

## THE JEWS OF EUROPE

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In attempting to give some account of the condition of the Jews in Europe during the year 5659, it should be premised that a somewhat false impression is liable to be produced by such a survey. Where the condition of Jews is favorable, there is little or nothing to say, so that what one has to report gives a rather sombre tinge to the whole picture, which is liable to be misleading. Let me say, then, at once that, taken as a whole, the year 5659 has shown a more favorable aspect than almost any recent year. There are plague spots, it is true, at Vienna, Paris, Bucharest, and Algiers, but the disease has not spread during the past year, and, except at Bucharest, has even taken a somewhat milder form. Isolated outbreaks and expressions of ill-will have occurred elsewhere, but, considering the huge activity of Anti-Semitism, we are surprised that they have not been more frequent. Inside the Jewish communities the one general movement that has attracted attention has been Zionism, which seems destined to divide the communities of this generation as the question of Reform did in the earlier years of the century. Whether its appearance is to be regarded as a favorable or a sinister sign in Jewish affairs, depends very much upon the individual standpoint, but even its opponents must recognize a certain idealistic trait in the movement, and enthusiasm for ideals can never be altogether bad. We might sum up the year 5659 in two words—Zionism and Dreyfus.

The year has seen the gradual collapse of the apology for a case against Captain Dreyfus, and at the moment there is every prospect of his being shortly released and of the iniquity of 1894 being to some extent redressed. The immediate cause of the change was the suicide of Colonel Henry, the arch-traitor in the original drama. After that confession of guilt, the claims for revision could not be denied even by the most prejudiced. The moment anything like fair investigation of the facts of the case was entered into, it was at once seen how flimsy was the charge. With its break-down, a severe blow was given to Anti-Semitism throughout Europe. It was the Anti-Semites who persisted in making Captain Dreyfus a typical Jew, in making his case a reason for regarding every Jew as a potential traitor; now they are reaping their due reward. To the surprise and to the growing admiration even of the French people, this typical traitor is turning out one of the most remarkable characters history has revealed. He has borne his martyrdom with the patience of a saint and the heroism of a soldier. The severest tortures of body and spirit have not soured him. He appears almost the only Dreyfusard who does not clamor for revenge. The Anti-Semites have chosen their type; the Jews might very well accept it.

Of the many exciting incidents that have characterized the various stages of the *dénouement*, it is impossible here to speak. The brave bid for justice by M. Brisson; the final attempt to discredit Colonel Picquart by imprisonment on a ridiculous charge; the successive changes of attitude of Mr. Facing-both-ways Dupuy; M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire, with his gossip about grog and the hoax played upon him by "M. Karl"; the desperate attempt to get the whole Cour de

Cassation to re-revise the revision which its Criminal Chamber seemed inclined to grant, with its utter failure; the romantic voyage of the *Sfax* from the Île du Diable, and the hurried and dramatic landing of Captain Dreyfus at Quiberon; and the subsequent revelation of the tortures he had undergone in the preceding four years,—are doubtless fresh in every reader's memory, not alone among Jews, but throughout the civilized world, which has seen a most striking novel in action. History knows no parallel to this *cause célèbre*, which has divided a nation so profoundly, and effected so many changes in government and administration. One of the most marked of these changes has been the revulsion of feeling in Alsace, brought about by this portentous act of injustice against a typical Alsatian, and it is a characteristic incident that the Chief Rabbi of Alsace was borne to his grave with the highest honors of the Rhineland at the same moment that a final attempt was being made to withhold justice from Dreyfus. Never has the course of justice in history been so clear as in this memorable *affaire*.

The question of the immediate future scarcely affects us here, but one cannot but hope that the magnanimous attitude of Dreyfus himself will be imitated by those who have fought so bravely on his behalf. The cry for vengeance was never a Jewish cry, and would be most impolitic in the present instance. It would be as unwise as unjust to allow the Dreyfus case to be made the excuse for an attack upon Clericalism, or even Jesuitry, in France. The Jesuits may have made use of the *affaire* to increase their influence in the army; some of them may even have had something to do with the underhand methods by which Dreyfus was originally condemned and by which the revision was impeded so long; but that is

no reason why Jews should allow themselves to be made a beating-stick for Jesuits or for the clergy in general.

From France to Algiers is a natural step, which, as regards the past year, may be said to be from the sublime to the ridiculous. The true aims of the braggadocio Max Régis and his followers have become apparent to the French Government, who soon put an end to his pranks when it was found that they meant Separatism. Unfortunately the effects of the stirring of the muddy waters of religious prejudice cannot be removed so easily. It will be some years before the unfortunate Jews of Algeria can resume their normal relations with their neighbors, and in the meantime many a family has been and will be ruined by the obstacles placed in the way of their earning their living, owing to religious prejudice.

