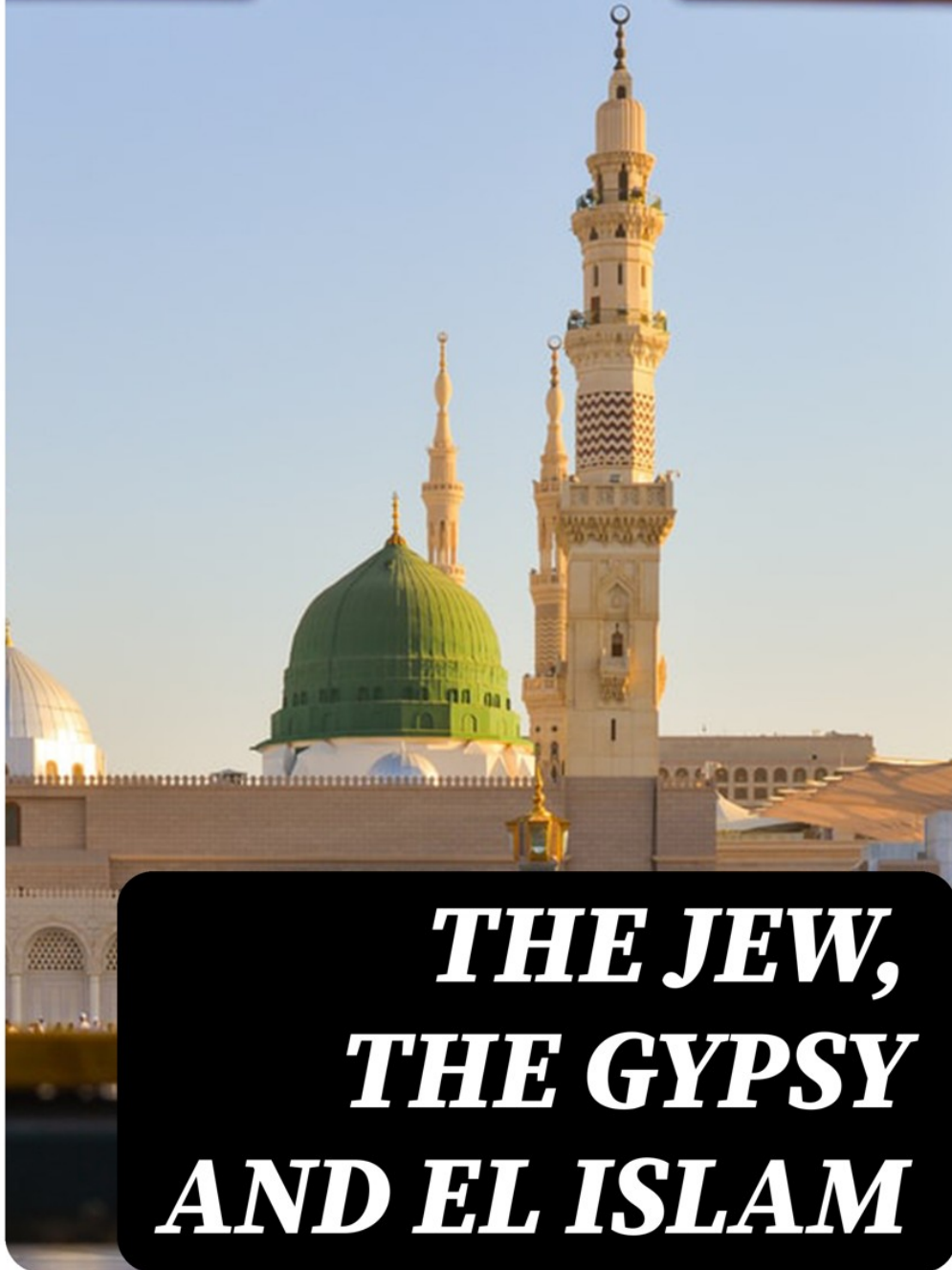


***RICHARD FRANCIS  
SIR BURTON***



***THE JEW,  
THE GYPSY  
AND EL ISLAM***

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**Richard Francis Sir Burton**

# **The Jew, The Gypsy and El Islam**

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# PREFACE

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“Good wine needs no bush,” and a good book needs no preface, least of all from any but the author’s pen. This is a rule more honoured in the breach than the observance nowadays, when many a classic appears weighed down and obscured by the unnecessary remarks and bulky commentaries of some unimportant editor. For my part it will suffice to give as briefly as possible the history of the MSS. now published for the first time in this volume.

