descended from them, their sufferings are dear to me, and I am proud of their honour. How great is my delight that fate granted me even once to feel the bitterness of exiled life of my nation. The agony has done me much good". And at the conclusion of his diary he says: "The reader sees that after the cause and aim of the pogrom was made clear to my mind, and being driven to despair of our national prospects, my study of the gymnasial course seemed to me a great perpetration against my unfortunate nation".

It is not our business to enter here upon the discussion whether great men are ordained by Providence, or predestined by nature, according to the doctrine that "the crisis always produces the man"; we only refer to the most remarkable fact that the great men who have at various periods freed our oppressed people were first induced not by reflection but by some external agitation

which overwhelmed their mind. Simply and concisely but with a tinge of poetical grace does relate our Bible: "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand". Theodore Herzl likewise—it is no secret now—when he saw with his own eyes how captain Dreyfus was stripped in Paris of his dignity, was so greatly shocked that he resolved to free our oppressed people, and in course of time he became the leader of the Zionist movement. Lilienbloom was more than shocked: he was agonised by the pogrom.

Another fact, not less remarkable than the first, is, that those men were great thinkers, and before they came forward as deliverers of their people, they were more or less cosmopolitans. From the birth of Moses and the time of his adoption as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, until he first "went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens", there is not recorded in the Bible a single characteristic, a single remark, of the intervening period. Yet we dare surmise that

Moses, being brought up in a royal family, was in all likelihood very far in spirit from his oppressed people; the following is a convincing proof. One of the most vital laws which preserve our people as a nation is that we may not intermarry with other peoples. This law first took root with our progenitor Abraham, and according to tradition, the Hebrews observed this law very strictly during the bondage in Egypt. And when Moses escaped Pharaoh's sword and fled to the hospitable but heathen Jethro, he married the daughter of his host. Herzl's, and to a very small extent Lilienbloom's, cosmopolitan attitude, speak for themselves too clearly, for most of the highly educated Jews are cosmopolitans.

But if the first and greater part of Moses' life is an insoluble enigma, a sealed book to us, and the first part of Herzl's life is similarly undeciphered for the present, we can penetrate Lilienbloom's soul without much difficulty. The first and greater part of his life was a page of a 'tragi-comedy,' full of infinite sorrow and incessant struggle for a bare livelihood. Not having the good luck to be brought up as a prince like Moses, nor beyond the walls of the Ghetto like Herzl, Lilienbloom was born and bred in the centre of the Ghetto, and consequently he saw and felt very deeply

the wretchedness of thousands of his brethern. For all that, however strenuously he laboured to attain some position in life, he could not for a moment forget his hopeless people. He seemed to be the embodiment of his people, their life was his life, their death—his death. In the seventies, when there prevailed all over Russia a severe famine which seriously affected the Jews, who, under the mournful existing circumstances, are always the first victims of any economical distress, Lilienbloom was the first who then suggested to promote the settlement in Russia of Jewish agriculturists. He offered that suggestion in an article written with such force that it made a strong impression upon the readers, and many of them resolved to carry out this project into effect. For this purpose the richest Jews in St. Petersburg laid the foundation of an agricultural society, and they managed to collect more than two hundred thousand roubles in a short time.

Lilienbloom was now not very far from setting up the banner towards Zion. He had already removed the two greatest obstacles. Since the last dispersion from Palestine our people had for centuries to live everywhere a wandering, beggarly, precarious life; it was never more granted the wandering Jew to

enjoy a natural and settled life as a farmer : acquiring land and living on it was forbidden him, and as time went on he naturally became absolutely estranged from nature. To stir up anew in the heart of the Jews the desire for cultivating the ground was the same as to remould the whole Jewish nation, and Lilienbloom was the man who possessed the creative power to exercise so commanding an influence over his Brethren,

The other obstacle was the pernicious Assimilation. We stated above that almost all the cultured Jews are inclined to cosmopolitanism, and a great part of them, including even some Hebrew writers, were of the opinion that Assimilation is the inevitable solution of our national problem, and that we ought, therefore, to comply with it gratefully. But Lilienbloom's most judicious and perceptive mind resisted powerfully this pernicious tendency. Before the occurrence of the pogroms in Russia, Lilienbloom vigorously refuted publicly, as well as in private letters to his intimate friends, the apparently strong motives of the preachers of assimilation. As an illustration we shall now translate one of his most important letters of which we already made mention at the outset of our essay, and which will point out by the way that not

only the distress of the Jews, but—and herein lies the full weight—the distress of Judaism was the concern of Lilienbloom.

The following is that pregnant letter.

“Odessa, 20 Kislev, 1888.

“Not to recur to our previous topics I intend to lay before you my present view which has not changed but has become clearer to me.

“After the pogroms I made up my mind to get at the root of the hatred that accompanies us everywhere and at all times. The old subterfuges, such as religious hatred, on the one hand, and the coarse appearance of our brethren to all other nations, on the other hand, cannot be any more taken for granted, because I have observed that those who do not tolerate any religion hate us not less than their orthodox ancestors, and our cultured brethren are hated in the same way as the ignorant classes.

