

SINAI TO CINCINNATI

*Lay Views on the Writings of
Isaac M. Wise, Founder of
Reform Judaism
in America*

by

DENA WILANSKY

1937

RENAISSANCE BOOK COMPANY
NEW YORK

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEDICATED TO JUDAISM

"Knowledge exists to be imparted"

—EMERSON

"ALL THAT THE LORD HATH SPOKEN WE WILL DO"

Long, long ago, a sound of beauty filled
The earth, and even the heavens were thrilled.
In Sinai's wilderness a voice was heard,
Sweeter than music or the song of bird.
A new-born people giving homage true,
"All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do."

"Before Me, thou shalt have no other god,"
Oft had Israel felt the chast'ning rod,
Until the consciousness of God supreme
Dispersed the shadows like the sunshine's gleam.
Though now they worship not Ishtar or Baal,
The god of gold still holds his mystic thrall.

Somehow, somewhere, the good and true will win,
This is God's world, it cannot end in sin.
While all on earth must learn, heed first the Jew,
"All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do."

DENA WILANSKY

Cincinnati, Ohio
May 1928.

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SINAI TO CINCINNATI

Author's Note

In beginning this work, the writer was actuated by two motives —

1. To show a side of Dr. Wise's activities which seemed not heretofore to have been emphasized, viz: his vigorous defense of Judaism in America opposite Christianity (or Christology).
2. To show the real reasons for his rejection of Zionism, which the writer believed, if better known, might remove the barriers raised against it, Zionism, and unite American Israel in the sacred work of upbuilding the Holy Land.

It was then discovered that the reason for his defense of Judaism was the same as for his rejection of Zionism, strange as this may seem — also, that the reasons for all of Dr. Wise's activities, no matter how widely varied the subjects appeared to be, could be traced to the same source. Therefore a number of other subjects have been included to further illustrate his motivating idea.

The writer also wishes it understood that the material herein presented has not been disclosed for the sake of sensationalism, but will be found to have a direct bearing on the subjects under consideration, in the attempt to clarify the life and writings of Isaac M. Wise, and his influence upon Judaism in America.

PART I
INTRODUCTION

ISAAC MAYER WISE

*Some Biography — A Few Excerpts From
the Editorial Correspondence*

Aphorisms

An Interesting Editorial on Germany

INTRODUCTION

ISAAC MAYER WISE

ISAAC M. WISE was a prolific writer, author, and poet. Besides personally conducting the editorial sheet of *The American Israelite* for a period of forty-six years (1854-1900), previous to which he had been a regular contributor to the *Asmonean* (1850-1854) and the *Occident* (1847-1855), he also wrote articles in other publications, among which were *The Hebrew Review*, *American Jews' Annual*, and *the Central Conference of American Rabbis Year Book*. He also contributed considerable material to the *Deborah*, the German weekly supplement to the *American Israelite*.

His published books number eleven. He wrote eleven novels in English and sixteen in German, and most of these novels, appearing in chapter form in the *American Israelite* and the *Deborah*, assume book proportions. In addition, hundreds of unsigned poems in both papers, are no doubt his compositions. A number of prayer-books, also, in English and German are the work of his hands.

In the year 1863 he was asked to accept the nomination of State Senator by the Democratic Convention of Ohio, which nomination he refused. Years later, he explained that "the reason why the editor of this journal (*The American Israelite*) refused to be nominated as State Senator by the Democratic Convention, is simply the utter impossibility to devote any time to the study of political questions and the work required by a senator who has the ambition of filling his position well. If one has under his care a weekly paper, a large congregation and Sabbath-school, and the Hebrew Union College, he can hardly afford to enter upon new obligations. This is the sole reason for declining the honor."

In Washington, D.C. in 1870, he opened in prayer the United States Senate. In 1887 he informed the public that at one time, (date not given) he had opened in prayer the New York State Senate. For eighteen years he was a Director and Trustee of the University of Cincinnati.

Dr. Wise was rabbi of the Bene Yeshurun Temple of Cincinnati for forty-six years, president of and professor at the Hebrew Union College from its establishment in 1875 until his death in March of 1900. He claimed the title of 'champion marrying minister' of America, having united nearly 4000 couples. He officiated at a hundred or more conversions from Christianity to Judaism. During his life-time, twenty poems were inspired by him and dedicated to him.

He was also a musician. One of the members of his choir, Henry Frank, since deceased, contributed the following infor-

mation: "Dr. Wise was elected rabbi of Congregation Bene Yeshurun in April, 1854. I came to Cincinnati in October, 1854, and soon afterwards was asked to join the choir. Dr. Wise was then the leader and teacher of the Choir, using his violin in teaching the new beginners; he was a great lover of music, and he succeeded in inducing the young people to volunteer gladly to become members of the Choir."

Pictures of Dr. Wise were sold and mailed to all parts of the country. In July of 1859, the following advertisement appeared in the columns of the *The American Israelite*:

Portrait of Isaac M. Wise

The undersigned has undertaken the pleasing duty of lithographing ISAAC M. WISE, the Editor of this Paper, and Rabbi of the Jewish congregation worshipping in the Lodge Street Synagogue of this city. I may well flatter myself on having succeeded in getting a correct and life-like Picture, which I now offer for sale, and will forward it in good order, free of postage, to any part of the United States, for the price of 50 cents. Address your orders to

J. SHOBE, care of Box 851 P. O.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

Postage stamps received as cash.

A quarter of a century later another advertisement to the same effect appeared, in May of 1886, as follows:

*Cabinet Photographs
of the*

Rev. Dr. Isaac M. Wise

Taken by Landy

The most life-like picture ever taken of this distinguished man.

Sent by mail, 50 cents each.

208 W. Fourth St.

Cincinnati.

Dr. Wise was a self-made man. He wanted neither fame nor fortune through inheritance. He has this to say of himself and his grand-parents: "My grandfather was a distinguished physician, and I know next to nothing about medicine. My maternal grandfather was a prosperous broker, and I was never out of debt. How is that? The point is, that a man should be proud of his own accomplishments."

From 1855 to 1898 he traveled constantly over the United States, giving lectures and addresses, mainly in the interests of the Hebrew Union College and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. On all these trips he reported to his paper under the title of "Editorial Correspondence." The articles describe vividly, often humorously and philosophically, the cities visited, Jewish communal conditions, general accounts of travel, impressions of people and places, and scenic descriptions, constituting an interesting summary of life and history, Jewish and general, in the United States, over a period of half a century. The following excerpts taken from his Editorial Correspondence, and philosophic statements taken from his general writings, will better serve to illustrate the man.

JULY 11, 1856. I came to Indianapolis without meeting any other accident except a poor breakfast, administered to a standing and anxious multitude, by some fellows who are as slow as Congress in deciding the Kansas question. There I was in the Indianapolis depot about 11 o'clock A. M., and looked with amazement on the commotion and hurry prevailing at this spot of railroads' junction, where every person appears as busy and quick as an office seeker before election day. Best you leave, thought I, or else you must pay again for looking at them, and off I went in search of my friends . . .

AUGUST 2, 1867. . . . I came to this sensible conclusion, that whoever wishes to travel pleasantly, must stay at home; but if they

are not inclined so to do, and must go eastward, if they wish to travel comfortably, let them take the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad; if for pleasure, let them cross the mountains on the Baltimore and Ohio; if for scientific exploration, let them take the one horse car from Brighton house to Cumminsville (suburban Cincinnati) and they will find ample time to design the outlines of an octavo volume.

JULY 13, 1877. Written from Salt Lake City, Utah . . . Sunset on the prairies is a grand scene which no pen can describe, no pencil depict, no language reach, and no colors represent. Majestically quiet and slow the sun moves on behind a veil of light clouds, growing in size as it comes nearer the horizon. The cloud receives and diffuses all glowing tinges which imagination could depict, changing tints and forms with every passing moment. You see within ten or fifteen minutes all shades and tints you could possibly think of. You see mountains of gold encased in fire, castles of blue, gray and black outlined with gold and crimson, overtowered by huge battlements encased in liquid fire. Now it changes into the shape of a burning city, a group of sphinxes, a squadron of fiery riders, anything you can imagine, and always relieved by the most unspeakable colors. Now I understand the visions of those seers of old, whose imagination was sublime enough to expound those charming phenomena and to read revelations in the configuration of clouds, sun, and slowly approaching darkness. The sunset solves many a psychological problem in regard to visions . . .

FEBRUARY 1, 1884. From: *A Southern Trip* . . . The Cincinnati Southern Railway carried your humble servant during Tuesday night to Chattanooga, Tenn. and he arrived on time Wednesday early in the morning. The very polite proprietor of the Chattanooga *Daily Times*, in his capacity of the reception committee of one, took possession of his man and landed him in good trim in the house of Rev. Mr. Ochs, where besides that venerable

gentleman, his excellent wife, three sons and a few daughters, were all ready to welcome their guest. From the porch of Mr. Ochs' home on a lofty hill, you may survey Lookout Mountain, Mission Ridge, a goodly portion of the Tennessee River and the whole city of Chattanooga. It is quite an interesting spot, which calls up in the mind many memorable reminiscences from our late war; however the traces thereof have disappeared, the names only of battle grounds have been preserved . . . Old Chattanooga as seen in 1858, is completely effaced, a new city occupies its spot and stretches far beyond the original limits, up the mountains and along the banks of the river . . .

DECEMBER 27, 1894. From: *Reminiscences from New Orleans* . . . The Thursday Steamboat Excursion . . . on the river, on the steamboat was the order this morning, and on we went to Canal Street and thence down the levee, where the cotton, the sugar, the rice, and mountains of other staples await shipment, and a motley crowd of Italians, negroes, and many other colors and nationalities lined the shore to see the decorated excursion boat go off on its journey. It was after ten when the boat started with about 250 ladies and gentlemen and a well schooled orchestra on board. It ran first northward up the river, then turned southward, so that the excursionists could see the gigantic fleet of all kinds of crafts anchored on both sides of the river, which is indeed a wonderful sight. The excursion boat was saluted by the ships roaring and whistling on both sides and making other hideous noises, complimentary to the city's guests on the boat under the commander-in-chief, Solomon Marx, chairman of the committee, the poet laureate of New Orleans in English and German. The Mississippi below New Orleans down to the Gulf stretches its giant length through a land which flows with milk and honey under the azure dome of an Italian sky. Both sides of the river are studded with baronial estates of the old and new styles. Magnificent residences

of peculiar southern architecture; with clusters of outhouses like Spanish villas, in the midst of sugar cane fields and orange orchards, the buildings protected by giant cedars, pines, hemlocks, line the two sides of the river all the way down at half mile distances. Our company enjoyed it hugely . . .

Aphorisms

FEBRUARY 16, 1872. In the history of the last eighteen centuries, Israel was in fault for too great love of God; and his enemies equally in fault, for too little love of their neighbor.

JUNE 14, 1872. Truth is the redeemer of mankind, the only saving Messiah, and reason is his Gospel.

AUGUST 2, 1872. I have no enemy because I hate none. I pity those who hate, for they are wretched.

AUGUST 23, 1872. Nothing can be more beautiful than the human countenance, or more sublime than human thought, among all things conceivable to man, and yet it is last and least that theology refers to it.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1872. He who has much can do much, how poor are the poor.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1872. Ideas are rays from the sun of universal reason, which connect the mote with the sun.

DECEMBER 20, 1872. Take care of yourself, and be free; or let others take care of you and be a slave. This is true also in religion. Those who must have a priest to take care of their souls can arrive as slaves only in eternal life, and God has made them to be free.

JANUARY 24, 1873. Sensational preachers, like devout actors, look out of place to intelligent persons, and succeed in one play only.

JANUARY 24, 1873. Freedom is the basis of ethics. Either man is a free moral agent, or he is irresponsible. Predestination, fatalism, original sin, and universal depravity are the direct opposite of freedom.

FEBRUARY 21, 1873. Without reason, nature is no Cosmos; it is a Chaos.

FEBRUARY 28, 1873. Temperament has much to do with the religious views of people. The choleric is usually orthodox, the sanguinic a free thinker, the melancholic an enthusiast, and the phlegmatic an indifferentist. This does not say that so it must be, and so man must remain all his life-time. His will, influenced by reason and conviction, is much stronger than his temperament. But where reason is not at work or but feebly exercised, the above classification will be found correct.

MARCH 7, 1873. Truly rich are those who use their wealth to ennoble themselves, their fellow-men, and endow institutions which will benefit the present and coming generations.

APRIL 28, 1876. What we call human body, is transient matter kept momentarily in this form. The soul is the man, the efficient and ever active cause of the body's existence and motion.

APRIL 28, 1876. God is, and the whole world of beings is His manifestation in time. The things are at no time the same, but God is immutable, therefore God exists and the things become.

JUNE 2, 1876. With the birth of an organic being, it begins not its existence, it merely opens its mundane existence; so with death it closes not its existence, it simply closes this cycle of its sublunar career.

NOVEMBER 1, 1878. Compassion is the mother of humanity. Only he who feels the woes of his fellow-men, will seriously think of alleviating them.

NOVEMBER 1, 1878. Genius is intensified sensibility. He who is greater than his neighbor has also stronger passions, the Talmud maintains. We reverse the adage and say, he is greater than his neighbors because his passions are stronger.

NOVEMBER 1, 1878. Diplomacy is a word made up of two Greek terms and signifies a double lock box, one within another. This, perhaps, is characteristic of the great art, to keep one's intentions locked in a box within a box, so that none could discover them.

NOVEMBER 1, 1878. The prophets were geniuses in Palestine, had they been born in New England they would have become inventors, in England, mariners, in France, soldiers, in Germany, philosophers, in Italy, composers, in Spain, poets, or social democrats in Russia.

NOVEMBER 15, 1878. Preachers who have a divided conscience—one half to be used in the pulpit and the other in private conversation—exemplify the adage, "United we stand, divided we fall."

FEBRUARY 14, 1879. If you have an idea which pleases you, and you are in doubt whether it is the truth of its contents or the beauty of its form which gives you satisfaction, translate it into another language, and you will find out which is which. In the translation in nine cases out of ten, it is only the truth of the contents which retains its value and beauty. What about the Bible which has ever found so many admirers in all languages?

JANUARY 5, 1883. Persecute a good man as Saul did David, and you make him great; crucify him, and you make him a god.

OCTOBER 24, 1883. Look out for your children; they inherit your vices as well as your virtues, and preserve both of them together with their consequences with much more certainty than the property which you bequeath them.

*JANUARY 17, 1895. "If a gentleman like Mr. Auer says in the Reichstag, many Germans want the republican form of government, we are obliged to believe it, especially as "many Germans" is an uncertain quantity. If he had said that many Germans are prepared and fit for self-government, we would certainly have denied it. We know they were not fit for self-government in 1848, and got themselves entangled in the reactionary net a few weeks after the magnificent rise of a people that breaks its chains. Since then Germany steadily retrograded, and especially since 1870, towards the military despotism, the French imperialism and chauvinism, so that the Germany of 1895 is far behind the Germany of 1795, when its mighty reasoners, poets, humanists and cosmopolitan liberators swayed a mighty sceptre among the educated classes of society, where now, especially among the young students and the popular educators a haughty boastful and self-delusive contempt of non-Germans, of German Jews, and especially of Frenchmen tears asunder all bonds of justice and righteousness. A people with a dozen or so political parties in its midst, and among them an anti-Semitic, a Catholic, a Protestant and a Polish party, is certainly unfit for self-government. It will snore yet a long time under the protection of its thirty-six monarchs before it will have gathered strength enough to digest the food of slavery which filled its stomach during these many centuries. It will not awake by its own exertions. It never did. The dream of freedom came over it from France, the unification from Italy, and the Socialism from both neighboring countries.

Germany can raise soldiers for its potentates and schoolmasters for boys, but no champions of freedom. It never produced a Cromwell, a Washington, or even a Kossuth. The sermons of liberty preached by mental giants of the last century were forgotten in this, so well forgotten, that the men and leaders of popular

*Because of the situation in Germany today, this extremely interesting editorial has also been included.

freedom and popular rights in 1848 are now objects of derision and hatred also with the students of the universities and the teachers of the people. The best have become the worst. Reaction is trump.

There is no republican form of government in sight in Germany. So we see things from a distance."

Reading the accounts of travel and other writings, one sees in their author, not a business organizer, as Dr. Wise is popularly referred to because of his successful accomplishments in finally establishing the Hebrew Union College, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, but the lover of nature, the humorist, the philosopher, and the student of life in many phases.

The last words written of Isaac M. Wise should not be—Organizer—but:

Isaac M. Wise — Lover of mankind,
Author, Poet, and Dreamer.

GENERAL REVIEW

BASIS OF DR. WISE'S BELIEFS

*Constitution of the United States —
The Fulfillment of Mosaic Ethics*

*The Universal Republic—Patterned
After America*

The Universal Religion—Reform Judaism

The Mission of Israel

*The Fifty Year Fulfillment Prophecy—
Messianic Era to Arrive by 1900*

CHAPTER I

BASIS OF DR. WISE'S BELIEFS

WHAT IS the real story of Isaac M. Wise? How did his writings impress the lay reader? Did his disciples really understand the man who was the aggressive leader of Reform Judaism in America? What did he mean by "Reform"? What did he mean by "Judaism"? From whence came the titanic strength and spirit to transform his dreams into reality, in spite of terrific and continuous opposition? Was the "Jewish pope" of America a "notorious infidel," a "traitor to Judaism," charges that were brought against him? Why did he fear neither friend nor foe in his efforts to expose the fallacies, absurdities and mistakes in the

New Testament; to establish the Hebrew Union College, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis? Why was he so bitterly opposed to "political Zionism"? Why did he, a foreigner by birth, so love America and the English language?

The beginning of the answers to all these questions, and many more, are based on the single fact that he considered the Constitution of the United States the practical fulfillment of Mosaic ethics, "Mosaism in action." In his own words: "What we claim is, that this country, in its constitution and institutions, in its laws and in the administration thereof, is Jewish . . . we have here the very government which was delineated by Moses on the basis of the Sinai revelation."

Freedom of conscience and liberty to worship, which had always been so seriously menaced or forbidden by the Old World priestly and monarchical forms of government, could in America be fully exercised because of the guarantees of the United States Constitution proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." In his preface to the "History of the Israelitish Nation," published in Albany, N.Y. in 1854, Dr. Wise says: "Moses formed one pole, and the American Revolution the other, of an axis around which revolved the political history of 33 centuries." From time to time, in his writings in the "*American Israelite*," he quotes this sentence, saying: "We repeat it, fearless of contradiction."

Here, then, in America, was the end of the road, along which Israel had so painfully wandered for so long. And here, freed of the political disabilities under which he had suffered in Europe, convinced that God had reserved America as the scene for the final unfolding of the divine drama of world salvation, Dr. Wise was ready to put his dreams into action. He believed that the American republic would precede and usher in the "universal

republic," and that Reform Judaism would and must become "universal religion." This belief was the Rock of Gibraltar against which the winds of opposition and the fury of his opponents dashed in vain. "The republican form of government," he said, "is the only one which God ordained for the government of society." The French revolution and republic having followed the American ones, the republican form of government would spread from France across Europe and into Asia, he believed, thus achieving a "universal republic." Of the "universal religion," he said: "The religion of the future will be Judaism in its pure and denationalized form. However the prejudiced world may protest, in theology it must finally become Jewish. There is no other way left to conciliate reason and faith . . . the hour of redemption for mankind must come, the Messiah must be sent to redeem them. Here in America the salvation of mankind must originate." In the third chapter of his "Reminiscences," he says, "I was an enthusiast on the subjects of America and freedom, and was convinced that everyone thought and felt just as I did. Consequently I could begin at once to reform and improve the world."

The instrument through which this reformation was to be accomplished was provided by the "Mission of Israel." In 1849, three years after his arrival in America, writing in the "*Occident*" he said: "The mission of Israel was and still is, to promulgate the sacred truth to all nations on earth; to diffuse the bright light that first shone on Sinai's sanctified summit, all over the world." By this he means the moral law — the Ten Commandments, the basis of civilization. Judaism to Isaac M. Wise consisted of its ethical phase only, the morality and monotheism of the Decalogue. This he claimed was real orthodox Judaism, "pure religion," the "essence" of Judaism, or "Reform Judaism." All other developments since the revelation of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai were spurious. The following are some of his own definitions. On June 13, 1862, he said: "That much is

true then, only that portion of Judaism which will and must become the common good of all men, is religion to us, and only in this respect we are Jews; all other laws, ordinances, customs and usages, wherever or whenever written or practiced have a secondary importance to us, it is the object and not the means we reflect upon . . . Only that which is expressed, contained or implied in the Sinaic revelation, is Judaism." On November 20, 1883, writing on the "Universality of the Sinaic Revelation," he said, "Those who want more, vastly more to be contained in the term 'Judaism' than the substance of the Sinaic revelation, are mistaken . . . Judaism is the religion revealed on Mt. Sinai." On June 22, 1899, he wrote: "Legalism is not Judaism nor is mysticism religion; the belief in fiction is superstition, Judaism is the fear of the Lord and the love of man in harmony with the dicta of reason."

And so Dr. Wise definitely places outside the pale of Judaism, or "pure religion," all those rabbinic-legal elements, all those cabbalistic-poetic ideas, which grew with and enriched the life of Israel, giving discipline and consolation for the trials and sorrows of life, and which are generally understood, in addition to morality and monotheism, to constitute Judaism.

In Europe, due to monarchical governments and the union of church and state, Judaism had not been free to fulfill its mission in the spread of Monotheism and morality. In 1852, delivering an address before the Hebrew Young Men's Literary Association in New York City, on "The End of Popes, Nobles and Kings," Dr. Wise says: "The dominion of popes and nobles found its grave in the progress of civilization, being opposed to liberty, so the dominion of monarchs equally odious will also find its grave in the rushing waves of time." America's democratic form of government having completely separated Church and State, the union of which, he believed, was the base of the world's troubles, there was no reason why he could not begin at once to

carry out the plans to which he had consecrated himself, which were to break down the religious barriers between Jew and non-Jew, and usher in the messianic era through a universal religion based on the understanding and acceptance of the morality and monotheism contained in the Decalogue, applicable to all humanity. This was to be the future religion of the world, the fulfillment of Israel's mission, the purpose for which God had preserved Israel through the centuries, and the only rational interpretation which could be placed upon Moses and the Prophets, he believed. And this future religion of the world he envisaged as seeing fulfillment in America and England first by the close of the nineteenth century (approximately fifty years after his arrival in America), from whence it would spread to the rest of the world. America and England are linked together because the men who founded the American republic and drew up its constitution and laws were of English descent. The people of America and England, the two English-speaking countries of the world, influenced so largely by Old Testament morality and ethics, were to be the new chosen people of the Lord, the world's Messiah from the redemption of ignorance and error. History since the establishment of the Thirteen Colonies under a free government, was moving much faster, he believed, than it had before that world-shaking event, that science, as represented by the printing press, the telegraph, the other means of rapid dissemination of knowledge, and the freedom to educate the public, would soon bring us to the messianic era of peace and good-will to all; that God was not as long-suffering as he was when Moses wrote his revelations, and that punishment to sinful nations followed more rapidly than in olden times. "Those who are engaged in revising Scripture," he said on August 26, 1881, "should not forget to make a note to that passage in Exodus which says that God is 'long-suffering,' that in our days the standard of time seems to be considerably reduced."

This reduction in the standard of time exemplified in the fifty year cycle which would bring about all things good, was firmly fixed in Dr. Wise's mind. Whether the problems were religious or political, he felt assured that the end of the nineteenth century would witness their solution. Of Russia under the Czar, which he called "the most damnable government on earth," he said in October of 1855 in an editorial headed: "Sebastopol Taken," " . . . the day is not so far distant when Russia, like Spain, will boast upon former days of grandeur and glory; both of them have trampled upon nations, have outraged the rights of man, and persecuted the sons of Israel. Russia will vanish away from the list of powers on earth *before the close of this century . . .*"

In August of 1858, Dr. Wise traveled to Baltimore to dedicate there the Temple of the Oheb Shalom Congregation. In an editorial entitled: "Eastward Bound," he records his feelings on this occasion. "The present trip," he wrote, "is one of paramount importance. It is a triumph of principle and system. The Editor of these papers (*Israelite and Deborah*) is an exponent of that progressive school which venerates the old and established products and forms of Judaism, comprehends the demands of modern days, and attempts to produce a legal and natural development of Judaism agreeable to the just demands of our age; *always starting from the basis, that the essence of Judaism is destined to become the universal religion, while its forms must change according to the demands of different ages, and fall away together with the final triumph of its essence.** A system so enlightened and liberal," he continued, "so boldly conceived and powerfully advocated, must naturally gain numerous friends and opponents. On the one side it is attacked by the self styled orthodox school, who consider every custom, form and observance of Judaism an eternal stepping stone to salvation . . . On

*Italics are the author's.

the other hand, this system is attacked by those who style themselves radical reformers and think the Messianic time is on hand if we yield, if we renounce our identity . . . While the former system had for a long time its stronghold in Baltimore, and the latter started from there, and has yet its seat there, there rises now a Temple to our system in Baltimore, and therefore the Editor of these papers is called from Cincinnati to Baltimore to deliver the dedication sermon. The Editor of these papers," he concluded, "entertains no doubt whatever but that his system will and must triumph all over this country, and is THE Judaism of the coming generations . . . He entertains not the least doubt that, *before this century will close*, the essence of Judaism will be THE religion of the great majority of all the intelligent men in this country. This conviction gives him the boldness and fortitude to stand on his own ground notwithstanding the numerous attacks and violent onslaughts made against him, or rather his system. Who stands firmest will be victorious at last."

A few years later in March 1860, in an article on America, entitled "Our Future," he again sounds the fifty-year fulfillment prophecy with reference to America's greatness. The article concludes: "Therefore aside of all extravagant hopes, visionary speculations, or transcendental theories, reasoning plainly from facts and analogies, we may predict that *before half a century pass away*, we must be not only the most numerous and the wealthiest nation, but also ONE nation, perfectly a national unit. Whatever turn politics may take, as long as the one language (English), no national religion, railroads, steamboats and telegraphs remain, as long as there is a free press and common sense, we shall be One nation, and therefore the greatest nation in history."

The near approach of the universal republic and the universal religion are again accentuated in an article in which he stresses the rapid progress of humanity through scientific invention, and

the end of Christian orthodoxy. This article was written on May 14th, 1875, and headed: "No Religious War." Dr. Wise writes: "The state of affairs in the civilized world's history, they say, points to a religious war . . . Alarmists would not even exempt our country from the general calamity. Here, they say, Catholics and Protestants are just as jealous of each other, and as bitterly opposed to one another as in any part of the world. The Catholics continually increase in number by immigration from Ireland and Germany, with an element much more likely to fight than to reason." Dr. Wise, however, does not agree with this contention. "It is a great mistake," his argument concludes: "to believe, that mankind can retrograde again very considerably, when the very atmosphere is pregnant with progressive ideas, new inventions and discoveries, and the telegraphs carry far and wide every idea sent into the world. The republic of letters and the dominion of intelligence are mightier now than they ever were, and grow faster and more rapidly than they ever did. Christian dogmatism, conceived and born in the Middle Ages, is no longer the religion of predominant minds; it governs no longer the ruling spirits, it is merely the religion of the mediocre and illiterate masses which decrease very rapidly, in exact proportion, as general information and enlightenment spread. It is impossible now to be a scientist with the belief in a trinity, incarnation, miracles, resurrection, etc., and the mechanic with the farmer is fast growing to be a scientist. The intelligence of today is not Christian, and the intelligence governs more so now than it ever did." "Before our very eyes," says Dr. Wise, "the world moves onward into the golden age of redeemed humanity and the fraternal union of nations, as our prophets thousands of years ago have predicted. We are fast approaching the universal democratic republic with civil and religious liberty, cemented by the world's advanced intelligence. This century settles old accounts. It is progressive."

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Dangers of Belief in Mysteries and Miracles

Born Christians Ruin Christianity

Original Purpose of the Christian Story

Origin of the Crucifixion Story

Assimilation and Conversion

*Some Striking Statements on Christianity
versus Judaism*

Separation of Church and State

Temperance

CHAPTER II

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

WHAT THEN, were the obstacles to be overcome in the fulfillment of Israel's mission in America? Had not the "Mosaic" constitution and the separation of Church and State already leveled a path through the wilderness that all men might follow? Was not the "essence" of Judaism sufficiently demonstrated thereby? Yes, but according to Dr. Wise, the work had only been begun, and the dangers which would hamper further progress, three-fold. These were:

1. *Orthodox Christianity, or 'Christology,' the successor to paganism, represented in America by Catholicism and orthodox*

Protestantism, "revolting to reason and deadening to mental freedom."

2. *Radicalism, which professed either no religion, or based religion on humanistic, ethical or other concepts, excluding God and the divine revelation of the Ten Commandments.*

3. *Orthodox Judaism, which had buried the soul or "essence" of Judaism under weighty trappings of custom and ceremony, thus, hiding its real light from the Gentile world.*

We will review these three obstacles to universal religion.

Orthodox Christianity stultified the mind by belief in mysteries and miracles (virgin birth, bodily resurrection of Jesus, vicarious atonement, etc.) making it difficult for its followers to exercise the divine faculty of reason in other fields, thus resulting in general crime, and concerning which Dr. Wise says: "Beginning as people do in the popular religion, with a suspension of reason, for none can reason and believe the Christian dogmas, all aberrations of the mind are natural." "Where in principle," he asked, "is the difference between those who knelt before a statue of Jupiter, or those who kneel before cross and crucifix? Where is the difference between those who worshiped Zoroaster's Ormuzd to protect them against Ahriman, and those who worship Jesus to protect them against Satan? The difference, it appears to us, is in words only."

To the Jewish lay reader Dr. Wise's herculean work in the field of exposing, or rather, popularizing the errors of Christianity, and defending the Jew and Judaism against its attacks, stands out as one of the most amazing activities of any man in America, or in the world. In July of 1899, less than a year before his death, he reviewed this work in his own picturesque language, as follows: "None can accuse us," he said, "that we spared our arms or projectiles, our energy and capacity, when or whenever the enemy attacked the Jew or Judaism. We retaliated fiercely,

stood like an iron wall around our camp, carried the war into Egypt whenever Judaism was assailed, smote the Philistines hip and thigh whenever the Jew was unjustly attacked." The courage and fearlessness he displayed, and the results achieved, are nothing short of marvelous. His battles against Orthodox Judaism seem to the lay reader like a family affair in comparison, for his work against Christian dogma was indeed carrying the war directly into the camp of the enemy, and this war for him never abated. In March of 1873, the editor of the "Catholic Guardian" said of him: "One of the vilest vilifiers of our holy religion in America, is a Jew — the Rabbi Wise of Cincinnati."

The orthodox Protestants were also on his trail. They accused Dr. Wise of trying to destroy their religion, and also informed him that he was not representative of Judaism. To both charges he took serious exception, in an editorial headed "A Christian World and a Jewish Reply," under date of August 27, 1875. The argument follows: "It might interest some readers to know that a paper is published in Cincinnati for some readers at Milton, Pennsylvania, wherever that may be, which styles itself 'The Christian World,' although it is more pagan than Christian, and the world is complete without that paper. It has two editors, whom neither you nor we know, and contains the material, put up at No. 178 Elm Street, for a dozen or so of sectarian sheets. Now these editors preach to us a very Christian sermon without any sort of argument, because we stated that Christian dogmatism, the very thing labeled Christianity by all sects, is a thing of the past; philosophy, criticism and science have completely uprooted it, and made it impossible for honest men of an honest education. Because we furthermore said that there is no reason why Jews should be expected now to embrace Christianity, when all oppression is removed, no especial profits to be expected, and dogmatic Christianity is a ruin never to be rebuilt again.

"Those reverend editors, as usual, with benumbed conser-

vatism, argue that reformed Judaism is Gentilism, Deism, Atheism, or some other ism, and rabbinical orthodoxy alone is true Judaism. That is decidedly rich. If a vulgar Chinaman would come today from his country and teach one of our chief-justices the laws of the United States, it would not look more impertinent and more foolish than the attempt of those reverend editors to tell us what Judaism is or ought to be. Gentlemen who cannot read the first chapter of the Bible in the original without dozens of blunders, which the boys and girls in our Sabbath-schools can correct; gentlemen who have never seen the inside of the Talmud, know nothing of Hebrew-rabbinical literature, and are unable to read any book or chapter thereof, tell us what Judaism is or ought to be. That is too thin and impertinent to be argued by anybody. That may do in Milton, Pa., here it looks extremely ridiculous and impertinent. Those gentlemen, to whom legitimate argument is as foreign as rational analysis, work themselves up to a pitch of fanatic excitement . . .

"We never said the Christian Church was dead. We maintained, and maintain, by the achievement of philosophers, science and criticism, Christian dogmatism has become impossible with the reasoner. It is all a matter of faith which reason accepts no longer. Trinitarianism and anthropomorphism may be preached to congregations, but they can no longer be defended in philosophy or science. The Christian story may be told in Sabbath schools and Sunday congregations, but in criticism it is considered mythical or legendary. It is not our fault; we Jews have not done it, although we always knew and maintained the same thing precisely. It is your own fault that you had a Voltaire, Rousseau, and Thomas Paine; a Bacon, Locke, Hume, Bolingbroke and the English Deists; a Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Feuerbach and Hartmann; a Schleiermacher, Strauss, Wislencenus, Rau, Renan and Theodore Parker; a Huxley, Darwin, Tyndall and the 'Westminister Review.' They are all born Christians, and they

ruined Christianity. We have been very quiet all this time, and only repulsed attacks. Curse Cromwell, if curse you must, and his Ironsides, Washington and his compatriots, curse the revolutions of France and Germany, curse Victor Emanuel, Count Cavour and Garibaldi, Bismarck and Doellinger — all of them Christians; for they have imposed on you civil and religious liberty; they have let loose reason, philosophy, science, criticism, the devils you fight; they have upset Christian dogmatism and the Christian story. The Jews have not done it. They have not crucified your Jesus the first time (although who would your clergymen be if he had not been crucified?) nor have they done it now. Then Gentile soldiers (Platdeutsche — most likely Anglo-Saxons) did the bloody work; and now again Gentiles, as mentioned above, do the work of crucifixion."

Isaac M. Wise had no wish, however, in exposing the errors in the New Testament, to make its believers unhappy, any more than in fighting for Judaism was his thought to make the Jews happy, his fight was, as he states again and again, *for truth, justice, and the good of humanity*. His work along this line might easily be compared with the efforts of the Russian Communist government in striving to eliminate anti-Semitism in that country, not because it wants to favor the Jews, but because of its aim to eliminate all ruling religions and their effects in order to make way for the new religion, Atheism. Similarly Dr. Wise's purpose was to eliminate both orthodox Judaism and orthodox Christianity in order to clear the path for the new universal religion, which he understood by "Reform Judaism." He honestly believed that once the Christian world understood the truth about the origin of Christianity, that is, the origin of the pagan concepts of virgin birth,* etc., they would gladly give up Christology as

*To understand Christianity, there are two pre-requisite subjects, and these are Judaism and Paganism of which Christianity is a compound. For the background of subjects like virgin birth, crucifixion, resurrection, etc. Paganism offers a fertile field for exploration. The pagan gods of old have their present Christ-

they had given up Paganism, and then the messianic era and universal religion would arrive. "We firmly believe," he said, as early as July of 1866, "that the day is not very distant when all Christians will understand the Christian story, as it originally was intended, as a legend, to convert the Heathens to the Monotheism and the Ethics of Israel." To this end he wrote the books:

The Origin of Christianity, and a Commentary to the Acts of the Apostles (1868)

The Martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth (1874)

Judaism and Christianity, Their Agreements and Disagreements (1883)

A Defense of Judaism versus Proselytizing Christianity (1889)

and all the other material which appeared during his lifetime in the pages of the *American Israelite*.

Reform Judaism in America has often been accused of deliberately opening the door to the assimilation of the Jew by Christianity. Whatever may have been the attitude of some of the early leaders of Reform on this point, and they are not guiltless of the charge, as the records in the pages of the '*American Israelite*' amply testify, certain it is that Dr. Wise as the outstanding leader never sponsored such a program or believed it possible,

ian counterparts in the substitution of Jesus for Adonis, for Zeus and for Osiris, Mary for Mylitta, goddess of fertility, etc. *The Golden Bough*, by Sir James George Fraser, *Sacred Fire*, by B. Z. Goldberg, can give full details on the background of sex in religion, and especially in the Christian religion.

