
SPHEX CLUB PAPERS

of

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Subject: Jew Baiting

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JEW BAITING

The current persecution of the Jews by the Nazi government of Germany has created indignation throughout the world, and perhaps nowhere has that indignation been so intense as in the United States. That is quite natural. Several million Jews make their homes in this nation, enjoying freedom of speech, which enables them to propagandize vigorously and continually against the oppressor of their co-religionists, the Hitler regime. A free press in the United States keeps us well and fully informed regarding the cruelties perpetrated in Germany. Because it is good politics to champion the Jews and damn the dictators, and further because our remoteness from Germany makes it reasonably safe to do so, our officials, from President down, publicly condemn the brutal policies upon which Germany has embarked.

From pulpit, press and political platform condemnation has been poured upon the Nazis, and as result there appears to be a popular impression that what is now occurring in Germany is something new under the sun. An article recently sent me by an organization with headquarters at a well and favorably known Southern university characterized the reign of terror in Germany as "unprecedented." In fact the history of nearly every Old World power affords precedent for what is now occurring in Germany, as regards its physical cruelties, or its insulting discriminations, or its inhuman order to the Jews to get out.

Knowing what has happened to the Jews in other lands at other times, one is justified in saying no more than that Germany has not yet reached that state of civilization which came to other nations many years ago.

Nowhere in Europe has the Jew ever attained to greater heights than in Spain, and nowhere has his fate been more cruel.

Jewish communities existed in Spain before the birth of Christ. Except the special tax upon Jews imposed by Rome, the Spanish Jews of that early day enjoyed the same rights as other citizens. When Spain came under the Visigoths early in the Fifth Century, the status of the Jews was not changed, for the Visigoths were Arian Christians and restrained the populace from any serious anti-jewish disorders. However, in the year 586 King Recared was converted to Catholicism, and under the influence of the Church put into effect the old decrees of the Church Councils restricting the Jews.

As was quite natural the Jews resisted these restrictions, and during the following century friction between Jew and Gentile was intense. In 694 King Egica condemned a part of the Jews to slavery for revolutionary tendencies, but he began his movement against them too late. Already the Jews had been conspiring with the Moors of North Africa, and in 711 the Moslems crossed the Straits of Gibraltar. As they advanced, they turned over the administration of conquered territory largely to the Jews, so as to keep their fighting strength at the maximum, and in four years time the whole of the Iberian peninsular was under the Crescent.

Under Moorish rule the Jews enjoyed great freedom. The early fanaticism of Islam had died down, so that the Synagogues flourished, Jews participated in the professions and trades, and Spain became a land of opportunity. The Jewish population was considerably augmented by Jews from North Africa who followed the Moors, and later by Jews from other lands.

From the time of the Moorish occupation until the Moslem power in Spain was definitely broken in 1212, the lot of the Spanish Jews was, relatively, a happy one. As the Christian princes, step by

step, advanced southward retaking the peninsular, they gave to the Jews under their rule the same religious toleration and economic freedom they had enjoyed under the Moors. In part this was the result of Moorish example, but mostly it was good policy. It was inexpedient for either Moslem or Christian prince to alienate the Jews, who could so easily give aid to the enemy.

Furthermore, both Moslem and Christian princes soon learned that the Jew had a great economic value. There were Jews in all lands, and the Jews in each had business connections with the Jews in the others. For this very excellent reason the foreign trade could best be handled with the aid of the Jews. For the same reason the Jews possessed in those days especial value in the field of diplomacy; and an additional reason for favoring them in the Christian parts of the country lay in the fact that the Jewish physicians had had good training in the medical schools of the Moors.

The following is quoted from a history of the Jews written by Cecil Roth, an English Jew:

"It was in the reign of Alfonso VI of Castile, (1065-1109), that the Jews of Christian Spain reached the zenith of their prosperity. His conquest of Toledo made him master of one of the oldest and most flourishing of Spanish communities. From this time the city was the capital of Castile, and the center of Jewish life for the whole of Spain. Alfonso's armies contained large numbers of Jews; and the black and yellow turbans which strewed the ground after the battle of Sacralias testifies to the valour with which they fought. Notwithstanding the admonitions of Pope Gregory VII, they were left in possession by the royal charters of all the privileges they had enjoyed under the Mohammedans, and were placed on a position of legal equality

with the general population. The king's body-physician, the Jew Cidelo, had an important voice in public affairs. A certain Joseph ibn Ezra, a refugee from Granada, and brother of the famous Hebrew poet, Moses ibn Ezra, became his treasurer; and was recognized by the Jewish communities of the country as their Prince. Co-religionists of his were employed on diplomatic missions of the utmost delicacy, and the maltreatment of one of them once served as the occasion for the outbreak of war. Alfonso VI.'s grandson, Alfonso VII, (1126-1157) continued the tolerant policy which had hitherto prevailed. Jewish scientists and financiers were prominent at court. Judah ibn Ezra, the son and successor of Joseph, stood high in the royal favor. So important was the position which he attained that when, in 1147, the fortress of Calatrava was captured, it was placed in the charge of the Jewish favorite."