It is, however, at Vienna that the most deleterious results may be seen of the Anti-Semitic agitation. The Municipal Council has continued to show its petty spite against Jews by such acts as excluding reporters of the best-known Viennese paper, the *Neue Freie Presse*, because it is edited by a Jew, while they have even imported Anti-Semitic feeling into such a seemingly innocuous topic as the supply of gas to Vienna. The separation of Jewish from Christian children in public schools has also been a sign of the relentless enmity of the Viennese municipality against the Jews, setting up a barrier against them—a sort of educational Ghetto—from their earliest years. Yet the influence of the mountebank Mayor, Dr. Lueger, has visibly diminished during the year, till at last we have seen him protected from the populace, whom he once roused against the Jews, by a guard of sixty mounted police. Here, too, time has brought about its revenges, but meanwhile the evil has been done, and the embitt-

terment of social relations between Jew and Christian has advanced to a deplorable extent. It is specially deplorable to find Anti-Semitism so rife among the students of the University of Vienna, a fact which implies that the governing classes of the future are being imbued with religious prejudice during their most impressionable years. It is characteristic that it is from Vienna that the comparatively new movement of political Zionism—which so many regard as a counsel of despair—has arisen.

On the other hand, it is satisfactory to observe that almost all signs of Anti-Semitic feeling have disappeared in Hungary, though in the neighboring provinces of the dual monarchy, Bohemia and Galicia, unfortunate riots have disturbed the relations of Jew and Christian during the past year. In regard to Galicia, it is possible that the movement against the Jews was of the nature of a *Jacquerie*, rather than a purely religious or racial one, since Jews form nearly half the class of small land-owners in that province. The conflict is the more disastrous since, quite apart from it, the social and economic condition of the pullulating masses of Jews in Galicia has worsened from year to year, till the *Judenelend* of Galicia has become a by-word.

Contrasted with the condition of the Jews in Lower Austria and Galicia, that of our Russian co-religionists for the first time shows some slight degree of amelioration. Whatever be the cause—whether it be the good-will of the Czar or the desire of his financial representatives to entice capital into the country—there has been a distinct—though perhaps only slight—indication of a more favorable attitude of the Russian Government towards its Jewish subjects. The decisions of the Senate throughout the year have been uniformly

favorable to Jews, even to the extent of allowing a new agricultural colony, in direct opposition to the notorious "May Laws," while the restrictions on residents outside the Pale have been distinctly modified in favor of Jews. The facts, that a Jew has been admitted as a hereditary noble, and that a Jewish soldier received marked military honors at St. Petersburg, are also significant, if slight, signs of a more humane attitude on the part of the government. Possibly one of the reasons for this change may be found in the remarkable figures in the census of the Russian Empire, taken in 1897, but published only this year. From this it appears that, notwithstanding the enormous emigration of the last twenty years, the Jews of Russia number no less than 5,700,000. When it is remembered that they are concentrated in the Governments of Russia where slight beginnings are being made towards manufacturing industry, and that it is the whole policy of the government to develop manufactures, the significance of these figures becomes apparent. It is significant that the Hirsch trustees, the Jewish Colonization Association, have begun to assist Jewish artisans in Russia, with the consent of the Russian Government. Even with these more favorable signs the lot of the Russian Jew is sufficiently hard, but at any rate we can say that it is not at present being made harder by the Russian bureaucracy. Notwithstanding the isolated case of a riot at Nicolaieff, it may be said that the Russian *people* have never been against the Jews.

A different picture is presented by that *annexe* to Russia known as Roumania, where the government, in its attitude towards Jews, has betrayed more than Russian rigor; so much has this been the case that it might plausibly be

argued that the position of the Jews is more unfavorable in Roumania than in Russia itself, for here the government has adopted the dastardly plan of striking at the educational system of the Roumanian Jews. By this means they create ill-will between the two creeds from the earliest years, while preventing Jewish youth from receiving the training which would make them good citizens. Of the 36,000 Jewish children of school age in Roumania, not more than 3,000 are allowed to attend the public elementary schools, and steps are being taken to diminish even this paltry number. It is of no avail that the Jews have contributed their quota of the taxes of blood and money which are exacted from all Roumanians of any creed; they are insidiously regarded as "aliens," and are unable to find a career for their talents and abilities.

It is to be regretted that one has to refer to some signs of Anti-Semitic feeling in the neighboring kingdom of Greece as an indirect result of the Cretan War, in which, it would appear, the Jews showed evidences of sympathy for Turkey, which has so uniformly treated them with humanity and tolerance. There has been some slight trouble in Larissa, and the Jews of Canea thought it desirable to leave when the Turks left the island.