The origin of the resurrection theory, dates back to the childhood of all races and people. When summer, with its heat and fruitfulness, faded, and autumn and cold winter took its place, the early children of mankind believed the Sun-god had died and they wept accordingly. Then when Spring came and life again asserted itself through the realms of nature, they believed the god had come to life again and rejoiced accordingly. Later this idea was amplified and it was believed another jealous god had contrived the death of the Sun-god. But the pagans at least in this respect, were kinder than the Christians, for they had their gods do each other to death — no mortal had power over them.

although the results of his work as seen today, unwittingly tended to the same conclusion. The following editorial dated April 17, 1885, emphatically proves his opposition to the assimilationists.

"The retiring President of the Sinai Congregation of Chicago suggested a few reforms of Jewish observances to his constituents in the form of a farewell address, such as abolishing the rite of circumcision, observing the Sunday-Sabbath, changing the Biblical holidays, Yom Kippur included, to the Sunday next following or preceding them, and other minor points. These reforms are not new in the history of Judaism. Paul of Tarsus declared circumcision abolished. Pope and Council established the Sunday-Sabbath and changed both Easter and Pentecost to Sunday; and they did it with the avowed intention to distinguish the Church from Judaism, chiefly not to be mistaken for Jews by the government which, especially from and after the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, with a few exceptions, hated the Jew and Judaism. They succeeded well. For after circumcision had been abolished, the days for the Sabbaths and festivals had been changed, and other than the underlying historical momentoes had been substituted, Christianity appeared no longer a Jewish sect, it became also externally a religion of its own, and made so many more enemies for Jews and Judaism. The reformatory suggestions of the President of the Sinai Congregation are not new. The only questions not answered yet in this congregation are these: Should American Jews imitate now the work done by the Church so many centuries ago, follow the prudent advice of Roman Catholic prelates, and declare the teachings of our savans superstitious errors, promulgated these eighteen centuries, which we must correct now? If we have no scruples about this little bit of honor due to our ancestors in their graves, and no compunction about such small matters, the next question arises, will not the same cause produce the same effect; will not those very changes place us in the same position as it did then the Christians, and in our days place us outside the pale of both

Jews and Christians? Any congregation which would introduce all those changes would certainly not be recognized, and not willing to be recognized yet as a Christian congregation, unless it would declare its belief in Jesus in this or that form; would it be recognized as a Jewish congregation by either Jews or Christians?"

To Isaac M. Wise, the progress of the world was the well-defined program of God in history, and therefore Christianity as a backward religion which had sought to interrupt and retard this program by its doctrines and dogmas representing perversion of reason, its cruelty to those of different beliefs, and its rigid stand against the discoveries of science which are further revelations of the laws of God in Nature, would go. "Facts teach," he said, "that Christianity is a retrogression in history. Prior to the American and French revolutions, it was the fortress of absolutism, and now it is an echo of olden times, believed by illiterate masses, reshaped by reformers, and rejected by philosophers, philanthropists, and patriots." Every time he used the famous phrase, "Yet Truth Will Triumph," he meant the truth of the knowledge of One God against the Christian-pagan trinity. Angered because of the continued efforts of the missionaries to convert the Jews, he said: "The Jews cannot be Christianized; this is beyond question. The spirit of the age goes against trinitarianism and favors Monotheism. Moses is ahead of the Pope." His idea was, not that Jews would become Christians, but that the Christians would become Jews, according of course, to his interpretation of Judaism as already given. "You will come to us," he said, "we can never come to you." He also used this phrase in connection with the conversion of Orthodox Judaism to Reform, believing its customs and ceremonies equally contrary to progress and enlightenment as Christian dogma, and labelling both under the head of superstition.

Armed with his "Three Lectures on the Origin of Christi-

anity," (Jesus — The Apostles — Paul) he toured the country in 1870 from New York to New Orleans, lecturing to mixed audiences (Jewish and Gentile). His New York lecture was given at Steinway's Hall, concerning which he wrote: "Since Mr. Dickens (Charles) gave his readings in the same hall, no audience so large and so intelligent has been gathered in New York to listen to any sort of lecture." Besides his published books on Christianity which appeared in chapter form in the pages of *The American Israelite*, he never ceased writing articles and editorials to prove the superiority of Judaism over Christianity; the failure of Christianity to function as religion, as evidenced by wars in every generation since its foundation; the crime and immorality always prevalent, and the progress of civilization in spite of the iron hand of the Church upon it. "Christendom always did," he said, "and does now stand far below the standard of ethics." The great minds of America among non-Jews, he pointed out, were those who took no stock in dogmatic Christianity — that "Paganism, Christianity and Mohammedanism were selfish religions because their main consideration was to save their souls." He constantly attacked the use of such phrases as "Christian morals," "Christian virtue," "Christian charity, love, brotherhood," etc., affirming that Christianity had proven itself a failure since mankind under its rule had always been enslaved mentally and physically, but that "the result of Judaism is that it outlasted all other religions and philosophical systems, and the little truth which mankind possesses is taken from our sacred shrine." His book, "The Martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth," is intended to prove that Jesus died only to save his friends, the apostles, for had he been proclaimed King of Palestine, as was their intention, war with Rome would inevitably have resulted (since Palestine was under Roman rule) for all the Jews, and the ringleaders certainly executed. By giving himself up, Jesus prevented the rebellion against Rome ripe at Jerusalem.

It is strange that crucifixion in the mind of the average Christian, is synonymous only with the death of Jesus. Under the rule of the Roman Empire, many a priest and layman in Israel, as well as many men of other faiths, who were considered a possible danger to the Roman government, found death on the cross, Rome's barbarous method of capital punishment. Indeed, the story of the death of Jesus by this method, for which there is actually no real proof, but reason for considerable doubt, was believed by Dr. Wise, as explained in his "Martyrdom of Jesus," etc., to have been patterned after the story of the crucifixion of Antigonus, king of the Jews about half a century before the beginning of the Christian era. Dr. Wise tells the story. "There existed, in the time of Paul, among the Roman-Syrian heathens, a wide-spread and deep sympathy for one crucified king of the Jews, as is evident from Dio Cassius, Plutarch, Strabo and Josephus. It was the youngest son of Aristobul, the heroic Maccabee. In the long combat for the crown of Palestine by the brothers Hyrcan and Aristobul, the latter at last succeeded in gaining the sympathy of Julius Caesar for his cause, who gave him two legions, sent him to Syria to regain his kingdom; but while under way, men of Pompey's party destroyed him by poison. His body was embalmed in honey, till Antony afterward sent it to Judea to be buried in the royal sepulchre. About the same time Alexander, the son of this Aristobul, who fought at home for his father's cause, was captured by Scipio and beheaded at Antioch. The death of these two valiant princes, whose cause had been declared just by Julius Caesar, enlisted wide-spread sympathy among Romans. There was one more son left of this heroic family, Antigonus, who followed his mother and sister to Chalcis, where the latter was queen. In the year 43 B. C., however, we find Antigonus again in Palestine claiming the crown. Allied with the Parthians, he maintained himself in his royal position for six years against Herod and Marc Antony. At last, after a

heroic life and reign, he fell into the hands of the Roman. 'Antony now gave the kingdom to a certain Herod, and, having stretched Antigonus on a cross and scourged him, a thing never done before to any other king by the Romans, he put him to death.' "

Dr. Wise continues: "The fact that all prominent historians of those days mention this extraordinary occurrence, and the manner how they did it, show that it was considered one of Marc Antony's worst crimes; and that the sympathy with the crucified king was wide-spread and profound. Here we may well have the source of the crucifixion story. That class of heathens, to whom the Gospel was originally preached, knew no difference between David and the Maccabees: both were then extinct dynasties. They had heard of a crucified king of the Jews, who was one of the last scions of a heroic family and a hero himself, young, brave, and generous, whose fate was regretted and whose fame was heralded. Paul, who made use of everything useful, narrated the end of Jesus to correspond with the end of Antigonus, both stories appearing identical, to enlist the prevailing sympathy for the hero of the Gospel story. Therefore he preached "Christ crucified." So the story was established among the Paul-Christians."

Many of Dr. Wise's articles show how the various books of the Old Testament have been misinterpreted, Isaiah — Ezekiel — Daniel, etc. to fit into the fulfillment myths of the New Testament conclusions. "The Gospel story," said Dr. Wise, "was written a century after the death of its hero from the traditions of illiterate persons by dogmatic men who shaped the life of Jesus to look like the fulfillment of certain Scriptural passages." "The whole messianic plot," he asserted, "originated in Alexandria by making allegories of Scriptural events and turning the political fabric of the ancient Hebrews into a mysterious scheme of salvation." Asked to preach a sermon refuting the divinity of Christ, he said: "Are we called upon to close up all the lunatic

asylums in this country? A man who seriously maintains that the Eternal God and the man Jesus are identical is as near lunacy as was Caligula when he proclaimed himself the highest God . . . Why not Mohammed, Napoleon, or Brigham Young? It will do as well for the one as for the other . . . However nicely the idea may be dressed, the great God of the immense universe looks too small upon the cross of calvary; and the human family is too large, has too numerous vices and virtues, to be perfectly represented by, and dependent on, one rabbi of Gallilee."

Often his arguments were humorous as well as incisive. Concerning the purchase of the figure of Christ by the Christians, he said: "They would like to have a god handy; especially one whom they can see, but who sees them not." When Dr. Wise came to America in 1846, the land was overrun by missionaries seeking to convert the Jews to Christianity, and many of these missionaries, sad to say, were apostate German Jews. His work in negating their influence and activities cannot be overestimated. In one article summing up the various conversion angles, he concludes: "Well, then, if you cannot improve the intelligence, moral character, or physical health of the Jew, what have you to offer him? You offer him your Christology, and say, if you accept that, we give you an order on heaven, payable after death. But here the question arises, how shall the Jew know that your draft will be honored in that Hereafter?" His piercing wit spared neither man nor woman. "Well-informed people assure us," he stated, "that Miss Sarah Bernhardt is Jewish in talent, French in disposition, and in moral character, Roman Catholic." When the Jews in America were being blamed for the financial panic of 1896, Dr. Wise, commenting on the situation, wrote: "The Jews, they say, are capital managers of capital. They understand how to handle money, and how to invest it profitably. From the Jews of the kings they advanced by their ingenuity in handling dollars and cents to the king of the kings. They loan to all and borrow of

none except of the rich non-Israelite who understands not the capital art of handling capital profitably, and of potentates that lack confidence in their own people and co-religionists." "And yet," he continued, "those Jews made some very poor investments. The worst speculation they entered upon was when they invested their capital in manufacturing Christianity. That did not pay at all. They put the blame on Peter, James, Paul and other dealers in salvation stocks, who put it on the market among ignorant heathens and their deceitful priests. They depreciated the stock first by watering it in baptizing, and then by amalgamating with worthless heathen stock. So the priests swallowed the income, and the holder lived on the capital until it became so meager that there was no market for it any longer, and a host of Christian Endeavorers, salvation armies and hired missionary peddlers auctioneer it among the masses, and sell it at a nominal or denominational price. So the stock came down to five per cent, and few to purchase at that low price, and the Jews lost the whole capital thus invested, except a small percentage invested here and there in public morality."

While his articles were directed to defend the Jew, enlighten the Gentile, and discourage the missionary, small doubt can be entertained that the logic and power of his writings also influenced many of the Jews of his day to retain their religion, about which they were not all enthusiastic. In 1878, commenting on the effect of his writings in *The American Israelite*, he remarks: "Those who now say with just pride, I am an Israelite, where some years ago they carefully concealed the fact, are not aware of the bitter struggles in the combat against friend and foe, which this change has cost, and most likely never will appreciate it." Dr. Wise's articles held an irresistible appeal which could not be ignored. Here, for example, are some of his published sentiments: "As long as professed Christians believe that one must be a Christian in order to be as good as any one of them, man is under the dementing

influence of religious delirium . . . Christianity must contain elements which higher orders of intellect cannot believe, for many of the greatest minds of all ages are infidels in the eyes of the Church." "If the civilized world had spent its zeal in cultivating an intimate knowledge and correct understanding of the Law of Moses, instead of squandering it upon the apotheosis and mystification of Jesus and Mary, there could not have existed the misery inflicted on man in behalf of religion." The article concludes: "It is a pity that this is true, and it is true that it is a pity." "Mankind," he said, "might do very well without the peculiar dogmas of Christology, but you cannot take from society the precepts and laws of Moses without destroying the entire fabric of civilization." "Judaism," he said, "pictures man in the image of God, while Christianity pictures God in the image of man." "Judaism teaches no dogmas on the belief of which salvation depends. Deeds and not creeds make the proper man. Divine retribution follows man's deeds independent of confession. The Talmud goes so far in this point as to imagine God himself to exclaim: 'Oh, I would rather they had forgotten me, and had observed my law.' " He proved conclusively that Judaism as a religion has no superior. In exposing the weaknesses of Christian dogma, he no doubt converted more Jews to Judaism than Christians, although his success in the latter field was not inconsiderable. Besides the large numbers of people who were influenced by reading his books and articles and hearing his lectures, many were actually converted. Disgusted with the voluminous publicity given to an occasional Jewish convert to Christianity at enormous expense by the missionary societies, he revealed some of the results of his own work in an article dated June, 1873. "Of the hundreds of converts from Christianity to Judaism, or pure theism, which we have made," he said, "we have advertised none, because we consider it a private affair, too holy to be drummed to the curious news-seekers." In a later article this number was modified to "nearly a hundred." On April 16,

1891, the following paragraph appeared on the editorial page of *The American Israelite*. "Our readers must have noticed of late that in every issue of this paper we have published accounts of one or more conversions from Christianity to Judaism. There is little doubt that these are constantly increasing and are of daily occurrence. Owing to their frequency, they now attract little attention. Besides, our acquisitions are invariably respectable people, who do not exhibit themselves as do those who leave Judaism, in a pulpit, like a freak in a museum. Our converts are generally people who, while they had usually come to believe in the truth of Jewish doctrines some time ago, only make a public confession of their faith when there is an occasion of sufficient importance to demand it." This occasion of sufficient importance was usually a wedding ceremony. Another conversion item of interest appeared in an editorial paragraph in January of 1899, as follows: "Talking about religious converts," said Dr. Wise, "we would say that Cupid brings more Christians into the Jewish fold every month than all of the Christian missionaries to the Jews win in a year. The balance as to the quality of the neophytes is still more heavily in favor of the Jews. And Cupid receives no stipend."

Dr. Wise was bitter against the Protestants because they observed Sunday, Easter, and Christmas at the times designated by the Pope's decrees, and felt certain that sooner or later they would come back to the original observance of the Sabbath. Some of the radical Reform rabbis had been working to change the Jewish Sabbath to the Sunday of the Christians. As late as 1900, the Council of Jewish Women, under the leadership of Miss Sadie American, also worked toward this end. In January of 1880, the following paragraph appeared in opposition to that program. "What would our anti-Sabbath advocates do if the Protestants for the sake of consistency would give up the Pope's Sunday, and like Jesus and his immediate disciples, observe and keep holy the Sabbath of the Decalogue? Some day or other Protestantism must

see its inconsistency in preferring the Pope's to God's Sabbath. The world cannot dispense with the Decalogue, but it can overcome inconsistencies."

He fought against Christian dogma because it had enslaved the peoples and given unlimited power to the Church which abused it. For his knowledge of persecution, Dr. Wise did not need to draw upon his imagination. In his childhood and young manhood in Catholic Bohemia, he had suffered for the privilege of being a Jew. "Barefooted boys, ragamuffins, and stupid cits had shouted hep! hep! at me so long," he said, "that I had grown accustomed to pity the whole lot, who, it is true, had succeeded in driving from my heart every trace of sympathy for the country, but not the inborn love of humanity." In the preface of his "Martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth," written in 1874, and dedicated to the famous French Jewish statesman, Isaac Adolph Cremieux, he says: "This Isaac Adolph Cremieux was born in France in the beginning of this century. Like the author of this treatise, when a poor boy, he was mortified and scorned by petulant fellows, because he was the son of Jewish parents." It was to the religion of his persecutors that Dr. Wise attributed all the shortcomings of its followers. Yet he maintained, that although Jews have always been cruelly persecuted in Christian countries, Christians have suffered more than the Jews by Christianity. "As long as the Church was the supreme power," he said, "all classes of people, the Jews included, were persecuted. The lower classes in Christendom were always treated like outlawed dogs. This proves that the Church never was and never could be the mother of modern civilization." Again, "It is a melancholy truth that the (Christian) peasants, serfs and slaves, two thirds of all human beings, were treated much worse than the Jews; but they had been so long beasts of burden, that they knew no better, therefore they mourned not."

And so because he had been himself a victim of Christian

hate, incited by the teachings of the Church for the furtherance of its own power, and purposes, he fought in America like a tiger against any encroachment on the pristine purity of the Constitution, against any movement that sought to unite church and state and place Christianity in governmental authority. He was not blind to the prodigious efforts of Protestant America to effect this very purpose. In 1898 in an editorial commenting on the proposal for a Christian citizenship convention to be held in Washington, he said: "They are so blinded by their lust for power for their church, that they mistake it for religious zeal." His battle was waged against the disruption of the foundation of religious liberty in America, represented by the efforts of Protestantism to put Christ in the Constitution, the Bible in the Public Schools, to make Sunday Blue-laws, to legalize Christian holidays, to call America a Christian country, to institute Temperance (Prohibition) laws, and other movements by which the Protestants of America continually sought to legally secure this land for Christianity. The "Temperance" people went so far as to attempt to prove the wine Jesus drank at the wedding in Cana was grape juice and not fermented liquor. Again and again Dr. Wise proved this was not true; that "yayin" means fermented wine. "All the evidence goes to show," he informed the public, "that the ancient Jews used fermented wines, with a fine appreciation of their varying qualities, and that Jesus was a good Jew in this respect, as in most others." Of Prohibition, or Temperance, as it began, (Dr. Wise's first article in condemnation of an Ohio temperance organization being dated March 6, 1868), he has this to say: "No moralist has the right to impose restrictions on the personal freedom of the vast majority for the benefit of the few who abuse that personal freedom . . . as little as any praying will stop the course of the Ohio River, so little the use of wine and strong drink can be stopped . . . the law would be the crime, and its execution the felony."

RADICALISM

Radical Reform Rabbis—Assimilationists

Robert Ingersoll — Atheism

Felix Adler — Ethical Culture

CHAPTER III

RADICALISM

AS HAS been stated, Dr. Wise fought the battle for "pure religion" on three fronts. In addition to exposing the fallacies of Christian dogma, and attempting to remove the coverings from orthodox Judaism, to clear the way for the God-ordained 'universal' religion, he had also to battle against the radical reformers who not only wanted Jewish custom and ceremony completely removed, but also circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, etc., in other words: the group of Reform rabbis who were ready and willing to renounce Judaism in all but name, believing the Mission of Israel fulfilled, and the time for assimilation at hand.

Then there were the large number of atheists, with Captain Robert Ingersoll at their head, whose arguments he refuted in a series of public lectures. Atheism, Dr. Wise believed, was the direct result of Christian dogmas. Many Christians being no longer able to believe them, they consequently denied all religion. There was also Felix Adler's "Ethical Culture" movement, which sought to declare a new religion without the Bible as foundation. Of him, Dr. Wise said: "He appears to us the truly good apostle of the 'goodness' which he preaches, based on the dogma, 'There is no God, and Felix Adler is His prophet.' "

The review of radicalism is necessarily brief, because it will be found that he inveighed against it at the same time as in the articles denouncing both Orthodox Judaism and Orthodox Christianity.

ORTHODOX JUDAISM

*Vanishing Spanish-Portuguese Jewry
Attributed to Orthodoxy*

*Dr. Wise Tries Reform to Save the
German Immigration*

His Love of the Hebrew Language

*Opposition to a College Under
Dr. Wise's Direction*

Plans for a Jewish Women's College

CHAPTER IV

ORTHODOX JUDAISM

WHEN DR. WISE came to America in 1846, he did not find Judaism in a flourishing condition. A considerable portion of the earlier Spanish Jewish immigration had intermarried and been lost to Judaism; and the few orthodox synagogues remaining attracted but few. Their disappearance he attributed entirely to orthodoxy, which was not in harmony with "the spirit of the age." "Many Portuguese families died out," he said, "others amalgamated with their Christian neighbors, and again others forgot entirely all about Judaism. Hence it appears that their peculiar orthodoxy was inefficient to preserve Judaism intact, or to infuse the families with

particular vitality." In 1847, in one of his polemics, addressed to Isaac Leeser*, recorded in the *Reminiscences*, he says: I asked Leeser how it happened that of all the Jews who had emigrated to these shores between 1620 and 1829, there were not two hundred families left that belonged to congregations, while the great majority had disappeared among the masses, traces of them being clearly recognizable in hundreds of Christian families. Leeser never answered this question, and the orthodox party owes me the answer still."

Among the new German immigration also, many wished not to be known as Jews. Dr. Wise concluded that the whole reason for lack of interest of the Jews in America in Judaism was due to the fact that the service was European in language and oriental in ritual, and that to preserve Judaism in America, the religion must be conducted in English, the language of the land. Then began his struggle for the removal of German from the synagogue service. He wanted to eradicate entirely the German language and influence, which was so strongly reminiscent to him of German anti-semitism and his sufferings in Europe. "Berlin," he stated, "was the most overrated city in the world, with the unhealthiest (moral) atmosphere; German anti-semitism began with the Crucifixion, as Pilate and his guards were Germans." Yet with all his desire to stamp out German and its associations, he published *Die Deborah*, the German supplement to *The Israelite*, because so many of the Jews in America then were unable to speak or read any other language. To thoroughly Americanize the synagogue he was convinced that not only was a foreign language an obstacle, but also that the customs and ceremonies which had been brought over from the various countries of Europe were antagonistic to the spirit of progress, civilization and America, so he fought

*Isaac Leeser—American rabbi, author, translator, editor and publisher; pioneer of the Jewish pulpit in the United States and founder of the Jewish press of America. Born in Westphalia, Prussia, December 12th, 1806. Died Philadelphia, Pa., February 1st, 1868.

for their removal also. But always his desire was not to perpetuate Judaism as the religion of and for the Jewish people, but to emphasize its universal aspects for the conversion and regeneration of mankind, and so make possible the acceptance of the universal religion — the monotheism and morality of the Ten Commandments, representing the will of God, and the Mission of Israel. "God has chosen and protected His people to this sublime end or to none," he said, "and in the great scheme of Providence there is nothing without its fixed object in cooperation with the whole." "Israel," he continued, "is the instrument in the hands of Providence to effect the divine purpose of the conversion of all nations to truth and light." "Paul," he wrote in 1870, in his "Paul and the Mystics," "conceived the idea of carrying into effect what all the prophets, and all the pious Israelites of all ages hoped and expected, the denationalization of the Hebrew ideal and its promulgation in the form of universal religion among the Gentiles, so that the whole human family might be united beneath the banner inscribed with the motto: 'One God and one humanity.' " "All Jews of all ages," he continued, "hoped and expected that the kingdom of heaven would encompass all nations and tongues; but Paul undertook to realize this hope; this is his title to greatness."

Dr. Wise's efforts to establish the Hebrew Union College were based on the belief that from this institution would flow the knowledge for the universal religion. It was to be not only a training school for Jewish ministers, but a perpetual protest against the pagan concepts of Christianity. It might be questioned since his whole effort was bent on teaching the Ten Commandments as a religion, why it was necessary to have a College or study the Hebrew language, literature and history. This was because he believed that only through study and knowledge of the original Hebrew in which the Decalogue is enshrined, could the pure principles be ascertained. "All misconstructions of the Bible," he said,

"find their original and efficient cause in ignorance of the Bible in its original tongue . . . All the bigotry and sectarianism which now injure the cause of pure religion, are engendered by the ignorance of the multitude. Let everybody be capable to read the Bible for himself in the original tongue, let every man be independent of his priest in matters of religion, and he is only such if he is himself capable to investigate, and a generation free of prejudices and independent of sectarian dogmatics will result." He did not think anyone ignorant of the Hebrew language or literature had the right to preach or exert any authority or influence in matters of religion. This was one of his outstanding criticisms of Theodore Herzl, that he did not profess to be a religious Jew, equipped with the necessary Hebraic lore. Dr. Wise's desire that all who teach or study Judaism should be Hebrew scholars, showed his emotional love for Hebrew, although he rationalized it on the grounds of intellectual necessity. In this of course, he was a better actual Jew than he or his critics realized. In St. Louis a Jewish lawyer had preached a sermon in the Temple, to which Dr. Wise took exception. "It is not well for a lawyer to preach a sermon," he declared, "any more than it would be for a tailor to plead a case before a court . . . As a lawyer, Brother B. is a success, as a preacher he is not, simply because he is a practical lawyer and not a practical religionist . . . Brother B. ought to give up preaching, simply because he does not understand that part of the business." On another occasion he said: "the holy ghost makes no Jewish preachers, they must have solid academic knowledge." In the *Reminiscences* is also an interesting illustration of his contempt for those leaders in Israel who were not thorough scholars. In 1846, the year of Dr. Wise's arrival in America, he had written to Isaac Leeser, editor of the *Occident*, an outstanding Jewish religious weekly, outlining his reasons for reform in orthodox Judaism. Rabbi Leeser's reply, as given by Dr. Wise, was as follows: "Leeser's answer to my letter was cold, decided and frank. He

looked upon progress in Judaism as unjustifiable; reform he considered to be destruction, the German rabbis innovators, desirous of tearing down. As for my references to authorities, he informed me that he did not read unpunctuated Hebrew, and besides he cared but little what different rabbis may have written, for his Judaism was laid down in the Bible, the prayer-book, and general custom. No one had the right to oppose these. He said that I would have to retrace my steps, or else Judaism would leave me in the lurch . . . Upon perusing this letter, I grew very angry at the thought that a man who could not read unpunctuated Hebrew, presumed to direct Jewish affairs in the role of editor and guardian."

Because his efforts to establish a Jewish seminary had aspects other than were ordinarily considered Jewish, Dr. Wise found his work very difficult. Attempt after attempt was frustrated because the people feared to place in his hands the authority for the instruction of rabbis. It took twenty years and a new generation before his labors finally brought results. In 1855, when the "Zion College" (the name originally planned for the institution) project was being agitated, Dr. Wise received the following letter from one Jacob Ezekiel of Richmond, Va. Mr. Ezekiel wrote: ". . . As I stated before, much will depend on the designs of its promulgators, as to what will be its ultimate success. Israelites naturally look with a jealous eye, at every attempt or inroad towards a reformation or improvement of their religion, and are mistrustful in placing the power of instructing their youths into the hands of those who have a tendency to lean towards any innovation of their faith.

"I dwell on this very important point, because you must be aware of the great dissatisfaction evinced by the Israelites of America in regard to *your views* of construction on certain points of our Holy Scriptures, as expressed in your first volume of "The History of the Israelitish Nation." That alone may in a great

measure prevent a general cooperation in this important movement; in fact, I have mooted this new project to some of my friends, who have urged such objections to the encouragement of this institution. Therefore I have thought proper to communicate with you, hoping that your reply will tend to allay all feelings of prejudice, that may exist towards consummating this laudable undertaking."

In reply to Mr. Ezekiel's letter, Dr. Wise, as Corresponding and Recording Secretary of the Zion Collegiate Association, wrote: "The Zion Collegiate Association believe, and have authorized me to express it, that they are determined to carry out their object, even if the one or the other class of our people should refuse them their support. The thousands of our brethren, of whom support is expected, and who will have the sole management of the university (it was at that time intended to have a regular secular university in addition to a Jewish theological faculty) are expected not to withhold their hearty cooperation from a work intended to benefit unborn generations, elevate and guard our faith, and do honor to the House of Israel—on account of theological niceties. It never was the case in Israel, that theological disputes disunited them to such an extent, that they should not heartily cooperate in matters of so much importance, as a seat of learning in a land where Jewish learning is almost extinct; still it must be confessed, that there are among us these six centuries, rabbinical, cabalistical, and philosophical Jews.

"So far in behalf of the Association. I for myself have to say, that I am aware of the prejudices existing personally against my humble self and my literary productions, caused partly by misconceiving and misconstruing my words, partly by the literary envy and ignorance of some public writers, and partly by the natural affection of the Israelite for his religion, and the concomitant fear of everything new or original, which comes in contact with his religious views. I can assure you, dear Sir, that I consider myself

an orthodox Jew, and I consider those who attempt to maintain the innovations of the Middle Ages, in idea or form, dangerous and hazardous opponents of Judaism. Still this has nothing to do with the Zion Collegiate Association. The law of this body prescribes, that the delegates of this society and the sister-societies, shall legislate for the university, have the sole management thereof, appoint directors, professors and other officers, and the laws enacted by them shall be supreme for the institute."

For the next several years, preparatory classes for the intended Jewish university were held in the Talmid Yelodim Institute, the parochial school of the Bene Jeshurun Congregation of Cincinnati. The Zion College however, had not materialized. In July of 1858, Dr. Wise sadly wrote: "The Zion College, my fondest hopes, the Synod, the union of Israel, the Minhag America, the revival of Hebrew learning — fairy dreams, and many other things I proposed, were defeated, I know it, by my pretended friends. Should I not retire from all and every public activity? Attacked as I was and still am by any and everybody who longs after notoriety, should I not retire? "He cannot write correct English," said the one, "he is ambitious, has high pretensions, wishes to outshine everybody, is egotistical, arrogant," and God knows what not, others said at different times, cast slurs at my intentions, and suspected my motives, mortified me with a thousand accusations, attempted to cripple my exertions, by a double headed opposition — should I not retire?

"No! exclaimed with irresistible power that unknown voice in me, I can not, I will not retire, 'Here am I, send me.' I shall not suffer it when on the one side the religion of my fathers, the sacred heritage of Israel, Jeshurun's precious boon is attacked by apostates, bigots, hypocrites, materialists, atheists, self-styled philosophers and unprincipled clamorers, and none appears to have the nerve to confront them, armed with truth and careless of consequences — while on the other side a self-styled orthodox press

which takes its Judaism from the armory of Christian theology, adopting only the name of God for that of Jesus — misrepresents the eternal truth, obscures the light of heaven and throws mud and mire into the pure fountain of salvation; — and again on the other side, radicalism, rebellion against God and Israel, with its deceptive cloak of rationality and philosophy, threatens to exterminate Judaism from the American soil, and boasts upon its impious intentions, to amalgamate Israel with the other nations, before Israel's sacred doctrines have sanctified them and redeemed them from fiction's oppressive hand — and lastly, on the other side, there is a true revival, a powerful regeneration among thousands of pious and well-disposed men, both among Jews and Gentiles, who eagerly listen to the message of truth, long after the pure water of divine revelation, seek after the hidden treasures of Sinai; when, we say on the other side, we are convinced that here on this free soil the Messiah must be born; here truth in its long combat against fiction must ultimately celebrate a glorious and final triumph, here the sun of salvation must rise, throw his effulgent rays on all mankind, sanctify, unite and fraternize all in God and truth, and I should be silent, I retire, I stand by an idle spectator? No! No! a thousand times NO! I will not do it. 'Here I am, send me.' I will go on as long as my God gives me strength and mind."

Two years later, in November of 1860, Dr. Wise announced the opening of a College scheduled for September of 1861. He then gives notice that "all the necessary arrangements are made to open a Hebrew college by the first of September, 1861. Our best friends do not know the plan, nor shall we tell them, still we hereby declare: All the arrangements for the opening of a Hebrew College, September 1, 1861, are completed; not only competent but excellent professors are engaged for every branch, and all things appertaining to a College are finished. We leave nothing to be discussed or done. The pupils may come at the ap-

pointed time." The article also gives an outline of the various courses to be offered in the Hebrew Department, the Classical Department, and the Commercial Department.

However, the sponsors of the above program must again have retreated, for two weeks after the announcement of the college opening, another article appeared in which Dr. Wise stated: "This shall be our vengeance: the sons of the wealthiest parents standing upon towers of money bags shall humbly and courteously bow to the sons of the humble writer of these lines, who shall stand upon the precious postment of knowledge and wisdom. This shall be our vengeance — our name shall live in the history of our country and our race, and your successors shall be very rich and blessed by the Lord. 'I and my house shall serve the Lord,' and whoever chooses shall serve Mammon."

In the fall of 1861, Dr. Wise moved to a farm in College Hill. This suburb of Cincinnati contained fine schools for both boys and girls — Farmers' College and General Carey's Female College. In connection with these schools and his own plans he wrote: "Having the intention to make our permanent home near those colleges within a few weeks from now, and desirous to contribute our mite to the work of education, we can promise to our friends who would send their sons or daughters to College Hill, not only to see them several times every week, and assist the professors in watching over their moral and religious conduct, but also to give them weekly several lessons, free of charge, in the religion and literature of Israel, and offer a good chance to those who desire to study biblical or rabbinical literature. Thus these institutes might offer at present all the advantages of colleges of our own, until we shall be enabled to establish a seat of learning under our own control."

No more is heard about definite plans for a Jewish university or religious institute until the year of 1873, a lapse of twelve years, when the project was again revived, and a plea also made

for a school or academy where Jewish young women could finish their education. On September 5th of that year, the following editorial appeared: "As soon as the Hebrew Theological Institute is established and ample funds provided for its permanent existence, the 'Council' of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations should take in hand the establishing of a 'Young Ladies' Academy,' which should be under the care of able Jewish matrons, where the daughters of Israel could be sent to complete their education in all the 'Arts' essential to a good wife and mother. At present, for the want of such an Institute, most of the young ladies are sent to Catholic seminaries, where they observe religious teaching which leaves on their young minds impressions which are detrimental to the Hebrew faith."

With regard to a finishing school for Jewish girls, this idea had been suggested by Dr. Wise many years before, in an article written in *The Israelite* under the date of January 8, 1858, after he had visited a private school which derived its funds from the general public but was managed by Christian religious interests. He wrote: "The pupils, those of Jewish faith not excepted, were required to attend the chapel every morning, while the principal repeated a prayer, strongly tinged with the religious views of the teacher, who no doubt firmly believed his creed to be the sole true one . . .

"If we are right in regard to the religious education of woman — and we would like to see the shade of an argument against our position — then it is highly necessary that we should have a female academy, where the daughters of Israel would be offered an opportunity to finish their education and have the benefit of a thorough and enlightened religious instruction.

"There would have been no Miriam, no Deborah, Hannah, Huldah, or daughters of Asaf, if our ancestors had not known how to appreciate the blessings of a religious education for wo-

man. Why should we be insensible to that blessing? But if we do comprehend it, let us act unitedly and fraternally, to provide for the happiness of our daughters, and lay a firm basis for the religious education of coming generations, and the elevation of our revered religion."

Evidently, nothing was ever done about the establishment of a school under Jewish auspices for young Jewish women, and they (Dr. Wise's daughters among them) continued to receive their "finishing" in the various Catholic seminaries.

With the plans for the establishment of a Hebrew college again in operation, Dr. Wise continued his addresses before the various communities in the United States to solicit their support. The address he gave before the Jewish community in St. Louis, Mo. was published in the *American Israelite*, and contains some interesting auto-biographical statements. He said to them; in May of 1874: "If you are not tired out, ladies and gentlemen, I shall speak a few words about the proposed college. The first among the various objects of the Union is the establishment of a Hebrew college, or strictly spoken, of a Hebrew theological department or faculty at the side of some liberal and well-conducted university; to educate ministers for the Jewish pulpit, ministers who have gone through an academical course at the university, and have a full knowledge of Hebrew literature, Biblical, Talmudical, philosophical, historical and poetical. The thing is quite simple. *Either we must educate young men for the pulpit, or expect to close up our temples and synagogues in the next generation. A cause which has no expounders, no pleaders, must vanish.* Hitherto we were able to bring over our rabbis from Europe, especially from Germany. But this will be impossible in the next generation, because Germany has now no abundance of prominent talent in that branch; its students are Germans who feel, think and speak German, while the next generation, more even than this, will feel, think and speak American; and finally Germany, in all its reli-

gious denominations, retrogrades into mysticism as materialism and atheism advance. We must educate our rabbis or have none.

"Whoever thinks must understand that we could do all that is great and good for Israel's cause and the triumph of humanity if we could only be induced to cooperate cordially and fraternally. And yet one must beg: 'Please join the Union of American Hebrew Congregations: it costs only one dollar a year.' Let us have your mite and your wisdom to do that which should be done in the name of God and Israel. And yet beg! Who called me here? Who invited me to this place? None! Why am I here? Do I want anything of you? Nothing! Why must I be your servant, your slave, your beggar, your scapegoat? I know not. Nobody knows. I quarrel with myself all day and part of the night that just I must be the beast of burden, the camel in the wilderness, that I must cry continually; like a solitary oak on the mountain, switched by the storm. I am growing old, weary and tired of life; and yet I must go on, and yet I had to come here and speak. For I cannot rebel against my God and my conscience. I can not separate myself from my people, cannot be faithless to my religion. I have come to plead, to beg, to entreat, to raise my feeble voice for a holy cause."