"For the next three quarters of a century, conditions in Christian Spain remained favorable. Jewish diplomats, financiers and physicians abounded; while Alphonso VIII's mistress, about whom many romantic legends have clustered, was the lovely Rachel, still remembered as LaFermosa (the Beautiful)."

Though the Spanish Jews enjoyed royal favor and consequent prosperity, they were accumulating enemies in other quarters. Tax gathering was largely in the hands of the Jews, which did not endear them to the common people. The fact that high positions at court fell into Jewish hands caused fierce jealousy and hatred of them among the Christian nobles. The clergy frowned upon them as unbelievers. And the spirit of the Crusades was in the air. So long as there was danger that the Cross might suffer from the Crescent, the Christian rulers could resist pressure from the Church to enforce its decrees upon the

Jews, but when the Moslem threat was removed this was no longer possible.

The Church demanded not only the enforcement of the measures of separation in vogue in other Catholic countries, but insisted upon more stringent ones; for the Tabernacle had been aggressively missionary in Spain and had even converted a few priests to Judaism. Resentment of the Church was natural. Proclamations of the "holy wars" though directed against the Moslems led to excess against the Jews, and civil war in Spain added to their misfortunes. They supported Don Pedro against revolutionaries, and the latter in revenge devastated the Jewish communities with ruthless fury and reduced the Jews to abject poverty.

In 1391 the inflammatory sermons of Fernando Martinez occasioned a massacre at Seville in which four thousand Jews were killed. Massacre spread like wildfire throughout Spain. Twenty years later, Vincent Ferrer started another anti-Jewish campaign. Tens of thousands of Jews, given the choice of baptism or death, preferred the former.

Jewish historians, used to recording that Jews went to the stake rather than renounce Judaism, take no pride in this phase of Jewish life in Spain. One writes that "for the first time in human memory, Jewish morale broke when put to the test," and another excuses them on the ground that "at heart they remained loyal to Judaism, secretly practicing its customs, instructing their children in its doctrines, and strengthening them in the steadfast resolve to throw off at the first opportunity the religion which had been forced upon them.

Apparently the Old Christians suspected the conversions of these Jews were not sincere, for it is recorded that they edged away

as the baptised Jews approached and called them Marranos, or swine.

Those Spanish Jews who had managed to escape both baptism and death were thenceforth put under most oppressive regulations. They could hold no positions of authority over Christians; they were excluded from the professions and many trades; and they were compelled to wear long coats of a coarse cloth and let their beards grow.

The Marranos, however, now being Christians were not subject to these restrictions and their progress was incredibly rapid in every walk of life. Many of the wealthy married into the finest families of Spain; and the judiciary, the administration, the army and the universities became overrun with them. They were to be found within the Church itself. As was inevitable the Old Christians transferred to the New Christians the hatred they had formerly had for the orthodox Jews, regarding the Marranos as hypocrites, pushing themselves into the lucrative places to the detriment of true Christians.

A small thing precipitated trouble. On the 14th. of March, 1473, there was a procession of Old Christians through the streets of a Spanish city. It passed a Marrano home where a young girl was performing her household duties, which included the emptying of some slop into the street. Quite unintentionally upon her part, it befouled a figure of the Madonna, and immediately the mob broke loose. For several days the rioting continued, accompanied by wholesale murder and rape. This was the signal for similiar outbreaks through the country; and during this state of things Isabella ascended the throne, pledged by her former confessor, Torquemada, to rid Spain of heretics.

To this end the Inquisition was established in 1480, and in February of the following year the first auto de fey was held, its victims being six men and a woman of Jewish extraction. In the

succeeding years the Holy Tribunal numbered its victims by the thousands, and a large percentage of the unfortunates were Jews. Many of the Marranos, being Christians in name only, and practicing Judaism in secret, had their secret dragged from them in the torture chambers and were consigned to the flames. Jews who had never been baptised were charged with giving aid to the Marranos and suffered the same fate.

In the very same year that Isabella sent Columbus on his voyage, with money borrowed it is said from a Jew, the Catholic Monarchs of Spain unexpected issued a decree ordering all Jews to leave Spain within four months. They were required to pay their debts before leaving, but no facilities were afforded them for collecting what was owed them? They were compelled to sell their immovable property at ruinous prices, and, being forbidden to take gold or silver with them, they were under the necessity of purchasing bills of exchange at even more ruinous discount. Rumors spread that some of the Jews had swallowed gold coins in order to take them out of the country, and this was the signal for massacres and horrible mutilations. Herbert L. Willett in his book, "The Jew Through the Centuries," writes: "The Jewish population of Spain in Isabella's day shrank from five million to 200,000."