Sir Richard Burton was a voluminous writer. In addition to the forty-eight works published during his life, there remained at his death twenty MSS., some long and some short, in different stages of completion. A few were ready for press; others were finished to all intents and purposes, and only required final revision or a few additions; some were in a state of preparation merely, and for that reason may never see the light. Those in this volume belong to the second category. That so many of Burton’s MSS. were unpublished at the time of his death arose from his habit of working at several books at a time. In his bedroom, which also served as his study, at Trieste were some ten or twelve rough deal tables, and on each table were piled the materials and notes of a different book in a more or less advanced stage of completion. When he was tired of one, or when he came to a standstill for lack of material, he would leave it for a time and work at another. During the last few years of his life the great success which attended his *Arabian Nights* led him to turn his attention more to that

phase of his work, to the exclusion of books which had been in preparation for years. Thus it came about that so many were unpublished when he died.

As it is well known, he left his writings, published and unpublished, to his widow, Lady Burton, absolutely, to do with as she thought best. Lady Burton suppressed what she deemed advisable; the rest she brought with her to England. She published her *Life of Sir Richard Burton*, a new edition of his *Arabian Nights*, also *Catullus* and *Il Pentamerone*; and was arranging for the publication of others when she died (March, 1896).

Her sister and executrix, Mrs. Fitzgerald (to whom I should like to express my gratitude for the many facilities she has given me), thought fit to entrust me with the work of editing and preparing for publication the remaining MSS. In the exercise of the discretion she was good enough to vest in me, I determined to bring out first the three MSS. which make up this book.

The first part—*The Jew*—has a somewhat curious history. Burton collected most of the materials for writing it from 1869 to 1871, when he was Consul at Damascus. His intimate knowledge of Eastern races and languages, and his sympathy with Oriental habits and lines of thought, gave him exceptional facilities for ethnological studies of this kind. Disguised as a native, and unknown to any living soul except his wife, the British Consul mingled freely with the motley populations of Damascus, and inspected every quarter of the city—Muslim, Christian, and Jewish. His inquiries bore fruit in material, not only for this general essay on the Jew, but for an Appendix dealing with the

alleged rite of Human Sacrifice among the Sephardim or Eastern Jews, and more especially the mysterious murder of Padre Tomaso at Damascus in 1840. There is little doubt that his inquiry into these subjects was one of the reasons which aroused the hostility of the Damascus Jews against him; and that hostility was a powerful factor, though by no means the only one, in his recall by Lord Granville in 1871.

Burton, however, had collected a mass of material before he left Damascus, and in 1873, the year after he had been appointed Consul at Trieste, he began to put it into shape for publication. It was his habit to collect for many years the material of a work, to mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, and then write it in a few months. This plan he pursued with *The Jew*, which, with the Appendix before mentioned, was finished and ready for publication towards the end of 1874.

In 1875 he came home from Trieste on leave, and brought the book with him, intending to publish it forthwith. But first he asked an influential friend, who was highly placed in the official world, to read the MS., and give him his opinion as to the expediency of publishing it. That opinion was adverse, owing to the anti-Semitic tendency of the book. Other friends also pointed out to Burton that, so long as he remained in the service of the Government of a country where the Jews enjoy unprecedented power and position, it would be unwise, to say the least of it, for him to make enemies of them. These arguments had weight with Burton, who was not as a rule influenced by anything but his own will, and for once he deemed discretion the better quality, and returned with his MS. to Trieste. There were other considerations too. His wife had just brought out her

*Inner Life of Syria*, which was partly devoted to a defence of his action at Damascus in the matter of the Jews. It had met with a very favourable reception. His friends were also endeavouring to obtain for him a K.C.B. and the post of Tangier, Morocco—the one thing he stayed in the Consular Service in the hope of obtaining. So the time (1875) was not deemed a propitious one for making enemies.

Burton put his MS. on the shelf, and waited for the promotion which never came. It remained there until 1886, when Tangier, which was as good as promised to Burton, was given by Lord Rosebery to Sir William Kirby-Green. Then Burton took down the MS. on *The Jew* again, and had it recopied. But his wife, who was endeavouring to obtain permission for him to retire on full pension, pointed out to him that since it had waited so long it might as well wait until March, 1891, when, his term of service being finished, they would retire from official life and be free to publish what they liked. Moreover, they numbered many friends among the wealthy Jews of Trieste, and had no wish to wound their susceptibilities. Burton reluctantly agreed to this, but declared his determination of publishing the book as soon as he had retired from the Consular Service. Five months before the date of his retirement he died.

Lady Burton had *The Jew* next on her list for publication at the time of her death. In publishing it now, therefore, one is only carrying out her wishes and those of her husband. But in the exercise of the discretion given to me, I have thought it better to hold over for the present the Appendix on the alleged rite of Human Sacrifice among the Sephardím and the murder of Padre Tomaso. The only alternative was



to publish it in a mutilated form; and as I hold strongly that no one has a right to mutilate the work of another writer, least of all of one who is dead, I prefer to withhold it until a more convenient season. I can do this with a clearer conscience, because the Appendix has no direct bearing on the other part of the book, and because the chapters on *The Jew* which are retained are by far the more important. The tone of even this portion is anti-Semitic; but I do not feel justified in going contrary to the wishes of the author and suppressing an interesting ethnological study merely to avoid the possibility of hurting the susceptibilities of the Hebrew community. It has been truly said, "Every nation gets the Jew it deserves," and it may well be that the superstitions and cruelties of the Eastern Jews have been generated in them by long centuries of oppression and wrong. From these superstitions and cruelties the enlightened and highly favoured Jews in England naturally shrink with abhorrence and repudiation; but it does not therefore follow they have no existence among their less fortunate Eastern brethren.