Dr. Wise's "holy cause" was, of course, his idea of a universal religion based upon the divine revelation of the Ten Commandments, but not including the development of rabbinic or historic Judaism. When the College was finally established, the curriculum was outlined by a group of men whose interests were entirely for the rabbinate as such. At the opening of the Hebrew Union College on October 8, 1875, Bernhard Bettman, president of the Board of Governors, made the following statement in his address: "We shall be happy to have amongst us the followers of other creeds, not for the purpose of making proselytes of them — for that has always been and still is repugnant to the very spirit of Judaism — but that they might understand the parent faith

from which their own religion sprung, and enjoy a literature equal to that of Greek and Roman . . . ”

Even after its establishment in 1875, however, the course of the College and its President, did not run smoothly. The cry for the removal of Dr. Wise from the office of president went up from time to time. It was suggested that he “be exiled from the community,” that he “be removed from the pulpit,” and that he resign as president of the Hebrew Union College in the interests of the institution. In 1884 the largest reform congregation in Philadelphia decided to withdraw from the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, (the original purpose of this institution being to support the College) “ . . . because the public utterances of the President of the Hebrew Union College were such as to give grounds for alarm concerning the example set its students for the ministry.” In answering this charge, Dr. Wise assured the Philadelphia congregation that his personal views on religion had nothing to do with the curriculum of the College, which a number of eminent men had entirely approved. The list includes: Dr. L. Meyer, Rev. L. Morais, Rev. Drs. L. Wolfenstein, H. Zirndorf, A. Huebsch, B. Felsenthal, A. Hahn, F. de Sola Mendes, and others who testified to the thorough Hebrew scholastic attainments of the students of the Hebrew Union College, as demonstrated in their public examinations. Regarding himself he says: “ . . . on the ground of newspaper reports and assertions, and perhaps also on account of an old grudge and personal malevolence, they advance as the cause of their proposed withdrawal from the Union ‘the public utterances of the President of the Hebrew Union College,’ which they think are dangerous to the conscience of students for the ministry. These public utterances, it appears, are those which have been published in *The American Israelite*. To what place in this country will you move your College, and what kind of Chinese wall will you construct around it, that its students be not reached by these public utterances? What kind of gag will

you apply to men and scholars to prevent them from uttering their doctrines and principles? What kind of electric brakes will you apply to arrest the wheels of progress? After a little reflection, it must become evident to these gentlemen that they cannot do either. As long as Isaac M. Wise lives and writes none can exclude his influence from the rising generation, and when he shall be dead his printed utterances will do the same work for a long time."

And so, with the end of Dr. Wise's first quarter century in America, (twenty years of it in Cincinnati) and the establishment of the Hebrew Union College in 1875, when his radical ideas were becoming more or less accepted by the German immigrants and an American born generation, into the apparent religious calm of the Israelites in America, the Russian immigration began.

THE THIRD WAVE OF IMMIGRATION – RUSSIAN

Dr. Wise Welcomes the Russian Jews

Believes America will go to War with Russia

Anti-Semitism and the Russian Immigration

*Anti-Semitism and the Previous German
Immigration*

Kosher and Trephah Arguments

Concerning Swine's Flesh

Dr. Wise Defends Reform

CHAPTER V

THE THIRD WAVE OF IMMIGRATION — RUSSIAN

*I*N THE EARLY eighties of the nineteenth century began the mass Russian and Roumanian Jewish immigration, due to the horrors of pogroms. In the beginning, Dr. Wise welcomed the immigrants gladly. Although there were some who believed this orthodox immigration would retard the Reform movement, Dr. Wise had no fears on the subject. He said: "We can not help admitting that, momentarily, those newcomers are of disadvantage to the Jews as a class, although those immigrants are certainly no worse than the Italians, Hungarians or Irishmen who honor us with their presence . . . But as regards the religious phase of the problem,

we have not the least apprehension that they will do us any harm or exercise any influence upon the development of American Judaism. They will come to us, we can never come to them. Let them come by the thousands, we will welcome them as friends and brothers, and are willing to assist them wherever we can." Dr. Wise felt certain that the new Russian immigrants would follow the banner of Reform. When, however, he learned that this was not entirely the case, he turned against them and became bitter in his denunciations. Ten years later, by 1894, he had so far changed his "public utterances" as to be responsible for the following: "The question has been raised," he wrote, "ought we any longer to give support to those Russian refugees whom we have housed, fed and clothed these twelve to fourteen years, when they, by their public organs, constantly denounce and coarsely insult us as 'Reformers' under which they understand a class of Israelites who stand far below them and outside of the pale of Judaism? Have we not done enough good for those for whom we are not good enough? They maintain that we are not their co-religionists, what other claim have they upon us? Whoever will answer this query will have an impartial hearing before the public in this organ." And this in spite of the fact that his own previous statements had been: "It is our duty to do good, and if we occasionally receive abuse in return, or discover that we have assisted unworthy individuals, we must not be discouraged nor seek an excuse for inactivity." Of course, being human and not a saint, as some would like to call him, although it is hardly a title he would have relished, it is not surprising that Dr. Wise became impatient when the Russian Jews proved stiff-necked and stubborn. He often defended those very traits in his editorials by comparing the faithfulness of the Russian Jews to Judaism when conversion would have saved them, while in Germany the Jews literally rushed into the arms of the Church on far less provocation. In 1885 he had answered the charge that Judaism in America was

dying, in an article entitled "Deathless Judaism," by pointing out the fact that the German Jews of America helped the Russian refugees, although prejudiced against them, as proof of the real religious spirit in Reform Judaism. It ought perhaps to be stated here, however, that this helpfulness on the part of the German Jews of America toward the hapless and helpless victims of the Russian terror, was not all due to "religious spirit." The entire country was shocked to its depths by the murder, rape and brutality of the Russian pogroms, which had allowed only part of its victims barely to escape with their lives, all their worldly goods having been taken from them by the insatiable lust of the ignorant Russian peasants turned into beasts by the program of the Russian throne and church. Outside of a few American anti-semitic secular and church publications, the sentiment of this land was deeply stirred in defense and pity of the refugees so barbarously handled. And it cannot be doubted that general public opinion was not without its weight and influence on the attitude of the German Jewry already comfortably established, toward their less fortunate Russian brethren. In fact, as late as 1898, American public sentiment was still so strongly opposed to the Russian regime, that Dr. Wise expressed his confidence that America would go to war with Russia to liberate the Russians from their inhuman government, just as America had freed Cuba from Spain's barbarous treatment, through the Spanish-American war.*

But while Dr. Wise denounced Orthodoxy and upheld Reform, which was continually becoming more radical in its almost complete lack of observance of all things commonly called "Jewish," he nevertheless continued the defense of the orthodox Russian Jews against the attacks of the secular press and Christian religious journals which were now marshalled against the new-

*With reference to the Spanish-American War, we know today that Spain had acceded to all of America's demands before the war, which was therefore unnecessary, as nearly all wars are.

comers. In this, of course, he was well schooled. The same arguments and coarse insults which had been leveled against the earlier German Jewish immigrants were now brought out and charged against the newer Russian Jewish immigration. Actually, however, the anti-semitic propaganda against the Russian Jews was not as ugly as that from which he had defended German Jewry in the preceding quarter century. The work of Dr. Wise had not been in vain. As always, he was fearless. To those who attacked Judaism and the Jews he showed no mercy or favoritism. From United States Senators and Representatives, to men of great wealth or prominence, down to unheard of editors of small sheets in the tiny towns of Tennessee and Texas, his word went forth, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

Let us go back to the year 1861 for an example of the treatment accorded the German Jewish immigrants in America. In an editorial of that year dated March 29th and headed: To Senator Wilson of Massachusetts — Dr. Wise speaks as follows: "Fully aware of the arrogance that a foreigner, a Dutchman and a Jew, as the Senator of Massachusetts would style us, should dare to address a reprimand to so lofty a personage as the Senator of Massachusetts naturally must imagine himself to be, we still cannot resist giving the senator a gratuitous advertisement by calling him once more before the forum of public opinion . . . You must consider us an officious person, when we take up the insult you have cast into the face of all Israelites in this country; but without premeditation the writer of these lines was born of a mother who is of that very tribe that 'stoned the prophets and crucified the Redeemer of the World,' as you say; and after mature reflection he adopted the religion of Israel as his own; hence your insult is thrown also on the humble writer of these lines. But if this was not the case, we would still raise our voice against you, because we consider it outrageously wrong for any man to abuse the authority the people conferred on him and the high place where

justice, equality and wisdom should abide, for the base purpose of slandering before the eyes of the world, a race of men and a class of peaceable citizens who have no defender, no advocate to retaliate for them or plead their cause."

On February 2, 1872, an article was quoted in *The Israelite* from the *Cincinnati Commercial* (a daily) in which it was stated that the Jews coming from South Germany were "small people of very dark complexion, with jet black, oily and curly hair." Dr. Wise's comment was as follows: "There is a peculiar mistake in this statement. In the large cities of the United States there are plenty of Jews from Southern Germany; in fact, the majority of German Jews come from the south of Germany. Yet there are plenty of tall men and women among them, and very few of dark complexion. In fact, there are many more above the average height than below it. (There followed then the names of a number of Cincinnati German Jews above six feet in height.) Complexion and size are various among Jews everywhere as among the rest of the population." An interesting article appearing in Dr. Wise's paper as late as 1897, shows that the good will he thought to have established between Jew and non-Jew, even in the city of his residence, was not without its flaws. An athletic club had been opened in Avondale, a suburb of Cincinnati, from which the Jews were barred, this condition having been imposed by the man who gave the land for the club grounds, which called forth from Dr. Wise the following editorial under the title: "The Avondale Scandal." He said: "This suburb, as everybody knows, has a large number of Jewish residents, who are the equals in character, culture and social position of the best, here or elsewhere. It therefore seems strange that among the one hundred or more names of the members of the new athletic club there should not be that of a single Jew, especially as the social and business intercourse between Christian and Jew is as cordial in Avondale as anywhere else . . . Neither birth, wealth nor education, nor all three combined, can make a

gentleman where the natural instinct does not exist. They may give a veneer, but it is so thin that the boor will show through at the least scratch. What is to be wondered at is that he (the donor of the land for the club grounds) should have been able to find so large a contingent in Avondale who are either of his way of thinking or are too unobservant or stupid to know to what they have committed themselves. The subject is a very unpleasant one, and we very much regret that circumstances have forced us to dwell upon it at such length."

Charges against the German Jews as incendiaries by the fire insurance companies also were not lacking in the early days. They were accused of all things, as Dr. Wise's defense articles prove. Some of the articles are not fit to reprint. When the Russian and Roumanian Jewish immigrants began to arrive in large numbers, the anti-semitic attacks began again, but they were mostly propaganda against foreigners, immigrants, etc., rather than insulting personal remarks.

In addition to defending the immigrant Russians against anti-Semitic American Christians, Dr. Wise had also to defend them against inimical German-American Jews. In December of 1891, he issued an editorial in condemnation of "those who classify immigrants as 'desirable or undesirable,' entirely overlooking their own immigrant ancestry and the fact that 'a man is a man for all that wherever his cradle stood.' "

The influx of the Russian orthodox immigration had brought with it a resurrection of the bitter arguments against form and ceremony which German Reform Jewry had already largely settled by abolition. Articles and treatises against what constituted "kosher" and "trephah" now appeared, Dr. Wise defending his position that only such laws as were actually stated in the Pentateuch could be called authoritative, and of these Pentateuch laws, only the ones which he concluded were meant to be "eternal" as differentiated from the ones he called "temporary;" the rabbinical ex-

pansion of the laws he did not consider binding. "The whole Kashruth establishment is kept up among orthodox Jews in obedience to rabbinical authority, and not according to Moses and the prophets, who," he said, "knew nothing of kitchen and table laws and observances." "Nobody has appointed those very orthodox critics overseers of the kitchen or taskmasters of the stomach. It is about time to stop that noise over the culinary department of Judaism. The American Hebrews' religion centers not in kitchen or stomach." In an article written on May 8, 1885, entitled: "That Kosher and Trepah Test" he explains his position in the following words: "The whole matter is reduced to whether one believes in the Law of Moses and the wisdom of his sanitary prescriptions, or to whether one believes in the prescriptions and ordinances of the rabbis. If one disregards those regulations, you cannot say that he is no believer in the Law of Moses, nor do all the medical and scientific demonstrations in favor of the sanitary laws of Moses give any support to those rabbinical prescriptions and ordinances. The same is the case with the 'kosher' making of flesh, the purging or cutting out the veins, arteries and some nerves running into the forbidden fat, and similar ordinances. Moses said nothing of the kind; it is all of rabbinical origin . . . Those laws are binding on those who believe in the infallibility of the Talmudical legislation and interpretation, and not for those who do not maintain to be orthodox rabbinical, Jews, and still are orthodox Jews as far as Moses and the prophets go. 'Trepah' in the sense of forbidden food, besides fat, blood, and animals that died of themselves or were torn by their prey, according to the Laws of Moses, is only the flesh of the unclean animals mentioned in the Law, Leviticus xi., and Deuteronomy xiv."

Although Dr. Wise denounced Kashruth and Shechitah as religion, he was more than willing to grant them recognition as sanitary laws which should be applied for the good of both Jew and Gentile. "In explanation of our position in regard to the

dietary laws of Moses, we have to say that we certainly consider each and all of them well considered sanitary laws, based upon experience and scientific principle. What Moses forbids as an article of food is injurious to health. This is well known now to scientists. Therefore as the results of science become popularly known, the Mosaic dietary laws gain general authority among the intelligent portion of the community. But," he continued, "when the zealous orthodoxy makes of those laws a matter of religion, a test of orthodoxy, a touchstone of Judaism, we must protest. It is not religion, it is sanitary advice which every intelligent man should take, especially those, who believe in the laws of Moses. "A man," he concluded, "can be a conscientious believer in Judaism and a religious Israelite without obeying any laws which are not contained, expressed or implied in the Sinaic revelation."

He denounced in scathing terms the use of pork, which is specifically prohibited in the laws of Moses. "Men as regards food are worse than hogs," he said, "notwithstanding the warning of Moses to all sensible men." On one occasion when a whole family in a small town in Pennsylvania had been wiped out by trichinosis, the disease produced by the worm which infests the muscles of swine, he said: "Almost everybody knows now the danger connected with that diet, and the impossibility of distinguishing the sound from the infected pork, and yet, as though the consumers were the hogs, they will eat the poisonous flesh. Man sometimes appears to have less sense than the mule which he works."

Dr. Wise inveighed against the use of swine's flesh during his entire ministry in Cincinnati, condemnatory articles on the subject appearing as early as 1864 and continuing through 1897. Cincinnati seemed early to have established a reputation as a pork-eating community. On January 4, 1867, Dr. Wise reprinted in *The Israelite* the following article which had appeared in the editorial column of the *Chicago Tribune*. He wrote: "Now the *Chicago Tribune* is guilty of the following offense on English

literature. I 'laid over' two days in Cincinnati and one day in Louisville. My observations at Porkopolis* were not sufficiently extensive to enable me to decide the question of relative size or superiority between it and Chicago. I learned one thing, however, which I have not seen in print, which has an important bearing on the future prospects of Cincinnati, to wit: that the Jews of that city, under the head of a very influential and learned rabbi, Mr. Lilienthal, have long since given up the Jewish dogma which excludes pork as an article of diet, and now use swine's flesh like good Christians; and that they have abandoned the long cherished purpose, hitherto a part of the Jewish religion, to rebuild Jerusalem and propose to build up Cincinnati instead, and to consecrate it as a 'new' Jerusalem. These are no fictions but veritable facts..."

Dr. Wise refuted the arguments contained in the *Chicago Tribune's* editorial, asserting positively that the 'goose' and not the pig was the most favored article of diet; also that Dr. Lilienthal was in no way responsible and did not concern himself with food questions.

In 1880 Dr. Wise wrote: "It is wonderful how the dietary laws of Moses have been adopted by most all civilized nations. The clean animals, or those called so by Moses, give us seventy-five percent of the animal food consumed in cities. The swine, bear, rabbit, squirrel, etc., like snails, crabs, frogs, etc., are used by rural people and dyspeptics in the cities, as the Rocky Mountain Indians eat lizards and the Chinese consume rats. The Mosaic bill of fare is most generally adopted."

Another interesting paragraph, evidently calculated to discourage the consumption of pork, appeared under date of August 26, 1887. It stated: "The dangers arising from the consumption of pork have frequently been pointed out by the highest medical authorities, and now an assistant of Professor Virchow, Dr. Grawitz, finds that about one third of the cases pronounced in life, muscular rheumatism, are shown by post mortem examination to

be due to trichinae, or pork-worms. In instances observed, it is said that the parasites must have been present in the muscles for years."

While these articles are all of a serious nature, Dr. Wise also saw some humor in the situation in connection with the hog story in the New Testament. He said: "When Jesus drove out those evil spirits, and the poor devils in their homeless, friendless and penniless state moved into the next best hogs which were so alarmed and became so desperate, that they jumped into the lake and were drowned, a splendid case could have been made of it, and suit for damages brought against Jesus and his disciples, especially if Brother R. down here had worked up the case. As the owners of those hogs have never been heard from, it appears that the story is either not true or the animals were American hogs, condemned by the Germans* and Frenchmen* in the Roman army, hence no damages could have been recovered."

The last of Dr. Wise's criticisms of pork was written under date of August 12, 1897, and is as follows: "The commandment of Moses forbidding for food the flesh of swine must have been original with Moses; for the ancient Egyptians must have made extensive use of that animal, as the swine-raisers were a special class of people among them, especially shunned and despised. The Christians who eat no pork—and their number is quite considerable—and all the Mohammedans learned this of Moses. Also the Romans up to the time of the Emperor Honorius, it is maintained, ate no pork, because Moses forbade it. Among the Jews, according to Isaiah 66, there were in latter times transgressors of this law, but they ate also mice and other abominable food. Still later, it seems, swine-raising was not uncommon among the Hebrews—perhaps for foreign markets (see Deut. xix. 20) or else the Sanhedrin as late as 50 B. C. could not have interdicted it as "cursed be he who raises

*At that time, 1884, France and Germany had condemned shipments into those countries of American pork.

swine," and Jesus could not have driven out the evil spirits of a number of men and banished them into a herd of swine. The unclean animal, wallowing in the mud, and subsisting on the foulest offal, was an abomination at all times to all nations. There were no swine among all the sacred animals worshiped by Egyptians, Indians or other heathens, nor did the poets glorify the hog, as they did the lion, the fox, the ass, the serpent, or even cats and dogs. The hog was nowhere except in the mud. The Romans sacrificed the swine to Ceres, because it was her worst enemy destroying the cereal plants, as they sacrificed the goat to Bacchus, because the goats destroyed the god's favorite plant, the grapevine. Among all animals, the hog was the most despised and so were its keepers; still it was an article of food everywhere, until Moses banished it from the table of his people. Why he did so is hard to tell. It seems because the hog was held universally in abomination, and Moses at the very head of his dietary laws lays down as the leading maxim, "Thou shalt not eat any abomination" (Deuter. xiv. 13) naming the swine especially as such. It is also possible, as modern scientists maintain, that Moses did know the germs of the diseases which are in the swine and other animals which he banished from the Jews' diet, although he had no microscope, as it is evident that the senses of sight and hearing especially, were with the men of high antiquity far superior to ours, and with Moses especially, of whom we know that he constantly urges the use of these two main inlets to the soul. It is hard now to guess the reason for this and several other ordinances of Moses—the Rabbis of the Talmud and Maimonides after them could not do it—but this is nevertheless sure, the prohibition to eat the flesh of the swine is of Mosaic origin."

But while Dr. Wise thus wrote against pork because Moses had prohibited it, his battle against rabbinical custom and ceremony went on against the Russian orthodox Jews. Most of these customs and ceremonies he listed under the head of "superstition."

Even the blowing of the Shofar on Rosh Hashonah he called "a sort of fetish, surrounded by most objectional superstitions, which are not only ridiculous but unreasonable." In one article he explains that the trumpet blast was originally meant to frighten away evil spirits, so this ceremony should no longer be used by enlightened and rational Israelites.

The acceptance of the cause of Zionism by many of the Russian immigrants further embittered him, and it would seem that he left no word unspoken to show how wide was the separation between his party and the Zionists. "They are Jews," he said, "and we are Israelites." Yet Dr. Wise was the same man who early in his life in America, before he had established his own publications or become rabbi in Cincinnati, wrote in the *Asmonean* in 1853 on the unity of Israel, the following Passover article: "The whole nation of Israel was redeemed to serve a divine purpose, and consequently, the individual or the congregation separating him or itself from the body of Israel, is wrong, and should be reminded of the wrong by this feast of redemption of all Israel—the whole of Israel was redeemed at once: its rich and poor, intelligent and stupid, great and small; its freemen and slaves, its officers and its teachers—all were redeemed—and the whole nation unitedly celebrated this feast of redemption."

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, Dr. Wise had traveled a long way from his earlier principles and doctrines on the oneness of Israel. He now not only rationalized all laxities in Reform Judaism, but strongly justified them. In an article which appeared on September 23, 1897, called "New Year 5658 A. M." he wrote: "Our pessimistic coreligionists of the conservative persuasion see everywhere signs of decline in Judaism; and they are not altogether wrong in the diagnosis. There is a visible decline observable in what they call Judaism, viz: in the observances and customs which lost their moral influence on the community. This kind of Judaism is on the decline. It is on the

down grade, and none can stay it unless it moves backward for a century or two the dial of time in science and general enlightenment, the reign of freedom with its progress and justice, and the consciousness of man that the intelligent and conscientious person has a right to think for himself and to govern himself accordingly. It is quite natural, therefore, that people deviate in what they consider minor things from the old course. None can arrest the exercise of thought or coerce the movements of conscience.

"Coming to genuine Judaism, ethical Judaism with its reasonable beliefs, you can discover no retrogression, no decline, no relaxation; on the contrary, there is progress and life everywhere. Our men are as honest and upright in their dealings with the world, our women as pure and chaste, and our youngsters as well behaved as their great-grandparents' parents were at their time with all their stern observance of religious ceremonies and ancient customs . . . Perhaps we are no better than our fathers were, but we are certainly no worse, for without the ceremonies, observances and performances we have dropped at the wayside, we are as devout Israelites as our forefathers were, and much more so, intelligently and emotionally, than our very conservative confreres."

"Notwithstanding the commercial and financial crisis the Jewish congregations all over the land held their own everywhere. So did the numerous charity institutions, to which several new ones have been added in the past year. The representatives of Judaism held quite a number of public meetings, as signs of the health and vigor of that ancient faith, which is as imperishable as Mount Sinai, where its fundamental laws and doctrines were first proclaimed . . ."

Note for Page 85.

*The unclassic name of "Porkopolis" clung to Cincinnati for many years until Chicago surpassed it in the pork industry.

— From: Henry Howe's *Historical Collection of Ohio*, Vol. I.

ZIONISM

England and America to Lead the World

English Poets Were Hebrew Scholars

*Near Arrival of Universal Republic and Religion
Make Zionism Unnecessary*

Theodore Herzl and the Dreyfus Case

Faith in France

Germany's Jewish Converts

Political Zionism

CHAPTER VI

ZIONISM

*A*ND SO WE come to Zionism, which was to assume such large proportions in the last decade of the life of Isaac M. Wise. He called it "Ziomania." (Coining words was not unusual with Dr. Wise. He hated the German musician, Richard Wagner, because of his virulent anti-semitism, and when Wagner's music was played in Cincinnati, refused to attend the concerts. People who could enjoy them, he said, were afflicted with "Wagnermania.")

The following editorial, written in 1880, shows how he felt toward Wagner and his music.

"The singers arrived in New York. The season may begin. The Wagner operas can now be trumped up in America. Wagner was one of those reckless and insensible egotists that started the Anti-Semitism in Germany, for which we expect, he deserves no special ovation in America. The compositions which he produced in the last fifteen years of his life, are such a noisy mixture of scorn and insanity that all the trumpets and bass drums of the orchestra cannot over-thunder it. The sense of his music is always about the same. It sounds as if a dozen or two of intoxicated individuals, each for himself and as loud as possible, cry, hollow, scream, shriek and make all other possible noises, when suddenly they furiously pitch into one another just long enough to catch each other by the throat or to produce the madman's dance for a moment or two and then fly apart to howl again, each for himself, *ad libitum*.

"At least we expected to be let alone out here with your Wagneri. Do not expect of us either a Wagner ovation or so much stoic self-denial that we pay our money and sit out one of Wagner's fifty yard concerts with all the bear skin and buffalo skin heroes with horns, and the coarse northern demons with goat-hoofs and dog-tails. We pay here for music consisting of melody and harmony. For a mere furor of instruments and singers we do not care in general, and especially not if Wagner is the composer thereof. The man who belittled and belied the Jews because they were his superiors in the dramatic art, and was not ashamed to conjure up the horrors of Anti-Semitism, has no claim on the respect of Americans, whether Jew or Gentile."

Getting back to Dr. Wise and Zionism. Assured as he was that the logic of history pointed inevitably to America for the fulfillment of ethical Scriptural prophecy and that the progress of history was Providence realized, therefore, since God had destined for America the role of Savior, no man might choose any other country and arrest the design of Providence, without inter-

fering with the especial plans of the Creator and the good of humanity. It must always be remembered that Dr. Wise's conception of Judaism was not the generally understood one of the religion developed by and for a particular group, but that it had been given to us solely for the purpose of instructing the world, in Monotheism, and that the carrying out of this mission was our major if not only cause for existence. "If we give up our mission," he said in February of 1860, "the religious world is without an efficient opposition to erroneous doctrines; and thus we inflict a sore wound on humanity." Later, in 1885, he states: "*The American Israelite* (his paper) has impressed the outside world with the conviction that we are a power for good in the land, a stronghold of progress and enlightenment, an efficient instrument in the hands of Providence to cultivate and elevate the religious idea."

He believed that in the main, America and England, the English-speaking countries of the world, had already shown unmistakable proof that they were fulfilling prophecy as the spiritual heirs of the wealth of Old Testament culture, the new "chosen people." Some of his reasons for this belief, outside of the most important one that the United States Constitution, based on English and American law, carried into effect the real meaning of Mosaic law, were the Old Testament inspired poets of England and America. Of Lord Tennyson he said: "Lord Tennyson, England's poet-laureate, read and understood the Hebrew Bible in the original. He inhaled poetical inspiration from those original texts, which, his biographer stated, he could not draw from any translation." Of Lord Byron, the famed English poet, he said: "To Jews of every land his memory will always be dear. He is reckoned among the friends of Israel, not only because his leanings were always toward the oppressed, but because of his explicit sympathy with the woes of Jewry. When he wrote his *Hebrew Melodies*, for the tuneful music of Isaac Nathan, he caught the spirit of Jewish feel-

ing with a completeness which no other Gentile has ever equalled." "The inspiration for Rudyard Kipling's magnificent poem, the 'Recessional,' was evidently drawn," said Dr. Wise, "from Deuteronomy viii, 11 - 18, and we trust that not only Britain, but all the other English-speaking peoples as well will heed the warning meant to be conveyed, for we verily believe that into their hands has been given the future of the earth's inhabitants."* His love for England and America and belief in their exemplification of Old Testament law and morality, and prophetic mission, can be further gleaned from the following paragraphs. On May 31, 1872, he said: "No war, at any price, no hostilities, no war, is the leading idea in the Geneva commission of arbitration. We want no war, is the principle leading the government of the United States in backing down or backing out from its position in regard to indirect claims. This only confirms our saying, that there are only two civilized nations in this sublunar world, viz., America and Great Britain, who want no war. Other nations also are fairly under way to become civilized, but they are only under way." On June 4, 1886, he continues: "On the charge that American people are lawless: Law abiding, law making, and expounding are as characteristic of the American people as they were of the Pharisees of old. With the exception of England, perhaps, the law is respected higher in no country than in this, although here, like elsewhere, there are cunning persons who seek crooked byways to circumvent the law . . . The law rules this country as it did Palestine under the Mosaic dispensation."

"It appears to be morally certain," he wrote on November 25, 1887, "that there will never be war between Great Britain and the United States, not even if Canada should insist upon being annexed to the United States. The same could be done between any two nations if they had reached the same high position in civilization." On the belief, oft-quoted, that the people of Eng-

*Robert Browning also was a student and lover of Hebrew.

land are the lineal descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel, after explaining the amalgamation of the Ten Tribes with the surrounding Palestinian peoples, he says in August of 1897, "... but whether Britain's sons are descended from Israel in the flesh or not, no one who has lived among them for any length of time, nor any one who reads contemporaneous history and studies it, can help believing that upon no people in ancient or modern times, since Israel went forth from Palestine, has the spirit of the Old Testament teachings fallen so fully or fruitfully, as upon the inhabitants of those small islands that lie between the North Atlantic and the North Sea, and upon their descendants and those whom they have assimilated and made like unto themselves." And to conclude, he wrote on April 20, 1899, the following: "The term Anglo-Saxon, as now generally used by American and English writers, seems to have very little reference to race or descent, and certainly none whatever to religious belief. Whatever may have been the original signification of the phrase, 'Anglo-Saxon,' it is now used to describe a class whose fortunes are by birth or adoption cast with those of the people of the United States or Great Britain for the purpose of carrying forward civilization by means of the English language toward the development of the highest ideals of civil and religious liberty. In this higher sense there is no reason why a Jewish American or Englishman, whatever may have been the nationality of his parents, should hesitate to proclaim himself as of the Anglo-Saxon race. It is far more a matter of ideals than of blood."

Most of the great English and American poets of the nineteenth century were Hebrew scholars. Many other men, also, great in mental stature, were well versed in the knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures. All this convinced Dr. Wise still further that the English-speaking peoples and the spirit of the Old Testament were one. A separate Jewish state in Palestine was therefore to him, entirely unnecessary in a world already Judaizing intellectu-

ally and morally. In 1887 there was published in the *New York Times* a letter of Henry Ward Beecher to President Grover Cleveland urging the appointment of Oscar W. Straus as Minister to Turkey *because* he was a Jew. The letter, after stating all of Mr. Straus's general qualifications, asks: "Is it not also a duty to set forth in this quiet but effectual method, the genius of American government, which has under its fostering care people of all civilized nations, and which treats them without regard to civil, religious or race peculiarities, as common citizens?" In the columns of *The American Israelite*, Dr. Wise reprinted all the articles of liberal non-Jews, emphasizing the fact that in spirit they carried out entirely the finest meanings and purposes of the Mosaic legislation, "There shall be one law, for the stranger and the home-born." In 1893, there appeared on the platform at the Music Hall in New York City, for the services in memory of Phillips Brooks, (eloquent and humane pastor) a number of gentlemen, Jews and Gentiles, among them Lyman Abbot, Gustav Gottheil, Richard S. Storrs and Joseph B. Choate. Dr. Wise described the services as Goethe's *Das Weltkind in der Mitte*, and said: "it looks like the approach of the Millenium."

While Dr. Wise thus rejoiced at all the signs and tokens of the near arrival of heaven on earth, he was well aware also of the evils in American life, but his faith was firm that these evils were only temporary, and that the Mosaic structure was safe. "Although even in our own country Satan grins sometimes maliciously enough," he said, "yet we feel sure under the Constitution, which is our fortress, and the spirit of the nation, which is one of freedom and justice." Although he did not believe Israel's mission had as yet been entirely accomplished, and the Jews were to remain a separate religious group until all the world acknowledged One God, still he stated as early as 1858, that "when the grand principles maintained and guarded by Israel are embraced, there is no cause for Israel's existence as a separate religious community,

and if the cause ceases, it lays in the wise plan of Providence, also the effect should cease to exist . . . We believe religion is a set of principles and not a system of observances or a mode of belief or worship." Later in 1883, he wrote: "One may love his kinsmen in Israel and love them affectionately. He may be sincerely attached to his country-men, whose feelings and hopes, designs and interests are identical with his own. But he is no man after the will of God if the human family is not more to him than his kinsmen and countrymen. He who does not understand this does not understand Moses and the Prophets . . . the extension of the covenant to all mankind." Two years later, in 1885, the following interesting article appeared: "Rabbi Menahem Degalia settled the prayer-book question. He said: 'In the future all sacrifices will be abolished, except the thanks-offering, which will never be abolished; and all benedictions and praise will be abolished, except the benediction of thanksgiving, which will never be abolished.' That is certainly to say, that the divine worship of the future will consist, as far as praise, prayer and benediction are concerned, of expressing our gratitude before the Almighty Dispenser of all the blessings which we enjoy, as this is actually contained in the ancient formula. This might make the prayer-book small and the souls large. That Rabbi Menahem was evidently a reformer, but he postponed his reforms to some future day. Has not that future day appeared already?"

So only the "essence" of Judaism was Jewish to Dr. Wise, and this Mosaic essence was already manifest in him in the English-speaking peoples of the earth, thus partially fulfilling Israel's mission, and obviating the necessity for rebuilding a state in Palestine to work out the ideas and the ideals of Moses, as given him through God's direct revelation of the Decalogue. "What is true and divine in the Bible?" he asked again in 1898, and answered: "That which is founded upon the Torah. In all things supersensuous human reason cannot go beyond Moses, therefore he only

was a prophet in the proper sense of this term. We send greetings and this abstract of a reply to Prof. Dallmann and all German and American professors who place Christianity above Mosaic Judaism with the special request not to take the Judaism of history as the genuine Judaism as we do not take the Christianity of history as the genuine Christianity."

Everything to him was rapidly being prepared for the universal republic and the universal religion, which he "a child of destiny" as he called himself, had done so much to bring about. In his book, *The Martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth*, published in 1874, is the following significant paragraph. "The decline of the Church as a political power proves beyond a doubt the decline of the Christian faith. The conflicts of Church and State all over the European continent, and the hostility between intelligence and dogmatic Christianity (science and religion) demonstrate the death of Christology in the consciousness of modern culture. It is useless to shut our eyes to these facts. Like rabbinic Judaism, dogmatic Christianity was the product of ages without typography, telescopes, microscopes, telegraphs and the power of steam. These right arms of intelligence have fought the titanic battles, conquered and demolished the ancient castles, and remove now the debris, preparing the ground upon which there shall be reared the gorgeous temple of humanity, one universal republic, one universal religion of intelligence, and one great universal brotherhood. This is the new covenant, the gospel of humanity and reason."

Only twice, as recorded in the editorial columns of *The American Israelite*, out of fifty years of writing, did he give expression to what might be considered actual pessimism with regard to the progress of America and the world toward perfection, and these two editorials were written one year apart, in the early years of the Russian pogroms. In May of 1881, under an article captioned "Outrages in Russia," the following paragraph appeared: "The last phase of Christian love and civilization, the Berlin

'Judenhetze' has been successfully transplanted from northern Germany into the Germanic Protestant part of Russia, and hence southward among Poles and Russians . . . None of us poor and ever disappointed optimists would believe that such scandalous outrages could possibly re-occur at this end of the 19th century, be started in the capital of Germany to be imitated by the Russian peasants . . . None of us could believe that man is still thus beastly and untamed . . . there is something wrong among us optimists and humanists, sad experience upsets our beautiful theories and we stand confounded before the angry eruptions of the treacherous volcano called humanity. There is a lie in its nature which has not been overcome. Will it ever be overcome? We hope and trust that it will. Till then, we poor optimists are sadly disappointed and made false prophets."

A year later, in May of 1882, a cemetery in Columbia, South Carolina, was desecrated. This tragedy called forth the following: " 'Israel has only the grave,' sang the inspired bard, but alas! here, in this last quarter of the 19th century, in this land of boasted liberty, fraternity and enlightenment, here they will not even leave Israel's dead in peace in their narrow house. For the third time within a few years a Jewish cemetery has been desecrated . . . There are times when the sense of wrong, of bitter, burning injustice becomes too strong to find expression in speech. There are times when we almost believe that the boasted present Christian civilization is after all but a very thin veneering, through which, at the slightest scratch, the old, mediaeval idolatry can be seen. We suppose that all this will cease in time, that the people will eventually advance to full civilization, but it will not be in our day, nor will our children live to see it."