“This investigation led me to the old course. Being busy with economical questions, I had not paid sufficient attention to it before, namely, the natural difference between the Jews (possibly the whole Semitic race), and the Japhetic or Aryan races, of which the first were Greeks, whose manners and customs

were afterwards adopted by all other nations. The Jews, according to Heine, concentrate all their mind on one thing, therefore all the powers they perceived they attributed to one God, and the Japhetic—on many things. The Jews contemplate nature, are moderate in history and legends, and the Japhetics are enthusiasts in all those matters (notwithstanding that in all the later centuries their scholars began to analyse and study the visible world). The Jews are morally very strict, they discern the essence and spirit of everything, keep themselves far from artificial pleasures; and the Japhetics concern themselves chiefly with beauty and taste, so that beauty has become with them an important cult, and to this day it is with them the greatest characteristic in poetry and prose; they are very particular about external appearances, and are mostly indulgent to pleasures. All the European students sing the song which begins:

Gaudeamus igitur

Juvenes dum sumus . . .

words unsuitable for men who devote their lives to study and the welfare of mankind. Were I to suspect our ancient scholars of knowing these characteristics I would then say that they intentionally named the progenitor of the Aryan races Japhet, because of

their love for beauty (יָפֶה and יָפֵה can be taken in Hebrew from one derivation. *The translator*). The Bible is with the Jews the same as the Iliad with the Greeks, but how great is the difference, how diverse are their spirits, and how far apart are their aims! From these books we perceive what was the business of the one race, and what the business of the other race.

“The Jews had years of the second tithe (מַעֲשֵׂר שְׁנִי), and they made their pilgrimage to Jerusalem and spent their money on cattle and whatever their heart desired; but the Greeks had their Olympic games, chariots, horse-races, various spectacles. The Romans had gladiators, amphi-theatres, circuses, which partly exist even now in Spain, and in another form, in all Europe. How tremendous is the passion of the European nations for plays can be seen from the fact that in the ancient times the starving mob cried: “Panem et circenses!” (I am always disgusted whenever I recollect that strange conjunction uttered by a starving mob), and also from the large sums they even now lavish on erecting theatres, while there are scarcely enough proper schools, hospitals, and charitable institutions. In Odessa they have just now built a large theatre costing one million and-a-half roubles (though

there are already minor theatres), whilst the town-hospital is in need of a new outfit, and there are not even half the number of schools required, and the medical department is on the verge of bankruptcy. Whom do they prefer to enrich, Helmholtz, Pasteur, etc. or Patey and Benar?

"The Romans disdained the beggars, charity and alms-giving were strange to them, and even in our own days begging is forbidden by the law;—the Romans had no idea of charity, and in the Middle and even Modern Ages the European nations are extremely dissoluted. Is it possible even to a very small extent that what happened to Pushkin with regard to his relations towards women and his death should happen to one of our poets? I do not speak of our old poets as Ben-Gebirol, Jehuda Halevi, but of our present poets: Almazi, Luzzati, Lebenson, etc. The Gospel, at bottom, did not affect a change in the life of the Japhetics; the Roman festivals, their customs and code are still the same. In vain does Professor Soloviev complain: the wolf sometimes casts its skin, but not its nature.

"A Jewish scholar once said: "Be rather a tail to lions than a head to foxes", and a Roman writer said: "Be rather the first in a village than the second in a town".

“To commemorate their national events the Jews did not raise monuments, public decorations, ornaments, but they made them perpetual by acts, by the Feast of Tabernacles, by Chanuccah-candles, and so on. The performance of the act had to recall to the Jewish mind those events of the past of which the Japhetics are reminded by monuments, statues and paintings. The Jewish poetry differs extremely from the Japhetic one. Its muse comes not from power, nor from beauty—because “favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain”—but from sublimity, consequently its style is sublime rather than grand. The Japhetics, blood-thirsty and keen for combat, could not produce to the world a man that should prophesy of a time when one nation shall not lift a sword against another, but, on the contrary, when one of their greatest men happened once on the grave of Alexander the Macedonian, he cried out pathetically: “Alexander conquered half the world whilst he was still my age, and I have done nothing!” How abhorrent are such words, as if it is incumbent on every man to destroy at least half a world! Whether Julius Cæsar really uttered those words or not, is all the same, I do not judge from a single individual but from the tradition that is circulated among

the people about their heroes, and therein, in that tradition, is the reflection of the national spirit.

“The Jews do not go out in pursuit of games merely for the sake of sport and from idleness; all kinds of pleasures that are invented only to pass the time—are Japhetic inventions.

“The Jews are far from order, and the Japhetics take much care of order, so that on account of the order and system they established in science we forget that the real pioneers of science were Semites, the Babylonians and the Syrians. Suchlike and many more are the differences between the Jews and the Japhetics, and it may be that all those differences are but branches from one and the same root. To join the different rings, to transmit the Japhetic spirit to the Jews, or from the latter to the former, or to reconcile the two different races—there is no need, and it is impossible to do so from my point of view. I must not, as a Jew who is concerned in this matter, undertake to decide; but I shall say with Lessing: “May every one say his ring is the real one”.

“But our ring fits only us and not others, and it is understood that those characteristics

which we consider our good points they regard as faults. Accordingly when they come in contact with us they are conscious that we do not resemble them, and our appropriate idiosyncracies keep them far from us, and they hate us not knowingly but instinctively.

“Our modern culture has done us much harm. Had our culture been based on practical knowledge and applied science it would have been a source of benefit to us; but our culture, which is European, is based on Greek and Roman civilisation, on taste and beauty, on external refinement, and whilst we endeavoured with might and main to adopt their habits and manners which are foreign to our spirit, we lost our own, and thus did not reach our goal. Our advanced men are, therefore, so to say, in a rotten state, and are, as a matter of course, hated the most, because a rotten thing gives out an offensive smell and excites loathing . . . To our sorrow, we cannot acquire in Europe a culture of another kind because we have no schools of our own, and suppose we had—then our teachers, appointed by the government, would be like monkeys that imitate others.

