

been offered him. But the independence of the bold Backwoods apostle, so far from giving offence to 'Old Hickory,' won his lasting regard, and Cartwright was afterwards his honoured guest at the Hermitage.—J. F. B. TINLING.

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## The Jewish Prayer-Book.

A STUDY IN THE WORSHIP OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

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### I. Introductory.

IF a typical cultivated Christian were asked to state what, in his opinion, is the radical defect of orthodox Judaism, he could, I suppose, give but one answer. He would say that it lies in the exaggerated place that is given, in the Jewish religious system, to the principle of Law. Judaism is dominated by the legalistic spirit, which has invested it with a certain artificiality and rigidity, a harsh and forbidding externality, manifesting itself in frigid ceremonialism and a marked lack of religious warmth. Does not the typical exponent of orthodox Judaism find his highest religious exercise and his deepest spiritual satisfaction in the pedantic logic of Rabbinical jurisprudence and the dreary casuistry of the Talmud?

To a certain extent this indictment is true—but it by no means expresses the whole truth. It is true that Judaism, as it organized itself after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., hopelessly committed itself to the principle of Law, which finds its logical outcome and expression in the Talmudic Codes. Yet Judaism has never been deficient in some of the higher and deeper elements that form an essential part of all true religion. Beneath and behind all this forbidding exterior a genuine religious spirit has never ceased to pulsate. One eminent English scholar, who, in a remarkable article published some nineteen years ago, did not hesitate to criticise later Judaism, even describes this element in later Jewish religion as in a certain sense Christian. 'I admit,' he says, 'that both in Jewish literature and in Jewish life there is a Christianity, or (for I am not using this word in

a dogmatic sense) a Christianness, of a more developed character than that which St. Augustine recognizes in every human soul.'<sup>1</sup> In spite of its legalism, its inadequate view of sin and its doctrine of merits, it is impossible not to recognize the spiritual power and lofty devotion that the religion of the synagogue has often manifested, and still often manifests, in its adherents.

The following tribute to the character of that typical product of the Rabbinical system, the *Lamdan*, or learned Jew, as he is seen in Russia and Poland is, I think, convincing. It is from the pen of the venerable Professor Chwolson of St. Petersburg, who was born and educated in a circle where the strictest Rabbinical ideas prevailed, and who is, moreover, a Christian.

Speaking of the *Lamdanim*, as he recollects them, he says: 'Other than Rabbinical learning did not then exist among the Russian-Polish Jews. The *Lamdan* was, in his own department, a cultivated person; he was, however,—and this is the main point,—as a rule, a thoroughly moral and ethically developed man. He was serious, religious, genuinely pious; never spoke any evil of any man, by way of slander or malice; did not "sit in the seat of scorners" and so shunned the card-table and dissipation; and was full of piety and consideration towards others: never used an unseemly expression or anything equivocal—any profanity, any "soiling of the lips"; attached much importance to decorum and courteous behaviour, and that too not merely in society outside the home, but also in his own quiet sanctum; he also treated

<sup>1</sup> Professor T. K. Cheyne, 'The Jews and the Gospel' (*Expositor*, 3rd series, vol. i., 1885, pp. 401 ff.).

his children with gentleness, and his wife with tender consideration and loving regard, and was pure and honourable in all his actions. Such was my own revered father, and such were all my male relatives whom I knew, and who were all *Lamdanim*.<sup>1</sup>

The truth is, nothing is easier for those who look at Judaism from the outside, and before whose eyes the externals of the Talmudic system bulk so large, than to underestimate the religious vitality that lies behind. Jewish literature, too, is of so varied a character and covers such an enormous range that it is exceedingly difficult for the uninitiated to appreciate its true religious value.

No doubt this very fact has proved a constant source of danger to Judaism itself. Even the Jew has sometimes felt the difficulty of seeing the forest for the trees. But, indeed, all Jews are not Talmudists. It is in its Liturgy, however, its Prayer-Book—where Jewish popular religion is really reflected and expressed—that we find the true measure of Judaism's devotional power. And to the study of this—which is comparatively an easy task with the aids that exist—the attention of those who realize the importance of forming some adequate and living conception of what Judaism really is, may be invited.

Here, if anywhere, the 'Christian' element in Jewish religion, which, according to Professor Cheyne, prophesies 'of a Jewish Christianity' to come, is to be seen. How large this element is has been admirably and yet succinctly set forth by the Rev. C. J. Ball, in a paper from which I will venture to quote: 'A very cursory examination of the Jewish Prayer-Book,' he says, 'reveals the fact that the Jewish coincides with the Catholic religion in many capital characteristics. Its prayers express most of the essential needs of humanity in terms as striking and beautiful as any supplied by our own Liturgies. The vivid sense of entire dependence upon God for Life and Light, for healing and happiness; the longing for emancipation from the bondage of the external and for the attainment of spiritual purity; the profound consciousness that man is sanctified by the Divine Law, which is the very principle of his perfection; the joy in God as the King of the universe and in the glory of His Kingdom; the strong assurance of His Personality, as a Being at once righteous