Another real note of pessimism was sounded in June of 1896, although it closed with his usual firm faith in America and its people. During the financial depression prevailing in America at that time, not only Christian religious journals but

many of the Congressmen in Washington were trying to popularize themselves with their constituents by providing them with the usual Christian method of relief by blaming everything on the Jews. At this time Dr. Wise spoke as follows: "... Now comes the St. Louis episode and the world is informed that the free coinage of silver at the present ratio is 'an old Jewish swindle.' In fact, whatever does not suit the world is nowadays laid upon the shoulders of the Jews. Just as in times of old they were charged with being the cause why pestilence, famine, drought, floods and other calamities came upon communities, so today, the belief in the supernatural having declined, all troubles in the financial and commercial world, all disturbances between capital and labor are laid on the back of the Jew. He is to be the scapegoat, if ignoramuses, fanatics and demagogues are to have their way. But fortunately in our country, they are after all only a very small minority. They do us no harm. They are not lions to rend and tear; they are only mosquitoes to annoy us with their buzz and tiny sting. They are unpleasant but they do not hurt. It is best not to take them too seriously. Yet who of us can help being haunted by the fear that what has happened in Germany, Austro-Hungary, and even in liberty-loving France, may happen here, and consequently tremble when ignorance or malice or both combined, appeal to the religious prejudices inherent in us all, to serve their ends? We have every faith in the sense of justice and love of fair play of the vast majority of our fellow citizens, and we can but pray that our faith is well founded."

In America Dr. Wise had been able to live "under his own vine and fig tree," and none had made him afraid. To him, the United States, Jewish in constitution, law and administration according to the plan of Moses, obviated the necessity of a return to Palestine to build a Jewish state. After America's war with Spain for the restoration of Cuba's human rights, he believed, as already stated, that America would go to war with Russia to re-

lease the Jews and Christians there from the horror of czar and priest ownership. In June of 1898 he wrote: "One need not be a prophet or the son of one to predict from the natural sequence of the principle which started the Spanish-American war, that a war with Russia is forthcoming . . . The principle as said, will ultimately lead to a war with Russia in behalf of a common humanity, perhaps in a shorter time than the statesmen can believe; for the once liberated moral principle travels fast, as did the principle of popular sovereignty in our century."

Dr. Wise considered political freedom to include all the necessary moral and religious principles and needs of man, a goal in itself and a complete synonym for Judaism—the path of progressive mankind through the plan of Providence as revealed in the Ten Commandments. In an article entitled "Moses Democratic" and written in July of 1869, he remarks: "Equality, justice and freedom to all is the great motto of the Mosaic legislation, carried into practice outside of Canaan, for the first time, in the United States of America." A quarter of a century later, in 1894, he again declares: "The declaration of independence, it has been said before, is, in fact, the application of the Ten Commandments to the then prevailing circumstances and popular demands; so does the Constitution of the United States re-establish the *e pluribus unum* state of Moses with due reference to new emergencies, environs and enlarged needs and conceptions of the age; with the only difference that Moses placed the center of unity in the religion of his people, made the law of divine origin, and obedience to it an inviolable religious duty; and our constitution makes the secularized law, the laws enacted by us and for us, the center of our national unity. In fact, this difference amounts to very little, inasmuch as the Decalogue after all is the immovable center in both systems. The theocracy of Moses and the democracy of Washington and his compatriots only differ in name, they are the same in fact—divine with Moses and secular with us, reduceable

to the same principle—the Hebrews all over the world look to this country and its institutions as the redemption of the world.”

Against this background of a clearly painted picture rapidly nearing completion, began the brushmarks of Herzl and other painters of life. The same pessimism and unhappiness which had sent Isaac M. Wise from Bohemia to America, sent Theodore Herzl from the Dreyfus case in France to Palestine. To Dr. Wise France was the sister republic of America, having patterned her government after ours. He was as enthusiastic about France as he was about America. France to him was the country from which the flame of liberty was to spread all over Europe. Of France he wrote in October of 1879: “The modern redeemer of the Jews was no particular man; the two revolutions, American and French, sounded the trumpet of resurrection for the oppressed children of Israel . . . the influence of these two events upon the fate of humanity is simply incalculable . . . our hopes are being realized . . . France is a republic and will be one to the end of this cycle, which will close with the universal republic. The progress of liberty is the genuine Messiah.”

The Dreyfus case, which Theodore Herzl as news correspondent for the *Neue Freie Press* in Vienna, had gone to Paris to cover, and which gave the impetus to his work in the attempt to legally secure a country in which Jews might live unhampered by the horrors of anti-semitism, was no symbol of retrogressive humanity to Dr. Wise, but only one more instance in proof of his theories that royalty and Catholicism, both of which the French army typified, were not civilizing agencies, but institutions which were already doomed to extinction in the progressive plan of Providence for the good of humanity. With the spread of general knowledge and education on the origin of Christianity and the crucifixion story, the teaching of which Dr. Wise believed to be the main cause of anti-semitism, conditions would constantly improve. In America he did not consider his labors in behalf of

Jewish defense, as due to anti-semitism; he declared there was no anti-semitism in America, but only the results of mis-education which his books on Christianity would go far to remedy. "The final redemption of Israel," he said, "can be brought about only by the final redemption of the Gentiles," in denying the possibility that Palestine might offer a solution of the Jewish problem . . . "we wait for the universal republic—the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, predicted by the prophets, which is to embrace this entire habitable globe and all its population."

In a 4th of July address published in 1894, he further expands on the theme of universalism as exemplified in the concepts of the Declaration of Independence. He says in part: "Returning now, to our main subject, we take into consideration the next and perhaps most important consequence of the Declaration of Independence, and that is, its influence upon the human family, this being the proper gauge by which to measure the importance of any historical event . . . the most cherished theories of the 18th century had suddenly been translated into real fact . . . it changed the social-political conceptions of reasoning philanthropists, and gradually marshalled into revolution the long-suffering serfs of the mighty in France first, on the continent of Europe and southern America next, in Asia and Africa last. It rolled on and on, a mighty stream, an irresistible flood, which was stopped momentarily now and then, here or there, but rolled on and rolls on steadily and will roll on until shall have come the end of thrones, crowns, despots, priests of violence and darkness and the lackeys of force and selfishness—the rejuvenation of the human family, the new era of freedom and humanity, to which our Declaration of Independence gave the undying impulse."

He did not oppose any movement to help the persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe to colonize in Palestine or other lands, agriculturally. He favored their plan of settling there for that purpose just as he favored Jewish agricultural projects in the

United States, South America and Canada. It was only the word "political" that frightened the cosmopolitan Wise in his fear that "the cause will ultimately result in harm to the Jews of America," as it might lead people to believe that the soul of the Jew here was not at one with the Constitution, that we looked for perfection elsewhere. "Those who want to establish a Jewish state in Palestine are pessimists," he said, "who despair of human reason, the progress of humanity, and the solidarity of mankind." "We, the citizens of the United States," he declared, "who believe in Moses and the prophets, are, and hope to remain, citizens of the United States; an integral element of this nation, and of no other, with no earthly interests or aspirations different from those who believe in Jesus and his Apostles."

The Jews establishing a possible new world source of salvation interfered with his entire conception of the progress of liberty through divine appointment in America; it also upset his whole interpretation of Judaism as morality and monotheism only, and not a particular religion for the Jewish people, universalistic in its implications. Naturally in Palestine there might be expected to again develop a culture and life specifically Jewish, and he had battled all his life to level the differences between Jew and Gentile by his attempt to uproot Jewish customs and Christian dogmas, preparatory to the advent of a universal religion, which in a universal republic he envisioned as the goal of human happiness and the plan of God. In his book, *Judaism and Christianity, Their Agreements and Disagreements*, published in 1883, he says: "Whoever is afraid of the two-edged sword of truth and the cold steel of logic is not expected to listen to these lectures." (They had previously been delivered in lecture form.) "We say the two-edged sword, and mean what we say; for we will have to cut into both Judaism and Christianity, as there are old sores in each system which must be cut, now or later, and will be cut and healed by the world's steady progress, whether we recognize

them or not. Whatever is in the way of the unity and fraternity of the human family will be overthrown. Whatever is unkind, uncharitable, ungenerous, intolerant, illiberal, or unfree cannot last much longer in our country. There can be no harm in exposing any elements of this kind at once and radically . . . Thank Heaven we are in America, and in Cincinnati, where free thought and free speech are the birthright of every law-abiding citizen. Speech and argument govern the community, and personal liberty is esteemed as man's most precious boon. Thank heaven that we live in an age and a country in which bigotry and fanaticism are subject to the sceptre of justice and reason." About fifteen years later, in 1897, he reviewed the purpose of this book in the following paragraph: "A book written by the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, a highly religious lady who died but lately, was translated into French, Hebrew, English, Russian, Italian, Swedish and Dutch, and had seen five editions in Germany before the authoress died. The title of the book is, *Ein Wort an Israel*, "A Word to Israel." The object of the "Word" is to bring nearer together Jews and Christians on the common ground of humanity and divine revelation. Several years ago we wrote a book with the same object in view as that good princess. Its title is: *Agreements and Disagreements of Judaism and Christianity*."

Palestine as a Jewish state conflicted with his entire conception of the Mission of Israel: that we were to live among all nations until they had become monotheistic. He believed the Jewish commonwealth in Palestine to have been only a training school for the development of the universalistic idea of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, and that with the development of this idea, there was no further need for the national life of the Jews in Palestine. To him the Dispersion came as God's plan for the dissemination of this idea among the peoples of the earth. He did not believe the Jews had any right to a separate existence as individuals or a people, that we had no national or

racial characteristics, that we were Jews differing from non-Jews only, in different ideas on religion. His faith in the Jew being able to retain his Judaism under all conditions, was implicit. The consciousness of the Jew as a scion of Israel and his natural intelligence, he believed, were more than enough to keep him true to the monotheistic faith of his fathers. Those who did leave the fold, he said, were no loss to Israel, since they represented our weakest and least desirable element. A converted Jew, he claimed, is a perverted Jew. He refused to readmit to Judaism an apostate who came to him, saying, "Those who deny Judaism once are traitors; we do not place confidence in traitors." "Judaism is not a mere belief, like other religions," he asserted, "but a matter of reason, and whatever is established in reason is and remains unchangeable; man has no power over it, it governs him. If a Jew changes from under the dominion of reason and deserts into the camp of mere belief, it seems so repugnant to common sense, that human nature unconsciously revolts against it." "A Jewish convert is a pervert," said Dr. Wise. This is not always true, of course, but history does reveal some conspicuous examples of Jews who have left the fold and have become their people's greatest enemy. One such was Joseph Pfefferkorn (1469-1521) a German Jewish convert to Christianity, through whose treasonous work the Jews of Germany suffered terrible persecutions in the 15th and 16th centuries. John Reuchlin, a German Christian scholar came to the defense of the Jews and their literature, which Pfefferkorn had claimed to be hostile to Christianity.

Dr. Wise said, too, that human nature unconsciously revolts against the conversion of Jews to Christianity. Perhaps this is the reason for the anti-semitism in Germany today, through which the half million German Jews who have remained true to their faith, are being made to suffer for the sins of their former co-religionists who have deserted them. The head of the present anti-semitic movement in Germany is Adolph Hitler. His chief

lieutenant is a converted Jew, Herr Philip Rosenberg, whom Pierre von Paassen, world traveler and lecturer, describes as "an extremely able man who may be called the tactician of the Nazi movement."* History it seems, is again repeating itself.

The list of Germany's Jewish converts to Christianity, particularly since the advent of Reform Judaism, is a long and impressive one, including famous musicians, poets, writers, lawyers, professors, etc., who readily gave up their religion for the material advancement to which their status as German Christians gave them access. Dr. Wise was well aware of this marked tendency of the Jews in the land of the origin of Reform Judaism, and expressed his contempt for their desertion more than once in his writings. The following paragraph written by him on November 1, 1894, will serve as an illustration. "'Geheimer Regierungsrath' is the high sounding title which the Emperor of Germany bestowed on Professor Lazarus of Berlin, on his 70th birthday. It is the very highest which a professor of philosophy can attain in the fatherland. Judaism feels honored by this gracious act of the emperor, because Prof. Lazarus is not only a philosopher of renown, but also a loyal and ever active Israelite, ** *a prominent and exceptional character among the professional renegades of Germany*, and those other great small men who sold their birthright for a loaf of bread, like the harlot in Proverbs."

Yet with volumes of evidence before him that Jewish converts do not necessarily represent our weakest or least desirable element, but may be lost through conditions which they have had no part in bringing about—that removing all the ancient landmarks of Judaism might naturally be expected to operate in time in America even as it had in Germany, and that Palestine might reasonably serve as an inspiration for scattered world Jewry to remain true to its central ideals, still Dr. Wise firmly believed that Palestine two thousand years ago had already achieved the

*Written between 1931-32.

**Italics are the author's.

only destiny for which it had been brought into existence, and that neither God nor the Jews would ever again want or need it. He believed himself singularly qualified to speak for both.

The two words "political Zionism," found the soft heel in the otherwise invulnerable armor of our Israelitish Achilles and filled him with fear and dismay. Being the most influential rabbi in America, and the editor and publisher of two outstanding papers, the Jewish "high priest" of America, as he was called, found large support for his views. In this way opposition to political Zionism, and opposition to Zionism in its spiritual aspects as well, became the most important plank in the platform of Reform Judaism. As the importance of modern Zionism as a Jewish world movement grew under Herzl's inspired leadership, Dr. Wise grew more and more embittered, using all his powers of journalism and eloquence to defeat it, in which effort he succeeded in America ably. "We American Jews," he said, "have nothing to do with Zionism, or that nationality swindle, simply because we are Jews by religion only and exclusively, untouched by nationality humbug or race sophistry." And today, more than thirty years after the death of the chief of Zionists opponents in America, his views, though in origin little understood, still obtain largely among the proponents of the movement, Reform Judaism, which, during half a century, he had so strongly championed.

And so we come to the end of the writings of Isaac M. Wise, whose pen mirrored his thoughts, hopes and feelings almost unto the day of his death in March of 1900. These thoughts and hopes the writer has tried to outline, beginning with his belief that America's people and constitution were the fulfillment of Mosaic ethics, that Mosaism or the Ten Commandments being the direct revelation of God, the dissemination of their morality and monotheism was the Mission of Israel; that a universal republic on the pattern of America was very near, and also a universal religion based on pure reason, which would mean the end of all forms of

idolatry and superstition, under which he understood Jewish custom and ceremony, as well as Christian dogma; of his attempts to simplify Judaism for the better understanding and acceptance of it by non-Jews, which conception of his divinely destined mission gave him the courage to attempt to destroy both Orthodox Judaism and Orthodox Christianity; of his efforts to establish the Hebrew Union College as the base for the spread of universal religion; of his belief that Palestine of old had already fulfilled its function in the scheme of Providence, making Zionism to him a natural foe of progress and Americanism because of its supposed interference with his conception of God's plans for human happiness.

Lest the reader think that the ideas advanced in this review represent only scattered or occasional thoughts from the pen of Isaac M. Wise, there will follow excerpts from his writings arranged by subjects as they follow each other in the General Review, covering his ideas through the fifty year period of his life and writings in America. It will be seen that the ideas outlined in this Review are not isolated ones, but compose the warp and the woof of his fabric of thought. In addition, they reveal his forceful and attractive style of writing. The excerpts also contain Dr. Wise's views on Prohibition, Intermarriage, War, Suicide Immortality and other subjects still of interest today.

Following these selections, will be given a summary and the reactions of the writer to this study.

END OF PART I

SINAI TO CINCINNATI

PART II

*Excerpts from the Writings
of Isaac M. Wise*

CHAPTER I

MOSES

The theology and religion of Isaac M. Wise begins and ends with Moses. To him, the Pentateuch, written by Moses, contains the source of all wisdom; the moral, legal and ethical law on which the civilization of the world depends. No man ever loved and revered Moses more than Dr. Wise. To him he was the fountain head of all human knowledge given him by God through Revelation. Dr. Israel Abrahams, in reviewing Dr. Wise's book, "Pronaos to Holy Writ," etc., says of him: "Differ though we may with Wise—some of us on account of his rejection of Biblical criticism, others because of his elevation of 'Mosaism' into a cult . . . it is not possible to withhold from him the crown of scholarship. . . ."

1861. Strike out the simple word Revelation, and nobody knows what justice, virtue or righteousness means. It is not so very easy to throw the Mosaic code to the rubbish of ancient codes, when it has become the corner-stone of the nations. It is not so easy to demonstrate Revelation away, if we have no other authority for either justice or virtue or their main definitions. Criticism amounts to little before the judgment seat of mankind; and the civilized world has expressed the verdict of "Revelation" on the Mosaic code, and adopted it as such for a basis in law and religion.

1872. It is the duty of all who work in the vineyard of Israel to preserve Judaism intact and in its purity; that coming generations inherit and promulgate what has been handed down from sire to son, in a regular line of succession from Abraham and Moses to the present generation, for the salvation and blessing of the human family. It matters not how forms and observances change, or customs are dropped, the eternal truth in principle, doctrine and law is "the law which Moses commanded us, the heritage of the congregation of Jacob." Whoever has risen above the level of the atheist must worship the God of Moses and the prophets, whatever name or appellation he may give to the great I AM. Whoever believes in justice and liberty must bow down in reverence before the Decalogue, which is the law of laws. Also the fundamental idea of political government, as advanced by Moses, is acknowledged to be the best, and most certain to secure liberty. He wanted in Israel twelve independent tribes, under one federal head, and one chief tribunal of justice and legislation, which is now imitated in our country and in Switzerland, and which is THE form of government for free nations. In theology, ethics and politics, it is Moses who has furnished the fundamental ideas, expounded by the prophets and teachers of Israel, enlarged and applied by the most revered apostles of humanity. Civilization in its onward march has not reached Sinai and Horeb yet.

1872. Without the Law of Moses carefully and conscientiously understood, we cannot preserve Judaism, for without Moses there is none.

1874. Open the records of Moses, read attentively, and the word "I" almost disappears. Moses stands there altogether unselfish, almost impersonal. It is nowhere the "I" which speaks, teaches, ordains, decrees, threatens or promises. It is God, all in all, whose will and words Moses announces. You do not read anywhere in the Pentateuch, "I am the life, I am the light, I and the Father are one, whoever sees me sees the Father, whoever receives me receives the Father," or any similar self-delusive and self-aggrandizing ejaculations. "And the man Moses was very meek." He did not know, says Scripture aptly, he did not know that his countenance was beaming, that divine wisdom radiated from his face . . . And when he died, he put the holy seal of impersonality and unselfishness upon his work. None should know his grave, that none worship him, that his people kneel not in idolatry and boundless folly before an imaginary sepulchre. This is the servant of the Lord,

emancipated of every selfishness, above—high above the little "I" . . . Moses is beyond a doubt the grandest picture of a human character, because most unselfish and impersonal. He was the servant of the Lord . . . Nothing is in our way to rise to that height of human greatness. Man can not become a god, but he may be God's servant.

1880. Take the whole of mankind, and you will find that all moral and religious progress consists of the enlargement of the periphery which has its center on Mt. Sinai.

1888. The world without knowing or professing it, Judaizes very rapidly in the very sense of the Law of Moses, so that we in this country, religiously observing the law of the land, actually observe the law of Moses. This is also the case in many details, as the protection of the matrimonial bonds and the family; the protection of property, labor, chastity and honor; the Mosaic laws of intermarriage have become the laws of most all nations of civilization. The Mosaic laws of charity, protection and support to the poor, the needy, the helpless, the weak, the humble and lonely, in various forms, rapidly progresses in the land with the support of just legislation and the progress of generous sentiments. The dietary and hygienic laws of Moses are no less rapidly becoming the law of the land. Every city has its health office and officers to enforce cleanliness, to protect against venomous contagion, unwholesome food and water, just as Moses ordained it. His law of "Ye shall not eat (the flesh of) carcasses killed by a disease or torn by an animal," is now the law in every well regulated community. So you might go on to show that various titles of law laid down by Moses, as far as state and society are concerned, have become or are rapidly becoming the law of the land. Unawares all of us are Judaizing . . .

1899. From: *Mosaism is Judaism*.

In the Baltimore *Jewish Comment*, it is maintained, contrary to our principle, that Mosaism is not Judaism; it is the mere starting point of it. The argument in defense of this theory is that we have in the Bible two more main divisions, Prophets and Hagiography, which would be of no use to us if Judaism as a religion is finished in the Thorah of Moses . . . We are ready to defend our theories, "In theology and ethics absolutely nothing of indisputable veracity has been advanced up to this day, nothing that has not been laid down in principle in the Thorah of Moses."

1900. From: *The Sunset of the Nineteenth Century*.

Let us start with the definition: Religion is primarily the inborn sentiment of the veneration of truth and the admiration of righteousness . . . If people break away from this or that religious institution, these or those observances and forms, depose the Pope, desert the priests, shake off the yoke of dogmas or commandments, split into new sects every day almost, but increase in religiousness, in the veneration of truth and the admiration of righteousness, we chronicle it as a religious triumph of the century; and you orthodox men, Jews and Christians of all shades of religious opinions can only look upon it as a sign of the times, which points to the new era of "Back to Mosaism," as indeed all your advanced preachers, Jews and Gentiles, do all the time, when they have given up preaching on dogmas, ceremonies, sacraments, forms and formulas. What do they preach besides veneration of truth and admiration of righteousness? And this signifies, although they would not confess it, back to Mosaism. The world is evidently religiously inclined and advances in religiousness. And yet strike out all dogmas, sacraments, forms and observances, and you must come back to Mosaism, for there is no other religion besides that revealed by Jehovah to Moses. Therefore reasoning on the subject as we do, and must do, we see in the sunset of the nineteenth century a glorious triumph of religiousness, and a long step forward toward the fulfillment of the prophecies — "Back to Mosaism!"

COMMENTS ON MOSES AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM

1880. It is established doctrine in Judaism that the entire body of doctrine taught and illustrated in the 19 books of the Prophets and Hagiography is taken from the Five Books of Moses, the Torah. "All the prophets received their prophetic material from Mount Sinai," or also, "The prophets added nothing to and took away nothing from that which is written in the Torah"—is the rabbinical formula of this doctrine. The Jewish "Derasha" as it grew out of the very spirit of the nation, must expound the Law, for Judaism consists of these two elements, the knowledge of the Torah and obedience to its teachings. The prophets and hagiographists are inspired expounders of the Torah, and it makes no difference when this or that book was committed to writing or received in its present form.

1880. That which is called Bible criticism, down to Merx and

Wellhausen, is actually a shapeless conglomeration of hypotheses, in which there is vastly more error and unwarranted assumption than truth, more philological quibbling and self-fabricated historical items than grains of fact.

1880. The main object of the Protestant Bible critics is to reduce the Old Testament to the legendary value of the New Testament.

1881. The strangest perversion in modern Bible criticism is that Israel now seeks information from non-Jewish critics.

1884. The unsophisticated man will naturally enough say: "If the Law of Moses is a fraudulent invention and the historical portion of your Bible is fictitious, what are you to expound it? What use have we for you and your eloquence, if the sources of all your wisdom are a conglomeration of falsehoods and pious frauds? What kind of Judaism can you teach us, if the fountain head is not only purely human, but purely fictitious and deceptive? What religion will you teach us and what evidence can you give us of its truth to replace our Judaism, which is based on the belief of the divinity and authenticity of the Bible?

1885. Do we admit that all our fathers and forefathers, and among them the most powerful and independent reasoners, were blind, and all of us were purblind, till those few Protestant clergymen professors came to open our eyes? We maintain that our reason is clearer and less biased than theirs, and we prove it by the fact that they believe in Christianity, and we do not.

1887. The Torah of Moses is a forgery, composed and compiled a thousand years after Moses, is the lame offspring of agnosticism begotten by Protestant theologians whose faith in Christianity has been undermined. Students shape their thoughts as women do their garments, according to the prevailing fashion, so Jewish students slipped into that Protestant gown and assumed that same kind of a visage. The gown is getting threadbare, the gilding wears off from the wooden idol, the priests desert the altar; a sober second thought begins to show the folly of quibbling on the authenticity of the Pentateuch, upon which rests the religion of the Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan, and the pillars of ethics and civilization.

1888. The whole question in which their souls are engulfed is not, what does the Bible teach, but when and by whom was this or that book written? This is the limit of all their wisdom.

1891. The Dutch and German Bible critics of the radical or negative schools, Ernest Renan and other followers of those schools, with Professor Steinthal of Berlin, have been hard hit by explorers and discoverers of these later days. One plank after the other was taken from under their feet by Assyriologists, Palestine explorers, Arabian tourists and Egyptologists, so that the chasm between those Bible critics on the one hand and the explorers and antiquarians on the other can hardly be bridged over any more. The explorers find almost daily new evidence of the genuineness of the Bible records, which the critics long ago banished into the land of myths and fables. Brugsch, Glaser and lately Naville succeeded in upsetting all those sagacious conjectures, combinations and theories in regard to Joseph, Egyptian bondage and the Exodus, by monumental and documentary evidence. So, while Dr. Glaser proved to the world that there was a large Shemitic literature prior to Moses or even to Abraham, the others show all about the stay of the Israelites in Egypt and their departure from it. The latest of these explorers, Dr. Naville, laid his work before a large assembly in the Victoria Institute in London, provided with maps, and gave it to the publisher. He, the discoverer of Subaste, and the Pithom of Exodus, fixed also other places in that district. So, for instance, he shows that Succoth was a district and no city. He identified Pithom with the Greek Heroopolis, the great emporium of the ancient Red Sea trade. He points out Baal Zephon not as a city but as a shrine with an altar of Baal. Migdol and Pie Hashiroth he ascertained as the Egyptian Serapeum, which was called by the Egyptians Maktol or Migdol. These places are mentioned in Scriptures in connection with the Exodus, and are today the dumb witnesses of the Scriptural story, as eloquent, indeed, as a living contemporary of those days would be now. We apprehend those radical critics, with whom the Bible stories are fictitious, will soon be forced to abandon their positions.

1891. Again we read as being "the old Mosaic law," "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," that this sentence is a Law of Moses which justifies capital punishment, but none can tell us where that law may be found in Moses. A passage in Genesis ix, 6. seems to be the text to that homily, but that is certainly no law of Moses, as it was addressed to Noah; and it is besides no law at all; it is a prediction, or rather a promise, as is evident from the verse immediately preceding the above where it is announced that God will require man's blood "from the hand of every beast;" it will be

required as well from the hand of man. It says no more than this: "murder will be avenged on man or beast by the hand of God." Experience teaches that this always was done and is done now. Murderous tribes and individuals and ferocious beasts are persecuted and possibly extinguished; by man their blood is shed. It is a law in human nature, but no law of Moses.

1891. It is a kind of "trick" in Christian polemics to expose weak points in the Mosaic legislation in order to establish the superiority of the New Testament above the teachings of Moses. They compare two incomparable subjects . . . (He quotes from Exodus and Leviticus to prove the misinterpretation of the "eye for eye," and "tooth for tooth" statement; that the literal execution of the law was impossible—like the pound of flesh in Shakespeare's Shylock case—with a criminal, for instance, who had but one eye, or one who had lost his teeth; that Moses meant fine and compensation according to judicial valuation and not literally "eye for eye," etc. The editorial concludes:) Aside from all that, however, the cry of the Christians and modern ethicists against the "jus Talionis" is absurd, when they sanction and practice it in its very worst form, in demanding life for life, not merely eye for eye, but life for life, and execute the murderer or even the political offender, or send a criminal to the penitentiary for life, also for other minor crimes. That is "jus Talionis"—in its very worst form. What is all the noise about? Our argument solves the apparent contradictions in Moses; but we know of no argument to solve the inconsistencies in modern pretensions and practice.

1893. Let us be just to Moses, if we cannot be as pious and holy as he wants us to be. Belie him not, misconstrue not his words. He has given to mankind the highest and holiest in theology and morals, in metaphysics and ethics. Let us be just to the great son of Amram, the Servant of the Lord. (In regard to the extermination of the seven nations of Canaan, Dr. Wise said:) Moses never commanded their extermination. We have already proved that the "Lo thechayeh" in Deuteronomy xx 16 cannot mean to slay or exterminate, as little as the same term in Exodus xx II signifies to slay or kill. We have already shown, partly at least, and will have something more to say about it, that the term "Charam" neither in Deuteronomy nor in Leviticus signifies to slay or kill. It follows from this, that Moses never commanded the extermination of the seven nations of Canaan. It is one of the misconstructions of the laws of Moses, that led to this barbarous

conception. Still we will add in our next paper a historical argument on this matter which we hope will finally convince all critics that there are no barbarisms in Moses.

1899. (On Higher Criticism, he says:) It may be higher criticism, but it is by no means the highest. The last word in this matter has not been spoken yet. The illusive foundations of "Higher Criticism" are proved by the theories of one group being completely overthrown by another.

CHAPTER II

AMERICA

"Moses forms one pole, and the American Revolution the other, of an axis around which revolves the political history of thirty-three centuries," said Dr. Wise. To him, the religion of Moses found its exemplification in the politics of America, based on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

Opinions on American Politics

Lest the reader think that Dr. Wise saw only the virtues of America and none of its faults, the concluding excerpts will prove self-explanatory.

While it is true that he was well aware of the presence of the serpent in America's Garden of Eden, he was equally certain that in the end right would win, that "Truth would triumph."

4TH OF JULY, 1856. This great and glorious day, which is inscribed with golden letters in the annals of mankind, was celebrated in our synagogue on Lodge Street in due and becoming manner. Solemn sentiments beamed from many a countenance, and rays of joy glittered through many an eye. It is indeed, a joyous occasion, when millions of free men salute the birthday of a great and independent nation, a nation, whose future greatness and influence on the history of mankind are incalculable; nay, the mind is wearied by merely guessing the greatness of the future to which we are destined. Ever since the powerful words of the Declaration of Independence were

read in the Hall of the Continental Congress, the spirit of liberty aroused from its lethargy, crossed the ocean, traversed France, thundered its demands through Germany, inflamed Poland and Hungary to battle their oppressors, rejuvenated Italy, and rests no more. When tired of its wanderings and persecuted by its enemies, it returns hither to rest in safety and recruit its strength. Then again it crosses the oceans, touches Turkey and promises a visit to China. So it will rest here and wander abroad, till there will be one fraternized, free and redeemed mankind on earth. On the 4th of July, 1776, Liberty built a house for itself, and this house is its castle from which it safely operates throughout the world.

1862. From: *Reflections on Washington.*

Washington was the greatest man of his age and a good many preceding and succeeding ages, because as a public factor he was the best man. His virtues are as simple-sublime as the Davidian psalms. Like an ancient patriarch he stands in the midst of modern history. In vain one reads the history of three centuries to find a parallel to him. Such a character could only form itself in the solitary settlements of the American colonies, far away from the corruptive influences of European civilization. Ideas as Washington uttered and realized on the government of nations, are so natural and true, that they could not spring from the soil of monarchical countries, nor could they prosper under the uncongenial sun of egotism, a vice which more or less forms the foundation of all European governments. A new era could begin only in a new world and with the American Revolution a new era of government begins . . . Columbus and Washington are mighty bridges constructed by the powerful arm of Providence for mankind to advance from the old into new provinces of progressive humanity; they are the triumphs of mankind after many years of bloody combats . . . We are as well satisfied with the Messiahship of Washington as the prophet Isaiah was with the Messiahship of Cyrus!

1867. From: *A Pamphlet by an Anonymous Writer on the Topic—The United States is Israel Restored, and Rev. Dr. Baldwin's Armageddon.*

The pamphlet before us proves what everybody almost knows, that God promised the land of Palestine to the children of Abraham, which promise was fulfilled. Stripped of all mystical, typical and symbolical views and fancies, the principle of the Armageddon is perfectly correct. The political side of the Bible is realized in the United

States. The Mosaic idea of a state and its citizens was perfectly understood by the framers of the Constitution. We live in a perfectly Jewish state and under a Jewish government in the strictest sense of Moses. Twelve sovereign tribes were united under one executive head, one legislature and one judiciary. This is also the fundamental idea of the "E Pluribus Unum." The principle of "one law" for all, or the equality of all before the law, and the sovereignty of the law and not the person, are strictly Mosaic . . . The scheme of government originally conceived for Palestine is carried out on a much larger scale in these United States.

1869. From: *Dedication of a New Temple in Quincy, Ill.*

The vast majority of our co-religionists in this country belong to the number of those who have returned from another Babylonian captivity, from under the iron sceptres of European potentates, princes and priests, who, in Russia and Prussia, in Roumania and Rome, still adhere to their inveterate sins of oppression and humiliation . . . In America, humanity recovers from its chronic diseases, and the star of happiness rises brilliantly in the pure horizon of unclouded truth. Behold the moral law which your prophets and your sages taught has received the sanction of the civilized world, and has become the foundation of human purity and happiness, virtue and eternal blessing. The political freedom which Moses proclaimed among the Egyptian bondsmen, and the Lord of Hosts confirmed by the mighty waves of the Red Sea, by the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, has become the ideal of nations, the hope of mankind, the unutterable blessing of our country . . . In America, the scattered and hostile fragments of the human family are reunited and reconciled to a band of brothers, this country repays to Israel the old debt of Christendom, and makes us rapidly forget the wrongs we suffered. God bless this our beloved country. Here we feel at home, and we are at home. . . Here we raise our temples to the Most High, and the great I AM is enthroned among the praises of Israel. Praised be His glorious name for ever and ever.

It is therefore, quite natural, that we cease to mourn before God, and to complain of the wrongs perpetrated on our hapless fathers. It is also natural that we pray no more to God to lead us back to Palestine and to send a king Messiah, to wear the crown of Israel. We want no king besides God, and no land besides this, which flows with milk and honey. We have ceased to lament; we rejoice before God.

1889. (As a new president awaits inauguration): Besides those

fellow citizens holding public office and those who wish to hold them, the change of administration affects none and nothing. Constitution and law remain all the same, the people's rights and toils, liberties and taxes, are unchanged. The republic is so well established and secure that we can truly say, "Besides God, we fear none," as no other country can. What was a doubtful experiment a hundred years ago, is now a rock of security and a beacon light of nations. Is liberty a success? Yes, and here is the proof. Can humanity be governed without princes, priests and armies? Yes, and here is the proof. Does freedom benefit man, physically, morally and intellectually? Yes, and here is the proof in the health, wealth and inventions of the American people. Here is an object lesson which the intelligent have commenced to study, and it will be understood better with every passing decade. This is a theme in which the soul delights.

1898. In his address before the "Maccabbeans" in London, Judge Sulzberger of Philadelphia said: "It is true both of the English and of the American nation that they have more affinity with the Jews than any other nation. They have made the principal literary work of the Jews, the Bible, more their study than all others have done. If we deprive the English language of the taste and color which the Bible gave it, we should deprive it of some of its finest elements." (Dr. Wise's comment) It is not only of the language of these peoples that this is true, but of their characters as well. English and American character is built entirely on an Old Testament foundation. The New Testament stories are a pigment with which its preachers paint pretty pictures, but when there is any serious work to be done they go to Moses and the prophets for inspiration. The Anglo-Saxons are most assuredly an Old Testament people.

1898. From: *Identity of the Mosaic State and the United States.*

(In this article written in *The Israelite* on December 29, 1898, Dr. Wise recalls that he had written on this same subject some forty-eight years previous in the *Asmonean*, but that no one then had taken up the subject for further discussion. He goes on to say:) The similarity of the two systems of laws was then to us no mere matter of science, although this alone would have sufficed to enlist our interest; it was to us also a matter of conscience. Like many others, we had left our home in old Austria, because the small residue of manhood left to one born and bred an Austrian subject of the vulgar class under the reign of absolutism, priestcraft and feudal laws (prior to 1848) revolted

against that state of abject slavery, and conscience dictated to be no longer a partner to the outrages committed on humanity. There across the ocean, where freedom, justice and humanity are at the helm of state, there you have to go, and there we went. This was not all, however; it was not only the man, it was also the Jew, aye, the Jew especially, who was mortally offended by the Austrian despotism of State and Church; it was no less or probably more offensive to the Jew's conscience, to see all the time the laws of Moses transgressed, and he himself deprived of all power and hope to live up to his religious dicta and bring his neighbors up to that obedience for the divine law. Every principle of the Austrian government was a transgression of the fundamental laws of Moses. Across the ocean, we believed, where freedom and equality are fundamental principles of the government, there is evidently an approximate form of government to that of Moses. It is our duty to go there, and so we did. As soon as we could reach it, we began to study the Constitution, laws and history of the country of our adoption, as a matter of science, and as said, as a matter of conscience, to arrive at the conviction that this country approaches nearest the Mosaic state among all countries known in history. This conviction sealed the man and the Jew with heart and soul to this country and this people.