“I still wish a reform, but a reform on the ground of applied science and criticism

and according to the Jewish spirit, but not on the Hellenian love of beauty and taste, with which we have no concern. Therefore I mentioned above that I have not changed my belief, because when I propogated reform I had in view practical knowledge and criticism, but not beauty. If I have at present no other task than that of Jewish colonisation in Palestine it is not because "I have become a pillar of ice, and all my thoughts are congealed by freezing to such an extent that I am no more able to conceive any idea", but because the tasks I am engaged in, as I perceive now, cannot be fulfilled here in Europe. Our religion cannot be reformed in Europe, and we do not lead in Europe a life that can undergo any suitable reform, and all other solutions being propounded to those tasks from of old seem discordant to our spirit and our habits. The performance of circumcision here in Europe seems barbarous; the observance of Sabbath—an immense economical detriment because of the compulsory law to observe Sunday; the food forbidden by our religion—sever us from all other nations; intermarriages—are necessary for the advancement of friendship between us and the other nations, and, generally, it is not fair to give up friendship because of prejudice. But what

else is there left for us? The education here is a European in every respect, with the spirit of severance from one another, of love for artificial pleasures, of trifles, of luxury, of submission to women, and of all we usually call worldliness; all those moods, the tenets of European civilisation, demoralise us all completely. Give me culture based on philosophy, on genuine criticism, on chastity and love for applied science; give me a Jewish spirit, and I shall devote myself to this task as well as to the colonisation of Palestine; but can you "produce a clean spirit"? . . . Could Jean Jacques Rousseau have seen such a culture, he would not have said that civilisation has injured the world.

"Therefore I can by no means admit that the Jews should go to Palestine via America, and I prefer one fanatic of Jerusalem, who would in no way influence one of the colonists with his fanaticism, to hundreds of Edisons, who cannot transmit to them his mental gifts and his inventions; they will only succeed in aping his manners. You would advise the son of David (Messiah), were he to ask you, to come not like a beggar on the back of a donkey, but like a Rothschild in the train, and in a first class carriage, too, and that he should convey us in ships

provided with all kinds of rich food and luxuries. But were he to ask me, I would say: "Come, Sir, through the window, through the chimney, on a donkey or a camel, provided you come and redeem us, and we will follow to a man, rich and poor, the rich in ships in special cabins provided with all kinds of dainties, and the poor on the deck in trading vessels, having but mouldy bread. The main thing with me is the end, and not the means to it.

"In order to make more explicit the difference between my view and yours, allow me to tell you what I once said in the presence of my friends. I consider your soul is transmigrated from Heine. This requires some explanation. Heine says that though he himself is a Jew, his nature and spirit are yet Hellenic. According to my opinion Heine was only partially right, because being a Jew he must have had a Jewish soul (allow me to express myself in the style of the Cabbalists), but he was also endowed with an additional soul, a Hellenian one. Those two souls both executed their function, but not promiscuously. "As oil cannot assimilate with other liquids, so Israel cannot assimilate with other nations", and therefore each of Heine's souls retained its innate ideas. His Hellenian

soul aided him to appreciate his Jewish soul (for he felt the power of them both what is otherwise denied to the single minded), and therefore he held Judaism in the greatest respect. His Hellenian soul gave utterance while he was engaged in love songs, in science of art, and other trifles; and his Jewish soul vibrated in him when he most sarcastically chastised single individuals and whole nations. All who were eager to imitate him only exposed themselves to ridicule, because they were like all other men—single-minded.

“You also possess two souls, one a Jewish, and the other a Hellenian, your souls also do not function promiscuously. In your lays we perceive the impression of both your souls; the gravest and most thoughtful ideas are sparks of the Jewish soul, and the most gay and exquisite tit-bits spring from the Hellenian soul; you are thus unrivalled among the Jewish poets that have but one soul, not a Hellenian, and therefore you lay so much stress on taste and beauty, the attributes of the Hellenians. You may consider me a lunatic, but don't forget that such a decree issued not from one of the Italian Cabbalists, but from Heine.”

We must admit that some of the arguments in this letter are pretty shallow, and to a

certain extent even erroneous; yet the letter on the whole contains a great deal of the Zionist kernel which must be strengthened by the addition of a few more striking contrasts of the two antagonistic spirits, the Jewish and the Aryan.

The results of the unfortunate revolution in Russia were a long series of slaughtering and crippling of thousands of Jewish men, and defiling of hundreds of Jewish women. You will say it is not Christian business to demand justice for Jewish women, not to speak of Jewish men. Well, suppose we fully agree with you. But at the same time the press reports that the Christian revolutionists in Russia were treated in a similar manner: the men slaughtered and maimed, and the women polluted. Did the Russian nation vehemently demand justice not only for one, but for hundreds violated women, and did the other Christian nations protest against these outrageous deeds? Yes, one nation has no right to meddle with the inner affairs of another nation; but all Christian nations have but one Christ, and why, then, in the name of that Christ, did they not with just indignation protest against the ravishment of Christian women in Russia? If the crusaders carried on wars against the Mahommedans

to assert and guarantee the right of Christian pilgrims to journey to Jerusalem, how much more then had all the existing Christian nations to carry on wars against Russia for the violation of Christian women? Moreover, can we find some excuse for the Christian women in England, the so-called Suffragettes? If they earnestly believe that by their participating in the Government they will improve the State, why then did they not sound the alarm against the violation of Christian women in Russia? Can there be any greater vice than the pollution of Christian women that ought to thrill with horror the English Suffragettes? One can have nothing against women that burn with desire to obtain the same right of voting as men, but is it not astounding that those women did not raise their voice against the rape of their sisters in Russia? And, finally, Tolstoy, the great Christian moralist, how did he behave in this case; was he terrified at the complete bankruptcy of Christian morality, and did he thunder forth against the loose-broken animal instincts? The answer to this grave question consists but of one monosyllable: No!