*The Gypsy* has a far less eventful history, though the materials for its making were collected during a period of over thirty years, and were gathered for the most part by personal research, in Asia mainly, and also in Africa, South America, and Europe. Burton's interest in the Gypsies was lifelong; and when he was a lieutenant in the Bombay Army and quartered in Sindh, he began his investigations concerning the affinity between the Jats and the Gypsies. During his many travels in different parts of the world, whenever he had the opportunity he collected fresh

materials with a view to putting them together some day. In 1875 his controversy with Bataillard provoked him into compiling his long-contemplated work on the Gypsies. Unfortunately other interests intervened, and the work was never completed. It was one of the many unfinished things Burton intended to complete when he should have quitted the Consular Service. He hoped, for instance, to make fuller inquiries concerning the Gypsies in France, Germany, and other countries of Europe, and especially he intended to write a chapter on the Gypsies in England on his return home. Even as it stands, however, *The Gypsy* is a valuable addition to ethnology; for apart from Burton's rare knowledge of strange peoples and tongues, his connexion with the Gypsies lends to the subject a unique interest. There is no doubt that he was affiliated to this strange people by nature, if not by descent. To quote from the *Gypsy Lore Journal*[\[1\]](#):

“Whether there may not be also a tinge of Arab, or perhaps of Gypsy blood in Burton's race, is a point which is perhaps open to question. For the latter suspicion an excuse may be found in the incurable restlessness which has beset him since his infancy, a restlessness which has effectually prevented him from ever settling long in any one place, and in the singular idiosyncrasy which his friends have often remarked—the peculiarity of his eyes. ‘When it (the eye) looks at you,’ said one who knows him well, ‘it looks through you, and then, glazing over, seems to see something behind you. Richard Burton is the only man (not a Gypsy) with that peculiarity, and he shares with them the same horror of a corpse, death-bed scenes, and graveyards, though caring

little for his own life.’ When to this remarkable fact be added the scarcely less interesting detail that ‘Burton’ is one of the half-dozen distinctively Romany names, it is evident that the suspicion of Sir Richard Burton having a drop of Gypsy blood in his descent—crossed and commingled though it be with an English, Scottish, French, and Irish strain—is not altogether unreasonable.”

On this subject Lady Burton also wrote:

“In the January number of the *Gypsy Lore Journal* a passage is quoted from ‘a short sketch of the career’ of my husband (a little black pamphlet) which half suspects a remote drop of Gypsy blood in him. There is no proof that this was ever the case; but there is no question that he showed many of their peculiarities in appearance, disposition, and speech—speaking Romany like themselves. Nor did we ever enter a Gypsy camp without their claiming him: ‘What are you doing with a black coat on?’ they would say; ‘why don’t you join us and be our King?’”[\[2\]](#)

Whether the affinity was one of blood or of nature does not greatly matter; in either case it lends a special interest to Burton’s study of the gypsy.

Of *El Islam; or, The Rank of Muhammadanism among the Religions of the World* there is little to be said. It is one of the oldest of the Burton MSS.; and though it bears no date, from internal evidence I judge it to have been written soon after his famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1853. It is, in fact, contemporary with his poem *The Kasîdah*, though I know not why the poem was published and the essay withheld. Probably Burton contemplated writing more fully on the subject. Muhammadanism in its highest aspect always

attracted him. So long ago as 1848 we find him preparing for his Mecca pilgrimage, not only by learning the Koran and practising rites and ceremonies, but by “a sympathetic study of Sufi-ism, the Gnosticism of El Islam, which would raise me high above the rank of a mere Muslim.”[3] Lady Burton writes: “This stuck to him off and on all his life”; and, it may be added, gave a colour to his writings. Since Burton wrote this essay (now published for the first time) a change has taken place among thinking men in the estimate of El Islam among the religions of the world. Writers like Lane Poole, Isaac Taylor, and Bosworth Smith, to name no others, have cleared away many misconceptions concerning the “Saving Faith,” and have discussed its merits as a humanizing creed. But the testimony of a man like Burton, who by personal observation studied thoroughly the “inner life of the Muslim,” who absolutely lived the life of an Arab pilgrim, and penetrated to the Holy of Holies, of necessity carries peculiar weight.