OPINIONS ON AMERICAN POLITICS

In public life momentary success depends on shrewdness often coupled with wickedness; lasting success always depends on goodness and enthusiasm. The popularity gained by sensation evaporates and depends on the continual repetition of sensation. The popularity gained by meritorious deeds is sound and finds its place on the pages of history. By tricks a politician may be elected to a popular office, but he cannot by tricks impress himself on the popular heart.

That man who went to a ball and found there a company of lame people was in the same fix as was that other man who had resolved to vote for honest men only for public offices.

Lying and poetry are not always identical, for some write the poetry of truth, and some lie unpoetically; but lying and making political campaign speeches are always identical. You have never read one free of lies.

Mediocrity is the best paying quality. The greatest men in this country were most abused; mediocrities rose upon the shoulders of public favor to the highest positions.

If politicians want you to run for any public office, run—that is, run away from them; for they invariably seek either convenient tools or your money.

1896. (Editorial) Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and those who believe that the boon of religious liberty and the equality of all religious denominations before the law, which has been won after centuries of battle, can be held without constant watchfulness and effort, are most grievously in error. For on every hand we see preachers of religion, who should be seeking to teach morality, peace, fraternity and charity, using every effort to destroy these virtues and uproot the principles upon which the fathers so wisely built our government. The fight for freedom is not permanently won by any means. Nor will it be as long as the fanatics who have their headquarters at Pittsburg continue their efforts to have Jesus proclaimed God by the Congress of the United States and the legislatures of the various states. Not as long as the war upon public schools is carried on by Protestant ministers under the plea of promoting morality by the reading of the Bible according to their interpretation. Not as long as the Catholic Church makes war upon the Public School system, denouncing it as Godless and immoral and places a ban upon those parents who send their children to it. Not as long as Catholics seek to seduce Protestants from their church and Protestants send missionaries among Catholics and both are at work to corrupt the faith of the Jew. Until these remnants of previous centuries of bigotry, ignorance and persecution have passed away, the friends of religious liberty can not lay off their armor and boast the battle won.

1897. A good idea of the progress of snobocracy can be gleaned from the fact that there are now twenty-seven societies in the United States, membership in which depends on descent from ancestors who distinguished themselves by coming over to America at an early date, or by being officers in American wars prior to 1861. Most of them are in a flourishing condition. So far these organizations have confined their activity entirely to social functions. In public affairs, in civic or charitable matters, they have taken no part, and for good or evil their influence has never been felt in the slightest degree. They are as yet something to be laughed at, an imaginary pedestal upon which a small class, without any of the usual claims to distinction, seek to set themselves above their neighbors. Nobody but the members of these societies of sons or daughters of thingummies take them seriously or ever mention them without a smile.

CHAPTER III

MONARCHIES—CHURCH AND STATE

Dr. Wise believed that the American and French revolutions meant the end of monarchies and of church rule, or rather, mis-rule, with their consequent enslaving of the bodies and dulling of the minds of their victims. From France the light of liberty was to illumine all of Europe, and the principle once started would encircle the globe for the salvation of mankind. The following articles will illustrate in part, the hapless condition of the world under the reign of priests and princes prior to and since the American and French revolutions, according to Dr. Wise.

1852. From: *The End of Popes, Nobles and Kings, or, the Progress of Civilization*. Delivered before the Hebrew Young Men's Literary Association, New York.

Liberty is not an artificial product of some ingenious minds, it is an innate principle of human nature . . . If Liberty is a natural part of human nature, despotism in either of its various forms must be unnatural to man . . . Hence despotism is an imposition, an unnatural and violent check upon the natural motions and actions of man; wherefore liberty comes by itself, and takes care of itself, if the natural qualities of man are not corrupted, while despotism must be invented, studied,

imposed and guarded. It is self-evident, that despotism must have its proper agents. If we consult History, we are told, the agents of despotism were always Popes, Noblemen and Kings, and their instrument was General Ignorance. If then, the power of these three classes of men be annihilated, and if their diabolish instrument be shivered, liberty is checked no longer, and must triumphantly unfurl its banners wherever men have entered into civilized and social life . . . Religion was made everywhere in Europe a political machine, to govern the people with more ease. The nobles and priests of each country were the privileged class, the dignitaries of the crown, the officers of the army, of the cabinet, and of the juridical tribunals. The sovereigns entered into leagues with each other, and the whole globe represented a net of monarchies, in which all mankind was caught.

1856. From: *Church and State*. History records no form of government in which Church and State were entirely separated: this was an original idea of the framers of our Constitution. The Declaration of Independence states in decisive language: We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. This unchristian principle having been adopted, the Constitution of the United States altogether ignored the subject of religion, and it was only afterward that the following amendment passed Congress: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, etc." This separation was the only way to establish a Republic, and liberty is safe only as long as Church and State remain separate.

1878. From: *The European Peace—The Treaty of Berlin*.

Nations have been handled and dealt with like chattels without their voice or consent. Provinces have been cut off here and added there, as though the land were not at all inhabited by human beings. The great European firm redivided the European farm among themselves, including the horses, cattle, and men pasturing upon it. It is a disgrace to humanity, an outrage on human reason, a demonstration of the low position occupied by European peoples, that half a dozen of princes by their agents dispose of the fate of the millions without asking the consent of any. This is the aching sore, the bleeding wound, the blasting stigma on the morbid body of European humanity; the nations are a flock of sheep, a herd of cattle belonging to the sovereign's farms . . .

1889. (*An editorial on the growing militarism of Europe to protect the monarchies.*) The new form of government in Europe is military despotism, when emperors, kings and princes appear in state, it is always in military uniform with the symbol of slaughter dangling from their loins. The ethical principle upon which this newest phase of public policy depends is international hatred, which is preached on every highway and byway, especially to the army and navy, and breaks out in all corners and nooks . . . Monarchical Europe increases its armies continually because the potentates must watch one another, all having robbing dispositions . . . The Thrones and dynasties need those immense armies, the nations could well do without the thrones and the armies . . . We need no armies to govern our sixty millions of people, because we have no throne and no dynasty to protect.

CHAPTER IV

THE MISSION OF ISRAEL

In America, Dr. Wise felt assured, that, freed from the dominion of princes and priests, living under a government which, for the first time in history, had completely separated Church and State, Israel was given the opportunity to carry out its God-given mission to teach the world Monotheism, or pure religion. —

"The liberty of this land," he cried, "is given us chiefly for the loud proclamation of this truth."

(Note: — In the excerpts on this subject will be found the only two articles on record on the "double" mission of Israel — their purpose and conflict. The first is quoted from the "Occident" of 1849; the other, twenty years later from the "Israelite" of 1869.)

1849. *The Occident.*

The mission of Israel was, and still is, to promulgate the sacred truth, to all nations on earth; to diffuse the bright light that first shone on Sinai's sanctified summit, all over the world. The progress of civilization, of science, arts and enlightenment level the way for this promulgation; the Christian missionaries prepare the heathen to accept, at some future day, the eternal truth from the hand of Israel; the infidelity so tremendously raging in Christianity all over the world, the innumerable sects in which it is broken up, give us the best evidence that the dogmas of Christianity are not any longer of a satisfactory

nature, either to the profound investigator, or to sound common sense: This gives us a satisfactory evidence, that [the time is close at hand when they will come and say, Let us ascend the mount of the Lord, let us enter the house of the God of Jacob; for from Zion cometh forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem] . . . And if you ask me, which part of our sacred faith shall be diffused among all nations? I must answer you: Only [the fundamental truths, the principle doctrines, the abstract truths concerning God and his attributes, his duties and hopes, shall become the property of all nations on earth . . . but the ceremonial part of our faith is the exclusive property of Israel]; it has never been given unto us to teach it to other nations, but partly to separate our forefathers from paganism, from the altar of idols, which they saw adored in Egypt, and in all the countries round about them; partly to prevent us from being divided and sub-divided into an innumerable amount of sects; and partly to stamp us with the signs and tokens of our faith, and of our nationality, that we, if scattered, may remain all over the earth one and the same nation, designed for one destiny; that we may not be swallowed up by the overwhelming multitude of other nations, before all the world shall have accepted our sacred message, until all nations adore with us the ONE and true God—until our mission is fulfilled.

1869. From: *The Situation*.

Judaism must fulfill two distinct missions. It must satisfy the religious wants of the Israelite, who has no priest to pray for him, no saints and no mediator to make intercession for him before the throne of mercy, nobody's merits to rely upon, and none's mischievous instigation to excuse himself. He stands alone with his truth before the throne of God, alone with his sacred heritage in the midst of the storms of the world, on the brink of eternity, the last and highest gradation of spirituality. He needs the whole power of consolation which religion affords to the yearning soul to be satisfied in life and in death. This is, undoubtedly, the first mission of Judaism.

In order to reach this object, religion must become concrete, intelligible to the common mind, it must connect itself by the proper threads with the gross conceptions of the multitude. It must have ceremonies and observances corresponding to the taste and the ability of conception of those very masses. These ceremonies and observances may be dear and elevating to those who find holy reminiscences and stirring suggestions in the symbols, although to the uninitiated they

may appear void of sense or even ridiculously small. Sprinkling somebody with a few drops of water and pronouncing a certain formula, appears no less ridiculous to us as a means of salvation, as our "Shofer" must appear to others.

Judaism, however, has still another mission, viz: to preserve and promulgate the eternal truths of universal religion. Without its influence on the progress of history, heathenism would have reigned supreme in all parts, no Christianity and no Islam would ever have come into existence. Without Judaism, Christianity would surely have relapsed into another form of idolatry, only that the Pantheon would have had a few more gods. Without the steady opposition of Judaism, the dogmatic Christianity of our century, in its opposition to the progress of science and freedom, would surely relapse into the barbarous theories of the Middle Ages. It is the spirit and genius of Judaism which opposes the aberrations of the religious mind, from the pinnacle of science now, from the echoes of philosophy then, by the voice of liberty here, and by a mighty wave from the literary ocean there. Here, then, we stand before the world with the consciousness of the treasures we possess, and the duties we have to perform to the human family. We know that this is the duty and mission of the Hebrew people. If the Hebrew people as a community fall apart, that treasure of truth has no bearer, no exponent, no guardian, and must vanish under the masses of ignorance, superstition and hypocrisy. We must uphold the Hebrew congregation to preserve Judaism for the blessing of mankind. But, in order to do this, we must also preserve a number of ceremonies and observances, which are necessary to preserve the union of Israel, but appear ridiculous or at least superfluous to others, and stand in our way of progress, retarding our mission to the human family. This is our misery. This is the painful part of the situation. Here you stand with your grand conviction that you do possess the sublime and divine truths to redeem the human family from the miseries of centuries, but you cannot break through the shell which embraces the kernel without destroying the fruit. You cannot break asunder the bonds of observances and ceremonies, without breaking down the congregation of Israel, the very vessel, the only vessel, in which these truths have been safely kept up to date. You cannot fulfill one mission of Israel without injuring the other. That is the misery of the situation . . . Therefore Judaism, satisfactory to the Jew, must naturally be unsatisfactory to the world. Therefore we must preserve those forms, ceremonies and observances which uphold the union of Israel,

which preserve the consecrated vessel in which the divine truth has hitherto been preserved. Therefore, we can only open our ranks to admit cognate minds, but we dare not break down the barriers, the inclosure, and lose our identity in the masses of mankind. We can only approach the world in the same ratio in which it is prepared to receive us. Our religion is too philosophical to suit thoughtless masses. It is too abstract for the vulgar thinker. Our own people can not elevate themselves high enough above the moral state of society, to grasp the sublime ideals without concrete means. We must preserve two kinds of forms, the one to preserve the union of Israel, and the other to afford concrete means to our coreligionists to reach the sublime ideals of Judaism. It is the solemn duty of Israel's teachers and literati to come to a common understanding concerning those forms; to lay aside that which is an incumbrance and preserve that which is necessary and fraught with blessing . . .

1870. From: *The Consolation*.

Israel's aim and mission are the universal triumph of truth, the sovereign dominion of justice, equity and freedom, the kingdom of virtue, purity, love and goodness; that there be revealed the glory of God, and all flesh together see that the mouth of God hath spoken. God has chosen and protected his people to this sublime end or to none, and in the great scheme of Providence there is nothing without its fixed object in cooperation with the whole. This being the object of Israel, its non-fulfillment was the main cause of his mourning, and the hope of its realization was the substance of the consolation. From this standpoint we ask, is any cause of mourning left us? is consolation necessary, is it reasonable? Will Israel's cause ever triumph? Will justice govern the nations, hold violence, selfishness and the animal passions in subjection? Will truth overcome the powers of darkness, and unfurl his glorious banner of wisdom, reason and understanding upon all the heights of the habitable globe? Will virtue overthrow the dominion of vice and crime, will purity and holiness be acknowledged man's costliest treasure and holiest attire? History says yes, for mankind has become better, wiser, and more just. With all our imperfections upon our heads, the nineteenth century is much more humane, and intelligent, than any preceding one. We progress, hence, we must reach human perfection in the organism of society, and in the conscience of the individual. But above all things and signs, deductions and inductions, it is the word and promise of God, that

the day will come, when the glory of the Most High will be so revealed, that all flesh together will see and understand, that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. Hope on, O Israel! comfort, comfort ye, my people saith your God. Let no good man despair of human nature and human destiny. Work on, hope on, all ye apostles of humanity, ye banner-bearers of truth, ye admirers and protectors of virtue and piety, work on patiently, hope on enthusiastically, for the God of Israel is at your right hand, you cannot fail; His promises are your banner of light, and you cannot err. The hope of the pious soul cannot be disappointed. The time will come when all fortresses, castles and bastions will lay in ruins, and a better generation will say, our hapless forefathers needed those damnable structures on account of their senseless strifes; when crown, scepters and thrones will be shown in museums to the inquisitive, who will laugh at the idea that their forefathers, having put this cap on a man's head, this stick in his hand, and having sat him on this chair, worshipped him and slaughtered one another at his command. The time will come, when like the ancient temples of heathenism, grass and shrubs will grow over the modern cathedrals, churches and mosques, and inquisitive children will amuse themselves with the modern mythology and legends, as we have done with those of Rome and Greece. The time will come, it is fast approaching, when man will recognize in man his fellow creature, the image of his God, the object of his love, the brother of his heart, when the knowledge of God will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

1880. Israel has been charged with a divine mission to the children of men, and must continue to exist until it has performed this sacred task. This is a doctrine, we believe, accepted by all our people in one form or another, either by the coming of a personal Messiah, as the one party believes, or by the progress of science, freedom, justice and humanity, as the other maintains. By what right, one might ask, does that people assume so lofty a position in the government of Providence? Because God has revealed His will to Israel, and His will must become the will of mankind. As for those who disclaim the doctrine of revelation, no basis is left for that doctrine. Without the fact of revelation, the Messianic doctrine in any and every form falls to the ground.

1887. It is the belief of many earnest and eminent men outside of the Hebrew persuasion, that the people, language, history, religion

and ethics of Israel are so wonderfully and tenaciously preserved in the human family by a special influence, an invisible agency of divine providence, for ultimate purposes not entirely understood yet—we suppose we know what the mission of Israel among the nations was and is now, and verily we believe we know what it will be in the future, until the unity, solidarity and fraternity of the human race under the supreme law of truth, goodness and justice shall be universally established. Those who believe in the Bible and do not pervert its plain statements, must also take for granted that Israel's mission is to bring about the universal triumph of Monotheism, when "God will be One and His name One" among all nations and tongues.

CHAPTER V

OBSTACLES TO THE MISSION OF ISRAEL

What were the obstacles to the fulfillment of the Mission of Israel in America? In brief, according to Dr. Wise, they were:

- (1) *Radicalism*
- (2) *Orthodox Christianity*
- (3) *Orthodox Judaism*

The following references will indicate Dr. Wise's opposition to the above mentioned obstacle—Radicalism. Under this heading he included any movement destroying religion, as Atheism, Materialism, etc., also religion without the Pentateuch as foundation, for instance: "Ethical Culture," etc.

The sections under "Orthodox Christianity" and "Orthodox Judaism" also contain and include protests against "Radicalism."

RADICALISM

ATHEISM

1861. From: *Mark the Consequences.*

The doctrine of the trinity and incarnation of the Deity is the veritable mother of Atheism. The history of Israel shows no atheists, and the few we have now, if any we have, are merely fashionable atheists who learned it in Christian society, especially of priests. As long as philosophy was in its infancy and limited to but a few apostles, and the Church was almighty, people believed the immaculate conception of Jesus from the Holy Ghost, and submitted to the rest of inexplicable mysteries. But when the multitude began to think for itself, and to think means to solve mysteries—this doctrine begat atheism,

not knowing another than the Trinitarian God in whom they could not believe, they naturally turned atheists.

1878. Col. Robert Ingersoll, famous lawyer, atheist, and lecturer, delivered a course of lectures entitled: Some Mistakes of Moses. Dr. Wise replied with a course of lectures on Friday evenings at the Plum Street Temple, entitled "Some Mistakes *about* Moses," "because that gentleman (Ingersoll) spoke of the mistakes of Moses and ridiculed the great law-giver of the Jews." These lectures against "realism, sensualism, materialism, atheism, and other isms," began as follows: "This congregation meets not this evening to pray for Col. Robert Ingersoll's soul, for he says he has none, and in this instance we are bound to believe him, as he is judge, jury and witness in the case; and there may be men without souls, as there are some without conscience, others without reason, and quite a number without principle." In the closing lecture of this group, called "Sources of Atheism," Dr. Wise concludes: "Those who have persecuted the Jew, do now persecute the Jew's Bible."

INFIDELS

1885. Skeptics, however, are preferred by Dr. Wise to the orthodox of any religion. He introduces a group of lectures entitled: "Lectures for Infidels," in the following words: "We will have to treat on a good many subjects in our proposed course of lectures for infidels. We may and do invite all sorts of that forlorn and ostracized class called Infidels, and we hope to show in some instances they are not half as bad as priests, rabbis, missionaries, revival preachers, salvation army folks, and other commissioned and non-commissioned officers of what they call genuine orthodoxy, describe them to be. There is reason in their madness, anyhow, and that is the very point we want to know and discuss in defense of man's common sense.

ETHICAL CULTURE

1891. From: *Suicide and Dr. Adler's Theories*. (Dr. Felix Adler)

The Decalogue commands, "Thou Shalt Not Kill," and defines not whom thou shalt not kill, because all human beings without any distinction are the objects of this prohibitory law. The suicide, like the murderer, kills a person, and is therefore no less a murderer than

he who slays any other human being. Suicide and murder are crimes of equal grade before the Sinaic law. Where the Decalogue was not recognized as divine law, as among heathens, both ancient and modern, Pagan moralists and philosophers, legislators and statesmen, guided by opinions of their own, or authorities of their own adoption, suicide was considered permissible, and under certain circumstances even laudable, a heroic last resort against Fate . . . The regard of Pagans for human life was and is now, very low. Aged and decrepit parents, no longer useful to the household or the tribe, were slain by their own children. Parents killed their own infant babes if their wealth did not permit them to bring them up and provide for them respectably. This murderous custom was so general in ancient times that Tacitus, in recounting the vices and follies of the Jews, upbraids them also with this, that a father is not even permitted to kill his own children . . . And now comes Dr. Felix Adler of New York, and announces the ethics of evolution as a continuation of Pagan morals—which it actually is—and tells his audiences that under certain circumstances suicide is a laudable or even a heroic act . . . Every one who can reason must see that suicide under any circumstances, unless brought on by insanity, is an act of cowardice, infuriated passion, or thoughtless despair. Most of those who take their own lives are too cowardly to stand erect and face the just consequences of their own crimes, follies, wickedness or stupidity, in which there is nothing admirable, nothing virtuous, nothing which does not arouse disgust and contempt. Then the others come, who, their passions concentrated on one desired object, be it the love or rather passion for a certain woman—or vice versa—for wealth, outshining splendor and magnificence, for high-living, lofty position in society or state, falsely called honor, which taken from passionate persons, they having no other ideal left, commit suicide. If one is not too sentimental, he can but pity the weakness of the person whose passions have become thus infuriated by this or that loss, and for pity's sake declare him insane, at least at the moment of committing suicide; but none, not even the most sentimental, will admire the rash act . . . If the suicide has parents, sisters, brothers, wife, children, friends, who are made miserable and disconsolate by the rash act, then the crime seems to be double, or even treble; at any rate, none can admire suicide. Hence it is no virtue in any case or under any circumstances; being no virtue it is a vice, hence a crime in the estimation of every right-minded man, except the apostles of the ethics of evolution, which Dr. Felix Adler has badly given away . . .

Dr. Adler, with his theory on suicide, suicidal indeed, has given away that system of ethics and all of his colleagues, who are much less consistent than the Pagans of all ages, and reason by far less cogently than the heathen philosophers of former days. This suicidal theory proves to every right-minded man that in ethical doctrine Moses overtops our modern ethicists about five times the height of Pike's Peak above the level of the sea.

FEBRUARY 15, 1900. Prof. Felix Adler in a recent discourse complained that in all the 24 years of the existence of the Ethical Culture Society, he had not been able to draw from the society one single man who would help him in his regenerating work. Professor Adler is not yet too old to learn that it is his system which is at fault. All attempts to maintain an organization to teach ethics or morals without laying a foundation of religion, broad and deep, is foredoomed to failure. The Jewish community would be pleased to have Dr. Adler recognize this. In spite of his severance from the Jewish church, he has never ceased to be a Jew in belief, if we judge him rightly from his public utterances. His coreligionists are prepared to welcome him back whenever he chooses to return, and there is little doubt that when he does so, he will be at once accorded the position in the Jewish community that his talents and character deserve.

CHAPTER VI

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Obstacles to the Mission of Israel

The excerpts under this heading will indicate in a measure the huge task which Dr. Wise had set himself, and to which he applied himself tirelessly, in the interests of Monotheism in America.

"The philosopher of history who believes in the goodness and justice of Providence, is unable to account for the advent of Christianity among mankind, its history being a perfect chain of wrongs, of crime, and of bloodshed," said Dr. Wise.

1868. *Editorial on the Origin of the "Origin of Christianity."*
(A book by Dr. Wise.)

This new, and we may add, entirely original work, *The Origin of Christianity*, being now ready to be put into the market, we beg leave of the reader, to account for its origin.

The author came in 1846 to the United States a young rabbi, who had preached for the term of three years to a congregation in Bohemia. The difficulties which the Jewish theologian has to overcome are so much greater, because he must study the same sciences with his Christian colleagues, besides which he has to acquire a thorough knowledge

of the Hebrew Bible and the rabbinical commentaries, of the Talmud, Midrashim, the Spanish Hebrew philosophical literature, and the modern German Jewish productions, which are a library of themselves. Therefore the author could not and did not pay much attention to the New Testament, besides a cursory reading, and to Christian dogmatics. As a general thing, the rabbis of Germany paid little attention to the New Testament, as the law of the land suppressed every impartial opinion on the subject, and the prejudices of the masses, both Jews and Gentiles, were bitterly opposed to the very idea of a Jew being engaged in the study of the New Testament.

After the author had settled down in the United States, he only labored under new difficulties. In the first place, he was obliged to spend all his leisure time in acquiring the knowledge of the English language and literature; and in the second place, the position of a poor rabbi of a poor congregation, as then most all Hebrew congregations were, was by no means enviable. He had not much to live on, for which he had plenty of work to do; six hours daily in the school, two or three hours weekly with the choir, and a sermon to preach every Sabbath and holiday, which is no child's play for a young practitioner. Thus the author's leisure hours were rather few, and these were spent in the New York State Library, so that he came in no contact with men of other principles and other doctrines, and could not feel the necessity of a better acquaintance with Christian literature. He might never have paid much attention to this subject, if it had not been for the following incident.

The building on South Pearl Street in Albany, known as the Hebrew Temple, since 1850, was occupied by a Baptist congregation. A young minister preaching his first engagement in that church, edified his flock Sunday after Sunday with sensational harangues containing violent attacks on Jews and Judaism. This led to a private controversy, and afterward to a public one, which ended with the dismissal of that pastor. Our author, in his daily visits to the State Library, had made some Christian friends, to one of whom he complained about the behavior of that clergyman. The gentleman said, he was surprised that a Jew should complain at all, when hundreds of missionaries, most of them baptized Jews, traversed this country and England, and all of them denounced the Jew and Judaism in the same manner. Besides, he said, there was not a pulpit as far as the English was spoken, not a stump to bear a political speaker, and not a sensational sheet anywhere, that did not precisely the same thing. He added then, that he

had been reading the last five years in that library, without the least success in finding a book or pamphlet in defense of the Jew or Judaism. He concluded with the remark, that this fact in our literature was enough to make us believe, the Jews deserved all those attacks, or else they must be a very illiterate people. The man who made these remarks, was a liberal, renowned and learned jurist; his judgment was based upon facts.

This opened the eyes of our author. He began to observe, to investigate, to read and to listen, and he was struck with astonishment at the numerous and stupendous prejudices against the Jew and his religion, which had been spread by ignorance, villainy, fanaticism, or pious stupidity. He began earnestly to inquire. Are the Christians as men and women any better than the Jews? The statistics of crime and of poverty, of the house of correction and of ill repute, replied with an emphatic No! In all practical walks of life they were no better, and much more addicted to the commission of capital crimes than the Jew was. Is their religious literature so much superior to ours, that they look down upon us with so haughty an air? You must read, the author concluded, and he began to read. He began with the orthodox Christian writers, and he was led to believe, that each class of them had a distinct New Testament as their authority, so widely they differed in the main. He began to read the literature of liberal Christians, and got himself finally so confused with a mass of conflicting opinions, dogmas, pretensions and promises, all based upon the same New Testament, that he abandoned the task of finding out what Christianity is, teaches or pretends. You must go yourself to the first sources, was the next determination of the author. Those writers were no fools, the cause of their strange disagreement might be in the first sources. He went to hear every Christian preacher of whom he could expect to learn something; but in vain, they differed in the pulpit just as widely as the writers did in their books. The only means then to know this subject was to study the New Testament, and so he did.

Since 1854 he has scarcely ever interrupted his inquiries into the Christian sources. From time to time he was under the necessity of responding to attacks, made by missionaries or the Christian press on Judaism, and this continual irritation kept him alive to his studies. From time to time he published critical reviews on portions of the New Testament, as on the conception and birth of Jesus, on his last days in Jerusalem, on the process, the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension, and finally he translated from the German *Wislecnus on*

the Four Gospels, for no other purpose but to keep himself in study and practice.

It cannot be denied that he practically succeeded in removing ten thousand prejudices from the devoted head of the Jew and the misunderstood cause of Judaism and religion in general. Where is that host of missionaries to the Jews, who, like the locusts of the prophet Joel, covered "the eye of the land?" There are none outside of New York, and none have ever ventured to come in contact with our author. Preachers and popular orators have learned to speak without abusing the Jew and his religion. Sensation writers have almost given up the task of being witty at the expense of some Jew. The authors of novels have accustomed themselves to find bad or ridiculous characters outside of the camp of Israel. The Christian press has entirely changed its tone, and it is certainly for the better. Liberal Christians, men of logical training understand now and express frequently, that the Jew largely contributes to the development of the religious idea.

The theoretical results of the author's labors are pressed together in *The Origin of Christianity*. His main force is in the following points. He has established that Jesus and his apostles are no fictitious persons; they lived and taught in Palestine previous to the fall of Jerusalem; and also after that event. He has shown that the Talmud mentions even a manuscript of Jesus himself, and also early evangelical Scriptures. He has identified the Paul of the New Testament, and the Acher of the Talmud, which leads to many facts concerning the life of Paul. He has established the fact, that the New Testament cannot be properly understood without a sufficient knowledge of the literature of that age, which is preserved in the Talmud and Midrashim, to which Christian critics, Strauss, Wislizenus and Renan included, paid either no attention, or a highly superficial one. The miracles, evil spirits, angels and visions of the New Testament and of the Talmud are identical, the offspring of the same people, climate, age and circumstances. Christian morals and rabbinical morals are twin sisters of the same mother, and the theological speculations in the two systems are originally of the same cast and character.

The difference of opinion among Christian divines and sects on vital points of Christianity is in the New Testament itself, which contains three distinct systems of Christianity, viz: the religion of the apostles, the Christianity of Paul, and the Greco-Alexandrian theology of John . . . therefore it is possible to prove from the New Testament the most conflicting opinions and doctrines . . . Clerical opposition to

the Jew and Judaism forced the writer into this study . . . The results are in the hands of the Almighty, who gave us understanding to be used for the benefit of man, for the advancement of truth, for the redemption of the human race.

CHRIST IN THE CONSTITUTION.

1861. From: *What Next?*

What next, we ask? At present the higher law gentry only go so far as to petition Congress to do them the slight favor and declare Christianity as the state religion of this country. Next year they will have to go one step beyond, and pray for an act setting a certain penalty upon disbelieving in Christ, and next comes the inquisition. The reverend gentlemen appear not to know that their savior prayed for them in saying: "Lord forgive them, they know not what they do."

We do not know indeed, what to do about that petition, should we weep over the melancholy condition of the country, detest the unbecoming interference of the clergy in political matters, or laugh at the ridiculous request that Congress should acknowledge the authority of God. Does God stand in need of such an acknowledgment, or did Congress ever deny His authority? We never heard either. The Constitution of the United States is an instrument as just as the Bible and in substance taken from that holy book. God protect the United States and her Constitution and in His grace shield and guard us against the dominion of priests.

1870. From: *A Few Ideas on the Pittsburg Convention.*

(The National Christian Association has resolved to encourage a law to include Christ in the Constitution and allow only orthodox Christians in the U. S.) Dr. Wise comments: The blood congeals in the veins, a thrill of horror stuns every nerve on reading from the pages of history all the misery, all the woes and torments which quarreling and ambitious priests inflicted on the human family. The assassin's poisoned dagger has not slain half the victims which fell under the zealot's hyena rage. There is no country on this planet, where the thing called religion by somebody, has not left the bloody traces of its insatiable fanaticism. There is no crime within the bounds of the wildest imagination which was not committed in honor of somebody's God . . . And we should take out of the arsenal of priestly arrogance and ambition the old sword of church power, soiled with the gore of

the innocent, and use it to commit suicide? Those men are mad, if they seriously expect us to accept their proposition, or they must suppose the majority of the people are their dupes and fools. But they are terribly mistaken. The world retrogrades not. Progress is God's law. This is the age of reason and justice, of personal liberty and personal reflection.

1898. From: *The National Christian Society and the Secret Societies.*

[This society, the forerunner of the present Y. M. C. A. system (?) is now trying to suppress Masonry because it does not deify Christ.] Says Dr. Wise: The trouble with the phase of Christianity which the N. C. A. represents, lies in the fact that it is a decaying cult. It is superstitious and in many respects barbarous. The people have outgrown it and the large majority of Christian churches have entered upon a course which is broader and more in consonance with the latest dicta of reason and science. The day for the old, intolerant orthodox Christianity is over, wherever the English language is that of the land.

1899. *The "United Christian Party of Iowa,"* organized a political party and nominated a full state ticket to be run by the standard: "What would Jesus do?" Dr. Wise comments: As we understand it, Jesus distinctly instructed his followers not to meddle with political affairs, and by inference, to keep church and state separate. However, with the cranks it is not so much a matter of what Jesus taught, as what they think he should have, and what they would have taught had they been in his place.

THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1855. From: *The Bible in the Public Schools.*

The political platform of one party in Franklin County, Ohio, has also the following point:

4th: The Bible without note or comment, in our Public Schools, which shall be kept free from all sectarian influences.

Dr. Wise says: There are plenty of mistakes and errors in the English authorized versions of the Bible, the Bible-Union is our immediate testimony to this effect, it cannot and dare not be read without comment or note . . . We agree to having the Bible in the public schools whenever the pupils are able to translate from the Hebrew into the

English, and their reading of the New Testament should be in exact ratio with their knowledge of the Greek language—then no notes or comments would be necessary.

1870. As long as the question was Bible or no Bible for the public schools of Cincinnati, we took no particular interest in it, because it did not actually amount to much. But the Court, and the particular advocates of the Bible, having changed the status of the question to the more momentous one, whether this is an orthodox Protestant or a free country, and consequently, whether the public shall be Protestant or free, now we are obliged to vote anti-Bible candidates to the Board of Education. We can not consistently vote for any person or measure in opposition to the broad principles of religious liberty, as the framers of the Constitution understood and promulgated it.

1876. Secretary Taft* is a man also of advanced and liberal views in religion. He was a member of Thomas Vicker's church as long as it existed, and took an active part in its affairs. When the question of the Bible in the public schools was before our Superior Court, Secretary Taft, then one of the judges, was the only one who decided against the Bible in the public schools, and delivered his opinion accordingly, of which the late Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase told us, a few days later, that Stanley Matthews' argument and Judge Taft's minority decision were conclusive, and must be sustained by any tribunal.

1899. Some time since the Board of Education of the city of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., by indirect methods, practically established sectarian schools of the various denominations. One Edward Keyser appealed against this action. Superintendent Skinner, who it appears had jurisdiction, decided in favor of the appellant and declared the action of the Board of Education illegal and against public policy. In giving his decision he said: "The public school system must be conducted in such a broad and catholic spirit that Jew and Protestant and Catholic alike shall find therein absolutely no cause for complaint as to the exercise, directly or indirectly, of any denominational influence. In this respect, every school maintained at public expense should be free, open and accessible, without reasonable ground for objection from any source whatever."

*Alphonso Taft, father of William Howard Taft, 27th President of the United States.

Mr. Skinner in these few words has clearly and concisely laid down the basic principle upon which our public school system logically rests. It has never been better expressed. There is great need of this reform in this direction in many places, notably in Philadelphia. We trust that Mr. Skinner's words will not be without influence.

PROHIBITION — TEMPERANCE.

1868. One of the most farcical papers we have seen for many a year is the proclamation of the "Grand Worthy Patriarch of the Sons of Temperance in Ohio," ordaining a fast day on Sunday, March 15, 1868, on account of the whiskey drinking done in Cleveland and Cincinnati. It is undeniable that drunkards are degraded and degenerated persons, and drunkenness is an evil against which all good men should work. But farces like the one before us render the cause ridiculous. Just think of that awful title of a "Grand Worthy Patriarch" given to an ordinary mortal. Just think of the idea to ordain a fast on Sunday with none to fast and plenty to laugh at the idea. Can they not do things without humbug? They make a farce of everything, and then they complain if they appear ridiculous to right-minded people.

1880. . . . There are problems which neither the State nor the Church can solve, because they are purely social and must be solved by society. One of them is undoubtedly the abuse of spirituous beverages. Laws will neither stop nor regulate it. Among us Jews habit and public opinion have done it well without the influence of either State or Church. There exists no necessity for our ministers to preach against the vice of inebriety, because it exists not. We can not see why Christian society should not be able to solve this problem just as well. If they can not, the law will not do it for them.

1889. We consider it the duty of all earnest men in the country, to whom liberty and the protection of liberty are dear, to protect our Constitution and government against the encroachments of Church legislation in the Congress of the United States, and in every other legislative body, state or municipal. The tendency is, and has been for the last quarter of a century, to legislate according to the dicta of vestry-room resolutions, or the resolves of the ecclesiastical conferences brought before legislative bodies, either directly by petitions from such reverend combinations or ecclesiastical trusts, or indirectly by some subservient politician who plays the role of heaven's police commis-

sioner. The question is no longer the separation of Church and State in our country; the question is, rather, shall the Church domineer over the State? This domination is the point in view by those ecclesiastical bodies and their political agents. With the plea that the preachers or priests must watch over the morals of the people, they assume the authority to watch and exercise a special guardianship over all people, instead of their own people . . . Let this go on a quarter of a century longer, and the free State will be changed into a Puritanic Church. Not in behalf of the Israelites, Sabbatarian Christians, and the millions of progressionists in our country, but in behalf of liberty, we call attention to this tendency of the age in our country.

1895. Morality at this period of the world's age and in this blessed country, it seems, has been limited down into the narrow compass of not drinking certain beverages, and not doing any work or seeking any amusement on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday. The code of ethics is so abridged that one could write it on a postage stamp. As the code is narrowed, so much more fanaticised are its expounders. They seem to believe that the salvation of mankind depends upon their code of two paragraphs. The tiny snail creeping slowly among the grass with its little house cannot see the stars. The visible horizon of small men extends not beyond the sphere of their imagination, which is rather diminutive. At present the saints are engaged in redeeming mankind by drinking laws and Sunday legislation . . .

WAR.