Man's inhumanity to man in modern Germany is not greater than it was in Spain five centuries ago.

The postscript to the tragedy of the Spanish Jews was written in Portugal, where many of them took refuge after expulsion from Spain, and where already there was a Jewish population. Less under the influence of the Church than Ferdinand and Isabella, the Portugese King was inclined to be lenient with the Jews, but the diplomats arranged that he marry the daughter of the Spanish monarchs, and the Princess would consent only upon condition that all Jews be expelled from

Portugal. Since the marriage was a highly desirable one, the fate of the Jews in Portugal was sealed.

It was not in the Iberian Peninsular alone that the Jews suffered persecution and expulsion. The last country to admit them, England, was the first to drive them out. Jews went to England at the time of the Norman Conquest. Their legal status was that of "Wards of the King," and they made their livings in England chiefly as money-lenders and tax collectors, occupations which made them highly unpopular with the populace, and also with the nobles to whom they made loans. The English clergy, of course, disliked them upon religious grounds. By the English Kings they were regarded solely as objects of financial exploitation, and the kings placed great restrictions upon them. One was that they could not inherit property, consequently when an English Jew died his property reverted to the crown.

When Richard crossed the Channel en route to the Third Crusade, attacks were made upon his Jewish wards in a number of English communities, the most bloody being at York. These murderous expeditions were led by members of the lesser nobility who owed the Jews money, and when the latter were murdered the evidences of the debts of the former were destroyed. Thus the Crown was deprived of its inheritance, and this was the occasion for an English law requiring that evidences of debt be made out in duplicate, one copy for the creditor and one for public record, so that English debtors could not escape payment by the simple method of murdering their Jewish creditors.

Repeated persecution so reduced the English Jews to poverty that they became of small monetary advantage to the King, who in 1290 accepted an indemnity from the nobles and clergy and expelled the Jews, confiscating their immovable property. As illustrating the attitude toward the Jews in England at the time, it is related that an English

ship captain was paid to carry a shipload of the unfortunate refugees to another land. On reaching the mouth of the Thames, he put them upon a sandbar at low tide, and, sailing away as the tide began to rise, called to them: "Moses got you out of the Red Sea. Let him get you out of the Thames."

Persecutions and expulsions of the Jews in France were, because of political division, on a small scale at first. Driven out of one barony, the Jews took refuge in another. However, as the Crown became more powerful, French Jews suffered more. In the Thirteenth Century, Louis the Saint demonstrated his saintliness by driving out the Jews and stealing their property in order to raise the money to finance a Crusade. Later he permitted them to return upon payment of a large sum. At the beginning of the Fourteenth Century, Philip the Fair, needing a bit of ready cash, suddenly decreed banishment of the Jews and seized their property. Still hard pressed a few years later, Philip graciously permitted the Jews to return upon payment of the usual admission fee. Again in 1394 banishment of the Jews from France was decreed and one hundred thousand destitute Jews sought refuge in Germany and Spain.

After the Church had put down the Albigenses menace in France, the Dominican order and Inquisition undertook the extermination of heretics, and inevitably this extended to the Jews; but the more serious massacres of Jews in France occurred during the Shepards Crusade. Few Shepards ever embarked to fight the infidel in the East, but they grasped the opportunity to strike at the Jew at home. Massacres of great cruelty spread through southern France, and community after community of Jews was exterminated.

Another form of Jew-baiting prevalent at that time in France

was condemnation of the Jews' holy books, their seizure and destruction.

That very violent anti-Jewish feeling existed in France until quite modern times is amply testified to by the Dreyfus case, and it is charged by Jewish writers that pogroms in French Morocco during quite recent years were inspired by French officers.

In Germany and Central Europe the Jewish communities led somewhat uneventful lives until the era of the Crusades. Before the organized forces of the First Crusade could get under way, a mob led by fanatical priests, marched through the Rhine Valley, Austria, down the Danube and then southward to Constantinople, murdering and plundering as they progressed, and though their outrages were not confined to the Jews, Jews were the especial targets of this so-called Peasants Crusade, which was in turn destroyed by the Turks when it reached Asia Minor.

At Worms the number of Jewish victims was reckoned at 800. At Cologne the synagogue was surrounded but, with the aid of the Bishop of the city, the Jews escaped, only to be tracked down later and massacred. With what horrible cruelties these Jews were put to death is attested by the fact that often Jewish fathers killed their own wives and children and then themselves rather than endure the torture they knew they would receive at Christian hands.