I should like to say a few words concerning the author’s MSS. So many conflicting rumours have appeared with reference to the late Sir Richard Burton’s MSS., that it is well to state that these are here reproduced practically as they left the author’s hands.[4] It has been my endeavour to avoid over-editing, and to interfere as little as possible with the original text. Hence editorial notes, always in square brackets, are sparingly introduced. It has not been found necessary to make any verbal changes of importance. But the case is different with the spelling of proper names, which were left in such a chaotic condition that a revision was found indispensable, so as to reduce them to some

measure of uniformity. The variants were so many and the MS. so difficult to decipher, that I am fain to crave indulgence for my performance of this somewhat troublesome task.

In conclusion, I will only add that it has been my endeavour to give a full and accurate presentment of these hitherto unpublished MSS. There are more to follow; but these form a good sample of the work of the famous Oriental traveller in fields which he made peculiarly his own. They are eminently characteristic of the man. They give glimpses of him once more as a bold and original thinker, a profound student of men and things, as a rare genius, if a wayward one, and as one of the most remarkable personalities of our day and generation.

W. H. WILKINS.

## Footnote

[1] January, 1891.

[2] Lady Burton's life of Her Husband, Vol. I., p. 252.

[3] Burton's *Reminiscences*, written for Mr. Hitchman in 1888.

[4] In the case of the Appendix on Human Sacrifice among the Sephardim or Eastern Jews and the murder of Padre Tomaso, I have (as before stated) preferred to hold it over to publishing it in a mutilated form.

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## I. THE JEW

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# CHAPTER I

## GENERAL OPINION OF THE JEW

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The history of the Jew as well as his physiological aspect are subjects which still remain to be considered and carefully to be worked out from an Aryan point of view. We have of late years seen books in plenty upon points of detail: let us particularize *The Physical History of the Jewish Race*, by Dr. Josiah Clark Nott<sup>[5]</sup> (Charleston, 1850); *Le Juif*, par le Chevalier Geargenot des Monceseaux (Paris: Henri Plon, 1871); and *Notices of the Jews and their Country by the Classic Writers of Antiquity: being a Collection of Statements and Opinions translated from the Works of Greek and Latin Heathen Authors previous to A.D. 500*, by John Gill (London: Longmans, 1872). But in these, as in other works, we find wanting a practical and personal familiarity with the subject, nor can we be surprised at its absence. It is generally assumed that at the present moment there are six millions of Jews scattered over the face of the earth. Some have exaggerated the total to nine millions and a half; but even the former figure is a greater number, says M. Crémieux, than the nation could boast of at any other period of its history, ancient or modern.<sup>[6]</sup> Throughout the world also the race increases with such marvellous rapidity as a rule, which admits of few exceptions, that philosophical inquirers are beginning to ask whether this immense fecundity, taken in connexion with the exceptionally healthy and vigorous physique of the race, its ubiquity and its

cosmopolitanism, does not point to a remarkable career in times to come.

The ethnologist and the student of general history are urgently invited to consider the annals and the physical and intellectual aspects of the children of Israel, perhaps the most interesting subject that can occupy their attention. The Jew, like the Gypsy, stands alone, isolated by character, if not by blessing. Traditionally, or rather according to its own tradition, the oldest family on earth, it is at the same time that which possesses the most abundant vitality. Its indestructible and irrepressible life-power enables this nation without a country to maintain an undying nationality and to nourish a sentiment of caste with a strength and a pertinacity unparalleled in the annals of patriotism. The people that drove the Jews from Judæa, the empires which effaced the kingdoms of Israel and Judah from the map of the world, have utterly perished. The descendants of the conquering Romans are undistinguishable from the rest of mankind. But, eighteen hundred years after the Fall of Jerusalem, the dispersed Jewish people have a distinct existence, are a power in every European capital, conduct the financial operations of nations and governments, and are to be found wherever civilization has extended and commerce has penetrated; in fact, it has made all the world its home.

One obstacle to a matured and detailed ethnological study of the Jew is the difficulty of becoming familiar with a people scattered over the two hemispheres. Though the race is one, the two great factors blood and climate have shown it to be anything but immutable, either in physique or

in character. Compare, for instance, the two extremes—the Tatar-faced Karaïte of the Crimea with the Semitic features of Morocco, the blond lovelocks of Aden and the fiery ringlets of Germany with the greasy, black hair of Houndsditch. And as bodily form differs greatly, there is perhaps a still greater distinction in mental characteristics: we can hardly believe the peaceful and industrious Dutch Jew a brother of the fanatic and ferocious Hebrew who haunts the rugged Highlands of Safed in the Holy Land. Yet though these differences constitute almost a series of sub-races, there is one essentially great quality which cements and combines the whole house of Israel.