1885. From: *The Platform to the Ethics of the Jews — The Wrongs and Rights of War.*

War is a demoralizing agency, for the victor no less than for the vanquished. It rouses only the virtues of courage and patriotism, but engenders many vices turned rapidly into shocking crimes, which remain dominant for a long time among the victorious and the vanquished parties. Any person acquainted with our history for the last quarter of a century, will readily admit that war is a demoralizing agency . . . War means slaying or maiming human beings, and is therefore diametrically opposed to the first law of God, the fundamental principle of morality, which commands the physical and mental preservation of the human race . . . Here is a point which ought to be known and appreciated. The fact that the Church, Christian or Mohammedan,

urged and carried on wars of extermination against unbelievers, at home and abroad—unbelievers in the opinion of that church at that particular time—is proof positive that those religions are not of divine origin. Every persecution of human beings, being a violation of the first law of God, is sufficient evidence that the religion in the name of which such persecution is carried out is the fabrication of wicked, or at least ignorant, and short-sighted men. Russia, Roumania, Persia and Morocco perpetuate the evidence to this very date, that neither Christianity nor the Islam is of divine origin . . . Peace is the natural state of society, and war is a disease.

The State based upon the moral principle must prevent, and never engage in any war of conquest, revenge or extermination, for any cause or pretext whatever. And yet, there is also a right of war, that is to say, that under certain circumstances war is justifiable. This comprises not only the war of defense against foreign or domestic enemies, but also war against crimes committed on the inalienable rights of humanity by any State or States, its or their agents or potentates. The Bible admits that by recorded facts, and also by special laws in the Torah . . . but it must be morally certain that the grievances could not be settled or remedied any other way, and in the face of the moral law justify the appeal to arms, not for conquest, revenge, or to gratify the ambition of combative persons who seek glory or wealth on the battlefield, but simply to remedy those grievances . . .

If you must go to war, the Torah commands, first try whether active hostilities could not be avoided, first offer its inhabitants peace . . . If you must make war upon your enemies, the Torah commands furthermore, destroy not the fruit trees even in the enemy's country, do not lay waste the land, beware of the wanton destruction of property . . . If war must be to redress intolerable grievances, make war upon warriors, says the Torah, and not upon female chastity . . . This also is one of the laws of which the founder of Gentile Christianity said the law is a curse. Now recollect if you can without a blush, the shame, disgrace and the outrages perpetrated by the soldiers of the so-called civilized nations in times of war and peace, and compare that conduct with these simple laws, too sublime to be of human origin, and you will approach a fair estimation of the differences between a State built upon the moral principle, and States built on human violence or human wisdom.

1887. There can be no doubt that war, like dueling and hanging of criminals, is a relic of barbarism.

1897. It has been established from official sources that since the year 1845 over three millions of soldiers were slain in the different wars among the civilized nations. The sums of money which those wars cost amount to thirty thousand millions of dollars, all of which the taxpayers had to pay as funeral expenses for their slaughtered sons. And yet we boast upon the high state of civilization we achieved in the second half of this century. Our self-delusion is phenomenal, no doubt.

PROTESTANTISM.

1870. From: *The Infallibility Dogma.*

Trinity, incarnation of the Deity, vicarious atonement, the entire fabric of salvation, the Sunday-Sabbath, baptism, and all the other sacraments, were accepted by the Protestant Church on the authority of the Church of Rome. Those dogmas are not in the New Testament, they are in the Church. The Church of Rome has established the Christian faith; therefore, either that Church is infallible, or the faith of all Protestants is fallible, unreliable and absurd. However Protestants may look indignantly upon the assertion, it is nevertheless true, the Protestant faith was established by the Church of Rome . . . The first question must be, where is the source of the Trinitarian doctrine? If it is not in the New Testament, if even Paul and John did not teach it, what business has the Protestant Christian to believe it? Evidently none. If John has Jesus proclaim God as the "Monas Theos," how can a Christian critic attempt to discover anywhere a triune God? The very research from a Christian standpoint, is heresy and blasphemy . . . Before anybody comes to us again with the Trinitarian doctrine, let him show where in the New Testament, that doctrine is taught, and if he can not, let him confess it to be a piece of popish theology . . . Here is your choice, gentlemen, either it is all true or all false . . . Either the pope is infallible, or Christology is a falsehood . . . Protestantism cannot philosophize itself out of this dilemma. They must take it all or nothing.

1875. The extreme Protestants must be taught a lesson, not to impose their religious prejudices upon the politics of the country, not to force down our throats Sunday laws, temperance bills, God and their Messiah in the Constitution of the United States, national holidays of a Christian or Puritan character; not to call this a Christian country,

a Christian people, a Christian civilization, a Protestant community, etc., not to change public schools and public institutions into Protestant mission chapels; not to consider themselves the lords of the land and other people merely tolerated . . .

1889. The proselytizing idiosyncrasy of our Protestant neighbors seems to be as incurable as was hydrophobia prior to Mr. Pasteur's advent.

EVANGELISTS, MISSIONARIES, SALVATION ARMY.

1897. One Collier, a theological student from Tennessee, sojourning in Rhode Island, has proclaimed his purpose of putting to death the Rev. Edward Everett Hale, the great Unitarian preacher, upon the ground that his theology is not sound. Dr. Hale diagnosed the young man's case as being one of "religious exaltation as the result of mingled conceit and laziness." Dr. Hale has done more, however, than explain Collier's condition, he has in one sentence given the world the efficient cause that produces the wandering evangelists of the Sam Jones stripe, the average city missionary, and the Salvation Army. To live and be well fed without working, to receive the admiring plaudits of a credulous world and at the same time to be able to believe that they are worthily serving the Lord, is just what would suit those who are blessed with an overabundance of "mingled conceit and laziness." We thank Dr. Hale for his definition.

THEOSOPHY, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE, SPIRITUALISM, ETC.

1898. We do not believe in Theosophy, we do not believe in Christian Science, we do not believe in Spiritualism, we do not believe in Christology, we do not believe in the infallibility of any church, person or book. We believe in nothing contradictory to human reason or offensive to conscience, to the best of our knowledge, both of which are gifts of grace bestowed on man by the benign Creator. With all that, however, we do not maintain that those beliefs are absolutely false . . . Spirits may be seen and heard by the influence of the imagination, as realities. So may certain melancholy and hysterical disorders be cured by the excited imagination. So higher worlds may be perceived, a glance into open heaven may be had by riding upward upon the cherub wings of imagination. Those who believe in the work of imagination are no liars, no imposters, they are not against us nor are we against

them who take their waking dreams for reality. We can but differ with them, but not condemn them. That which our reason affirms not, does not exist for us; it may exist for others . . . But the spiritualistic mediums who give physical manifestations, the Christian scientists who profess to be able to cure disease by prayer and mental training, the divine healers who do likewise by laying on of hands, and all others of the kind, are one and all, without exception, wilful and deliberate cheats who prey upon the weakness of humanity purely for the sake of gain, precisely as do the bolder criminals who pursue methods less safe to themselves, though no more dangerous to the public. They are all of one class and should be treated precisely alike by the law.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

1892. From: *Judaism and the Modern Idea*.

In ethics, it is evident, the whole enlightened world with all its excellent scientists and philosophers—we prize them very highly—has not risen one hair's breadth above the Ten Commandments, above the Mosaic maxims of "Love thy neighbor as thyself," "Thou shalt love the stranger like thyself," "There shall be only one law, one statute for all, the home-born and the stranger," "Ye shall proclaim freedom to all the inhabitants of the land," and the like, found in Moses. Neither in reason nor in ethics have the most advanced thinkers risen above the Revelation of ancient Israel, and the masses everywhere, alas! stand below, far, far below it. The inroads of science upon religion concern orthodox Christianity only. It is none of our quarrel. Those learned and enthusiastic gentlemen, the very enthusiastic and brave M. von Egidy of Berlin included, seem not to know that in our camp these battles have been fought long ago; that we are with our faith within the circle of the arena, where revelation and science join hands to the eternal covenant of peace; because we started originally from the very standpoint of reason which those good men now propose. We wish them the best of success.

EVOLUTION

Dr. Wise was absolutely opposed to the Darwin theory of evolution. "The gorilla theory," he said, is a dream without foundation in science. The first man was gifted with moral and intellectual faculties, which, however, were undeveloped. "Darwin," he said, "succeeded in making monkeys out of men, but failed in making men out of monkeys."

CHAPTER VII

DEFENSE OF JUDAISM AGAINST ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Views on —

Jewish Education
Intermarriage
Blood Libel
Immortality
Circumcision
Shylock
Assimilation
Burial

JEWISH EDUCATION

From a sermon called "The Light" which appeared in the "Occident," March, 1849.

. . . Where shall we kindle the light of the Lord? "In the tabernacle of the congregation," says our text; but there is, besides the Synagogue, yet another holy tabernacle, a temple for the welfare of mankind, and this is "the school." The Synagogue we may call the hot-bed in the garden of the Lord, for the riper age; but for the youthful one, the school stands in the same relation. Do you desire, fathers and mothers, that your children may grow up as good men, as pious Israelites, to be your joy, and contribute to the welfare of mankind?

then are you bound to take care that they be educated in such schools where one can become, at the same time, a good man and a pious Israelite; and such schools are still but few in number, and not a hundredth portion of Jewish children enjoy such an education, as just stated; and even in such schools have we Christian books, where, on nearly every page, Christian principles are conveyed to the child; nay, we have not even a Bible; we must borrow it from the missionaries, who wish to undermine us by this selfsame Bible. Fathers and mothers, what will you say, when at some future day, your own children should deride Judaism? Will it be agreeable to you, if, at some future day, your offspring should renounce the name of Israel? And granted that this would not please you, then must you labor with all your might that it shall not take place; then must you act unitedly to oppose the evil, ere it has become too great and inveterate, and defies the hand and skill of the physician. Yes, if you wish to preserve the house of Israel in its future generations, then can you effect it only through union, through the quiet and peaceable harmonious working of all the powers of all the congregations of Israel in this western continent . . .

Arouse yourselves, all who have yet sympathy for Judaism, all who yet love Judaism, assemble yourselves together, and consult how this holy work should be commenced—let us lay the foundation of a free Jewish press, free as the air, which may diffuse every good idea, let it be attainable and intelligible to every man, that we may all be truly instructed concerning the nature and beneficent influence of our religion; that our youth when quitting school may be able to instruct themselves concerning the word of God, and that they may be preserved to Judaism and become intimately connected therewith; that we may be able to defend our faith against the wild assaults of the missionaries, against the decrying and profanation of our holy word, . . . so that we may be able to fulfill our most sacred task, to cause all the people of the earth to know "that the Lord is God, there is none else."

From: *Jew and Gentile. Why They Should Not Intermarry.*
March 14, 1879.

. . . When the Hebrews of Spain, France, Belgium, and Germany especially largely Judaized and ruled those countries in agriculture, commerce, law and other civilizing influences, the danger of the Hebrew being led astray to worship the gods of those nations was entirely overcome, and the intermarriage of Jews and Gentiles was extensively

practiced without any known objection on the part of the Jewish authorities. When Christianity became the domineering power of those countries, then the Christian authorities prohibited intermarriage with Jews . . .

Intermarriage is an element of disturbance in any family if spouses confess two different religions, and a cause of contention in the education of the children. It is no less an element of disturbance and cause of contention if either one of the spouses has no religion at all . . .

As long as the Christian looks upon the Jew as a damned soul, destined to go to perdition, whatever his merits and virtues may be, simply because he believes not in the Christian fabric of salvation; as long as the Jew, on his part, looks upon Trinitarianism, the Gospel story, and the dogmas based thereon as being merely another form of Paganism, and can hardly persuade himself to believe that any intelligent Gentile can believe them, so long it must be expected that Judaism and Christianity in the same family will be the same element of disturbance as they were in States and among nations. The congregation of Israel cannot relinquish her conviction, can not forget her history, and can not repudiate her religion; hence she cannot sanction the intermarriage of Jew and Christian, unless the latter embrace the faith and cause of Israel.

APRIL 4, 1884. From: *Dr. Oort and the Blood in the Matzoth.*

Dr. Oort is a Protestant. He is a professor of Hebrew at the University of Leyden. At the late Congress of Orientalists he read a paper on the origin of the blood accusation raised against the Jews in the 13th century and again in the century of Charles Darwin, Edward Lasker and Moses Montefiore, the subject being, "Do The Jews Mix Christian Blood with the Flour of which the Matzoth are made?"

Quite a number of hypotheses have been advanced to account for the rise and propagation of this most insane piece of nonsense, which is no less stupid than malicious. Dr. Oort advances the hypothesis, that the story was invented purposely to prevent Christians from eating Matzoth and celebrating the Passover with the Jews. The Christians held the eating of Matzoth and other Jewish observances in high esteem and religious veneration. Therefore, quite a number of horrid tales were invented to frighten the Christians away from the synagogue and the Jewish families.

In the second Christian century, says Dr. Oort, when the separation of Christians and Jews was partially effected, large numbers of Christians Judaized and did conscientiously observe the Jewish laws

and customs. This however, was the case also in the next following centuries, so that the Church felt obliged to direct all her efficient arms against the sanctuary of Moses; because many Christians still worshipped in the synagogues and adhered to Jewish customs . . . In order to make the Matzoth odious to the Christians, Dr. Oort thinks, the cruel tale was invented and circulated that the Jews kill Christians and use their blood in preparing the Matzoth.

This is certainly a new theory to account for that bloody tale; and it looks very likely. Inventions of that kind for similar purposes are very numerous even in our days, and were so much more frequent in the days of ignorance and darkness. To mention but one, we will narrate this from our own experience. About 45 years ago we happened to come late on Friday to Budweis in Bohemia, and were obliged to stay there over the Sabbath. Saturday morning we found that whole dull town in commotion. It appeared that everybody had something to do in a particular hurry. Our host, who was as stupid a burgher as any, could only tell us that everybody must do some work early on Saturday, although he knew not why. An old priest, teacher of history at the "gymnasium," did tell us why the Budweis people were so industrious just on the Jewish Sabbath day. When the Hussites (followers of John Huss) became very numerous in this neighborhood, said he, a movement was on foot with them, and found favor with many, to restore the Jewish Sabbath instead of the Christian Sunday. A number of Catholics seemed to favor this innovation, and rested from all labor on Saturday. The bishop, assisted by the government authorities, did all in his power to maintain the holiness of Sunday, and failed. It so happened, that on two successive Saturdays, an unusual number of babies died, and once three houses and then four houses were destroyed by fire. This may have been accidental or caused by some fanatic for the benefit of the Church. Anyhow, the monks at once informed the populace that this was a special punishment of God on account of the grievous sin of violating the holy Sunday, and sanctifying the Jewish Sabbath. The populace was so fanaticized, that none was safe of his life who would not rest on Sunday, and not show by actual work on Saturday, that he was an orthodox Christian. Since then, our informant said, all the Budweis people, without knowing why, are used to do some work on Saturday more than any other day of the week.

MAY 16, 1889. *On Immortality.*

(In this editorial Dr. Wise shows that Paganism, and later Christi-

anity and Mohammedanism, are selfish religions, because their main consideration is to save their souls—why Judaism is far above these faiths, and why Moses did not have much to say about immortality. The article concludes:) . . . Religion basing chiefly on selfishness with very little regard to humanistic principle is characteristic of the whole of ancient Paganism, so that the gods and goddesses were believed to be capricious egotists. This fundamental idea underlies all their forms of worship and codes of morality. The whole fabric had the same object, to gain the favor of the gods for personal or tribal purposes, to expiate their wrath to the same end, and to save the individual's soul from perdition or destruction. In direct opposition to all those selfish conceptions, Moses appears on the stage of history. He had nothing to say about immortality, future reward or punishment, besides references to the existence of such beliefs and his endorsement thereof by not objecting to it, although he incriminates all the superstitions then in vogue in connection with the souls and the dead bones of the departed. Neither Bishop Warburton nor the great Rabbi, the author of the "Sheloh," guessed the right cause, why Moses did not, like all other founders of religious systems, take the immortality doctrine as the basis of religious belief and worship, and yet the cause is quite simple and clear. What we see now from history he must have seen also then, that the selfishness which is the very foundation of this hope and belief, overwhelms and even extinguishes that other principle of religion which is the main pillar of human society, viz: to advance the well-being and happiness of our fellow-men and fellow beings, which demands the overcoming of selfishness, the subjection of egotism to catholicity, particularism to the solidarity of mankind. Therefore he placed the immortality doctrine in the rear, and the happiness of the human family in front . . . The fact is that the civilized world stands far below Moses and Mosaism in the dim twilight of selfishness with a thick cloud between them and truth, torn asunder occasionally by the lightnings of modern culture, to convince the intelligent how dark it is yet in your churches and mosques.

NOVEMBER 12, 1891. From: *The Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant*.

(Reviewing: *History of Circumcision*, by P. C. Remondino, M.D.)
. . . We have had frequent occasion to notice the thoroughly scientific labors of Dr. Remondino, of San Diego, California, who stands at the head of the profession in the state and national associations of the medical

and public health departments. We find in this book again a thoroughness of knowledge and soundness of induction which characterize the scientific conscience of a public writer.

In this book all information regarding the Abrahamic rite is well concentrated and logically considered. The diseases, both physical and moral, are re-enumerated, basing on statistics. The conclusions at which Dr. Remondino arrives are entirely contrary to those of the "barbarous rite" savants; he proves that this operation is an unquestionable benefit to humanity, and not only recommends the operation, but recommends it to be performed in the first days after the child's birth, as is the Jewish custom.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SHYLOCK.

DECEMBER 17, 1891. (Editorial) Niebuhr, in his story of Rome, we think, was the first man to speak of the Italian Shylock novel writer in the sixteenth century. Leopold Stein narrated the same forty years after Niebuhr—in which the story of the pound of flesh is reported as a fact which indeed occurred in Rome under the reign of Pope Sixtus V., with the only difference, however, that he who demanded it from his bankrupt creditor was a Christian nobleman, and the Jew was the defendant whose life Pope Sixtus saved by his wise decision. Shakespeare, who perhaps had never seen a Jew, changed the roles, because he did not dare to make a Christian nobleman so vile and bloodthirsty a human wolf or hyena, while he had to fear nothing of the Jew, although he has Shylock argue his case quite well. This inversion was cowardly enough of the great dramatic poet. But a poet is no prophet, he claims the license to belie a god and to befoul a man.

(In the year of 1861, a story appeared in the pages of *The Israelite* called *The True Shylock Story, and Sixtus the Fifth*, author not given, in which is narrated that it was the Jew who owed to an Italian nobleman some money which he could not pay. The Jewish merchant had, however, a beautiful daughter whom the nobleman coveted, and whom he was willing to take in exchange for the father's debt. The daughter, however, refused to give herself to the nobleman, who in revenge exacted the penalty of the pound of flesh, an agreement he had once made with the father in case he was unable to pay his debt. The Jew had entered into the agreement with the nobleman, believing the matter a joke, as he and the nobleman had been friends. The story tells that it was only because the nobleman wanted the girl that he

became friends with her father and loaned him money, which he had reason to believe could not be repaid. The case was brought to court and the sentence about to be carried out in full, the nobleman demanding his pound of flesh of the Jew, when the pope, who was present incognito, having been appealed to by other Jews in behalf of the merchant, revealed himself, and through his power, saved both the father and daughter from the clutches of the Italian Catholic nobleman.)

ASSIMILATION

OCTOBER 28, 1891.

England also has its modern Haman. His name is Professor Goldwin Smith, a theatrical man of absurd prejudices against the Hebrew race. He renders the *Nineteenth Century* odious by his anti-Jewish declamations, although both the writer and the editor must know that every allegation upon which Mr. Smith's conclusions are based are either inventions or misconceived and misrepresented facts. Why does the *Nineteenth Century* print such stuff to its own detriment? Professor Smith is a man of theories which he never tested on the touchstone of facts. To argue with him would be a waste of time; none can convince him of his fallacies.

A poetical genius addresses the following lines to the Professor:

*To solve the Jewish question,
And make the Hebrew pause:
Smith offers the suggestion,
"Suppress his Book of Laws;
"If still his fixed division
From Gentiles he maintains,
Abolish circumcision,
'Twill minimize his brains.
"And if this plan's miscarriage,
Stops not his nation's life,
Enforce his intermarriage,
With a non-Hebraic wife!"
All points this drastic treatment clears,
'Tis simple, thorough, new:
The Jewish question disappears,
AND SO, TOO, DOES THE JEW!*

BURIAL

MARCH 22, 1900.

(The Rev. A. R. Church of the Universalist Church of Akron, Ohio, has proposed in a paper called "Burial Reform," that coffins be made of light wood to enable the disintegration of the dead body to take place as soon as possible, as is the orthodox Jewish custom—also to eliminate expensive funerals.)

. . . The paper of the Rev. A. R. Church on simple burial is one more evidence to us, that Christendom in the main comes back to Moses, notwithstanding Paul's abolition of the Law. Nine of the Ten Commandments are holy law to all Protestants and eight of them to all Catholics. The interdictions of consanguinary marriages as laid down by Moses, with some extensions, are holy law all over Christendom. So are now a large portion of the dietary and hygienic laws, which are increasing steadily. But the reforms of the day in Christendom point back even to the old customs of Judaism, not only in this mode of burying the dead, but also in sustaining the living, by food inspection and cattle slaughtering of which their fathers knew nothing; by the protection given to the laboring man and to labor in general; by the rights guaranteed—at least in some parts of the world—to the stranger, the alien or the foreigner; by stretching the rigid Sabbath laws of the Rabbis to Sunday; by making out of the Jewish "Chanukah" the Christmas holy day, and All Fools' Day out of the Jewish "Purim." Our entire form of government, with all the great principles underlying it, is taken from Moses, and the good Puritan mothers to this day would not cook a meal on Sunday. The world is Judaizing.

CHAPTER VIII

ORTHODOX JUDAISM

Obstacles to the Mission of Israel

Reform-Orthodox Controversies

Spanish-German-Russian

THE SPANISH-PORTUGUESE IMMIGRATION

SEPTEMBER 20, 1872. American Judaism, before the influx of emigration, was Portuguese, limited to four congregations in New York, Philadelphia, Richmond and Charleston, about five hundred families altogether. Therefore little was known of the ancient faith outside of that narrow circle. With the emigration, American Judaism begins its era, which is now about forty to fifty years. The main bulk of Jewish people came to this country from and after the year 1835. They came from all parts of Germany, Austria, Poland, Holland, France and England, with all the national and provincial prejudices of those various localities, strangers to one another in all points of prac-

tical life, without any affinity except the common faith. The sore shoulders of the oppressed yoke imposed upon them were still bleeding when the new combat for a livelihood in a new world was opened by the penniless, friendless and speechless strangers. It took them a good many years to establish themselves and to be perfectly naturalized. They built up congregations, societies, lodges, temples, charities and schools with wonderful rapidity; but they appear not yet prepared for great, common and national enterprise.

AUGUST 15, 1884. There are a few important facts to be considered in connection with the reform movements among American Jews. Of all the orthodox Sephardic families, very few are in existence any more. You go today into any Sephardic synagogue in New York, Philadelphia, Richmond, Charleston or Savannah, and you find here and there an original Portuguese, while the vast majority of them are Germans, Poles, Dutchmen or their descendants. Many Portuguese families died out, others amalgamated with their Christian neighbors, and again others forgot entirely all about Judaism. Hence it appears that their peculiar orthodoxy was inefficient to preserve Judaism intact or to infuse the families with particular vitality. With all the conservatism in theory and practice, those congregations never raised one Jewish minister, chazan, rabbi or chacham; all of them up to date, had to be called in from foreign countries. They raised not one Jewish scholar who acquired a name anywhere as a man of learning and Jewish lore or a man or woman of letters, besides, perhaps the late Mordecai Noah, Miss Penina Moise and Miss Emma Lazarus. All American writers on Judaism, like Isaac Leeser, were foreigners. Hence it does not appear that the peculiar orthodoxy, the loss of which is so much lamented, benefited the intelligence of the Jews in this country. Worse than that is the fact that none of the children in those very congregations learned any Hebrew or anything about Judaism except what was written in somebody's catechism or abridged Bible history. None besides those who did a good deal of reading for themselves knew anything of Israel's post-biblical history, or could read a passage in the Hebrew Bible. We have seen and heard in Portuguese Synagogues in this country, that most all the younger men when called to the Torah could not say the benedictions, the chazan had to recite them. Never a Jewish young man in this country studied for the ministry before the late Rabbi Tuska, who was Hungarian born, except one, Mr. Michael, of Philadelphia, who studied with Dr. Lilien-

thal, but dropped that vocation. The whole orthodoxy of the past cannot show a blade of grass which they have raised and cultivated for Judaism. The system must have been wrong, or out of date and place, or else it would have produced some lasting effect, none of which can be shown. It is quite safe to maintain that if the reform element had not been poured in and the reform movement had not brought new life and motion into Judaism, there would be as little left of it in proportion now as there are Portuguese families left in the orthodox Portuguese Synagogues. The reform movement was not started a minute too soon; for a large number of immigrant Jews were already under way to that self-same indifferentism and blissful ignorance, when the movement was started and called them back to their duty.

THE GERMAN IMMIGRATION — REFORM

MAY 11, 1855. . . . It is therefore, that we write and hope, that men of sound and common sense and intelligence will reflect and come ultimately to the result, time changes, but our religion changes not, hence its forms must be changed, for the forms must be agreeable to the demands of the time. Forms change—this is reform; all forms are immutable—this is the principle of the orthodox, to which they do not adhere however.

AUGUST 29, 1856. . . . A reorganization of the Synagogue in America has become especially necessary, from obvious causes. The American Jew is a Jew by religion only, in every other respect he is an American citizen, and coming in contact with all classes of people, he becomes so thoroughly naturalized, partakes so much of the tastes, views, and inclinations of the American, that he is satisfied no longer with that portion of his divine service which bears yet the stamp of the Middle Ages, or is opposed to the refined taste of the age. The thrilling exclamations of the "Chazan," which once touched his heart, fill him now with disgust, and he thanks God, if no stranger hears it. The reading of the Law, once an instructive lesson to him, has by its peculiar chant lost all its influence, by the concomitant offerings and honors it has become quite profane, and its length renders it tiresome. . . . Many of our pious men lament over the fact, that the Synagogue is not only not much visited, but the visitors find no satisfaction. Let them open their eyes to the causes, and they will become convinced that the American Synagogue needs a reorganization. . . . The Synagogue in its reorganization must offer full satisfaction to the intellect.

This undoubtedly is the first rule to be observed, as the intellectual powers predominate with the Israelite. Whatever is unreasonable must be abolished, because it tends toward degrading the Synagogue. . . . The intellect can be satisfied only by instruction, therefore the Bible must be expounded by a competent man. This is the principle reform, there must be an expounder of the Law in every synagogue. There are so many perverse things, in this country, no wonder then that there are also Synagogues without teachers of the Word of God. A singing individual, unable sometimes to translate the prayers he chants, is called a minister, and the places where he gives his regular concerts is called a Synagogue, the men who help him chant or listen attentively to him, are called pious, and the whole concert is called divine service. The consequences, however, are the non-attendance of the members to divine service, because nothing, absolutely nothing, is offered to the reflecting mind. There, and there first, reform must commence, because there lies the fundamental fault.

DECEMBER 19, 1856. From: *The Reform and Its Principles*.

A closer inspection of the state of things convinced the intelligent portion of the Jewish community, that there existed a number of laws and usages which prevented a closer proximation between Jews and Gentiles. These laws were made in times when the Heathen nations were thoroughly corrupted and an approximation between them and the Jews was by no means considered desirable. Others originated in the days of persecution when the Jew was forced out of society and overwhelmed with wrongs and contempt. The Jew, then, in the way of retaliation, established laws and usages, excluding himself from the Gentile society. This absence of a close proximation had more than one disadvantage for the Jew. The prejudices which were afloat against him could not be vanquished, as he always kept aloof, and the narrow conceptions contracted in the narrow streets of the Jewry remained untouched with the lower class of people.

The philosophic and literary class of the people maintained, that such usages and laws as separate us from society at large, perpetuating the prejudices we harbor against each other, and being in themselves neither commanded by the Bible, nor necessary for the safety of the Synagogue, must be abolished. They said Judaism has a cosmopolitic tendency, its ultimate object is the enlightenment of humanity; as long as the storm of persecution and darkness roared abroad, we went as far as possible out of the danger, and even covered our divine light

under the cloak of new ceremonies, or behind barriers of separating usages; but this storm ceased; we must approach nearer to mankind, throw off the cloak and show them our divine light; we must approximate those who need our instruction, who are depressed in mind by priestcraft and prejudices, and render an invaluable service to both ourselves and them.

These ideas started the struggle between the parties.

OCTOBER 1, 1858. From: *The Parties.*

There is peace and unanimous action but in the camp of the two extreme parties, in the synagogues of the so-styled orthodox and in those of the decided reform congregations. Therein men are meeting, each and every one holding the same views and opinions, and hence no conflict can arise. In the orthodox synagogues everything is carried on after the old style and fashion; shouting and screaming, rocking and turning into all directions is the order of the day; and every one can do after his own heart's pleasure.—We leave them untouched and unnoticed, as a monument of by-gone days; we know it is the last ray of light, the setting sun of this system, is shedding. We do not wish to disturb the last hour of its existence, we pass it, like we pass a cemetery, knowing, here rest the decayed bones of past ages.

Peace, too, reigns and prevails in the reform congregations, which have been called into life within the past twenty years. We know the future is theirs; the coming age belongs to the energetic youth. They have been much derided, slandered and laughed at; but their unyielding energy, the trust and confidence in their good cause, the liberality by which they are supported, have overcome all obstacles, and their prosperous financial condition shows, therein and with them is the spirit that will and must conquer.

OCTOBER 29, 1858. From: *The Re-Organization of the American Synagogue.*

The means by which to effect this reorganization are four. Religious instruction to all ages and sexes, improvements of the Synagogue, a college for the education of ministers and teachers, and a synod to maintain our union and accelerate our progress. These are the four points, which, again and anon, we discussed, expounded, recommended, and they alone contain the remedy for the existing evil. All reforms not having these points in view are a vain attempt, and will not lead to any desirable result.

Religious instruction is the first and principal means to bring about a successful reorganization of the synagogue. Judaism is not a faith, a mere belief of certain doctrines, nor is it a compendium of observances; it is a divine science, a knowledge, as well as astronomy, mathematics or geology is. It must be learned, known and compared, in order to be appreciated and practiced. . . . It always was an acknowledged truism in Israel—knowledge is the basis and stronghold of our religion . . .

APRIL 8, 1859. From: *The Right Cause*.

(In this editorial Dr. Wise tells the *Cincinnati Gazette*, who bewail the declining popularity of the Church, attributed to high pew rents, what is really the trouble.) . . . The orthodox Christians demand of the world to believe a thing against which common sense protests loudly and emphatically. The Church imposes on them the belief of a trinity, incarnation of the Deity, immaculate conception of Jesus, the miracles he is said to have performed, his resurrection and ascension, the remission of sins by his blood, the salvation by faith, the condemnation of the unbeliever, his mediation before himself, his power over the world, the sacred supper, to forgive sins, total depravity of man, and a hundred other doctrines which cannot be true, the plainest common sense says so, every principle of philosophy is opposed to them, no man of thought can ever believe them; still the orthodox Church continues to impose these doctrines on Christians as religion, and without them she knows no religion. Therefore the churches are every year deserted more and more, the number of believers become less every month, and all the eloquence of the clergy, the zeal of the laity, and the groans of the *Gazette* can not save orthodox Christianity from destruction, here in this country of free thought and the free word.

We do not mean to say that Judaism in its orthodox forms advances toward a better fate than orthodox Christianity. Whatever is rotten and dead must be and will be rejected—all customs, usages, laws, ceremonies, traditions, doctrines, however old they are, and to whatever high authorities they are ascribed—all and everything repugnant to the dissecting power of the intellect, will and must give way to better, sounder and more appropriate successors. Our orthodox ministers and laity no less than yours misunderstand the essence and tendency of religion, and gnaw the shell without tasting the kernel. Ours no less than yours accuse the will of Providence of moral deprav-

vity, whereas the progress of mankind as developed in history being the will of Providence, is condemned by the conservatives, who consider our ancestors of the centuries past so much better than ourselves . . . they forget the liberty of speech and print, the cheap literature of the people, the freedom of thought which like wildfire spreads rapidly from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and with lightning speed and lightning force pervades all strata of society, like a powerful battery dissolves all the inherited elements, and shakes the ancient fabric to its very center. Neither cheap pews nor the *Cincinnati Gazette* can save orthodoxy from destruction. Rational reform, rational and just concessions to the state of society, the results of criticism, philosophy and science are the means to place religion once more upon the throne from which orthodoxy has driven it.

FEBRUARY 10, 1865. From: *The Future of Religion*.

(An editorial against the outworn doctrines of the Pope's encyclical.) . . . An institution built up during the ages of darkness with doctrines or laws to suit or benefit those ages, will not do always, will not do in these days of progress, research, criticism, philosophy and universal struggle for liberty.

In the synagogues the same inconsistency and absurdity exists. Because the rabbis of the Talmud or the expounders thereof, with their knowledge, state of enlightenment, society, or other circumstances, so many hundred years ago said so and so, and this or that; therefore you must believe and always do so or else you are a heretic or infidel. If one will not believe like Luther that Jesus was the son of God, he is a heretic in the estimation of all Christians; and if one should not believe in the coming of the Messiah who will restore the political existence of Israel, he is a heretic in the estimation of all Jews, that is, the so-called orthodox of either party . . .

The time changes, the church does not. If a man of an enlarged mind as Pius IX has, lends hands to all sorts of oppression in behalf of the Church, sanctions the dogma of the immaculate conception of the "Mother of God," sanctions the kidnapping of Jewish children,* and opposes all that is dear and sacred to modern society, he can only

*On June 23, 1858, at Bologna, Italy, occurred the forcible abduction of a 6 year old Jewish child, Edgar Mortara, by order of the Pope and Church of Rome on the grounds that he was a Catholic because his Catholic nurse-girl had secretly baptized him when he was two years old. Mortara became a Catholic priest.

have the intention to ruin Catholicism, in which he succeeds as well as our so-called orthodox Jews unconsciously succeed in ruining their particular Judaism and the orthodox Protestants with their unreasonable dogmas ruin their churches and systems. The world, however, will lose nothing by the loss of either, and God will be praised as acceptably by the thinker as he is by the believer.

AUGUST 19, 1870. Without the reform commotion of the last quarter of a century, Judaism in the United States would be a mummy, a lifeless piece of curiosity for some museum, while it is now a living reality, and progressive cause.

JUNE 2, 1871. In Judaism, the term reform is a misnomer, we abolish antiquated forms, and supersede them by such new ones as correspond with the demands of our age.

FEBRUARY 14, 1873. (*Editorial*) It has been maintained in the *Jewish Messenger*, although without proof—still it has been maintained—that Judaism, as we teach it, is too intellectual, too much like a worship of reason, a moral science, a high-bred; while religion depends on faith. We have, indeed, often revolved this question in our mind, but from another standpoint. We asked ourselves frequently, is this generation intelligent enough to conceive and appreciate Judaism in its entire rationality, its unclouded luster of philosophical truth? Weak eyes are dazzled by brilliant light, and it impairs them. But, we concluded, the intelligent portion of our age also must have its expounders of Judaism, and resolved to do this part of the service.

To reclaim and attach the intelligent to Israel's cause, is our main object. Those who cannot follow in the upward flight of intellectual Judaism, to its philosophical height, find plenty of leaders and instructors, and common-places are easily repeated; but somebody must take care of the intelligence; therefore we have tried to do it. Experience has taught us that we were successful. In our congregations, where we preached in that rational style, always, and without exception, both in Cincinnati and Albany, Judaism has not lost its prestige and influence, and reason, reconciled with faith, has been sanctified. As far as *The Israelite* is read, Judaism, is respected, appreciated, and even admired. It appears, therefore, that the intelligence of the age is mightier and more influential than inherited notions and forms. Again, we said to ourselves, the world has tried it long enough with uninquiring faith, dogmas, mysteries, forms, formulas and observances, and wick-

edness has wielded its scepter in spite of all real and assumed faith; now let us try it once with the cold steel of logic and merciless rationality, and let us see whether appeal to reason will not have a better effect than appeal to faith. The phenomenal sciences of the nineteenth century are atheistical, they sneer at faith, but must listen to reason. The man of this century is skeptical; let him doubt reason if he can. In as far then as Judaism is in harmony with reason, it is the religion of intelligence, now and forever. So much about the utility of the system. If your children learn no superstition, are used at once to receive Judaism in their reason, they will remain faithful to it forever.