There has fortunately been no indication of ill-will against the Jews in Turkey, but to leave Europe for a moment, one has to recognize that Turkey has been getting alarmed at the influx of Jews into Palestine—whether as a result of the Zionistic movement or not, it is somewhat hard to say. Certainly it is difficult for a Jew now to enter the Holy Land, and even French, English, and Italian Jews have had to appeal for protection to their consuls before being allowed to

land at Jaffa. The visit of the German Emperor to Jerusalem has been interpreted in many ways by those who watch the meteoric career of that somewhat enigmatic character. One hears that he is decidedly in favor of the Zionistic movement, as likely, in his opinion, to increase the influence of Germany in the Holy Land.

With this reference to Zionism we may return to the career of Jews in the more fortunate countries where no Anti-Semitic feeling exists. In Germany it has died out, and even the attempt of Viennese agitators to revive it in Bavaria has proved unsuccessful. Holland and Italy, Switzerland and England, have all been in the proverbially happy position of countries which have no history. Having no outward attacks to bear, the Jews in these countries have mainly been occupied in dividing themselves on the problem of Zionism. It is somewhat difficult to determine how far the Zionistic idea has made progress in Europe during the past year. The second Basle Congress scarcely seemed to arouse so much enthusiasm as the first, which is perhaps natural. The movement has arrived at the difficult phase constituted by the creation of the Colonial Trust or Bank. This has been so far a success that the million and a quarter dollars needed as a minimum have been subscribed, and certainly, if the movement has a practical aim and basis, it has for some time to come the wherewithal to carry it out. This is the critical stage of political Zionism, and every one is awaiting the next step. Meanwhile, within the ranks of Zionism itself a certain amount of division appears to be taking place—some reverting to the old ideas of gradual colonization, while others keep their allegiance to the *idée mère* of the New Zionism—a guarantee from the Turkish suzerain for a legally



constituted home in Palestine. What part the German Emperor is to play in obtaining a guarantee, or in securing it when obtained, lies hidden in the breast of the chief representative, Dr. Herzl, for this is in the main a one-man movement, which is at once the source of its weakness and its strength. It would be an almost unique event in Jewish history, if a single man can carry through a great national plan without secession or conflict.

In England the movement has been for the most part taken up by those who have recently experienced Russian and Roumanian tyranny. Very few of the historic nucleus of the English Jews have cast a favorable eye upon the new movement. The Chief Rabbi, in particular, has exercised all his eloquence and authority in combating it, and the chief Anglo-Jewish newspaper has been equally strong against Zionism. For the rest, there has been little stirring in communal matters in England. Rabbinical diplomas have for the first time been given to theological students trained solely in England, so that it may be anticipated that in a few years England will be able to supply its own rabbis. A tentative movement has been made towards Sunday services, which at present has not led to any active steps. The oft-threatened attempt to introduce an Alien Immigration Bill, to be based on the United States practice, has again been dropped by the government, and with the marked revival in trade very little is heard of the deleterious influence of the alien immigrant.

Abroad, apart from the events already referred to, one can observe signs of Jewish ability making its way to the front in various countries. One of the most characteristic of these is the fact that the late Mr. Gladstone was succeeded, in two of the foreign honors which he had gained by his brilliant

gifts, by two Jews—Signor Luzzatti at the French Institute and Mr. T. C. Asser at the Brussels Academy, the latter taking also a very prominent place at the Hague Conference.

As regards European Jewish literature, it would be impossible to summarize, even roughly, the mass of publications pouring forth from the press on all sides of the manifold Jewish interests, but the production of the first volume of Professor Lazarus' *Ethik des Judenthums* deserves special mention, even in the most summary treatment; while the recent production of some further pages of the Hebrew original of Ecclesiasticus by Professor Schechter (who has during the year received the well-merited honor of the appointment as Professor of Hebrew in the University of London) is perhaps the most striking event in purely Hebrew literature. Mr. Zangwill has been comparatively silent during the year, at least on this side of the water; but Mr. Gordon, who follows to some extent in his footsteps, has added to his reputation by his "Daughters of Shem" and his "Lesser Destinies." One should not, perhaps, leave out of account that one of the most noteworthy books of last year in England was Mr. Sidney Lee's "Life of Shakespeare." It is indeed curious—having the "Merchant of Venice" in view—that among the most prominent Shakespearian scholars of the day are Mr. Sidney Lee and Mr. Israel Gollancz.