What in the beginning was the work of an irresponsible mob, became the work of more or less responsible leaders before the Crusading era was over. Religious passions were aroused to high pitch, and to many Christians it seemed illogical to risk Christian lives in battle against the distant Saracens while older and more bitter opponents of the Christian faith were left alive at home, and, as the Christians believed, profiting financially from the Crusades.

In order to stir up the mob against the Jews the so-called

Blood Libel was invented. According to this tale the Jews used the blood of a Christian child in connection with the celebration of the Passover. Whenever a Christian child disappeared, or was lost for a time the cry arose that it had been kidnapped and killed by the Jews of the community for ritual purposes. Massacre and torture of the Jews followed.

In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council gave recognition to the doctrine of Transsubstantiation, and very shortly thereafter this served as another pretext for attacks upon the Jews. It was asserted that Jews had stolen the consecrated host wafers, and re-inflicted the sufferings of the Cross upon Christ by Piercing the wafers with sharp instruments. From the year 1250 on this story was repeated endlessly. In Berlin sixty Jews were burned at the stake on this charge, and in 1298 a German nobleman, taking alleged host desecration as the pretext, marched through the land with a horde of followers and destroyed 146 Jewish communities. In Nuremberg alone over 1000 corpses were counted, while the victims at Rothenberg numbered 560.

Although priests were frequently the instigators of the stories which resulted so disastrously for the Jews, the Pope did his best to protect the unfortunates. In 1247 Pope Innocent VI issued a bill in which he said: "Contrary to the privileges graciously granted them from the apostolic chair, and opposed to God and His justice, they (i.e. the secular and clerical princes) oppressed the Jews by starvation, imprisonment and by other tortures and sufferings; they afflicted them with all kinds of punishments and sometimes even condemned them to death, so that the Jews, although living under Christian princes, are in worse plight than were their ancestors in Egypt under the Pharaohs;" and the Pope therefore forbade "the secular

and clerical princes to devise infamous plots against them in order to steal and obtain possession of their property unjustly." This defense of the Jews by Innocent VI was not unusual, but followed precedents set by his predecessors. The state of mind in which the Crusades, the Blood libel, and the charges of desecrating the host had put the Christians toward the Jews made it an easy matter when the scourge of the Black Death came to Europe to blame that also on the Jews. Indeed, almost any public calamity was made the pretext for Jew-baiting. However, the political situation in Germany, was such that there could be no general expulsion of the Jews as in England, France and Spain. Frequently the Jews were expelled from some locality to complete the work of massacre; but when driven out of one locality, they were received by another, so that at no time after the year 1000 was Germany without Jewish population.

The Lutheran Reformation brought no amelioration in the lot of the Jew, Luther did indeed denounce the Catholic Church for its treatment of the Jews, but apparently he did so in the expectation that he could convert the Jews to Protestant Christianity. On the other hand, the Jews gave certain aid to the Reformation in the hope that those who broke away from the Catholic church would accept Judaism. When this became clear to Luther he dipped his pen in vitriol and denounced the Jews, admonishing his followers to burn their tabernacles and, in a sermon shortly before his death, advise Christian princes to drive Jews from their realms. There was slight difference in the fate of the Jew whether under Catholic or Protestant prince; and in Germany from the time of the Crusades there has been a strong anti-semitic feeling. It was not brought to Germany by

Hitler; he simply used to his own ends a prejudice which had existed over the centuries.

The history of the Jews in Italy is of particular interest as showing the official attitude of the Catholic Church toward the problem. From the first the Papacy frowned upon physical mistreatment of Jews, and never sanctioned the conversions by force which took place in Spain and elsewhere. On the other hand, the Church regarded the Jews as a menace to the truth faith, and out of desire to protect Christians against being led astray, the Church was responsible for measures which the Jews found oppressive.

Recognizing that positions of authority lend an influence that may be used in the field of religion, the Church prohibited the appointment of Jews to places of authority. This meant not only that Jews were denied public office, but that they could not practice the professions of medicine or of law, and that they could not employ Christians as servants. There was residential segregation, too, but not in the sense of the Ghetto, which came later. Also the Jews were required to wear clothing which distinguished them from Christians. In Italy it was a yellow hat.

The practice of money-lending for usury - usury then meaning any rate of interest whether reasonable or otherwise - was prohibited to Christians. The Church found however that the Old Testament did not forbid Jews to lend money to Christians for interest, and so the Jews were practically forced to become money lenders, all the way from pawn-broking to banking, because few other means of earning a living were open to them. Along with money lending went old clothes peddling and the sale of second hand goods, because articles pledged were so frequently not redeemed.

In the Papal States all church laws could, of course, be enforced; and the example of the Papal States was usually followed closely by the other Italian States. Outside of Italy, the influence of the Pope was not as strong, particularly as regards the Church rulings protecting the Jews against physical mistreatment, but the restrictions upon Jews which the Church felt necessary from religious standpoint were widely followed throughout Christendom.