But is this Judaism? That is the question. Is the theology and ethics which are in perfect harmony with reason, Judaism, or must we add to its miracles and mysteries, based on faith? After we had gone over the ground again from Saadiah to Maimonides, and rehearsed the most sublime thinkers among our fathers, Saadiah, Ibn Gabirol, Bachia, Ibn Daud, Ibn Zaddik, Judah Halevy, Ibn Ezra, and Maimonides, this question was definitely answered. That only which can stand the test of reason is Judaism indeed. That which needs other props is not for us. Let the Christian rely upon his peculiar faith; he needs it, he cannot do without it; Let the Israelite be rational; as rational, if he can, as Maimonides or Rabbi Joshua ben Levy, as Hillel, Ezra, or Moses himself, who was rationality incarnate. "I wish all the people of the Lord were prophets." Judaism in Palestine, as represented in the Bible, in Ben Sirach's book, in the Maccabees, in all the Halachah and Hagadah of Palestine, was strictly and invariably rational, appealing to reason as its highest instance. In Alexandria it was reasoned into Platonism and Asiatic theogonies, and it landed in Christianity and Gnosticism. In Babylonia, it was developed into a peculiar casuistry, surrounded by the superstitions of those localities, and it landed in Rabbinism and Mohammedanism. From and after Saadiah, the pure Judaism of Palestine was again taken up by thinkers of eminent depth, and its result was the rationalism of Maimonides, which has forever impressed itself upon the Jewish mind, notwithstanding cabbalism and rabbinism, because it is the original and unalloyed essence of Judaism. If anybody charges rationalism upon us, we can only tell him to quarrel with our literature, the Talmud and Midrash of Palestine, and the master works of the Moorish-Spanish Jews, down to Abarbanel. It took us long enough to get ourselves out of the huge confusion of the Babylonian Talmud and the Cabbalah, the old casuistry and mysticism; but out we came, and then understood

the value of Judaism in its purest rationality. We love it, because it is rational; we believe it, because it is in harmony with reason. We can only teach it as we do love and believe it. We do not worship reason; we worship only God, because He is the source of life, love and reason. Ours is no dim and mysterious conception of Deity, we see the Eternal One in His manifestations. We need no miracles in order to believe in the One, Almighty, and All-wise and most holy God. We need no miracles to convince us of any truth revealed to reason's eye, or of any duty impressed on the conscience of humanity. Miracles prove nothing. They stand in no connection to the propositions to be proved. They would prove nothing today, if wrought before our very eyes. All theological systems based upon faith are worthless to thinkers if the matter taught tallies not with reason; and tallying with it, what means faith? And not tallying with it, what is the use of faith? We do not mean to say that this is a religion for thoughtless masses, who need the strong arm of mysterious authority; we mean to say it is Judaism, the religion of intelligence, natural, universal and eternal religion. That is all we wish to teach. We let others manufacture religion for thoughtless masses.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1875. From: *Reply to the Open Letter of Rev. S. Morais*.*

As an exception to the general rule, by which I have been guided for many years, viz. not to reply to accusations coming from our own camp, especially not if they are of a personal character, or they are preferred in behalf of the so-called orthodoxy—I do reply to the open letter of Rev. S. Morais of Philadelphia, simply because I hold that gentleman in high esteem as an Israelite and scholar of sterling merits.

In the first place, I wish to say, that I do not recollect having "bespattered" anybody "with mire" in maintaining that the outworn Ghetto "Beth-Hamidrash" orthodoxy is a thing of the past, with which American Judaism has nothing in common. (After a lengthy explanation as to why his standpoint is justified, he continues:) Then comes the momentous questions of the "Kosher" meat. Here is an inevitable conflict between the Portuguese and the German-Polish casuists. How will those God-fearing men decide, what is actually "Kosher" and what "Trepah?" The result is simple, you cannot

*In the year 1880, H. S. Morais published a book entitled "Eminent Israelites of the Nineteenth Century" in which is a chapter devoted to Isaac M. Wise.

decide the questions today by the rabbinical codes. Then the next question, where will you take your God-fearing men from, to come up to the orthodox standard? Will you band together a class of ignorant men, to decide by their God-fearing quality, a very uncertain thing after all, what we American Jews must do or omit—we will at once tell you that it is not Jewish to be guided by ignorance. If you select your God-fearing men from among the celebrities of the Ghetto "Beth-Hammidrash" we will oust them sky-high, because we on the side of Reform in this country know more than they do, know better than they do, and we are civilized men which they are not. We have the majorities and the spirit of the age with us, we will not be ruled or even advised by mummies from the Middle Ages. Your God-fearing men are not so easily found, and they are without any authority upon which to ground their decisions.

I have probably said too much, and if anything offensive to Rev. S. Morais, I beg his pardon a thousand times. I respect the gentleman highly and do certainly not intend to offend him. I am not used to deal in casuistry, have left it far behind. This is an age of broad and liberal principles, and all casuistry, like dogmatism, is very narrow, intolerant and illiberal. Judaism offers a field too wide and too broad, that one should narrow himself down to casuistical questions against which Rabennu Bachai already entered his protest. Mr. Morais, please, let small minds pick up small notions; they will not do either for you or for me. The treasures of Israel are so vast and rich, that he who picks up pebbles and stumbles over diamonds looks not as ridiculous as he who quibbles casuistically and carefully closes his eyes to the ocean of truth rolling under his feet. The palace, sir, let us enter the palace, and not scratch our names on a brick outside thereof. Let us write our names upon the stars and not upon tombstones.

JULY 7, 1876. From: *The American Israelite After 22 Years of Its Existence.*

The American Israelite has made American Israel American. Our opponents on one side wanted to make it Palestinian, and bring it in conflict with patriotism and republicanism. We felt obliged for Israel's sake to fight them, and teach that this is our home for us and posterity forever; that we have nothing to seek in Palestine, and want no Messiah-king; that we are neither Germans nor Poles; we are Hebrews, and must be now American Hebrews.

Again—our opponents on the other hand wanted to Germanize

the American synagogue, by German prayers, sermons, catechisms and religious schools, which would have made Israel a stranger forever in this country. For Israel's sake we were obliged to oppose them, and Americanize the synagogue in language also, and we have succeeded well in most places; where the German synagogue still exists it is for Germans only, as the Polish synagogue is for the Polanders, the young generation always excepted. The bulk of the American Israelites, however, are Americanized in language also, and they cannot retract, so that neither the German nor the Polish Synagogue has a future in this country, to prolong its existence beyond the nineteenth century.

THE RUSSIAN IMMIGRATION—ORTHODOXY

MARCH 11, 1881. (*Editorial*) A correspondent from Bradford, Pa., complains about the attacks repeatedly made on the Polish Jews by their German co-religionists, and proves that which is well known, that it is unjust and mean to attack a whole class for faults which may have been found in some individuals thereof, furthermore, showing that there is evidence in existence of better education and superior knowledge among a certain class of Polish than among a certain class of German Jews. That is all true, and we would like to publish the whole of the matter if our space permitted. At the same time we would respectfully request our friendly correspondent to notice that the Polish, Hungarian and Russian Jews in this country do exclude and separate themselves from their German co-religionists congregationally and socially, some considering themselves too religious to associate with German "Poshim," and others make that or something else a pretext and excuse to save a few dollars expenses. That self-imposed isolation more than any other is the reason of the existing prejudices. We condemn and loathe every attack made on any class of people, whether from Poland or France or elsewhere; but we cannot help seeing the main cause of existing prejudices.

DECEMBER 22, 1882. (A paragraph telling of a book written in Hebrew by Nahum Sokolow, on the persecutions of the Jews in Russia) . . . The work is well written, its author evidently has historical talent and is a good Hebraist. So much more do we regret that he wrote in Russia, and could only write a very small part of the wrongs and barbarities which that empire inflicts upon its Jewish subjects. The book is a melancholy evidence of how the oppressed and maltreated ones in Russia are not permitted to speak.

MARCH 9, 1883. If you speak of Jews, you must not forget that there are two kinds of them, to be classified as Israelites and Jews. The former are, as a class of people, known as believers in the Old Testament, men and women who support congregations, public institutions of charity or instruction, visit houses of worship and assist in cultivating and promulgating the religious idea and advancing the cause of humanity. The other class called Jews are persons who do nothing for the benefit of man or the cause of Israel. They eat, drink, sleep, marry, raise a family, do business, make money and die like other heathens. They support no congregation, no beneficent or scholastic institution, worship nowhere, care for no soul, not even their own, live to die, to be really dead in time and eternity. This class of Jews does not belong to us who are Israelites; it belongs to the large class of nothingarians, the idle boarders of the American people, with whom we have nothing in common, although their mothers may have been daughters of Sarah. They have nothing to do with us. They do not recognize us and do not care for us, exactly as we do not care for them. We treat them as gentlemen and ladies, if such they are, and consider them as dead-heads or dead weight on board our ancient ship.

MARCH 15, 1884.* We must insist upon this one article of faith, "I believe in the revelation of God and the God of revelation," as the basis on which American Judaism can rise to unity and to the dignity of universal religion; and in this state only it has a promising future in this country. All non-universal elements in all departments of religion, philosophy, government and social order will fall to the ground before the fast striding cosmopolitan spirit in our country. If Judaism cannot confront this spirit of the age and rouse itself to that dignity, it has no future in this country. But we maintain it can on that one article of faith and on that one only, which suffices to confront all religious systems extant, and to satisfy the religious feelings of all intelligent men. From that standpoint it matters not how the written or traditional literature of Judaism is construed; how much or how little of its customs and usages are considered obligatory; what class of institutions are to be retained and what others to be built up; the nucleus is positive religion, intelligent and intelligible religion, universal religion, and that will outlast all progressions of time and time itself. The shrieks of pious pessimists, who see the end

*Included in this section mainly because of the editorial date.

approaching as often as a pebble falls from the gorgeous temple, and the declamations of impious nationalists, who maintain they can satisfy the world's religious yearning by their self-glorifying speculations, do not amount to much after all. The former cannot prevent the decay, and the latter cannot change human nature. Human reason stops before its own majesty and submits with awe to that higher authority which is revelation; and that is the only authority to which it submits; and that is the only true religion. What man invented he may remove and supersede; it is not religion, whose first attribute must be immutable eternity.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1884. (An editorial on the horror of the Russian pogroms, the destruction of Jewish property, killing of the owners, outraging of women, murder of children.) . . . When the history of this horrible century will be written, in which the temple of Mars was never closed, the bloody nineteenth century of Christian grace; the chapter of Russia will be the most detestable and most humiliating to the genius of humanity. So horribly, it will be said, Tartarian brutality and despotism can dehumanize so large a number of people in spite of all the progress of science and culture in all adjacent countries. Speaking of culture, moral or ethical, there is no more of it today in Russia than there was in Christendom in the darkest days of the Middle Ages. The common man there is the same exactly as his Tartarian or Slavonic sire was five hundred and a thousand years ago, except perhaps, that he is a better agriculturist or mechanic. It is a nation that cannot read, with a religion made up of the rankest superstition and fanaticism, with the most despotic government in the world, which partakes largely of the nature of the wolves among whom they live. When the day of judgment will set in upon that country, there will be woe! woe! thrice and ten times woe!

NOVEMBER 28, 1884. (An editorial on a news item, that a number of Jewish families in Russia were about to embrace Christianity, in order to escape persecution.) . . . It is a wonder that the Russian Jews, viz. three to four millions, under all that barbarous treatment by the populace and the government, stand so heroically by their faith, that but so very few become hypocrites and renegades to save their lives and to protect their families and their property. We can but admire the consistency and faithfulness of the Russian Jews, that their renegades are so few . . .

MARCH 13, 1885. Another misfortune has befallen the Russian Jews. Prince Paul Demidoff de San-Donato died last month, and he was the only Russian statesman so high in rank who took the part of the Jews and advocated their complete emancipation. He was also a member of the imperial commission charged with the duty to propose laws for the future legal status of the Jew in the Empire. . . . Honor is due to the memory of the deceased prince, and sympathy to the Jews, who have lost their most sincere advocate and patron.

1887. (On the announcement of a new Hebrew publication from St. Petersburg, to be called *Ben Ammi*, Dr. Wise commented:) It is admirable and demonstrative of strong Jewish feelings, that the persecutions and oppressions only intensify their pride of race, religion and history, instead of discouraging and humiliating them. These fellows seem to have backbone.

JULY 11, 1884.* *The American Israelite* is the organ which, with its broad and liberal principles of humanitarianism, genuine democracy, and unlimited tolerance, teaches orthodox Judaism, in the strictest sense of those terms, while its opponents here and abroad advocate abnormities and deformities, which they label Judaism. We teach the belief in the one living God of Israel, and gave to our readers the evidence thereof in the *Cosmic God*. We teach divine revelation and prophecy as the corner-stone of religion, and laid down the proof in numerous lectures. We teach the doctrines of universal and special providence, of divine justice, reward and punishment, personal immortality of the soul, remission of sins and universal salvation, the final triumph of truth and the fraternization of nations, the advent of the universal republic and the kingdom of God on earth and in heaven. We have advanced and proved all this in numerous essays and books. We teach salvation by righteousness, the progress of man by enlightenment and freedom, and the unification of the human family by the word of God. We reconciled Judaism and Christianity in their fundamental principles in our *Agreements and Disagreements*. These are the fundamental doctrines of American Judaism, of eternal Judaism, of universal religion. This is genuine, rational and complete orthodoxy, as compact and logical as it can be made. . . . We are the orthodox Jews in the very spirit of Moses and the Prophets, the Tana'im and the Amara'im, the Arabic-Spanish, the Italian and the

*Included in this section mainly because of the editorial date.

German schools of Israel's greatest and most distinguished men and teachers, under the very light of the nineteenth century and the conceptions of free America.

JULY 25, 1884. The difference between us and our opponents is simply this: We understand Judaism to be a religion, or rather, the only universal religion, while they understand it to be the system of observances peculiar to the Jewish people. Therefore with us observances are of secondary importance, while they are of primary importance with our opponents. Only such observances and practices which might and should become universal, because they would be beneficial to all men, are with us inherent elements of Judaism, while our opponents from their standpoint look upon every Jewish custom as an essential element of their religion. We can not agree with them.

SEPTEMBER 26, 1884. (*Editorial*) It is not only the *Jewish World* of London which expects from the influx of Russian and Roumanian Jews in the United States a retrogression of Judaism to the mediaeval and demi-cabalistic standard of the "Shulchan Aruch;" but there are quite a number of very intelligent gentlemen in our country who apprehend similar results for the religious and social standing of American Israelites by the influx of an element so entirely foreign, and in many cases, altogether outlandish. This apprehension makes of them opponents of the immigration, especially in New York, Chicago, St. Louis and other places where such immigrants settle down in large numbers. We can not help admitting that, momentarily, those newcomers are of disadvantage to the Jews as a class, although those immigrants are certainly no worse than the Italians, Hungarians, or Irishmen who honor us with their presence. It is expected that the Jew be a decent, clean, civilized man, who submits gracefully to sanitary laws and police regulations, uses soap, and dresses like other people, which we hear is not the case with all those new-comers, for a good long while. This may produce and intensify social prejudices against our co-religionists at least for the time being, and ought to be counteracted by charitable people everywhere. Persuade them not to establish new Ghettos for themselves, not to live together in one narrow quarter, to send their children to public schools, to use more soap and less "Shulchan Aruch." . . . But as regards the possible religious phase of the problem, we have not the least apprehension that they will do us any harm or exercise any influence upon the development of American Judaism. They will come to us, we can

never come to them. . . . Let them come by the thousands, we are not afraid of them; we welcome them as friends and brothers, and are willing to assist them wherever we can.

SEPTEMBER 26, 1884. *The Jewish World* of London, sees in the Russian immigration the beginning of retrogression among "American Israelites" to the old "Shulchan Aruch" orthodoxy, which, says that organ, although not entirely desirable, would be anyhow preferable to that form of Judaism which has its center in Cincinnati. That was a capital hit of the *Jewish World*, to please the dozen or so of English-Polish readers it may have in New York. But that is all. There is no danger that the Russian Jews settling down in this country will abide very long in their inherited orthodoxy, which quite a number of them had deserted before they came to this country; or that the rest of the "faithful" ever will exercise an influence upon American Judaism. As long as they will exclude themselves, they will remain excluded and harmless. They will neither be molested or noticed. This, however, will not last long in this free country.

MAY 28, 1886. American Judaism is not latitudinarianism to accommodate itself to everybody's notions and whims, nor is it a chameleon to change its color "ad libitum," it is the same old rock, however, without the dust and moss of ages.

OCTOBER 1, 1886. *The Jewish World* in London calls Dr. Wise the utterly uttermost heterodox, and it is alright from its standpoint, its Judaism consisting of that petrified tribal legalism, which in the language of Dr. Wise is a bastard of a medieval mother and a Polish father trained up for the English conservative market, which is neither orthodox nor heterodox, it is simply absurd. Still Dr. Wise would not call that truly good man of the *Jewish World*, heterodox, if anything, he would call him erratic, who makes of Judaism a bundle of stereotyped observances and hygienic prescriptions, and composes his theology from the material found in his immediate neighborhood, not from Jewish literature. But that is alright as far as Dr. Wise is concerned, who is not influenced by the new fashioned inquisition and its astonishing audacity, pronouncing judgment over a man's doctrines without any authority besides that individual's self-assumed importance. He ought not to publish lies, however, as he does in accusing the professors of the Hebrew Union College of being interested in the Pittsburgh Conference of the Wiseonian heterodoxy, which is a positive falsehood, whether from ignorance or malice. Those professors are

and have always been unconcerned in all those questions, are honest men and teachers, and the *Jewish World* did belie them, which is not very orthodox.

JANUARY 28, 1887. As far as American Judaism is concerned, New York and Philadelphia are outlying stations. Only a portion of their populations are Americans indeed, the bulk is as yet English, Polish, Roumanian, Galician, Hungarian, German or French, old-style Europeans, with the same notions and superstitions which their great grandparents brought out of the Ghettos. They have never been in America, they have been in New York or Philadelphia, which they look upon as being all there is in America. North of the Harlem River and on the other side of Germantown begins America, what they call there the West; there begins another life, other views prevail, and another spirit of the age is dominant. If it were not for the reform congregations of New York and Philadelphia, there would be as much difference between the Hebrew populations of those cities and of this great country as between us and the inhabitants of North Africa. It is next to an impossibility to associate or identify ourselves with that half-civilized orthodoxy which constitutes the bulk of population in those cities. We are Americans, and they are not. We are liberal, humane, cosmopolitan and broad in principles, and they are not. We are emancipated men and women, free, firm, and fraternizing, and they are not. We unite and they break up. We enlighten and they obscure. We appeal to reason and they appeal to their grandparent's habits. We are Israelites of the nineteenth century and a free country, and they gnaw the dead bones of past centuries. Besides the name we have very little in common with them. For the honor of American Judaism and our defense opposite the enlightened world, we do not want to have even that in common; we let them be Jews and we are the American Israelites. Write that to the "Jeshurun."

JULY 25, 1889. No argument of the united orthodoxy of Judaism and Christianity can convince us that reform and progress did not come as a God-sent blessing to the cause of religion and humanity in general and to Judaism especially in this country. It is with us a stubborn fact that reform and progress rescued and established Judaism in this country—the painful retrogression in numbers and loyalty among the older orthodox congregations is our evidence—we can not repent or retract. Our cogitation and conviction are no less respectable than those of our opponents. No one has a right to impugn our

motives. Like all of you, we are children of the Living God and members of the divine covenant. Opposite us no honest religionist dare claim that he is absolutely right and we are absolutely wrong . . .

MAY 19, 1892. It would be well for all to bear in mind that whatever may be the effect upon the wages of the influx of Russian Jews into the United States, it can be felt in New York City alone and there only in a very few of the trades. On the other hand, these immigrants develop in an astonishingly short time so ardent a love for our institutions that it is calculated to put many of us to whom they are an inheritance, to the blush. To us, religious and civil liberty is a matter of course, we know of no other conditions except by hearsay; to them it is a boon, as novel and unexpected as it is delightful. The native of Ireland never loses his love for the Emerald Isle, and the German brags of the Fatherland and Deutchtum on every possible occasion; but the Russian, when he leaves the inhospitable shores and cruel despotism of his native country behind, is only too glad to forget the land where his lot was only wrong and unmerited suffering and to become a true and loyal citizen of the land that offers him present shelter and hope for the future.

OCTOBER 11, 1894. The Jews of Russia, Poland, and those of Hungary commonly called "Wasserpölen," are, with a few exceptions, the descendants of German Jews, who, in the 16th and 17th centuries emigrated or were driven away from Germany. Without German schools or literature they continued tenaciously to speak but German, intermingled, of course, with corrupted Hebrew and Slavonic terms. So they have now a jargon without alphabet (they use the Hebrew) and without grammar, an obsolete and corrupt German-Hebrew-Slavonic excuse for a language. . . . Here the Polak will be wiped out in the rising generation; this atmosphere is rank poison to all unreasonable conservatism, this is emphatically the progressive world, with a national stomach to digest and assimilate all sorts of nationalities, languages, religions, habits and usages, and change it all into American blood. If the same had been done in proper time at home (Europe) they would be there men, as they fast turn out here to be. The fanaticism and absolutism of Christendom has made of them what they are now. The world has sinned more against the Jews than a hundred Christs could atone for on the cross. The modern anti-Semites are only the sons of their fathers, and no worse than they were.

JANUARY 3, 1895. *The Jewish Progress* of San Francisco, Calif. (Dr. Voorsanger) quoting from the New Orleans *Picayune*, part of our address, which points out the dangers of making dogmas in Judaism, remarks this:

"And yet, we submit to Dr. Wise, this high conception will not do for the people. The latter need the winged words that represent the thought of our religion. We need a few well expressed "Anhaltspunkte" so that the people may know. This has been the aim of the philosophers. No one ever sought to fetter Judaism to an authoritative creed, but philosophical abstraction is as bad as esoterism. It is beyond the comprehension of the masses. Judaism has definite teachings. Those can be put in words intelligible enough to constitute a consensus of opinion. Judaism is not mere ethics." (End of Dr. Voorsanger's quotation.)

MAY 23, 1895. Sex Laws from *The Laws of Moses*.

The subject is too delicate to be discussed in its details. The civilized world has become so sensually immoral and indecently sensitive in this matter, that things cannot be called any longer by their right names, which was not the case in the days of Moses. One thing, however, might be said here with propriety. The preservation of the Israelite in mental and physical health and vigor, notwithstanding the demoralizing and degenerating influences poured upon him these fifteen centuries by potentates, priests and mobs, and having lived in all climates and vicious atmospheres, is due to the observation of these laws of Moses regulating the sexual intercourse—as is evident yet from the domestic purity of the family—much more so than to all dietary and hygienic laws, all the washing, cleansing, bathing, eating or drinking or not drinking. The secret how to keep the human race mentally and physically healthy was known to Moses only. The existence of the Israelites after the crushing and destructive work of Satan, Fanaticism, proves that he knew the secret as no law-giver before or after him did. More of the mental and physical diseases, more idiocy and imbecility were engendered in the violation of these laws, also more crime and malice, than by the violation of all ceremonial laws and sacraments; and it is the case yet to this noon-day of the nineteenth century.

JUNE 3, 1897. Holy (Easter) week has again been marked in Russia by murder, arson and plundering. During fifty-one weeks of

the year Jew and Christian get along together well enough. With the advent of Easter, however, when the ignorant masses are excited and inflamed by the teaching and preaching on the crucifixion and passion of Jesus in their churches, by exhibitions of pictures, by religious processions, all directly tending to arouse their hatred against those who are supposed to have killed their God, murderous outbreaks are sure to follow in greater or less degree, for which the Russian Christian church is directly responsible in the sight of God and man.

NOVEMBER 4, 1897. *Le Monde Canadien* a French weekly newspaper published at Montreal, is a journal in which usually the most liberal and tolerant views are expressed, yet in a recent issue we find a story entitled: "Un Drame en Russie," which is such an atrocious libel on the Jews, so overflowing with venomous hatred, so ingeniously and painstakingly untruthful, that in the absence of the writer's name, the authorship might be attributed to Satan himself. . . . We expect misdeeds of this kind from the journalistic scum that panders to the canaille of Vienna and Berlin, of St. Petersburg and Paris, but that these should find an imitator in the editor of *Le Monde Canadien*, was something we thought to be impossible. It is like being stabbed in the back, in the house of a friend.

JANUARY 6, 1898. It must be considered that [as long as Judaism was stigmatized and decried among the nations, and its advocates were forbidden to speak or to write in its favor, it was impossible to enlighten mankind on the laws of God and the revelations of the prophets. As long,] furthermore, [as Judaism was encrusted in Rabbinical casuistry and kabbalistic mysticisms . . . and its cult was in matter and form foreign, outlandish and unintelligible to the outsider, and but half understood by the majority of its own votaries, Judaism could not possibly recommend itself to intelligent people.] When Mr. Simon of London proposed two years ago to start in that city a propaganda of Judaism, the whole orthodoxy of the British capital opposed it, and the thinking portion knew well, why they opposed it. They understood correctly that neither their cult nor their catechism was sufficiently purified from that casuistry and mysticism, to attract the attention and captivate the reason of outsiders. Both cult and catechism were for the Jew exclusively. [American Israel] on the other hand, [is free from all these incumbrances, free by the constitution of our country, the habits and training of its people,] so free indeed, that the editor of this paper could twenty-five years ago lecture in all parts of the country

on Jesus, the Apostles and Paul before Jews and Gentiles, and be introduced to the audiences by eminent Christian divines in New York, Chicago, New Orleans and elsewhere; could write and publish several books on the origin of Christianity and its creeds, and was molested nowhere, on the contrary, made numerous friends among Christians, and without denying for one moment his antagonism to Christology and his unbelief in the Evangelical story as it is in the books. [Here where we have emancipated ourselves from that casuistry and mysticism, and have reformed our cult, to stand at the head of all church worship in beauty, solemnity and intelligibility, perfectly modernized and purified to be acceptable to all—here is nothing in our way.]

CHAPTER IX

ZIONISM

Obstacles to the Mission of Israel

France — The Dreyfus Case
PALESTINE

The Dreyfus Case, of Paris, France, turning point in the life of Theodor Herzl, founder of modern Zionism, did not impress Isaac M. Wise as the justification for a separate Jewish government. Anti-Semitism to him could be eliminated only by the abolition of all orthodox religion, Jewish as well as Christian, to be replaced by his conception of a universal religion. To him, France could do no wrong. "France," he said, in 1889, "always has been the hope and pattern of Europe. We glory in la belle France, that dear old birth-place of liberty, equality and justice for Europe. In a few years the power of aristocracy will disappear there as it did here. We glory in the French Republic."

FRANCE — THE DREYFUS TRIAL

JULY 26, 1878. *The thirtieth of June.* The 30th day of June was a great day in Paris. The colossal statue of the Republic was unveiled on that day. A concourse of people never seen before in that metropolis crowded the streets to do homage to the French Republic. The demonstration was colossal, overwhelming and enthusiastic, without police force, orderly and loyal, without bayonets. It was a genuine outpouring of the Democratic spirit which has taken hold upon the French nation, and signaled the end of all imperialism and royalism in France. Twelve hundred communistic convicts were pardoned on that day as an evidence of the strength and security of the Republican

government. Our hopes are being realized, France is a Republic, and will be one to the end of this cycle, which will close with the universal republic.

APRIL 5, 1889. *Two Great days.* . . . April 30, 1789, George Washington was inaugurated the first president of the United States of America in the city of New York, and this was in fact the first day of the American Republic. May 5, 1789, the States General of France was opened in the city of Paris, and this was the birthday of the French Revolution. The influence of these two events upon the fate of humanity is simply incalculable. The jubilee year of all oppressed and enslaved nations and races was proclaimed to the astonished world. Few men then divined the consequences of those events, or even could dream of them. Here are now, after one century, the republics of America, France and Switzerland, with two hundred millions of people, the seventh portion of the whole human family. Absolutism is swept out of Europe, swept into the Russian ash-barrel. . . . Despotism fast gives way to the reign of justice, the human mind is liberated daily more and more by free thought, free speech and free press, the kingdom of God on earth advances rapidly and irresistibly. Barbarism gives way to humanism, man is re-instated in his rights. A century of glory followed those two events.

AUGUST 8, 1889. Today France is, what M. Guizot some forty years ago claimed for her, the most civilized nation of Europe, in liberty second only to our country, and far in advance of it in the fine arts and social culture. France represents now the Europe of 1990, minus the standing armies, which will then exist only in the historical digests of annoyed school boys and girls.

SEPTEMBER 7, 1899. *On the Dreyfus Trial.* The distrust and perpetual hostility among Christian nations each against all, is another proof that Christianity as a redeeming religion is an utter failure. If anything is evidenced by the Dreyfus trial it is the fact that every government in Christendom mistrusts all its neighbors; every one of them has its spies everywhere, and seduces men by heavy bribes to become traitors and liars, fostering thereby the most despicable vices, espionage and treachery. It must be done, statesmen tell us, because none can trust its neighbor for a moment, as there exists no friendship, no cordiality, no veracity, no mutual confidence among nations; self-interest is the motive of peace and war; next to it comes pride, some-

times called honor. That is exactly why we maintain that Christianity as a redeeming religion is an utter failure; it cannot overcome vice and crime in society; it cannot establish justice in the governments.

PALESTINE

MARCH 6, 1857. . . . The resoration of Israel to Palestine is prophesied by Moses; but this belief, or the prayer in this respect, cannot prevent one from being a good citizen of the country where he lives; for we are told nowhere that all Israelites must return to Palestine. Those who wish to stay where they are, may pray to see others restored to the land of their wish. The prayer for the restoration of a kingdom, and a personal king of whatever dynasty, however, is sinful and un-Jewish.

JANUARY 20, 1860. From: *Morocco Exiles Again*.

(In this editorial Dr. Wise discusses the proposed plan to settle Moroccan Jewish exiles in Spain and Algiers. He thinks that Palestine would be the best place.) . . . If we are allowed to make a proposition in this matter, we would say, improve this opportunity, buy a tract of land in Palestine in the plain of Jericho or Esdralon, or somewhere near the sea-coast, and send those exiles there. In language, habits, customs, manners, etc., they are no strangers in Palestine. The soil is as rich and the agricultural advantages as numerous in Palestine, as in Algeria. The land is cheap, the climate excellent. In Palestine, if they actually colonize the land, they may expect any amount of assistance and support from abroad until the colonies flourish, which they cannot expect in Algeria. Let this colony flourish and it will soon form a nucleus for the oriental Jews. . . . Thus a firm foothold might be gained in Palestine. If the Rothschilds, Montefiores, Goldsmiths, Foulds, etc., desire it so, they can carry it out now better than at any other time. You have prayed long enough, take now a practical step towards the colonization of Palestine . . .

FEBRUARY 3, 1871. . . . If a claim of 200 years standing is good, one 2000 years old must be equally good. If Alsace and Lorraine are justly reclaimed by Germany on the ground of having been German two centuries ago, then our claim to Palestine must be acknowledged by the great powers. We propose to send a deputation to the London Conference on the Eastern question, to be headed by some of our patri-

otic champions, to urge our claims and prove our right to the possession of Palestine. Prussia must vote for it, and will do it to get rid of Jacobi, Lasker, and others. Russia votes with Prussia, and England can be won by a favorable commercial treaty. Here is your majority, let us have it.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1876. . . . The Jews do not think of going back to Palestine among Bedouins and sandy deserts, and the nations in power do not want them to go there. No European country today would give permission to the Jews to emigrate with their wealth or even without it; and the European Jews have as little an idea to go as the Rothschilds want to purchase Palestine, or be kings of the Jews. It is all dream and fantasy. The world goes not backward, its march is onward, and this will expunge the old race prejudices as well as the religious superstitions of the races. We are marching toward Jerusalem, we march toward one God, one law and one human family, and history lies not. The world must become one promised land, and all men priests of the Lord of Hosts; this is the final cause of the logic of history. Let those who are narrow-minded enough, tie the world's destiny to the soil of a certain strip of country; we do not. We expect, and will see it come, the unification of the human family, the triumph of truth, and the dominion of goodness.

JANUARY 19, 1877. From: *The Jews and Palestine*.

. . . What we actually wanted to discuss is this: Mr. Conway, in his prudent, enthusiastic way, sees the new Kingdom of Palestine rise from the ruins of Turkey, of course, under the kindly care of the new Empress of India, a well-known good old lady; and now the Jews go there already in large numbers in anticipation of events to come, to establish a Jewish kingdom. The fact is, if all the Jews of England go to Palestine, they are not numerous enough to make a large city, for their whole number is about 60,000. Mr. Conway sends large numbers of them to Palestine just now, say perhaps fifty or sixty thousand. We guarantee that he could not name this many. Based upon these statistics, he sees a Jewish-English kingdom grow up in the dreamland of Palestine. There is not a word of truth in the whole Utopism set afloat by Mr. Conway in his London letter which appeared in last Saturday's *Commercial*. . . .

DECEMBER 29, 1882. "If that is Judaism which you expound in

your lectures, then I am a Jew," writes Mr. L., and we think he has company in this country. There are quite a number of men whose beliefs are perfectly Jewish, although they do not know it. What we claim is, that this country in its constitution, and institutions, in its laws and in the administration thereof, is Jewish. Our object in demonstrating this allegation in lectures is first and foremost to show that the religious Jew must be a loyal and law-abiding citizen; and in the second place it is intended to show that we have no need for any Messiah or going to Palestine to reconstruct the Hebrew State, when we have right here the very government which was delineated by Moses on the basis of the Sinaic revelation, with all the rights and privileges to correct and improve where correction and improvement are necessary.

MARCH 16, 1883. If Miss Emma Lazarus and others who handle a pen would lay aside their romantic notions of race, nation, Holy Land, Restoration, etc., and assist those practical heads in scratching out of their brains the pervert notions of distinction between a man and a citizen who believes in Moses and the Prophets, and another who believes in Jesus and his Apostles, they could render good service to their co-religionists and to the cause of humanity, which is disgraced by the blind prejudices of those narrow-minded individuals who see in the Jew a stranger, an indefinable scarecrow of their bewildered imagination. Individuals of that kind are not very numerous in this country, and therefore it is so much easier to cure them of that mediæval malady. If our co-religionists are worse than the believers in Christology, let us teach and elevate them to that standard of rectitude which makes the good citizen. If they are better than others, let us open the eyes of the blind to see correctly. If they are of equal merits with others, let us meet their revilers upon the common ground of argument. But for the sake of common sense let us give up all romantic notions, and remain upon sober and practical ground. We, citizens, of the United States, who believe in Moses and the Prophets, are, and hope to remain, citizens of the United States, an integral element of this nation, and of no other, with no earthly interests or aspirations different from those who believe in Jesus and his Apostles. Let us meet the enemy on this ground, for this is God's truth.

1883. From the book: *Judaism and Christianity, Their Agreements and Disagreements.*

. . . Confused and defective reasoners still fancy a Jewish nationality and government, the restoration of the throne of David under a Messiah king, of which there is no idea in the Sinaic revelation or the laws of Moses. They despair of human reason and the progress of humanity, the solidarity of mankind, and the advancement toward that objective point of all prophecy, because their conceptions of God and His government are inadequate, obscured and confused; because they disagree with the Israel, whose God is the Creator, Preserver and Governor of the universe and the merciful Father of mankind. They disagree with Israel, and there begins their "Disagreement" with the world and its affairs. . . .

AUGUST 3, 1888. The narrow gauge railroad from Joppa to Jerusalem, about 45 miles, is nearly done and will be ready for business in September. This improvement does away with the ass for the coming Messiah; he can ride in a railroad car clear into the city of Jerusalem.

APRIL 30, 1891. The railroad direct to Gehenna will be finished in December or January next, viz., the forty to fifty miles of railroad from Joppa to Jerusalem, with the depot in the Valley of Gehenna below Jerusalem. Then whoever may desire it can go with steam to Gehenna. The depot being in that notorious valley, it will soon be cleansed and built up, and so the horrid Gehenna of the Jews will soon disappear. We hope the "Christian Hell" will soon follow its Jewish predecessor.