But thousands of years ago, the uncivilised and primitive Jewish people acted in such a case entirely according to the then and

even now predominant Jewish spirit. The following story is told in the Book of Judges. The people of Gibeah violated the concubine—merely a concubine, not a legal wife—of a stranger who came to stay for a night in that town. The debauched people of the town tired the poor woman all night long, and in the morning she fell dead at the door of the house where her master was hospitably received. Her master cut her in twelve pieces and sent them to the twelve tribes with a charge of ravishment. All the tribes fell into a passion at the sight of such a horrible crime, they gathered themselves together and demanded that the sinners should be given up to them. When the townsfolk refused to obey the national demand, all the tribes proclaimed war against Benjamin, and killed all the tribe save six hundred men that escaped the grip of death.

Moreover, whilst we were writing these lines we were shocked by the following ignominious incident, related in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*. French soldiers in Morocco, who were stationed there to keep up order in the country, broke into Jewish houses with weapons in their hands and violated Jewish girls and women. When the Jews complained to the captain of this regiment, he answered very

characteristically: "That is the manner of war." Now, not only the gloomy and semi-civilised Russia, but the most enlightened France has contributed another bloody page to Jewish history. In such a case the Bible furnishes a most remarkable law. It is written (*Deuter. Cap. 21*): "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hand, and thou hast taken them captive: And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, and thou wouldest have her to thy wife". The last sentence is not quite correct in the English Translation, for according to the Talmud it is written in a commanding tone: you shall take her to wife. At any rate this passage clearly shows that the Jewish warrior married and did not violate the beautiful woman, though she was but a captive and a heathen.

Only ignorant people and savages are nowadays afraid of devils, of ghosts and other fantastic monsters, for the enlightened mind will never more be obscured. But are there no exceptions to that maxim? Take for instance the Blood Accusation. Such an accusation can only strike root in the mind of a barbarian, and it was really first invented by the pagans against the Christians in the early

stage of Christianity. But the merciful Christians proved to be excellent disciples, and they turned the same accusation, chiefly in the Middle Ages, against the Jews, and thus many pages of our history are stained with blood. But as time went on civilisation put an end to credulity and superstition, and the Blood Accusation was also mitigated, but did not vanish altogether.

But—how infamous, how atrocious!—in our own enlightened century Russia has surpassed all Christendom. A Christian boy was killed at Kiev according to all the directions of a book written by a certain Jew-hater. And—how lovely! how humane!—one of the members of the Duma asked the Minister of Justice, during the session of that Parliament, does the Government know about that murdered boy, and if so, what steps she intended to take? Till recently such a case was usually settled in a simple way: the followers of Christ's doctrines—the doctrines of boundless love and mercy—the inhabitants of that town where such an accusation was brought against the Jews, used to do justice to their Christian feeling by a massacre of the Jews of that town. But that Russian Member of Parliament is a faithful follower of the notorious Haman who "thought scorn to lay hands on Mordechai

alone", and therefore intended to induce the Government to take up the case and perpetrate a general massacre of the Jews. The best evidence that the accusation against the Jews of Kiev was false is that, however hostile the Government is disposed towards the Jews, all efforts to detect the real murderers were in vain; but the fact will remain at once a terrible and ignominious one which is a thousand times more formidable than any pogrom.

And the ignominy will remain for ever not only with Russia, but with all the civilised world, either constitutional or republican, for not having resentfully protested against the blood-stained Parliament. Politicians—of course the most ingenious of them—will say that I am entirely void of politics: every Government has the full right to deal with its subjects as it pleases, and no other Government has the right to interfere, because—it is a very fine policy—it would hamper the international business. But if a Christian Government grossly insulted another Christian Government, then, as a matter of course, only the sword could blot out the insult, notwithstanding the ruined lives of innumerable Christians. Now, if this be the case with a mere insult, then I dare ask, when a Christian

Parliament, as the Russian, propagates massacre from its tribune, why should not all the other Christian Parliaments interfere in the name of the honour of all their Parliaments? Can we imagine a greater ignominy and more vicious propagation than the propagation of massacre from a parliamentary tribune? Every Government has the full right to instigate the mob clandestinely to slaughter the Jews to a man, and no other Government dare interfere, for, as I stated above, the Jews, according to the opinion held by most pious and merciful Christians, are created for that very purpose. But to preach in broad daylight, from a Christian parliamentary tribune, slaughter on Jews who are falsely accused—how is it with the honour of all other Christian Parliaments?

The prohibition of eating blood is frequently repeated in the Old Testament because of a simple but very remarkable reason. The Bible says: "Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh, for the life of all flesh is in the blood thereof." This prohibition was intensified to an enormous extent by our Rabbis, and it contains scores of subtle laws even in the case of a mere blood-spot in an egg. Butcher-meat, in order to be freed from the slightest taste of blood, must undergo the

following treatments. First of all it is cleared of its veins, and kept in water for half an hour, then it is excessively salted and preserved in this state for an hour, so that no trace of blood is left; and the operation of slaughtering an animal is not less remarkable. The throat is cut by the Schochet, who is specially trained for that operation, with a knife whose edge has no notch whatever even that of a hair-breadth. The throat must be cut as swift as possible only by two turns of the knife to and fro, and when the Schochet's hand is too slow or presses a little the throat with the knife, the flesh of the animal is forbidden, because its death-agony was thus prolonged. For that very reason we are not allowed to eat the meat of the "clean" animal or fowl shot or killed in any other manner. And the Schochet must not only be skilled in slaughtering, but also a propound veterinary, for after slaughtering the animal he carefully examines its lungs, and when he finds the slightest symptoms of any disease, he pronounces the animal treifa (i.e. impure)