Especially after society got beyond barter and to a money economy, some form of banking was a necessity. This necessity was supplied by the Jews as result of Christians being prohibited from engaging in usury. Then as now, debtors dislike creditors and seek to avoid payment; and in those days the easiest way to avoid payment was to murder the creditor, unless the civil authority could be induced to cancel debts by law. Thus, though the Popes protected the Jews from physical mistreatment as much as they could, outside Italy the Church ruling as to usury was as much the cause of Jewish massacres as was the religious intolerance stirred up by the Crusades.

However, in Italy itself the lot of the Jews was much easier than in other countries, due to the protection given by the Popes, until the Reformation brought on the Counter Reformation. In 1555 Pope Paul IV, holding the Jews partly responsible for the Reformation, withdrew from the Jews the protection which had hitherto been given them. The restrictive laws were more rigidly enforced, and new ones added. Of the latter the two most effecting Jewish life, not only in but outside Italy, were:

1. - The denial of the right to own real estate, making it necessary that Jews sell whatever of real estate they already owned at whatever price they could obtain under those circumstances, and,

2. - The requirement that Jews live within a walled in quarter, the gates to which should be locked at night. From the quarter in which the Jews of Venice lived, these restricted habitations of the Jews became known as Ghettos.

The severeness of the measures adopted by Pope Paul IV is indicated by the fact that the Sultan of Turkey protested against them, and in a very haughty note to the Pope demanded that such Jews as happened to be Turkish subjects be released.

One Jewish historian comments, however, that, at the time, the Ghetto was not an unmixed evil, because, while it kept the Jews in, it also kept their enemies out.

In passing, it is interesting to note that our modern skyscrapers find their genesis in the Ghetto. No provision was made for enlarging the area set aside for the Jews, so that as the Jewish population increased expansion of housing was upward because it could not be outward. Also the conditions in the Ghetto were like in modern slums. The Jews lived in them but did not own them, being denied the right to own real estate, so that high rents and cramped quarters were the results.

From the period of the Crusades until Poland became involved in wars with Russia, Prussia and Sweden, and disrupted by internal dissensions as well, that country furnished the Jews their best haven in Europe. The Tartar invasion of Russia and Central Europe had driven many inhabitants of those sections westward to

Poland, many of the immigrants being Jews. Poland itself was invaded by the Tartars though not conquered; but the desperate battles left Poland almost lacking a middle class. The Polish king sought to remedy this state of affairs by inviting immigration. Many Germans accepted the invitation, and so too did many of the oppressed German Jews as well as Jews from other lands. Poland became a land of economic opportunity for the Jews, who were granted a model charter of protection and liberties by Boleslav the Pious in 1264. The Germans who came at the same time as the Jews brought their anti-Jewish feelings with them, the clergy were hostile, the massacres at the time of the Black Death did not stop at the Polish frontier, Blood Accusations were not unknown; yet relatively speaking the Jews were much better off in Poland than elsewhere because they were not denied economic opportunity. The current of Jewish migration from western Europe consequently continued, reaching its climax during the reign of Casimir the Great, 1333-1370, who, under the influence of his lovely Jewish mistress, Esther, extended the privileges given the Jews under their original charter. They were unrestricted as to their residence, were authorized to rent estates even from the nobility and the priesthood, or to hold them in mortgage, and cognizance of disputes in which they were concerned was reserved to the crown. Indeed, Casimir was so fair not only to the Jews but to other unfortunates, that the lawless nobility, whom he kept in check, called him "King of the serfs and the Jews."

Not a few Polish Jews engaged in money-lending, but Jewish activities were not confined to that. Many were engaged in the mercantile business, others in handicrafts and manufacture, and

they were universal over the country as stewarts and adminisitrators of the great estates. As result of this freedom, Jewish culture improved, and though they produced no scholars so great as those of Spain or France, the average education among Polish Jews was quite high. Those Jews who came to Poland from Germany dominated their co-religionists from other lands, and Yiddish, a Low German dialect, interspersed with Hebrew and Slavonic elements, became their language, and is still the language of the Jews of Russia and Poland. To what extent the Jews in Poland might have developed had there been peace and continued tolerance can only be guessed, but the dynasty under which they prospered died out, the King was made elective by the nobles, and war after war ensued until finally Poland was dismembered, part going to Russia, part to Germany and part to Austria.

The treatment of the Jews by Russia was as brutal as possible. Their young men were forced to serve twenty-five years in the army, the object being more religious than military. They were confined to a certain area known as the pale; and finally there were deliberately organized pograms, in which they were murdered, raped and otherwise tortured - so brutally so that the Congress of the United States made protest, and, when Russia declined to give Jews who were American citizens, the same rights as other American Citizens, our trade treaty with Russia was abrogated.