<sup>1</sup> *Das letzte Passamahl Christi*, etc., p. 74 n.

and merciful, tender, and true; the belief that He is the Eternal Source of all being besides His own, that He is One and that there is no unity like His; that He is incorporeal and immaterial; that He is the First and the Last; that He knows all our thoughts and deeds, and recompenses the obedient and the sinner; the sublime conviction that all the words of Prophecy are true; the daily expectation of the Coming of the Messiah; the momentous doctrine that the dead will live again; all these and many other features of Judaism bear a close resemblance to the faith of Christendom, and should have their influence in a mutual attraction and an enlightened sympathy between the Churches of which they are the common possession. Israel prays as we pray, Our Father which art in Heaven; Israel prays with us that He may hallow His name throughout the world; Israel prays as we pray, Lead us not into the power of sin and temptation; and so for the other suffrages of the Divine Petition. Ours alone, of all the many religions of man, shares with the Jew the persistent hope of the final restoration of Israel; we alone pray with the Jew that God will gather His ancient people from the four corners of the earth.'<sup>2</sup> Such is the general character of the Jewish Prayer-Book, as it strikes an accomplished Christian scholar. Before coming, however, to a closer consideration of the prayers, it is necessary to make one or two more general remarks.

Leaving out of account the radical alterations that have been introduced in the Reform synagogues, we shall confine our attention to the liturgical formularies of orthodox Judaism; and in this category we shall include the formularies not merely of the most strictly orthodox, but also those of the moderate party, whose modifications of the older ritual do not involve any essential break with tradition, but are mainly in the direction of the omission of redundant matter. But within the ranks of the orthodox Jews there is an important division, which depends not upon recently developed differences of opinion and taste, but upon the effects produced by living in communities widely separated and influenced by widely different historical conditions during many centuries of the past. According to this division, the Jews fall into two main classes, namely, those of the *Sefardim* and the *Ashkenazim*. Now, by the mediæval Jews, the land Sepharad mentioned in Obadiah 20 was

<sup>2</sup> *Church and Synagogue*, vol. iii. p. 50 f.

identified with Spain, while Ashkenaz, one of the descendants of Japheth (Gn 10<sup>3</sup>), was identified with Germany, probably because of the similarity in sound of the name Gomer (the father of Ashkenaz) with that of the Teutonic Fatherland.<sup>1</sup> Hence Ashkenaz is the mediæval Jewish name for Germany, and Sepharad of Spain; and the Jews of German- and Slavonic-speaking countries are called *Ashkenazim*, while the Spanish and Portuguese Jews are named *Sephardim*. The Ashkenazim or German-speaking Jews have for centuries used among themselves a German jargon, the commonest form of Yiddish, which is derived from the dialect of the Rhine; and this form of speech prevails even among those who live in Slavonic-speaking countries. The reason is that the Jews of Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland (as well as of Germany proper) are the descendants of those who were originally settled in the Rhine valley, having overflowed into these countries from the original settlement, and having carried their German speech with them. The original colony is said to have consisted of Galileans who were deported to the lower Rhine in the reign of the emperor Hadrian. On the other hand, the Jews of Spain and Portugal have overflowed into Provence, Italy, North Africa, and Turkey. Their diffusion was especially stimulated by the expulsion from Spain in 1492, which was also responsible for the founding of a Sephardic settlement in Holland, and from thence later in London. Now the Ashkenazim and Sephardim differ on the following points: (1) in their pronunciation of Hebrew; the former reproducing, to a large extent, the provincial peculiarities of Galilee, the latter approximating more nearly to the classical diction of Judæa; (2) in the intonation of the prayers and Bible lessons: 'the Sefardim have pretty much maintained the old Oriental chants, which move in a very narrow compass, while the Germans and Poles have allowed a strong European element to enter their religious music';<sup>2</sup> and (3) there are differences, on the whole, by no means inconsiderable, between the service-books of the two divisions. The importance of these, however, must not be exaggerated. In the oldest elements of the Liturgy they are in essential agreement—the Sefardic versions being distinguished by a marked tendency to diffuseness and Oriental exuberance of expression (*e.g.* the heaping up of

synonyms). It is in later additions to the Liturgy that the two branches most markedly differ. The German Prayer-Book seems ultimately to have been derived from Tiberias, in Galilee; that of the Sefardim from the Babylonian Schools (in the ninth century A.D.). The technical term for these varieties of liturgical form and usage is *minhag* (= custom). Thus 'the German minhag' and 'the Portuguese minhag' are spoken of. The former is divided into two varieties, namely, the Ashkenazic minhag proper (that of Western Germany) and the Polish minhag (that of Eastern Germany and of the countries farther east and south-east).<sup>3</sup> Modern movements of population have in many cases brought Jews of these originally separate communities into close proximity. But in these cases the old distinctions are still maintained, and so we find German synagogues in Jerusalem, and Portuguese synagogues in London, Paris, Hamburg, and Vienna, side by side with the synagogues that follow the minhag of the original settlements of the places in question. It ought here to be mentioned that the Jews of the East (Egypt, Palestine, and Arabia) had originally a minhag different from those of the Ashkenazim and Sefardim; but after Maimonides' stay in Egypt, and also owing to the influx of refugees from Spain after the expulsion, the Sefardic Liturgy displaced the earlier ritual in these countries.