But the Christians do not abstain from eating blood: they use it in different dishes, and not only concrete blood, but the most sacred. Both the Roman Catholics and the Lutherans adhere to the doctrine of the real

presence of Christ's body or blood in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The root of this doctrine—we may surmise—was the parent of the Blood Accusation against Christians, which has afterwards turned against the Jews. And no wonder. One that uses blood cannot help suspecting his neighbour of doing the same. And when a man uses blood—be he even highly educated—*his spirit must naturally become more or less prurient of bloodshed.* Within our brief limits it is impossible to furnish evidences enough for our opinion, but from one or two examples the reader may infer the rest. Carlyle says: "Much has been said of Mahomet's propagating his religion by the sword. It is no doubt far nobler what we have to boast of the Christian Religion, that it propagated itself peaceably in the way of preaching and conviction. Yet withal, if we take this for an argument of the truth or falsehood of a religion, there is a radical mistake in it. The sword indeed: but where will you get your sword! Every new opinion, at its starting, is precisely in a minority of one. In one man's head alone, there it dwells as yet. One man alone of the whole world believes it; there is one man against all men; that he take a sword and try to propagate with that, will do little for

him. You must first get your sword! On the whole, a thing will propagate itself as it can. We do not find, of the Christian Religion either, that it always disdained the sword, when once it had got one. Charlemagne's conversion of the Saxons was not by preaching. I care little about the sword: I will allow a thing to struggle for itself in this world, with any sword or tongue or implement it has, or can lay hold of." Carlyle might have mentioned some more important instances when Christianity often manifested itself not merely by word but entirely by sword. He had only to refer to the blood-stained Crusades and the Inquisition of Spain that were soaked through and through with Jewish blood; but he, as well as Luther, sincere and profound Christians as they were, felt instinctively---as Lilienbloom phrased it---an aversion to the antagonistic spirit of the Jews. At all events, Carlyle considered it as a matter of course and justifiable to propagate an idea through the medium of the sword, and was not struck with abhorrence at the crime of bloodshed.

But the Jewish spirit, with respect to the propagation of Judaism, is just the very reverse to the Aryan spirit. Lilienbloom showed the difference between the great warrior,

Cæsar, who was burning with a desire to conquer the whole world, and the great prophet, Isaiah, who prophesied a universal and permanent suspension of hostilities. But Lilienbloom omitted another remarkable characteristic which is mentioned just in the beginning of the same chapter of that book. Isaiah says: "And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." And this luminous prophecy will come to pass not by the sword, but as one of the minor prophets foresaw: "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit." Thus from the earliest period of Jewish legislature we were gradually imbued with a multitude of laws which prohibited eating of blood in any form whatever, and which even transformed slaughtering of animals into a holy performance.

The Jewish history contains many records of wholesale slaughters of the Jews in several countries at different times, and all of them were perpetrated by Christian fanatics, or by ordinary Christian murderers. As time pro-

gresses the records of Jew-slaughtering are here and there increasing, and we are becoming accustomed to them as to all other inevitable calamities stored up by nature for mankind. But the eighteenth century has contributed to Jewish history such a multitude of atrocities which can by no means be justified as being the result of religious fanaticism. or perpetrated for plunder's sake. One of those outrageous crimes will suffice for our purpose.

A certain Christian mayor of a country-town in Russia had invented a most ingenuous amusement : he used to command Jewish women to climb up a tree and cry cuckoo, then he shot at them from a fowling-piece, and when the unfortunate woman fell wounded beneath the tree, he cheerfully flung golden coins at them. Is it possible to imagine, even to a genius such as Dante, the greatest inventor of hells, that he who is imbued with an abhorrence of eating of blood, and takes up the cause of a defiled woman, would be delighted in shoot ng at women for amusement's sake only ? The unhesitating reply must be "No".

But to return to our subject. Had Lilienbloom purposely set himself the task of pointing out all the striking differences between the Jewish and the Aryan spirits, he, as a

profound Talmudist and a great scholar, might in all likelihood have produced a most valuable work, but he was wholly absorbed in the renaissance of our ancestral land, and overwhelmed with numerous Zionist affairs. Dr. Glucksohn in his fine article "The work of the Chovevei Zion" (republished in the "Zionist work in Palestine"), giving a short account of twenty years work, merely mentions Lilienbloom as one of the first pioneers of the Zionist ideal, and thus he does him a great injustice. The fact is that Dr. Pinsker became a Zionist only through Lilienbloom who exercised an immense influence over him. Lilienbloom himself tells us so—of course, modest as he was, he would not use the expression "immense influence"—and from his account, which extends from the year 1881, since he wrote his article "The Jewish problem and Palestine", till the year 1890, when the Russian Government sanctioned the laws and regulations of the Society for the relief of Jewish Agriculturists in Syria and Palestine, it is conspicuously seen that Lilienbloom was all in all with the Zionist business. Even the sanction of the Russian Government, which was obtained by the urgent and adroit solicitation of Zederbaum, the editor of the "Hameliz"—another great omission of Dr.

Glucksohn—was brought about by Lilienbloom who again exercised his all-powerful influence over Zederbaum. There was no Conference, no meeting of the different Zionist societies in which Lilienbloom did not take an active part. Freethinker or heretic as he was considered by the orthodox class, he succeeded in influencing the Rabbis to allow the colonists in Palestine to go on with their work in the year of remission. This procedure cost him much trouble and pain, but he never spared the most precious thing for his worshipped ideal—Zionism.