Just what the status of the Jew is in Soviet Russia is not definitely known. Despite the fact that it is widely believed that Jews were highly influential in bringing about the Bolshevist revolution, there is no evidence that they are given any preferential treatment by the Soviet authorities.

Although the eyes of the world today are upon the Jews of Germany, their co-religionists are suffering in other lands.

Despite the provisions of the Versailles treaty designed to protect Jewish as well as other minorities, Jews are ill treated in both Poland and Roumania, and the fact that King Carol appears to be devoted to his Jewish mistress does not seem to have softened him toward her race.

Just as Spain was the haven for Jews prior to the Crusades, and Poland their land of refuge after the Crusades, so today the eyes of oppressed Jews turn toward the United States, and have so turned for half a century. The Jewish population of the United States was increased by leaps and bounds through immigration until it was temporarily ended by the World War, and it would be pouring in now even more rapidly were it not for the fact that the World War gave this nation warning of the dangers of unrestricted immigration, resulting in the present quota system. Insofar as the quotas permit, our Jewish population is still increasing.

On the face of things, the United States would seem to offer the Jews everything they want, religious liberty, political equality and economic opportunity. The first is guaranteed by our Constitution, and the oppressed Jew of other lands may come here with complete assurance that he will be free to practice his religion without hindrance.

A justice of our Supreme Court is a Jew; the Governor of our largest State is a Jew; the Mayor of our largest city is part Jew; our Secretary of Treasury is a Jew whose father was our Ambassador to Turkey during a prior administration; and some of the President's closest advisers are Jews. Certainly these facts, coupled with the fact that Jews enjoy every political right that other citizens enjoy, show that here they find no political discrimination.

In the economic field, the American Jew is equally unrestricted. As physicians and lawyers, as educators and journalists, in the fields of art, of science and of finance, American Jews have played important roles and have found neither their race nor their religion a barrier to success. If in some occupations the Jew is conspicuous because of his absence, it is because he has not chosen to enter those occupations.

Nevertheless, there exists in the United States a very definite anti-Jewish feeling, the extent of which probably is but imperfectly realized, and the latent dangers in which may be very great. Why is this?

The answer of course is found to some degree in those phases of life in which the Jew has in other lands been made the victim of discrimination. In the United States as elsewhere a difference of religion does make for hostility to the Jew. Here as elsewhere, the most common Christian conception of the Jew is not as the race-brother of Christ but as one of that race responsible for the Savior's suffering upon the cross. For all its teaching of brotherly-love, the Christian religion has not sufficiently impressed its adherents with the fact that the Jew is indeed a brother. In the political field, the number of Jews to be found is not an indication that the mass of American gentiles believe Jews should be given authority over Christians. It is to be noted that public office is held by Jews chiefly through appointment. Only seldom is a Jew elected to public office, and that happens for the most part only where Jews form a very large element of the population, and where it is necessary for reason of political expediency to give them some share in the political plums. If the Jewish population of the United States were not centered around New York city, where Jewish votes can decide who will

get the electoral votes of New York and New Jersey and possibly of Pennsylvania, there would be many fewer Jews holding public office by appointment. Of this the American gentiles are well aware, so that the prominence of Jews in our public life, so far from being an indication of esteem in which they are held by the average American gentiles are well aware, so that the prominence of Jews in our public life, so far from being an indication of esteem in which they are held by the average American, is a cause for anti-Jewish feeling. His Christian fellow citizens resent that he gets a voice in public affairs out of proportion to the per centage of Jews in the whole population.

That certain Jewish leaders themselves feared such a result from Jewish concentration around New York city was plainly indicated by a movement some while back to bring Jewish immigrants into this country through the port of Galveston, Texas, and distribute them throughout the United States. As long as jobs are plentiful, there is a minimum of conflict between Jews of the working class and Gentiles of the same class; but in periods of depression, when jobs become scarce, it is no difficult task to stir up enmity between Jew and gentile workmen. Quite recently a workman asked me whether it were true that there was a colony of immigrant Jews near Norfolk, and that each Jewish employer in Lynchburg had promised to give at least one of those immigrants a job; and my questioner was very bitter at the idea. It meant, he said, that an equal number of Gentiles would be thrown out of work. He made it quite clear that he felt bitter about it.

Anyone who takes the trouble to ask questions of a few Lynchburg workmen as to how they feel toward the Jews will ascertain that there is a latent hostility toward them that any agitator could

easily stir into something more intense and more dangerous. It is unlikely that this is a peculiarity of Lynchburg workmen.

For that matter anti-Jewish feeling is not confined to any one class of Americans. A New York lawyer friend of mine has been made anti-Jewish by the fact that Jews in New York have flooded his profession. A doctor friend recently expressed the same attitude toward the prevalence of Jews in the medical profession. True, they did not express it in terms of competition for fees. They regarded their Jewish competitors as, in their words "unethical;" but after all it means the same thing. I have a feeling, too, that the increasing number of Jews in the faculties of our universities will sooner or later lead to the same situation in the academic world.