While in other respects our report of the year 5659 is on the whole favorable, there is one point in which it has been of darker hue than almost any recent year. European Judaism has lost during the year a more than usually large proportion of eminent and memorable figures. Chief Rabbi Tal, of Holland, and Chief Rabbi Weill, of Strasburg, were perhaps more eminent for their position than for their influ-

ence on contemporary Judaism. Dr. E. Hildesheimer was a force throughout European Jewry which has been consistently exercised in favor of orthodoxy for very many years. Rabbi Wohlgenuth was perhaps not so commanding a figure, but his influence was exercised in the centre of Russian Jewry. Jewish philanthropy has suffered severe losses during the past year; prominent among them is that of Baroness de Hirsch, who carried out so worthily her husband's magnificent plans for the amelioration of the race. Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild was conspicuous as a Mæcenas, and his magnificent collections will henceforth become the permanent possession of the British nation. Germany, as well as German Judaism, has seen two predominant figures in the political sphere removed by death during the year. Dr. Ludwig Bamberger was for many years one of the directing minds of German Liberalism, while Dr. Martin E. von Simson was little less than one of the founders of the German Empire, so prominent a position did he take in its early years. These two men alone would be sufficient to disprove the Anti-Semitic outcry that Jews cannot be patriots, and cannot devote their whole energies to the welfare of the nation. Another example is afforded by the late Madame Coralie Cahen, the French Florence Nightingale, a Jewish Sister of Mercy, whose efforts in the Franco-Prussian War were recognized by the rare decoration of the Legion of Honor. She and Madame Furtado-Heine were recently the only two women holding the Grand Cross, and now both are gone. It is curious that the year which has seen the Court of Cassation so much discussed has also seen the death of a former Jewish President of it, M. G. E. Bédarrides. The eminence of Jews in the drama has been sadly exemplified by the death of Adolphe

Dennerly, one of the most popular French dramatic authors. In the world of thought, the death of Professor H. Steinthal has removed one of the foremost thinkers of the day; with Professor Lazarus he was the founder of the study of *Völkerpsychologie*, while his works on the Origin of Language and on Ethics are classic productions. A remarkable figure has dropped out of the ranks of French Judaism in Alexandre Weill, one of the most brilliant journalists of the French capital and one of the last surviving members of the Heine set. Signor David Levi, of Turin, was a poet of some power, and devoted his gifts to Jewish themes; while David Henriques de Castro, of Amsterdam, was an antiquary of great gifts, who pursued researches in the history of the aristocratic community of which he was one of the last representatives. It is somewhat rare that a bookseller, as such, should demand notice in a European survey like this, but the late Fischl Hirsch has done as much as any one towards that revival of New-Hebrew studies which has been so characteristic a movement of the century now passing away. Scarcely a library of Europe was not indebted to him for some of its most precious manuscript treasures.<sup>1</sup>

The losses of the year have been many and great, yet everywhere one sees Jews of ability coming to the fore to replace them both in the national and in the communal life. At first view, a survey of Jewish affairs produces a feeling of depression. The century opened with the highest hopes of emancipation in all directions: it appears to be closing with

<sup>1</sup> To this list must now be added the name of Professor David Kaufmann of Buda-Pesth, one of the most active and able of contemporary Jewish scholars, whose death at the early age of forty-seven is a severe blow to Jewish science. [ED.]

attempts at taking back the rights slowly won from the sense of justice of the nations. There is a reaction, it is true, but already we can discern the turn of the tide. The defection of France from the great cause of Liberty has been, indeed, a severe blow, but France herself is coming round to juster views, and many years must elapse before Frenchmen will forget the *impasse* they have been led into through the wiles of the Anti-Semites. It will take something more than demonstrations concocted by M. Paulus at four francs per head to induce Frenchmen to embark once more upon the troubled waters of Anti-Semitism. The Viennese have not yet awakened from their Anti-Semitic nightmare, and Vienna is perhaps the most dangerous spot in Europe, from a Jewish standpoint; but elsewhere in Europe men are awakening from their dreams, and are beginning to recognize that in all unsectarian action they can once more clasp hands with their Jewish fellow-citizens, and act in unison with them for the welfare of their fatherland. Russia is still in the seventeenth century, not alone in regard to Jews, but in regard to all dissenters and all ideals of modern progress. It is impossible, however, that the state of affairs can last long, now that she has entered upon new lines of economic development, and when once this is done, the useful place which Jews can take in the modern manufacturing community will ultimately have to be recognized, even by Russia herself. When once Russia enters upon the path of justice, Roumania cannot but follow, and *cadit quaestio Judaica*. Meanwhile the very attacks upon Jews and Judaism have aroused some of the noblest sides of the Jewish nature: persistent patience under persecution, fellow-feeling with the oppressed, clinging with fervor even to the national ideals of the persecutors.

In this regard, as in so many others, Dreyfus has been the typical figure: after all he has suffered, he seems anxious to devote himself only to the highest interests of the nation that has treated him so ill.