The vigour, the vital force, and the mental capacity of other peoples are found to improve by intermixture; the more composite their character, the greater their strength and energy. But for generation after generation the Jews have preserved, in marriage at least, the purity of their blood. In countries where they form but a small percentage of the population the range of choice must necessarily be very limited, and from the very beginning of his history the Jew, like his half-brother the Arab, always married, or was expected to marry, his first cousin. A well-known traveller of the present day has proved that this can be done with impunity only by unmixed races of men, and that the larger the amount of mixture in blood the greater will be the amount of deformity in physique and morale to be expected from the offspring. Consanguineous marriages are dangerous in England, and far more dangerous, as De Hone has proved, in Massachusetts. Yet the kings of Persia intermarried with their sisters, and the Samaritan branch of



the Jews is so closely connected that first cousins are almost sisters.

Physically and mentally the Jewish man and woman are equal in all respects to their Gentile neighbours, and in some particulars are superior to them. The women of the better class are strongly and symmetrically shaped; and although their beauty of feature is not that admired by the Christian eye, debility and deformity are exceptionally rare. In grace of form and in charm of manner they are far superior to their husbands and brothers, and indeed this everywhere appears to be a sub-characteristic racial feature. They are nowhere remarkably distinguished for chastity, and in some places, Morocco for instance, their immorality is proverbial. Their grand physique does not age like that of the natives of the strange countries which they colonize and where Europeans readily degenerate, they preserve youth for ten years longer than their rivals, they become mothers immediately after puberty, and they bear children to a far later age. Their customs allow them to limit the family, not by deleterious drugs and dangerous operations, but by the simple process of prolonging the period of lactation, and barrenness is rare amongst them as in the days when it was looked upon as a curse. There is scarcely any part of the habitable globe, from the Highlands of Abyssinia to the Lowlands of Jamaica, in which the Jewish people cannot be acclimatized more readily and more rapidly than the other races of Europe—also the result of blood comparatively free from that intermixture which brings forward the inherent defects of both parents.

The Jews also enjoy a comparative immunity from various forms of disease which are the scourge of other races. Pulmonary and scrofulous complaints are rare amongst them; leprosy and elephantiasis are almost extinct; and despite their impurity in person and the exceptional filth of their dwelling-places, they are less liable to be swept away by cholera and plague than the natives of the countries which are habitually ravaged by those epidemics. They seldom suffer from the usual infectious results, even where the women are so unchaste that honour seems as unknown to them as honesty to the men.

Physiologists have asked, How is this phenomenon to be accounted for? Why is the duration of life greater among the Jews than among the other races of Europe? Is it the result of superior organization or of obedience to the ceremonial law? The researches of those who have made these questions their special study supply but one satisfactory or sufficient answer, and it may be summed up in six words—a prodigious superiority of vital power. And all the laws attributed to the theistic secularism of Moses were issued with one object—namely, that of hardening and tempering the race to an extent which even Sparta ignored. The ancient Jew was more than half a Bedawin, and not being an equestrian race his annual journeys to and from Jerusalem were mostly made on foot. His diet was carefully regulated, and his year was a succession of fasts and feasts, as indeed it is now, but not to such an extent as formerly. The results were simply the destruction of all the weaklings and the survival of the fittest.

Thrice during the year, by order of the Torah (Deut. xvi. 16)—namely (1) in the Passover, or feast of unleavened bread during the first ecclesiastical and the seventh civil month; (2) at Pentecost, or Shebath (weeks), the feast of the wheat harvest in the third or the ninth month; and (3) at the Feast of Tabernacles, or the ingathering of the harvest in the seventh or the first month—the Jew of old was religiously commanded to appear before the Lord. He was bound to leave his home, which might be distant a hundred and fifty miles, and travel up to Jerusalem, where he led a camp life like his half-brothers in the Desert. This semi-nomad life was combined with a quasi-ascetic condition produced by the frequency and the severity of his fasts and by the austerities attending upon making ready for the Sabbath, that is to say, the preparations of Friday evening—some religious men even in the present age suffer nothing to pass their lips for seven consecutive days and nights.[7] This afflicting the soul, as it is called, served to breed a race equally hard and hardy in frame and mind. It embodied to perfection the idea of the sacrifice of personal will. Add to this the barbarous and ferocious nature of their punishments, amongst which stoning by the congregation is perhaps the most classical, and the perpetual bloodshed in the Temple, which must have suggested a butcher's shambles.

Again, the history and traditions, the faith and practice of the Jew ever placed before his eyes the absolute and immeasurable superiority of his own caste, the "Peculiar People, the Kingdom of Priests, the Holy Nation." This exaltation justified the Hebrew in treating his brother-men

as heathens barely worthy of the title of human. “Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations”—an unfriendly separation and an estrangement between man and man equally injurious to the welfare of Jew and Gentile. It grew a rank crop of hideous crimes committed in the fair name of religion—what nation but the Hebrew could exult over a Jephthah who “did with his daughter according to his own,” that is, burnt her to death before the Lord? At the same time it inculcated a rare humanity amongst its own members unknown to all other peoples of antiquity: for instance, it allowed the coward to retire from the field before battle, and, strange to say, it inculcated the very highest of moral dogmas. In 250 B.C. Sochæus, and after him the Pharisees, according to Josephus, taught that God should be served, not for gain, but for love and gratitude: hence his follower Sadík forbade the looking forward to futurity, even as Moses had neglected the doctrine with studious care. Even in the present age of the world such denegation of egotism would be a higher law.