Differences of religion and of race, resentment against Jewish prominence in public office, competition with Jews for jobs, customers, clients and patients - all these things contribute to friction between Jews and their Christian neighbors, but they do not completely explain the anti-Jewish feeling of Christians. If every Jew in the United States were converted to Christianity, if every Jewish officeholder were to resign, if a sudden upturn in business were to make work of all sorts so plentiful that friction engendered by competition automatically ceased, there would still remain anti-Jewish feeling.

What characteristic has the Jew that offends his Christian neighbor to this extent?

In reading several histories of the Jewish people, and other books dealing with anti-Semitism, I ran across numerous attempted explanations. Some say that the Jew is tricky in business, and that therein lies his unpopularity. Some say that the Jew is a

radical, and thereby incurs the enmity of conservatives. Others point out that Judaism is not only a religion but also a nationality, and that the Jew's neighbors consequently feel he has more interest in establishment of a Jewish state than in being a good citizen of the nation in which he happens to live. A recent statement made by Rabbi Wise - a statement of doubtful wisdom - is pointed to in substantiation of this last charge. None of these things seems to me to explain, chiefly because most of them are answerable. There is no proof that Jews are more tricky in business than Christians. Perhaps they are only more successful. If there are Jewish radicals, so too there are Christian radicals and certainly there are able Jewish conservatives. For every member of the Jewish race in the United States who looks upon himself as a Jew who happened to be an American there are probably several who look upon themselves as Americans who merely happen to be Jews. I did, however, read one book in which the author applied to the Jews an adjective which I do not find in my unabridged dictionary but the meaning of which was quite clear to me, and which seems to me to cover the matter. He said the Jews were "pushful." That word, to me, covers every characteristic of the Jews I have ever found to rub me the wrong way. Persecuted in one country, Jews push into another. For that the Jew can not be blamed, since it is almost a matter of life or death with him; but in the country where he finds a refuge, he pushes himself into matters of dispute upon which Christians feel strongly. Thus his pushfulness gets him into a position similiar to that of the individual who intervenes in a family squabble not his own.

Possessed of unusual courage of one kind, i.e. the courage of martyrdom, the Jew has not demonstrated the courage of the pioneer,

and when he arrives in a nation of a different race and religion, it is inevitable that the inhabitants who were there before him, knowing it was their own ancestors who pioneered and built up, feel that they rather than the Jewish immigrant should reap the fruits. The Jew seemingly does not to any degree share that view of the matter, and many of them pushfully assert their right to reap where their forebears have not sown. However, it is in personal relations that Jewish pushfulness most offends the Gentile. Religious, political and economic freedom have not completely satisfied the Jew in America. He frequently points, with bitter indignation, to the fact that certain private schools, certain clubs and certain neighborhoods exclude members of his race, not, of course, by law, but by the wishes of the gentiles who own and patronize those schools and clubs, or who live in those neighborhoods. It has been proposed here in Lynchburg that no golf club be permitted unless it admits Jews to membership; and that, if a piece of privately owned real estate be sold with a restriction against re-sale to a Jew, it be denied those city facilities for the support of which it is taxed. So far from ending that unfortunate dislike which many Gentiles entertain for Jews, such pushful methods merely serve to intensify and extend it.

Religious, political and economic freedom - and the Jew wants them all - find their basis in the rights of the individual. If, in the pursuit of happiness, a group of Gentiles find association solely with their own kind essential to its acquirement, that is their right. If a Jew attempts to "push" in, he is invading those very individual rights which are the basis of things denied him for so many centuries in the Old Country, and which he has found

here. He will not be invited as long as he pushes.

I am aware that there are Jews who are not pushful. If someone were to assert that they are the majority of Jews, I could not and would not deny it. They are, unfortunately, the unvocal portion of their race. The pushful are very vocal. Just so long as silence gives consent, the vocal Jew will by Gentiles be accepted as speaking for the whole - and whether that be fair or unfair it is a fact that must be taken into consideration by anyone, Jew or non-Jew, who would like to see anti-Jewish feeling disappear.