Lilienbloom's leading motive of Zionism was the settlement of Jewish agriculturists in Palestine. In spite of his passion for reform and his burning desire for knowledge, he would have sacrificed all the world for one Jewish colonist in Palestine, because that colonist would never more be a stranger in the world. He was in this respect quite the reverse of Achad Haam whose sole aim is the revival of the Jewish spirit. In their different views of Zionism lies the interpretation of their contrary attitudes towards Herzl's scheme. Lilienbloom the Jewish scholar and reformer but always struggling for a bare wretched maintainance, and having for the most part of his life to deal with in-

numerable wretches like himself, could not but cling to concrete remedies in general, and with respect to Zionism in particular. Soon after the first pogrom took place in Russia some of the Jewish students of the Moscow University "wanted to propagate amongst the Jews the idea of buying Palestine"—as Lilienbloom puts it—"They wanted that every Jew should contribute to that plan not less than 25 Kopecks. According to one of them who proposed this plan to me, we will have to give the Sultan three hundred million francs. I told him that the initiative must first be taken abroad." This idea, however chimerical it may seem at first sight to men of sense, fascinated Lilienbloom for a while because of its novelty, and in an enthusiastic article, published in the *Hashachar*, he urgently pleaded to carry it into effect. But shortly afterwards he realised the immaturity of such a grand solution. "How foolish I was to write in the *Hashachar* to buy Palestine!"—he exclaimed in one of his letters—"Why shall we buy from the Sultan the land which requires treasures of gold, and in which success is more than doubtful, whilst we can dispense with this project. What we have to do is not to be strangers any longer, and as we gradually return to our ancestral land, we shall never

again be strangers ; that is the very thing. We only ought to buy there many portions of ground and settle down, as all other nations in their native land, though many of them are subdued by other governments. Not a Government of our own is our present need, but the citizenship, the history, the settlement in the native land for all the nation".

As all Lilienbloom's thoughts were concentrated on the Jewish settlement in Palestine, he bid Herzl a welcome with all his heart and soul. Lilienbloom was not a man of the world, and, like all Russian Jews, oppressed and humbled to the dust he placed the utmost confidence in his European co-religionists, who, as the Russian Jews believe, fully enjoy the common weal. And as dark clouds were continually gathering on the Jewish horizon, the Jewish world was on a sudden—great events mostly take place unexpectedly—entraptured by a certain phenomenon : there appeared not the richest of the Jewish people, nor the greatest scholar of them, but a mere Herzl, a Jew with a soul of a Moses, of a David, who was shocked at the degradation of his people, and in his world-wide grief issued a "Judenstaat". His pamphlet was not a "calling voice in the wilderness" : Jews of high culture and ability, and Jews of wealth

from all parts of the Diaspora enthusiastically adopted this happy solution of the Jewish problem, and Herzl brought his ideal so far that he once declared that the Sultan was willing to sell Palestine to the Jews for a fixed sum of money, but the Zionist Organisation could not afford the required sum, and the Jewish nation as a whole did not make the necessary advances to Herzl.

But could Lilienbloom the great patriot keep himself back from the grand prospect of the new Zionist movement? Our answer is in the negative. When the first Zionist Conference took place in Russia at Minsk, Lilienbloom being one of the delegates, solemnly pronounced the benediction: "Blessed art thou, O, Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast kept us in life, and hast preserved us, and enabled us to reach this season". In the early stage of the new Zionist movement there was not yet the contrast between "practical and political Zionists", and the greater part of the Russian "Chovevei Zion", the most oppressed of all Jews in the world, who are left to rely upon vague and remote hopes, could not but bid Herzl welcome, since he had designed a complete solution which depended on their own will, and who hinted at some substantial and reliable support from highly esteemed sources.

As regards the attitude of Achad Haam towards Herzelian Zionism, which is just the reverse of Lilienbloom's, we must give first an account, of course a very brief one because of our limited space, of the chief impediments which still continue to hinder the progress of the Zionist movement among the masses.

We have already indicated that Herzl once made mention of a very grievous fact that the Sultan was willing to sell Palestine, but that the Zionist Organisation could not advance the required sum. But why could it not advance this necessary sum? Was it not the most sacred duty of the Zionist Organisation to hammer the iron while it was hot, to stir the whole Jewish nation to redeem themselves once for all? However oppressed and degraded we are in Russia and Roumania, and notwithstanding the multitude of wretched Jews all over the world, the Jewish nation as a whole could easily have met the redemption with their purse; but the matter in hand is not a pecuniary question at all: there is a lack of something which is far more vital, of which Herzl himself was at first unconscious. Just after Herzl's "Judenstaat" was translated into Russian the greatest active Zionist in Russia, M. Ussischkin, received a copy of it from his Zionist friends in Vienna with the

request to make his Russian friends acquainted with it. When Ussischkin shortly afterwards came to Vienna and was asked to pay a visit to Herzl, Dr. Birnbau asked his opinion about the new star that had appeared on the Jewish horizon. Ussischkin replied: "This man will be of very great use to the Palestinian movement. He will doubtless attract all the Russian Jews and probably will also affect our Western brethren. He is in want only of one thing, which with regard to our interests is a great deficiency: he does not know the Jews, and therefore he is sure there are obstacles only outside the Zionist circle, and not within the Zionist circle. But don't open his eyes. It is better that his belief in his undertaking shall be strengthened".

We are very sorry to say that Ussischkin's opinion was infallible. A brief outline of the national life of the Jewish classes will throw some light on that subject.