All these specialities in combination urged the Jews to dare and to do everything against all who were not of their own blood. The inevitable conclusion of such a policy was that eventually they came into collision with all around them; that they failed in the unequal combat with pagan Rome and early Christianity; that they lost the birthplace of their nationality, and were scattered far and wide over the surface of the earth. And what has happened once may happen again.

The Greeks of earlier days, who like the Hebrews had but one faith and one tongue, also met periodically as a single family at Delphi, the centre of their racial area. Thus that gifted people without any inspiration effectually combined with grandeur in the worship of the gods the law of harmony which should preside over human society. But the Greeks were a sensuous and a joyous race, walking under the free heavens in the glorious lights of poetry, of art, and of beauty, and could not fail to realize the truth that society based upon reciprocal benevolence means civilization and the highest stage of human society—communion with the world.

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Dr. Boudin, the eminent physiologist and medical writer, remarks that the Jew is governed by statistical laws of birth, sickness, and mortality completely different from those which rule the peoples amongst whom he lives. This assertion is confirmed by the testimony of history. During the Middle Ages, when the unclean capitals of Europe and Asia were periodically devastated by the plague, the angel of death passed by the houses of the oppressed and despised Jews, although they were condemned by local regulations to occupy the worst quarters of the cities. In speaking of the pestilence of A.D. 1345, Tschudi says that it nowhere attacked the Jews. Frascator mentions that they completely escaped the typhus epidemic in A.D. 1505; they were untouched by the intermittent fevers which reigned in Rome in A.D. 1691; they were not subject to the dysentery which was so fatal at Nimeguen in A.D. 1736; and both in 1832 and 1849 it is stated upon excellent authority that

they enjoyed comparative exemption from the cholera in London, although during the last-named year the city numbered nearly thirteen thousand victims.[8]

Not less curious are the statistics showing the natural aptitude of the Jewish people, at once so national in their sentiments and so cosmopolitan in their tendencies, for universal acclimatization. The Jew and the Christian will emigrate to a British or a French colony from the same birthplace; and while, owing to the uncongenial climate, the Christian settler with his family eventually dies out, the Jewish settler increases and multiplies. In Algeria, for example, the French colonies would become extinct in a very short process of time were it not for the steady influx of immigrants, whereas the Jew takes deep root and throws out vigorous branches.

With respect to the superior longevity of the Jews, German sources supply some interesting particulars. Dr. W. C. de Neufville,[9] of Frankfort, by the collection and collation of an immense mass of statistics, has demonstrated the following facts:

1. One-fourth of Christian populations dies at the mean age of 6 years 11 months.
2. One-fourth of Jewish populations dies at the mean age of 28 years 3 months.
3. One-half of Christian populations dies at the mean age of 36 years 6 months.
4. One-half of Jewish populations dies at the mean age of 53 years 1 month.
5. Three-fourths of Christian populations die at the mean age of 59 years 10 months.

6. Three-fourths of Jewish populations die at the mean age of 71 years.

It is found that in Prussia the annual mortality among the Jews is 1·61 per cent, to 2·00 among the rest of the population. The annual rate of increase with the former is 1·73 per cent.; with the latter only 1·36.[10] In Frankfort the mean duration of human life is 36 years 11 months among the Christian population, and 46 years 9 months among the Jewish.

I will now quote at full length the favourable verdict usually offered in the case of the Hebrews by the writers of Europe:

“If we trace the history of the Israelitish race from the destruction of Jerusalem to the time at which the prevalence of a more enlightened public opinion caused to be effaced from the Statute Books of European nations the barbarous and cruel enactments against the Jews, adopted in an epoch when bigotry, brutality, and persecution were rampant, we shall be constrained to admit that there has been something little less than miraculous in the preservation of this people from utter extermination. Basnage[11] (*Histoire des Juifs*) calculates that 1,338,460 Jews perished by fire and sword, famine and sickness, at and after the siege of the Holy City. Subsequently a host of unfortunate exiles became the objects of bitter and unrelenting persecution, fanaticism, and tyranny in every country throughout Christendom. During the two years which preceded their final expulsion from Judæa, 580,000 Jews were slaughtered by the Romans; and the gradual dispersion of the rest over the face of Europe was the prelude for the perpetration upon them by

'Christians' of a series of atrocities almost unequalled for merciless savagery. The functions they discharged in mediæval society were, in reality, of the most valuable kind; but so dense was the ignorance, and so inveterate were the prejudices of the age, that towards the close of the thirteenth century upwards of 13,000 Israelites were banished from England in one day; just as two hundred years later 500,000 were expelled from Spain, 150,000 from Portugal, and an indefinite number were cast out of France. For a period of three centuries successive sovereigns refused to accord permission to the Jews to worship Almighty God within the English realm; nor was it until the Protectorate of Cromwell that a synagogue was allowed to be erected in London.