The undeniable existence of anti-Jewish sentiment among a large number of non-Jewish Americans makes it important to consider whether it might not flare up into Jew-baiting here. The first inclination of any citizen of the United States, if asked whether such a thing might come about here, would be indignantly to deny that it could happen. He would point to the fact that religious tolerance is ingrained in our citizens. He would assert that Americans are civilized and would not engage in the brutalities which have characterized Jew-baiting elsewhere. He would deny that any political leader could be found who would put himself at the head of any such movement. In this matter, his wish would father his thought - and he would be wrong. To take these things up in reverse order, consider the second Ku Klux Klan. It was founded upon prejudice against Negroes, against Jews and against Catholics. Thus its membership was limited to Protestants, and it attained a numerical and political strength of alarming proportions. Suppose it had omitted Catholics from its Hymn of Hate; is there any reason to suppose that there is less prejudice against Jews among Catholics than among Protestants, and that, confined to anti-Negro and anti-Jew

prejudices, the klan's numerical and political strength would not have been increased by Catholic membership. Consider also that the creation of the klan was co-incident with so-called good times, when economic rivalry was not stimulating prejudices; is there not reason to think that a similiar organization might make even greater appeal to ignorance and prejudice during depression? In this same connection, consider that a man like Henry Ford was induced to finance a bitter attack upon the Jews through his newspaper, The Dearborn Independent.

As for the incapability of Americans to descend to brutality, it is a myth. Over a long period of years not only the South but other parts of the nation have witnessed lynchings; and not infrequently lynchings have been accompanied by a brutality not exceeded in the Jew-baiting practiced in Europe. I recall that a lynching in California was witnessed by women as well as by men, and that some of the former attended with children in their arms and held them up so they might see the sufferings of the victim. The Mafia riots at New Orleans, when eleven Italians, thought to have been implicated in the murder of the chief of police of that city, were dragged from jail and cruelly lynched, despite the fact that some of them had been tried and acquitted. And in that case the mob was headed by the leading citizens.

During 1922 there was serious labor trouble in coal fields of the Middle West, which brought about a serious riot at Herrin, Ill., resulting in the murder of a large number of men, who claimed to be members of another union, but who were charged by the union miners with being non-union strikebreakers. Following is an eye-witness account by an Associated Press correspondent:

"Out in a road near the mine, six men tied together, all of them wounded by bullets and blows, lay in a scorching sun, while hundreds of men and women laughed at their pleas for water,

"One of the men, his face blood and one shoulder shot away, apparently was within a few minutes of death.

"'Please, boys, give me a drink,' he moaned.

"A laugh from the hundreds of spectators was the only reply.

"This correspondent rushed to a house for water and when he returned he was faced by a crowd and quickly drawn pistols and told to keep away.

"When the man begged again for water, 'for God's sake,' a young woman with a baby in her arms placed her foot upon the mangled body and said: 'I'll see you in hell before you get any water.'

"The men apparently had been dragged down a rock road tied behind an automobile."

The men and women responsible for what is here described, despite their brutality for the moment, were not brutes. They were ordinary human beings. Their like is found in every American community. What happened there and then, can happen anywhere at any time given the incentive and opportunity.

That physical mistreatment of the Jews could take place in the United States upon any grand scale is highly improbable; that the Jews will ever be banished from the United States is unthinkable; but that a nation wide movement based upon Jew-hatred, attended by local outbursts with brutality, is easily conceivable. The combustibles are there. It needs only the match to start the conflagration. And, it

seems to me, there are some big-hearted but muddy thinking Americans who are playing with matches.

I have reference to those who urge that we let down the immigration bars in favor of the Jewish victims of German Nazism. Where would such a policy end? If it be our duty to humanity to afford asylum to the German Jews, do we not equally owe asylum to the Jews of Roumania? Indeed, why stop there? Fascism has an anti-Jewish policy too.

Additions to our Jewish population at a time when we are not able to supply employment at the wages demanded to all the potential workers already in the United States can have but one effect, social disorder. That Jew-baiting would become an outstanding phase of such disorder seems to me the inevitable consequence unless we look at the matter realistically and resolutely decline to heed the appeal to emotions.

It does not follow that we must be either unsympathetic with the Jew or deny him our aid. The Society of Friends, or Quakers, has suggested that the German Jews be colonized in Alaska. It bears looking into. The rigorous climate of Germany means that German Jews would not suffer in Alaska from the weather conditions, and Alaska is not the land of perpetual ice and snow it is popularly conceived to be.

Whether the Alaska idea is or is not workable, it involves principles that are sound. If the United States is to be held responsible for the Jews who are persecuted in Germany - or Poland or Italy or Roumania, or wherever they are persecuted - then the United States should attempt to work out the problem with two things in mind:

1 - That any persecuted Jews of other lands for whom we become responsible be settled where they will come in competition with Americans as little as possible, and,

2 - That the money spent to accomplish this be not a dole but an investment, upon which at some reasonable time in the future the United States may expect to get dividends in the shape of an increased trade that will help create jobs for the unemployed we already have.

Unless we either accept the responsibility upon some such basis, or, as many urge, refuse it entirely, we need not be surprised should the future bring to the United States that Jew-baiting we have thus far escaped and which our citizens, Jews and non-Jews alike, do not wish to invite.

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