The one thing, at once formidable and deplorable, is the indifferentism of the Jews with regard to the Christian attitude towards them. Lilienbloom and some other intelligent and sensible Jews, shocked with the first pogroms, became Zionists; but what was the result of the false Blood Accusation against the Jews, preached from the Russian parlia-

mentary tribune? Could there be a more appalling incident than that? and yet how many Jews are converted by it to Zionism? Does it not remind us of that obsequious servant who said: "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free", and his master bored his ear with an awl for such degradation? The heinous, perilous, most pernicious indifferentism of the Jews to their slow but inevitable decline and fall—I say "inevitable" not because of a ruin predestined by relentless fate, but because of the present grievous circumstances—is a crime perpetrated by the well-known Rabbis—nothing to say of the minor ones—and the so-called Jewish aristocrats.

The well-known Rabbis, since they are the leaders and representatives of our spiritual life, are guilty of our national wretchedness. Being alarmed by the first pogroms, and more so after having deeply investigated the root of Antisemitism, Lilienbloom had arrived at the conclusion that besides the hostility, the Jew-baiting, all over Christendom, the Jews as a whole nation will ever fail to retain their peculiarities in a pure and original form as long as they continue to live among Christians. Our nation will not only never again produce great men like Moses the lawgiver,

or the prophets, but it will in course of time languish and fade away as an exotic plant transplanted to the North Pole. But we are not beyond recovery: we have but to return to the cradle of our nationality, to Palestine, and there—only there—we will regain all our lost abilities, and lead a natural life. Thus the trend of all Lilienbloom's thoughts and actions after becoming a Zionist was directed towards the Jewish colonisation in Palestine. And Lilienbloom, as well as the other Zionist pioneers, though at first a reformer, almost a cosmopolitan, took the greatest pains for the rescue of our nationality.

But what have our present great Rabbis, the guardians of our national spirit, done? When Mendelssohn first brought civilisation into the Jewish world by translating the Bible into German, and by shedding great light on it by his exquisite exegetic interpretations, the Rabbis were very alarmed because—as Dean Milman puts it in a very concise but most striking manner: “Rabbinism was still the stronghold and the source of the general stubborn fanaticism: yet even this stern priest-craft which ruled with its ancient despotism in more barbarous Poland, either lost its weight, or was constrained to accommodate itself to the spirit of the age, in the west

of Europe." The Rabbis had reason enough to be "stern," and even "stubborn fanatics" not "to accommodate themselves to the spirit of the age," for as Milman himself says: "Many of the Jewish youth emancipated by his (Mendelssohn's) example from the control of Rabbinism, probably rushed headlong down the precipice of unbelief". But what did the Rabbis then do to keep the Jewish spirit in good preservation? The idea of practical Zionism did not occur to them, although the Jews generally pray daily, and on every occasion, for their restoration to Zion; but what do the Rabbis do at present when they see the innumerable apostates, on one hand, and the brutal persecutions and pogroms, on the other hand? Moreover: when the Blood Accusation, which is a thousand times more formidable than any pogrom, was recently declared from the Russian parliamentary tribune, what action did the Rabbis adopt? Yes, they divulged a paper, at once a protest and an apology, wherein they declared that we are unguilty of drinking Christian blood; but this vindication of theirs was not only unnecessary, but the lowest degradation. The whole civilised world is convinced that that accusation is false, and on the question: When and where do the Jews drink Christian

blood? there is but one answer: everywhere and whenever Anti-Semites accuse the Jews of that crime. That Blood Accusation should have impelled the Rabbis to take a position in the foremost ranks of the Zionist camp; but not only our most orthodox Rabbis, but the most advanced ones, the so-called Chief-Rabbis, who are held in esteem by Christian kings, look upon Zionism with hostility. The advanced Rabbis—with a few exceptions only—to gain access to the Christian kings and princes and Ministers, obsequiously sacrifice their nationality and declare that the Jews are but a religious cast and not a nation, though the same Rabbis pray daily—and pray they must because of their official post—for the restoration of our nation to Zion

The orthodox Rabbis, again, fully agree with some of our greatest antagonists in one point. Amongst the base objections raised against the emancipation of the Jews there is one argument which was recently brought forward by a certain "black" Member of the Russian Duma, an argument which Macaulay long ago exposed to ridicule in his "Civil disabilities of the Jews". In this brilliant essay he says: "There is another argument which we would not willingly treat with levity,

and which yet we scarcely know how to treat seriously. Scripture, it is said, is full of terrible denunciations against the Jews. It is foretold that they are to be wanderers, Is it then right to give them a home? It is foretold that they are to be oppressed. Can we with propriety suffer them to be rulers? To admit them to the rights of citizens is manifestly to insult the Divine oracles". The clear-sighted, kind-hearted and just Macaulay could not imagine all the brutalities and cruelties performed by the most pious Christians in the name of the Bible. Just to give one instance, we shall refer to Ingersoll's "Lectures and Essays, first series". Ingersoll tells us in one of these lectures: "Timothy Dwight, President of Yale College, preached a sermon against vaccination. His idea was that, if God had desired from all eternity that a certain man should die with the small-pox, it was a frightful sin to avoid and annul that decree by the trick of vaccination". The same morbid logic governs most of the Jew-haters, of course, of the so-called Christian devotees who stick not to the spirit but to the written letter of the Bible. And our Rabbis are inclined to make use of the same logic.

We could, to our sorrow, easily furnish a big list of the most striking facts which

would prove to be a terrible accusation against the orthodox leaders and Rabbis; but at present this is not our intention, therefore we shall cut the matter short and direct some attention to the enlightened and rich classes of our co-religionists.