"In works of fiction, in the drama, and in daily life the name of Jew has become a byword and a reproach, and an explanation of this is to be sought for rather in the malignity of religious prejudice than in the actual conduct of the people who have been visited with so much opprobrium. Their virtues are their own, but their faults are the fruit of eighteen centuries of outlawry and oppression. Under such treatment archangels would have become depraved. In the history of the whole world there is nothing which in any degree resembles the systematic persecutions, the barbarous cruelties, the cowardly insults, the debasing tyranny to which the Jewish race has been exposed. That it was not degraded to the level of the African negroes, or absolutely obliterated from the face of the earth, is only another proof of its wonderful vitality and of the indestructible elasticity of the national character.[\[12\]](#) In



spite of all these centuries of oppression and repression, its representatives are still found, not merely among the monarchs of finance, but among the royalties and aristocracies of genius. Every one must remember the passage in *Coningsby* in which Mr. Disraeli enumerates the illustrious Jews who are occupying, or have occupied, the foremost rank in arts, letters, statesmanship, and military science—Count Cantemir in Russia, Senor Mendizelal in Spain, and Count Arnim in Prussia; Marshals Soult and Massena, Professors Neander, Regius, Bearnary, and Wohl; the composers Rossini, Mendelssohn, and Meyerbeer (not to mention Offenbach); Rachel the actress; Pasta, Grisi, and Braham the vocalists, Spinoza the philosopher, and Heine the poet; to which list he might have added the names of some of the most distinguished of living French and English celebrities.[\[13\]](#) And though we have forgotten Xapol and Gondomar, Yahuda Halevi, and Aviabron, alias Solomon ben Gabriel, few of us can ignore the Rothschilds and Goldsmids, the Ricardos, Rouhers, and Torlonias, now become household words in Europe.

“That in all countries the Jews, on the other hand, should evince a preference for sordid pursuits, and follow them with an eagerness and tenacity worthy of employment in more generous and elevated callings, must also be admitted. William Abbott, in his outspoken and earnest but narrow-minded way, advanced this plea upon one occasion in the House of Commons, in resistance to a motion to relieve all persons professing the Jewish religion in England from the civil disabilities under which they then laboured. He was replied to by

Macaulay in a speech as eloquent in terms as it was irresistible in logic.

“‘Such, sir,’ said he, ‘has in every age been the reasoning of bigots. They never fail to plead, in justification of persecution, the vices which persecution has engendered. England has been to the Jews less than half a country, and we revile them because they do not feel for England more than a half patriotism. We treat them as slaves, and wonder that they do not regard us as brethren. We drive them to mean occupations, and then reproach them for not embracing honourable professions. We long forbade them to possess land, and we complain that they chiefly occupy themselves in trade. We shut them out from all the paths of ambition, and then we despise them for taking refuge in avarice. During many ages we have in all our dealings with them abused our immense superiority of force, and then we are disgusted because they have recourse to that cunning which is the natural and universal defence of the weak against the violence of the strong. But were they always a mere money-changing, money-getting, money-hoarding race? Nobody knows better than my honourable friend, the member for the University of Oxford, that there is nothing in their national character which unfits them for the highest duties of citizens. He knows that in the infancy of civilization, when our island was as savage as New Guinea, when letters and arts were still unknown to Athens, when scarcely a thatched hut stood on what was afterwards the site of Rome, this contemned people had their fenced cities and cedar

palaces, their splendid Temple, their fleets of merchant ships, their schools of sacred learning, their great statesmen and soldiers, their natural philosophers, their historians and poets. What nation ever contended more manfully against overwhelming odds for its independence and religion? And if, in the course of many centuries, the oppressed descendants of warriors and sages have degenerated from the qualities of their fathers—if while excluded from the blessings of law and bound down under the yoke of slavery they have contracted some of the vices of outlaws and slaves, shall we consider this a matter of reproach to them? Shall we not rather consider it a matter of shame and remorse to ourselves? Let us do justice to them. Let us open to them every career in which ability and energy can be displayed. Till we have done this, let us not presume to say that there is no genius among the countrymen of Isaiah, no heroism amongst the descendants of the Maccabees.’”

We have “done this,” and the results have stultified all this nicely balanced rhetoric. And the following pages may suggest that our European ancestors had other reasons for expelling the Jews than the mere “bigotry” and “brutality” so unphilosophically ascribed to them by Lord Macaulay.

## Footnote

[5] [Dr. J. C. Nott, the well-known ethnologist.]