Among the Jews of one district of Arabia, however,—namely, Yemen,—many of the peculiar features of the earlier and original usage still survive, which are of great historical interest and value. Of even greater importance from the historical point of view are the Liturgy of the Karaites—a Jewish sect in the Crimea, who repudiate rabbinical traditions—and that of the little community of Samaritans which still survives at Nablûs, the ancient Shechem, in Palestine. There is also a mystical Jewish sect, numbering some five hundred thousand, scattered about districts of Poland, Russia, Northern Hungary, and Roumania, known as the *Chasidim*, or 'Pious,' who have a Prayer-Book of their own. This, however, is mainly based on the Sefardic minhag. This sect, while not denying the binding force of rabbinical ordinances, attaches a higher value to

<sup>1</sup> See *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, i. 193 (*s.v.* 'Ashkenaz').

<sup>2</sup> Dembitz, *Jewish Services in Synagogue and Home*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> The term 'minhag' is also used in a wider sense to denote any variety of local usage or custom in civil life. The Mishnic rule is: *Everything according to the custom (minhag) of the country* (הכל כמנהג הארץ, *Baba Metzia*, ix. 1).

the esoteric teachings of the Kabbala than to the Talmud.

In what follows we shall take for our text-book, as being most practically useful for our purpose, the German minhag, as it is used among the

Ashkenazic congregations of Great Britain and the British Empire, in Singer's convenient edition.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Authorized Daily Prayer-Book* (Hebrew and English), published by Eyre & Spottiswoode.

(To be continued.)

## At the Literary Table.

### Notes and Notices.

MR. ALLENSON'S 'Handy Theological Library' is excellent evidence that there are theological as well as other masterpieces which may be bound in leather and sold at a small price. Phillips Brooks' *Lectures on Preaching* is one of the volumes. It costs 3s. net.

Messrs. A. & C. Black have published a sixpenny edition of Professor Percy Gardner's *A Historic View of the New Testament*. It is very well printed.

The story of the C.M.S. and C.E.Z.M.S. missions in the Punjab and Sindh was told by the late Rev. Robert Clark, and now it has been made into a book by Mr. Robert Maconachie, late of the Indian Civil Service, and published by the Church Missionary Society at 3s. 6d. net. It is a big book for the money, and there is plenty in it—plenty of information, plenty of enthusiasm.

St. Mary's! What a fascination is in the name in Oxford! And its sound has gone forth far beyond Oxford. Who does not know that 'here John Keble delivered the testimony which marked the beginning of the Oxford movement'? Who does not know that 'here Newman's afternoon sermons were preached'? The present vicar, the Rev. H. L. Thompson, is proud of his church and its history. He has preached the facts of that history in seven sermons, and had the sermons published by Messrs. Constable in a book which bears a most exquisite photograph of St. Mary's as a frontispiece. Order the book by the title of *The Church of St. Mary the Virgin* (3s. 6d. net).

The new volume of the Century Bible is *Judges and Ruth* (Jack; 2s. 6d. net). The author is

Professor Thatcher of Mansfield College, Oxford. The Authorized Version is dropped: it was a useless swelling of the bulk of the book. Judges does not need a new commentary so cryingly as some other books of the Old Testament; for we have Moore and Black, a big and a little, both excellent. Still Mr. Thatcher is thoroughly furnished, and he can see things for himself.

Messrs. Longmans have published a remarkably cheap (3s. 6d. net) edition of the late Bishop of Oxford's *Ordination Addresses*.

The Principal of the Church of Scotland Training College in Glasgow is a literary enthusiast. He should have been chosen for some Chair of English Literature ere now. For he has insight as a student, enthusiasm and experience as a teacher. Mr. Williams' new book is entitled *Our Early Female Novelists* (Maclehose; 2s. 6d. net); but it contains essays also on Pope, Emily Brontë, Scott's Poetry, and Zola's *Theory of the Novel*.

'The King's Classics' are small quarto volumes after the antique manner—broad margin and white label and the binding cords prominent across the back. Roper's *Life of Sir Thomas More* is the volume in our hands (Moring; 1s. 6d. net). It is well edited with notes, index, and careful reprint of Singer's modernized text. After the Life come the letters to his daughter. The romance of Sir Thomas More's life has been written once for all by Miss Manning in *The Household of Sir Thomas More*. This is the reality for which Miss Manning's readers have often asked.

Of the lives that were lost in the Boxer riots, it would seem that not the least valuable was the life of a young American missionary, Horace Tracy Pitkin. Lost, did we say? Short it was