Every Jew whose mind has not been affected by any assimilative tendencies knows full well that except a territory of our own, and, consequently, a political position in life, we are in all respects a nation with its appropriate attributes: we possess a religion of our own, in which we may assuredly take a pride; we possess a Bible of our own which has no equal; we possess a language of our own—I mean the Hebrew language; we possess a history of our own which is the choicest of all histories in the world; we possess a literature, ancient and modern, and, above all, a Jewish spirit, stamped and fostered by our great prophets. Yes, we are richly endowed with spiritual treasures, which are overcast with the darkest clouds of the Diaspora, and it needs staunch and sober champions to release it from the cumbersome dregs. But the majority of our enlightened and wealthy Jews are intoxicated with worldly pleasures and with the European will-o-the-wisp, and thus would heartily sacrifice

all their brethren to the European Moloch.

After having pointed out some internal obstacles which hamper the progress of the Zionist movement, we shall return to Achad Haam's attitude towards Zionism. Achad Haam being himself an aristocrat who never experienced the travails of life like Lilienbloom but whose mental capacity, keen and sound critical insight and his great erudition exceed Lilienbloom's, is a Zionist of quite another type. He has never been, like Lilienbloom and Herzl, enthusiastic, for his sound mind is always sober, and his conception of Zionism sprang, as a matter of course, not from his inmost feelings, but from his great logical power. Zionism with him was what a mathematical problem is to the mathematician: never to be changed or mistaken. He profoundly traced back the Jewish history from the present day to the restoration from the Babylonian captivity, and perceived all the analogous characteristics of the ancient and modern Sanballats. The ancient ones bitterly and treacherously opposed the efforts of Nehemia to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple: they could not suffer the idea of Jewish renaissance. Says Nehemiah: "When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there

was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel". The objections of the Sanballats were the following: "But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?" And again: "And it came to pass that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?" Our modern Sanballats are not very far from the ancient ones in their attitude towards Zionism. Some of the latter said "Zionism is not compatible with patriotism of the individual countries where the Jews live". Others assert that Zionism must strengthen anti-Semitism. Others again ask, what good, from a biological point of view, the segregation of the Jews in Palestine would do to the world? And again others oppose Zionism on the ground that it was the mission of the Jews to teach humanity

LILIENBLOOM

pure monotheism and true morality. It is quite unnecessary to furnish here a full list of all the objections of our Sanballats to Zionism. The objections are so numerous and so wicked that they cause the blood of a Jew to freeze on seeing that his so-called brethren oppose, by all kinds of sophistry and subterfuges, this sole and vital remedy. But Achad Haam from the first moment of his devotion to the Jewish renaissance conspicuously perceived all the inveterate maladies of the Jewish spirit since the Diaspora, and demanded a radical cure, the revival of the Jewish spirit by educating the people anew, according to the national spirit.

On the one hand Achad Haam is quite right demanding first a new education for the Jewish people. The idea of providing first a national education for the people and then to shape them into a nation settled permanently in a cultivated land, is not a new one. It is indeed a most striking characteristic of our nation. Whilst the history of nearly every nation in the world begins with the acquisition of a land, the Jewish people begin their history with the fostering and training of a national spirit. Moses the Lawgiver, who brought up in the wilderness a new generation, free from bondage and servi-

tude, preceded his disciple Joshua, who strove for the possession of Palestine. The same process was repeated a second time at the Babylonian captivity: Ezra the Scribe, who is rightly held in great esteem as the second Moses by our Talmudists, took much pain to re-educate the Jewish people. It was in olden times, and it is at present our lot to be first captives, slaves, and oppressed, and as such, we must first of all shake off the Golus fetters from us and purify our spirit from all the rubbish and dross of the Diaspora. Always having this in view, Achad Haam can by no means be fully satisfied with the small number of Jewish colonists in Palestine, nor with the grand scheme of Herzl. He is dissatisfied with the first because it does not in any way give a complete remedy of the Jews, nor can he be pleased with the other, however capacious it is, because it is political.

On the other hand, however, Achad Haam was wrong. Before people, the more so if they were enslaved for a considerable time, can be grouped into a nation, they must first shake off their mental fetters and become enlightened; but after having once enjoyed all the thrivingness and prosperity of a free and enlightened nation, they unfortunately become again enslaved, then however their

cultured intellect may have sank into pitch-darkness, their release must not start with recultivation only, but it must simultaneously go hand in hand with the restoration of the material welfare. And our Book of Books again furnishes a remarkable model. While Ezra the Scribe was the torch-bearer of the Jewish renaissance at the release of the Babylonian captivity, Nehemia, his associate in the sacred work, took the greatest pains to re-edify the walls and the temple of Jerusalem, and to restore the Jews to Palestine. And it could not be otherwise. The same process was, and is still seen in the actions of the Odessa Committee, the remnant of the early Chovevei Zion. The actions of the members of that Committee are the synthesis of two opposite directions which converge in the end to one point. Achad Haam, one of the Odessa Committee leaders, is as yet initiating and promoting the revival of the Jewish spirit, and Lilienbloom, the other leader of that Committee, devoted twenty-eight years of his life entirely to the restoration of the Jews in Palestine. Even on his death-bed (died on February, 1910), he did not depart from his ideal. The last three months of his life he suffered infinitely from a cancer in the oesophagus, and when Ussischkin visited him

a few hours before he breathed his last, the dying Lilienbloom asked, what was to be heard of the alteration of the laws and regulations of the Society. He did not ask to provide his family with a livelihood, for he died a beggar, but was anxious to take with him to the grave good tidings about the Society.

Thus always die the faithful and sincere children of their nation.