[6] The two great centres of Jewish population are, first, the northern part of Africa between Morocco and Egypt, especially the Barbary States, where they form the chief element of the town population, and where a census is at present mere guesswork; they spread gradually southwards, and since 1858 a trading colony has occupied Timbuctoo on the Niger. The other families in Africa are the Falashas, or Black Jews of Abyssinia, mere proselytes like those of Malabar, and a few Europeans at the Cape of Good Hope. The second great centre is that region of Europe which extends from the Lower Danube to the Baltic; and here there are about four millions who occupy the middle class among the Slavonic nationalities, while in the whole of Western Europe there are not a hundred and twenty thousand. Their descendants have followed the path of European migrations to America, North and South, and to Australia, where the large commercial towns enable them to multiply as in the Old World, and much more rapidly than the Christian population. The other outlying colonies are in Turkey, European as well as Asiatic, although the Holy Land now contains but a small proportion of their former numbers; in Yemen, especially at Sanaá and Aden, in Nejerán, and other parts of Arabia; along the whole course of the Euphrates, in Kurdistan, Persia, and India, especially in Malabar, where there are white and black Jews; in China and in Cochin China, both colonies being also found; and in the Turkoman countries. Here they inhabit the four fortresses of Shahr-i-sabz, Kulab, Shamatan, and Urta Kurgan, with about thirty small villages; they live in their own quarters, and, except having to pay higher taxes, they are treated on an equal footing with the other inhabitants.

[7] This terrible fast is called Ha-fraká. Old men have been known in Syria and Palestine to endure it twice a year, in summer and in winter. They sup on Saturday evening, and till the sunset of the next Saturday they do not allow themselves to swallow even a drop of water or to touch a pinch of snuff. The state of prostration towards the end of the term is extreme, and the first thing done, when the time has passed, is to place the patient in a warm bath. This is probably the severest fast known to the world, unless it be rivalled by certain Hindu ascetics: the Greek and Coptic Christians and the Muhammadans have nothing to compare with it.

[8] This we gather from the reports of the General Board of Health on the epidemic cholera. In 1832 only 4 deaths were recorded out of the 3,000

Portuguese Jews, and in 1849 amongst the 20,000 then inhabiting London there were no more than 13, although the loss from cholera amounted to 12,837. This gives a proportion of 0·6 per 1,000, whilst the superintendent registrar assigns 1: 1,000 to Hampstead, 6: 1,000 to Whitechapel, 7: 1,000 to the City of London, 19: 1,000 to Shoreditch, and 29: 1,000 to Rotherhithe. [These figures are for the special cholera year 1832. Since then the visitations have been much less severe.]

[9] [The work referred to is *Lebensdauer und Todesursachen 22 verschiedener Stände*. Frankfort, 1855.]

[10] [These figures are for average years, and hence hold good now as then.]

[11] [Author of the large history of the Jews in 5 vols. Rotterdam, 1707.]

[12] There is another parasitic race, also of pure blood, but Indo-European, not Semitic, whose preservation appears almost as “providential” as that of the Jews, and whose union is even more exceptional because it is not bound either by revelation or indeed by any form of faith—the Gypsy.

[13] Not to mention Wolff and Palgrave the travellers, and Monseigneur Bauer, Père Hermann, and Père Marie de Ratisbonne, the converts.

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## CHAPTER II

# OPINION OF THE JEW IN ENGLAND

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Of all Europeans, the Englishman, who boasts of being a staunch friend to the people “scattered and peeled,” and whose confident ignorance and indiscriminate philanthropy are bestowed upon them equally with the African negro, knows least of the customs and habits of his *protégés*, and especially of those of Jews in foreign countries. The neglect of things near to us must be the reason why we know so

little of the inner life of Jewry: there are, however, other concomitant causes.

In our native land the Hebrew lives protected, and honoured, in fact, as one of ourselves. We visit him, we dine with him, and we see him at all times and places, except perhaps at the Sunday service. We should enjoy his society but for a certain coarseness of manner, and especially an offensive familiarity, which seems almost peculiar to him. We marvel at his talents, and we are struck by the adaptability and by the universality of his genius. We admire his patience, his steadfastness, and his courage, his military prowess, and his successful career in every post and profession—Statesman and Senior Wrangler, Poet and Literato, Jurist, Surgeon, and Physician, Capitalist, Financier, and Merchant, Philosopher and Engineer, in fact in everything that man can be. When we compare the Semitic Premier with his Anglo-Saxon rival, it is much to the advantage of the former: while jesting about the “Asian mystery,” we cannot but feel that there is something in the Asiatic which we do not expect, which eludes our ken, which goes beyond us.

Those familiar with the annals of old families in England are aware of the extent to which they have been mixed with Jewish blood, even from the days when religious prejudice is mistakenly represented to have been most malign. Indeed, of late centuries our nation has never prided itself, like the Portuguese and the Iberians generally, in preserving its blood “pure and free from taint of Jew and Infidel.” The cross perpetually reappears in outward form as well as in mental quality. Here and there an old country house produces a