MARCH 19, 1891. Mr. Henry Wentworth Monk, the apostle of the universal peace project, like Dr. Blackburn and other eminent Chicago gentlemen, wants the persecuted Jews, at least of Russia and Roumania, to be settled in Palestine, where climate, soil, tradition and surroundings are most congenial to the Hebrews; and, says Mr. Monk, Palestine is unquestionably the most suitable country for the location of the supreme international council, which must soon now supersede the arbitrament of war. From Palestine he believes the Jews could become the best missionaries of civilization in Asia. Dr. Blackburn and his compeers want the President of the United States to call a convention of all governments to protest against Russia's barbarism, and to make Palestine, under a protectorate of our government, a Hebrew country again. All these benevolent gentlemen, we have no doubt, mean it well and are perfectly in earnest with their philanthropic projects.

as did many Englishmen before them in the same matter. The practicability of those projects seem to be quite doubtful to our mind. The desirability of any of them appeals to us so far only as the Hebrews of those Slavonic countries are turned to agricultural pursuits in any country, in Palestine or elsewhere; and furthermore, as far as the malice and heartless despotism of Russia and the stupid prejudices against the Jews elsewhere can be uprooted, the partition walls between man and man erected by unreasoning fanaticism and narrow-minded selfishness can be leveled and the debris moved out of sight. That "WE" and "YOU" in the mouths of ever so many well-intended people, in speaking of Gentiles and Jews, of Christians and non-Christians, is to be eradicated, and the solidarity of mankind as an indivisible "WE" is to be established. This is the end and aim of the entire historical process, this is the sublime lesson taught by Israel's prophets; this is the only solid basis to a sound and universal system of ethics. The final redemption of Israel can be brought about only by the final redemption of the Gentiles, their liberation from their fanaticism, their narrow-mindedness, their exclusiveness, their claiming heaven and earth as their own exclusively, their cutting and tearing up of the human family in factions and fractions, in consequence whereof every faction and fraction cut from the living organism of the human family is sick, suffers pain and is made miserable.

This of course, is not to say that the humane endeavors of those numerous other Christian and Jewish gentlemen to afford momentary relief to suffering multitudes is not meritorious, deserving the warmest thanks and effective support of all good men; on the contrary, we feel touched to the core by every humane and benevolent project to alleviate suffering, to dry tears and silence sighs. What we want to impress first and foremost on the noble philanthropists is, that we want no new nationality created, and no old one restored, no sectionalism and no particularism in any temporal affairs; we want the equality and solidarity of mankind. This is evidently the will of God expressed in the Holy Writ; to bring about this millenium Christendom must be reformed, the evil must be uprooted from the soil where it flourishes and thrives.

MAY 2, 1895. Some charitable gentlemen of foreign birth, hailing most likely from the northeast of Europe, united themselves in Baltimore into a society of "Lovers of Zion," i. e., to advance Jewish settlements in Palestine and Syria. This, we think, is a laudable enter-

prise in the same proportion as it leads a certain class of Israelites to agricultural pursuits. Those charitable gentlemen published the organic laws of their society in English and Hebrew. That is also laudable, as not all understand English, nor do all understand Hebrew; some understand neither. These laws open with a lengthy preamble setting forth what the society calls "Our Aim and Our Purpose," which opens thus: "What a few choice men of our nation (?) foresaw has indeed come about. European civilization failed to realize the expectation of many, it brought not with it the true enlightenment, etc., therefore we must go to Zion." This rare piece of arrogance is marvelous, a dozen or two of men from the very verge of civilization denounce the European civilization as a failure. Because an emperor, Alexander III., tyrannized over Russia, and there are in Europe just now a low class of people called anti-Semites, the whole of the civilization of Europe is a failure; "human society was beautified from without, but within the canker grew," those critics say, which in common parlance means the whole civilized world is going to the dogs. This arrogant pessimism is qualified by the conclusion "therefore we must go to Zion," i. e., outside of the European civilization to find there the right kind of civilization among the Bedouins, or in Persia, Morocco, or the Soudan. Or is it intended to say that they might establish there a new Polish-Jewish civilization like the one in Galicia, for instance, or in those Polish districts where Rabbinism and Hassidism are supreme? Anyhow, it proves either the ignorance of those gentlemen about the present status of civilization, or the loss of confidence in human nature owing to momentary reverses, like the suicide; or else the whole is a thoughtless piece of demagoguery to bewilder others. Anyhow, that preface ought to be buried in the waste-basket, for the benefit of the Zion Association of Baltimore.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1897. Dr. Herzl does not profess to be a religious Jew. With most of his followers he maintains only to be a Jew by nationality or race. He has not the least intention to benefit Judaism. He is a politician, loyal and patriotic, no doubt, as so many politicians profess to be, and works to set up a Judenstadt, not a religious congregation at all. Religion is at present out of the question altogether. . . . Dr. Singer, the preacher of the London reform congregation, called Dr. Herzl in an address, one of Israel's prophets, or like those ancient seers, and cited Renan as his authority. We call that doubly foolish for Dr. Herzl has nothing in common with the ancient prophets,

and Ernst Renan is no authority. . . . The false Messiahs who appeared from time to time among the dispersed and suffering remnants of Judah, had no religious purpose in view; all of them were political demagogues or patriotic fantasists with as much religious zeal as was deemed requisite to agitate the Jewish mind and to win the good will of the masses and its leaders for the proposed political end, which was the restoration of the Jewish nationality and the conquest of Palestine. All of them failed miserably and left behind them plenty of misery for their thoughtless followers. And yet with that warning of history before them, the party of men called Zionists and the admirers of Dr. Herzl's "Judenstadt" propose to do the same thing over in our days. . . . We cannot afford to let it go out into the world that we are in sympathy with a cause which we know will ultimately result in harm to the Jews even in this country. Already many of the journals of this land are making capital out of this thing, and it becomes us to put a stop to this movement, at least so far as we Americans are concerned, right in its incipency. We denounce the whole question of a Jewish State as foreign to the spirit of the modern Jew of this land, who looks upon America as his Palestine and whose interests are centered here.

JUNE 30, 1898. *Max Nordau* — *Laubhuetten* reports — married in Paris lately a Roman Catholic lady. Well, H. Heine did the same. Still, Heine was not the leading spirit of the Zionist Congress in Basle and Nordau was. And yet Nordau has something in common with Heine; Heine turned Christian and then repented it, Nordau turned Jew and now repents it. If he comes to the next Congress at Basle without his dear wife he ought to be expelled from that august body for cowardice before the enemy.

AUGUST 24, 1899. *On the Zionist Congress.* The third Congress of the Zionists was held in Basle the 15th, 16th, and 17th of August. Besides the presiding officer, Dr. Herzl of Vienna, there were also some non-Russians among the honorable representatives, like Professor Gottheil of New York, who is no Russian, not even a Pole, for he was born in England, grew up in America, excepting only the time he spent in Berlin as a student of the Hochschule and the University. What that Congress actually did, we can imagine, or rather decipher, from the published proceedings of the two former meetings. They repeated that the Jews are a nationality and not a religious

community, denounced the Reformers and the rich men i. e., nine-tenths of all non-Russian and the majority of Russian Jews who would have nothing to do with Zionism; celebrated a mutual love-feast, which is always very touching indeed; claimed to have so and so much "promise to pay" to a national bank managed by poor poets, preachers, professors and other irresponsible non-financiers; made statements that no statements could be made of state secrets, and broke their bread together in the simplicity of their hearts. The rest of the proceedings will be published in the Jargon papers and the *New York Journal*, we think. We only want to state here, that the American Jews as a body took no stock in that bank, were not represented in that Congress, and have nothing to do with Zionism or that nationality swindle, simply because we are Jews by religion only and exclusively, untouched by nationality humbug and race sophistry, which Napoleon III started, to gall Austria with its numerous nationalities.

DECEMBER, 1899. *Zionism—from the Hebrew Union College Journal.*

I understand under "Zionism" an extended "Benai Berith" association, for the benefit chiefly of Russian, Polish and Roumanian co-religionists, or rather, the large class of the poor among them. To contribute to this new B. B. association and to cooperate with the body is an act of charity, like the dispensation of alms in any form. According to all I know of the disposition and temper of the sons and daughters of Israel, large numbers of them would have attached themselves to this organization, although quite a number of them do not consider it their duty to feed Russia's mendicants made by her infamous misrule, if its mouthpieces, leaders and agents had not made it impossible for thinking citizens among cultured nations on the one hand, and for orthodox Rabbinites and Hassidites of Russia on the other hand, to identify themselves with the Zionist movement. . . . Still, as long as those gentlemen kept their business among themselves, the men in Israel could well afford to be charitable and let every man ride his hobby or his bicycle at his pleasure. But when four to five years ago, Dr. Herzl, Dr. Nordau & Company, came out with the grand scheme of establishing an independent Jewish state, called congresses to Basle, made a heathen noise the world over, added shame to blasphemy, folly to falsehood, the disgrace of a mountain travelling and bringing forth a mouse, and what a mouse! one that steals our honor and veracity and carries it into the fortresses of our antagonists

—then Turkey spoke, and many of our best men and public bodies protested against the foolish project of fooling masses of Russian Jews and American newspaper writers, preachers, missionaries, and anti-Semites. No normal man can believe, that we Jews leave the great nations of culture, power, and abundant prosperity in which we form an integral element, to form a ridiculous miniature state in dried-up Palestine. . . . This chapter in the history of Zionism broke off the bridge between them and thinking Israelites. We can never identify ourselves with Zionism. If any of them want to carry out the original plan of assisting the poor of Israel in the lands of barbarism, turn them to agriculture and the practical arts, they must construct another organization, one which every intelligent and charitable citizen can support without bringing upon himself the odium of being a traitor, a hypocrite or a fantastic fool, whose thoughts, sentiments and actions are in constant contradiction to one another.

END OF PART II

PART III

LAY VIEWS ON THE WRITINGS OF
ISAAC M. WISE

MOSES

Dr. Wise's Battle-Cry — "Back to Mosaism"

Separates Israel's Body and Soul

Rationalism Not Enough

CHAPTER I

MOSES

*H*OW DOES all this material affect the lay reader? What conclusion can be drawn that may be helpful in the understanding of the many controversial points included, which affect the outlook and interpretation of Judaism in America and elsewhere?

To begin with, we must go back to Moses—the beginning and the end of Dr. Wise's religion.

The Ten Commandments, the direct revelation of God through Moses on Mt. Sinai, contained, according to Dr. Wise, all the religion necessary for the happiness and well-being of all men. The fact that Biblical Criticism ascribes the Decalogue to

the genius of the Prophets and not to Moses, will not be discussed. Whether Moses or the Prophets wrote the Ten Commandments, they are still of Israel, and their value is to be judged, not as a miracle of Revelation, but in their beneficial applications to the needs of humanity. In this regard, we can agree fully with Dr. Wise. The understanding of and the obedience to the Ten Commandment by all would, without a doubt, usher in the era of peace on earth and good will to men. If none would steal and none would kill and none would covet, certainly the major physical problems of the world would be solved. Surely, then, the Ten Commandments are applicable to all mankind, and we Jews may well be proud that our people were the first to accept these principles of right living and try to put them into practice at a time when the rest of the world was sunk in the darkest abyss of idolatry, murder and gross immorality practiced in the name of religion. Dr. Wise was right. The Sinaiic revelation was and is intended for the salvation of all men. No one will disagree with him on this point. No one can. But even though the laws of Moses were meant for all men, Dr. Wise need not have spoken of the world as Judaizing because it progressed in accordance with Mosaic ethics. Jews live in all lands, and accept many of the customs and ideas of the peoples around them, but we do not say that we are Christianizing thereby. Morality is for all, like the sun and the moon and the stars, and should not be labeled by any particular group as its possession.

The Ten Commandments were, said Dr. Wise, the beginning and the end of religion; his battle-cry, "Back to Mosaism." The life developed by Israel from and after the Sinaiic revelation, meant little to him. Any one was a Jew who believed and practiced the morality and the ethics of the Decalogue. There was for him no other criterion. The cultural-religious life necessarily developed after Moses, since he could only begin it, was according to Dr. Wise, only to mark time with until the American Revolution,

through which would naturally follow the plan of Providence for world salvation in the establishment of a universal republic and religion. "A Jew, or an Israelite," he claimed, "is any one who believes in the revelation on Mt. Sinai." On this construction, he called himself an orthodox Jew, and the orthodox Jews he called enemies of true or universal religion. That Orthodox Judaism contained and had preserved and practiced through the centuries, all the elements which he called the "essence" or principles of Judaism, in addition to the other legal and poetic developments, he never seemed to consider. To him, religion needed no building to house or protect it, the foundations were enough for all rational men. "We believe religion is a set of principles," he said, "and not a system of observances or a mode of belief or worship." He did not see that religion is both a set of principles and a system of observances and mode of worship, that without the definite ritual and ceremony, the principles cannot be developed and symbolized. He separated the life of Israel from the religion of Israel, which had always been one—its body from its soul, and believed it could thus continue to exist. His conception of religion as rationalism is, of course, untrue to life, which includes a complexity of thought, act and emotion. Morality and ethics are the base of civil life, and their establishment presupposes cultural development of many kinds according to different individuals, groups and temperaments, from that stage on. Morals we should all have in common, like air and sunshine. Religion is or should be, morality plus. He entirely overlooked the human psychological fact that custom is unwritten law, and rational or irrational, cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand or polemics. His purpose was, of course, to develop a new universal religion, to which end all the custom and ceremony of the Jews, and the dogmas of the Christians, were to be sacrificed, and he believed that the end would justify the means.

The non-Jewish world has been acquainted with the Ten Commandments almost as long as the Jewish world, although it

is true that Jews have adhered more closely to them than non-Jews. Yet if the dissemination of the religion revealed on Mt. Sinai were the sole mission of Israel, surely this was accomplished long ago. There are many men and women of other faiths of sound moral understanding and practice, yet it would surely be laughable to call them Jewish for that reason. This however, is what Dr. Wise asks us to believe.

His standpoint was philosophic, ethical, general, perhaps far ahead of his time, but not religious in the sense in which the world understands the term religion, and certainly not in the sense in which Jews understand Judaism.

AMERICA

*Universal Republic Not Solution —
People Now Enslaved Industrially —
America's New Problems Unknown
Fifty Years Ago*

CHAPTER II

AMERICA

*I*N DR. WISE's love for America and belief in its high future, we agree with him. America can and will lead the world if we have the proper leaders. The English-speaking peoples of the world, America and England, can save the world if they will. But we know today that a democratic form of government does not mean the end of the people's troubles. For democratic governments must also have leaders and these can become corrupt and fail to carry out the laws of the land and the wishes of the people. In America today* we have the terrible situation where the men in

*Written between 1931-32.

governmental authority refuse to consider the will or the needs of the people. We suffer far more injustice today than the original thirteen colonies considered good reasons for war against England. Vast corporations controlling millions in men and in money have just as fully enslaved the people industrially as did kings and priests under a monarchical or religious system. Typography and general education have not liberated the general intelligence of the masses, which Dr. Wise considered inevitable. As always, comparatively few people really think. This is no doubt due to the fact that to earn a living takes so much of the mental and physical capacities of the average worker, that any leisure must be used for relaxation and entertainment to maintain sanity. When our country has grown great socially as well as politically, when the workingman will have time to think as well as to work and to play, this condition may be remedied. It is due not to lack of natural intelligence but to enforced inability to exercise it. Dr. Wise said (1869) "History is Providence realized . . . Individuals and nations, by an undefined impulse, are the actors who realize the plans of a higher power, to the detriment of all that is wicked, the development and preservation of all that is good..." We hope and pray that the progress of history will go steadily forward for good, but the backward eddies are strong, and make the forward flow a difficult one.

The real worth of any system of government is not in its theoretical possibilities, promising though these may be, but in actual results of actual practice. "By their fruits ye shall know them." So we today have seen that the power of one man or a group of men to acquire unlimited and unnecessary wealth, which our present president calls "rugged individualism," is a noble experiment which has resulted in so many ragged individuals that there is proof positive of something wrong in the system or its administration. The royalty of monarchical systems has been replaced by money barons and kings of finance for whom the

masses toil and starve, the women folk of these aristocrats of lucre are as much apart from the "common herd" as ever were queens and royal ladies. The difference, it seems, is in words only.

The freedom to make laws which the framers of the Constitution thought to have made the right of Americans forever, has been usurped by the government at Washington, which has betrayed the faith and innocence of the people for money bribes from religious and commercial interests. The men whom we have sent to Washington to serve the people have become taskmasters instead, or should we say "tax-masters," and so far the people have not been able to take the whip from their hands, although it is hoped and believed by all lovers of freedom that the people will awaken in time to restore to themselves that precious boon of freedom, than which there is no greater. Uncle Sam in the role of Simon Legree, is not a pleasant picture. Unless stopped in time, America is turning from the ideals which inspired its greatness and grandeur, from a haven for the oppressed of all nations, from a land of freedom and opportunity for all, to a dream of empire, militaristic and greedy. Well may the student of history pause and tremble as this familiar regime presents itself once more, and this time under the eagle eye of Liberty.

Dr. Wise would have a universal republic. We too, hope for a universal republic in spirit, but as the home is the unit of life within the nation, so are nations the units in the life of international affairs. Internationalism without nationalism would be as impossible as making clothes without cloth, or erecting a brick house without bricks. Political autonomy is the foundation on which the general structure of a people is built. America became the great country it is because it was politically assured, and therefore free to develop along other lines.

Times change and ideas change with them. Today the best minds declare that not the melting pot is the true expression of America's genius, but that the groups within America be free to

develop their latent possibilities, and so lend life and color to an otherwise increasingly drab scene. The real test of the American republic is not to mold all its people into one cultural or religious pattern, but to give them the freedom to be natural. The world needs for its salvation, not a universal republic necessarily patterned after America, but human and universal sympathy, tolerance and understanding toward those who differ in political or religious theory and practice.

This it is that America should teach the world, this the mission for which it is conceivable a gracious God might have reserved America. Has America fulfilled this mission? Those who truly love her wish the answer might be "yes." Whether the future will answer the prayers of the many who wish for their beloved country this highest honor, only Time can tell.

CHURCH AND STATE

*Mankind Tortured by Abuse of Power
Rather Than Religion—*

Church and State Represent Individuals—

*Development of Character World's
Greatest Need*

CHAPTER III

CHURCH AND STATE

*T*HE UNION of church and state, Dr. Wise believed, was responsible for the world's ills. Under the dominant religion, Catholicism, two thirds of the Christian peoples had for seventeen centuries, been no more than beasts of burden, ruled over and despoiled by the other third, which consisted of the clergy and the nobility. Not until the American Revolution and the United States Constitution separated church and state, did light begin to shine over a darkened world.

However, it is also true that in the eighteen centuries preceding Christianity, pagan rule was carried out and on under the same

conditions. Both the pagan and the Christian leaders used their religion as the ladder on which to climb to power, their real goal. When a kindly king or a genial pope occasionally graced the monarchical or religious throne, life became happier for all. The fault then, it seems, lies not so much in religion, as in faulty human nature. It should, of course, be the province of religion to teach its votaries to use and not abuse the powers and passions within them, but do not all religions claim this for themselves? Judaism says that man when taught to reason will live rightly, Christianity claims this result for love, although it certainly forgot to include love of the Jews. But whether we begin with the head or the heart, there must be communion between the two, to establish whole and happy living. By whatever route we come to the social considerations of mankind, it is certain that no religion believes itself lacking in perspective. Why, then, has so much suffering in the world been attributed to religion? It is actually not so much religion which has tortured mankind, but the abuse of power, and in the inability to use it constructively for the good of all by the few to whom has been given or who have taken upon themselves authority. Because we are still so far from the millenium, and real character so rare a flower in the weedy garden of humanity, most men, on attaining power, religious, financial or political, generally become intolerant or corrupt.

America has been made great by its few social-minded leaders, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt and Wilson, who dared not only to envision a better social order, but struggled toward its achievement, and through the magnetism of character, inspired the people to work with them. Character is the axis on which the welfare of human life on earth revolves. To the Jew, the Creator of heaven and earth is perfect, representing all goodness, all wisdom, all virtue, and only in the measure in which men seek to approach this standard, do they become like unto God.

The history of Christianity does reveal in its very origin the

union of church and state. The New Testament account of the Crucifixion was written with one eye on religion and the other on the powers at Rome, whom no one dared antagonize. So the story accuses Israel of all the crime, for Judea was only a helpless little state under the vassalage of Rome,—and exonerates Rome through its cruel governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate, picturing him as a man of tender heart and clean hands. Contrast this conspicuous cowardice and lack of truth written into the Crucifixion story with the sublime courage and fearlessness displayed by the prophets of Israel, as they openly condemned those of their kings who had done that which was evil, and in words whose echo will ring throughout all time, dared to say "Thou art the man."

Catholicism became a cruel and backward religion, not so much because of its ritual or ceremonies, but because of the abuse of power by its leaders. When the Protestants came into power in America, the same abuse of political power endangering the happiness of the masses, went on, in the fight to make America safe for Protestantism. Dr. Wise aptly said of them: "They are so blinded by their lust for power for their church, that they mistake it for religious zeal." They used religion as the road to power, even as Catholicism and Paganism had done before them. Men, tasting the blood of power, become inhuman, callous to suffering, turning a deaf ear to the cry of misery their abuse of power has created. This dastardly use of religion is as old as the history of mankind. Eternal vigilance is still the price of liberty.

Dr. Wise rightly condemned the Catholic Church for its abuse of power in Europe, and its torture and death of those who held other views on religion, yet he did not hesitate to condemn and do all the harm within his power to the orthodox and Zionist Jews for their dissent from his Reform construction of Judaism. Had he possessed political power to enforce his ideas, who can say how far he would have gone?

No religion or system of government can make for lasting

happiness as long as corruptible human beings have charge thereof. Diogenes might still need his lantern to find an honest man. Father Abraham might yet plead with God not to destroy the earth if even ten truly good men could be found on it. The world needs to turn its attention, not so much to new religions or new forms of government, but to the development of character. Not only have kings and priests and organizations abused their power, but millions of people in the past as well as in the present, endure misery and suffering in homes where tyrants rule, under the inescapable yoke of cruel or selfish parents, friends or relatives. The abuse of power is common to all—high and low, rich and poor, ignorant and educated, in all kinds and conditions of society. Blaming a sinful world on money or religion is to evade the real issue behind money and religion—lack of character of the people who constitute the world.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Dr. Wise Speaks of His Childhood

Paul and Dr. Wise

Dr. Adolph Moses of Louisville, Ky.

CHAPTER IV

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

ONLY ONE editorial in all the voluminous writings of Isaac M. Wise, throws any light upon his sufferings in childhood "because he was the son of Jewish parents." Max B. May, Dr. Wise's grandson, wrote of him that "he could not be induced to talk about his early years, and often said they were too terrible to contemplate." The editorial referred to, was written in *The American Israelite* under the date of January 2, 1880. In it Dr. Wise states his oft-repeated conviction that the world must become Jewish in philosophy and humanitarianism, and that fifty years might accomplish this result. The article concludes: "Some of our youngsters,

we know, smile at the idea and consider it, perhaps, a Wisean eccentricity, a theoretical conclusion carried on the wings of imagination. But we have fifty years of experience behind us, and are neither eccentric nor particularly given to imagination. Fifty years ago an old and venerable Catholic priest took half a dozen of us boys under his particular care to give us extra lessons. We usually went to his house in the evening an hour or two after dark. One evening a troop of naughty chaps, to the number of thirty or more, gave us such a terrible snowballing that one of our boys, on reaching the priest's house, fainted. The priest applied restoratives and the boy recovered. The first words he spoke were, 'Why must I be a Jew?' The priest laid his hand upon the boy's head and said, very earnestly, 'To civilize those barbarians.' Then we could not understand the import of those words; on the battlefield of practical life we gradually learned to appreciate them. The boys so mercilessly snow-balled that evening have become civilizing and humanizing factors in the process of history, and that troop of naughty boys has undergone a wonderful change. You take the change wrought in half a century as a starting-point and make a sober calculation of the character of the future, and you will discover that our predictions are no Wisean eccentricities."

In 1880, Dr. Wise was sixty years old, and since he says the incident had occurred fifty years before, he evidently was but ten years old at the time.

He had suffered not only as a child from the Catholic louts in Bohemia, but as he grew into young manhood, from the anti-semitic government. Deeply impressed also, with the Enlightenment movement of the 18th century, the friendship of Mendelssohn and Lessing, the breaking down of the Ghetto walls, etc., he sought to reconcile the two antagonistic trends in Christianity between its intelligent Liberals and the cruel and ignorant masses. Is it not possible that he found in the struggle between these two elements, a rational explanation for his sufferings in the words

of the old Catholic priest, that the mission of the Jew was "to civilize those barbarians?" May not the whole tenor of his life have been shaped by those few words, evidenced by the fact that fifty years later he tells the story so clearly, and attributes his life work to them? Possibly, too, he was revenging himself, although unconsciously, for the insults offered to him as a child through Christianity, by later exposing all its weaknesses so mercilessly, although he was convinced that he was doing it for the good of humanity. The oft-repeated statement that Christianity would come to Judaism and not vice versa, may also have had its roots in the outraged feelings of the sensitive child who had suffered so intensely because of the ugly treatment he had received as "the child of Jewish parents."

In America he studied thoroughly the New Testament and all literature pertaining thereto. He wrote in 1869: "It took me twenty years of study and research before I had the moral courage to step before an enlightened community to analyze and expound the origin of Christianity." He had, in fact, taken the study of the New Testament so to heart as to have become unconsciously imbued with its methods. Paul, he said, brought Christianity to the pagan peoples because it would have been impossible for them, accustomed as they were, to the worship of many gods, to have come directly to Monotheism. So he brought them Judaism via the Son, who was later to be removed, when they were capable of understanding the religious idea. In his *Martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth*, he writes as follows: "Paul was a wise man, no doubt. He dealt with pagans according to their mental or moral abilities. He took away, he gave, he reformed and remodeled existing elements to the best of his ability, in order to impress them with the religious idea. To him, the Son of God was no more than the incarnate symbol of the religious idea. Since the pagans could not reach the Father (Monotheism) in His absolute spirituality, he led them to the Father through the Son, viz., the incarnate and

accommodated religious idea. Therefore, it gave him no particular trouble to change and amend stories and incidents, as he could best use them for his higher aims." This same procedure Dr. Wise followed with reference to his interpretation of the Old Testament in relation to his own ideas. It gave him no particular trouble, either, to change and amend the Pentateuch and the Prophets as he could best use them for his particular aims. He was justly horrified at the Christian conception of Jesus crucified to save a sinful world. And yet the conception embodied in the Reform universalistic Mission of Israel is infinitely worse. If it is impossible for a rational mind to conceive of a kind Father sacrificing one beloved son, is not that horror multiplied incalculably by the conception that all the people of Israel are to be a continual sacrifice on the world's altar of sin and ignorance, which their espousal of Monotheism has evoked in a pagan and later in a Christian world? Surely a merciful Father could have found some other method of educating and saving the human race than by the perpetual sacrifice of the one group, Israel, which is faithful to Him. Yet, according to Dr. Wise, this is the sole purpose of our continued existence, to live as monotheists no matter what price a pagan or a Christian world extorts in blood and gold. Of course, living in America, where he was and felt safe, he entertained no doubts but that the suffering Jews in other parts of the world could manage to get along until the near arrival of the universal republic and religion.

Dr. Wise also stretches general Old Testament statements into specific fulfillment prophecies just as surely as did the writers of the New Testament. Christianity discovers Jesus prophesied in Isaiah, and reform Judaism finds therein a universal Mission of Israel. Actually, the Old Testament records only the history of the Jews, and their moral and spiritual evolution, in which all peoples have found and still find solace because the human nature portrayed and the hopes mirrored are universal in fact and

appeal. Paul abolished the laws of Israel. His new dispensation was the advent of Jesus. Dr. Wise abolished Jewish custom and ceremony. His new dispensation was "the spirit of the times." Paul abolished the Law to make Judaism easy and acceptable to the Gentiles, and Dr. Wise would have abolished Jewish tradition for the identical reason. Both of them based their work on the belief that a new era was about to be ushered in, a new dispensation wiping out all that had gone before. Like Jesus, Dr. Wise claimed to love all and hate none, yet as Jesus unjustly reviled the Pharisees, from whose ranks came those same people who "followed him and heard him gladly," so Dr. Wise left no word unspoken to destroy that orthodoxy from whose ranks has come almost the entire Reform rabbinate.

The non-observance of Jewish law among Paul's heathens was natural and in accord with the life they were already living, while the abolition of the customs and laws of Judaism among the Jews, advocated by Dr. Wise, created a grievous wound, as it was part of their very life. It is not surprising, then, that Dr. Wise's first efforts in Albany, in 1850, to accomplish this end were attended by such painful results, for he was struck by one of the opposing party as he stepped before the ark to take out the scrolls of the Law. In the *Reminiscences* he comments on the incident as follows: "Who can describe that terrible day? Not I. It was agonizing, hellish torture. This victory of orthodoxy proved its grave wherein it was buried." And his self-imposed efforts to fulfill this prophecy never abated.

In America he helped to build the walls that today still separate Orthodox Jews from Reform, Zionist from non-Zionist, and nowhere in the whole United States is this barrier so deep and wide, as in the city of Cincinnati, where he labored so long. Dr. Adolph Moses, a contemporary rabbi in Dr. Wise's time, delivered an Address of Congratulation at the meeting of the Central Con-

ference of American Rabbis, held in Cincinnati in March of 1899, in celebration of the 80th birthday of Isaac M. Wise. In this Address Dr. Moses speaks of Dr. Wise as follows: "... Everywhere his word has been like a hammer breaking ancient prejudices. Everywhere his message turned the heart of the Gentile towards the Jew, and the heart of the Jew towards the Gentile. That anti-Semitism does not exist in this country; that Jew-hating and Jew-baiting are an impossibility in our America; that Judaism is universally respected and regarded by many enlightened Gentiles as co-equal with Christianity; that our temples are more and more becoming houses of prayer for all nations, is in a large measure due to the far-spreading influence exerted during half a century by Dr. Wise's preaching and writing. . . . His has been and is the eloquence of a powerful personality, the eloquence of unshakable conviction, the eloquence of reason alive with passion, the eloquence of ideas irresistible in logic but charged with emotion. The fruit of that eloquence of character, of knowledge, of life-long enthusiasm, for the moral and religious ideas of Israel, is the condition of Judaism in Cincinnati. It may be said without fear of contradiction, that Cincinnati has been for years, and still is, the center of American Israel. The right man and the right conditions met in this city, and the outcome of their harmonious co-operation, their mutual actions and re-actions, during well-nigh half a century, has been a blessing to all the inhabitants of Cincinnati, the Jews first and next the Gentiles; a blessing to all American Israel, a blessing to Judaism in the Old World. . . ."

Dr. Moses says that the result of Dr. Wise's ministry in Cincinnati is the condition of Judaism in this city. To a Cincinnati, today, this is rather a sad commentary, for Cincinnati is the only city in America, for a town of its size, that does not possess a Jewish Center Building or Y. M. H. A., although the effort to acquire one has been going on for many years. Time and again,

definite promises made have been broken, hopes have been dashed.* Dr. Moses states: "Everywhere his (Dr. Wise's) message turned the heart of the Gentile toward the Jew, and the heart of the Jew toward the Gentile." To the latter half of this statement Cincinnati Jewry can amply testify. Reform Jewry of this city (representing the more financially able) contribute generously to all non-Jewish causes. The Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. buildings and their branches, are palatial institutions, offering every conceivable comfort, convenience, and recreation. But any definitely Jewish cause here has a hard road to travel. Turning the heart of the Jew toward the Gentile, seems unfortunately, to have included turning it away from his fellow-Jew. In Cincinnati, at least, the Reform and Orthodox groups, or the German and the Russian elements, have been bound together only by the slender thread of obnoxious charity, given, not socially or philanthropically, as to equals, but only as a duty to inferiors.

In olden times, the differences between pagan life and Jewish life needed not to be pointed out. When Christianity rose to power, the Church kept the divisions marked. But today, in a more liberal age, the differences are not so clear, and the dangers of assimilation correspondingly greater. If Reform Judaism is sincere in its mission to represent Monotheism, its responsibility to maintain and foster Jewish institutions and education is all the more essential, since the loss through assimilation is a great one. (It has been estimated that 90% of marriages between Jew and Christian result in a complete loss to Judaism as a religion.) A more liberal Christianity is not necessarily monotheistic.

Dr. Wise was just as insistent on abolishing all the Christian

*The reader is again reminded of the fact that this material was written five years ago. At that time the conditions stated still existed. In the fall of 1935 a building was leased in Avondale (suburb of Cincinnati where most of the Jewish population reside) for a period of two years housing the activities, which the former Young Women's Hebrew Association had struggled for twenty years to carry on.—May the new venture prove successful! It is as much needed now as ever.

tradition of the last two thousand years as Jewish tradition. Just as he claimed Jewish orthodox practices were not really Jewish, so he declared Christian orthodox practices not really Christian. Only the doctrines and the principles of Jesus which were based on Hebrew knowledge could be called Christian, and only the principles contained in the Ten Commandments were really Jewish. His reasons were always the same, of course, to wash the world's slate clean of all existing religions, and write on it, the words: Universal Religion.

Were Christianity a whole religion, satisfying its adherents in mind and body, heart and soul, there would be no anti-semitism, no need of a scape-goat on whom to wreak the little understood wrath of unsatisfied souls. It would shine by its own light, and as a natural consequence, give light to others. The same may be said of Reform Judaism as given by its founders. If it held within itself all the elements necessary to a complete life, there would have been no need of the bitter revilings against Orthodox Judaism and against Zionism which stained the pages of American Jewish journalism in its early days and still continues as bitterly, if not so frequently, until today.

Of course, had Dr. Wise been concerned with Judaism as the religion for the Jews, instead of a universal religion for all mankind, most of his trials and tribulations would have been spared him. As it was, he created misery and hatred in both the ranks of orthodox Christians and orthodox Jews, and made no lasting friends even among the liberal Christians. After his 80th birthday, the following paragraph appeared in the editorial columns of *The American Israelite*; under date of April 20, 1899: "The Consul-General of the United States in St. Petersburg, W. L. Halloway, is the only diplomat abroad that sent congratulations to Rabbi Wise on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. Thomas Vickers, the former Rector of the University of Cincinnati, did the same out of all the non-Jewish coterie of learning. Both these

gentlemen, it must be borne in mind, are personal friends of long standing of the celebrant."

Those who gave him joy and honor were Jews, or Israelites, the people of his congregation and the students and graduates of the College he had founded. Mankind or Christianity, whom he had so eagerly longed to serve first, had forgotten him.

ORTHODOX JUDAISM

*Jewish Orthodoxy Accused of Conflict
with Americanism—*

*Reform Rabbinate Rigid in Observance of
Hundred Year Old Reforms—*

Reform Judaism Attributed to Laity

CHAPTER V

ORTHODOX JUDAISM

*I*N HIS EFFORT to level all barriers between Jew and Gentile in America, preparatory to a universal religion, Dr. Wise wrongfully accused Jewish orthodoxy of being in conflict with American culture and ideals. It must not be forgotten that he, himself an immigrant, was dealing primarily with an immigrant generation, whose dress, habits, customs and language were European. In this, of course, the Jewish immigrant, German or Russian, was no different than the Christian immigrant.

The rites and ceremonies of orthodoxy are concerned mainly with the home and synagogue, which is a private and personal

matter, and in no possible conflict with the American government. The religion of the Jew, Reform or Orthodox, cannot interfere with his Americanism. The Constitution of the United States wisely forbids any connection between Church and State. "Congress shall make no law regarding religion." So how can we be un-American by being Jewish in any degree? If Catholicism, Protestantism, Atheism, Agnosticism, etc., do not conflict with Americanism, how can Judaism, on whose moral principles Dr. Wise said, the Constitution was based? As far as the personal appearance of immigrants is concerned, their clothes, manners etc., these change quickly enough into the status quo. Dr. Wise believed that the spirit of the age was responsible for Reform. Why, then, did he not let the spirit of the age perform its work naturally instead of forcing it as he did? It is true, Judaism does change in its outer forms continually, and the orthodox Judaism of today in America or Europe is not as rigid as it was in the previous generation, but these changes have come about painlessly and naturally, they change from within, without benefit of clergy, and are not forced by command from without. They adjust themselves to outer conditions by natural law.

There is only one basis on which this charge that orthodox Judaism conflicts with Americanism, could be justified, and that basis would premise the belief that Church and State in America were one; and that, since the majority of Americans were Christians, the orthodox Jew would not harmonize with Christianity. Since the separation of church and state in America was, according to Dr. Wise, the progress of God in history, how could any Jew make the assertion that Jewish orthodoxy and Americanism were antagonistic?

To harmonize and reform Orthodox Judaism with the "spirit of the times," or his own interpretation of it, was his justification for eliminating time honored customs and ceremonies. Isaac M. Wise was born in 1809, more than a hundred years ago. He made

his reforms in the conviction that the dead of the past had no right to command the living of the present. Surely the leaders of Reform Judaism today have that same privilege, particularly when time has proven unmistakably that many of these reforms have caused injury instead of benefit to the cause under consideration. Times have naturally changed in the course of a century. The needs of today cannot be patterned exactly after the needs of yesterday. Yet many Reform rabbis, today, are more rigid in their observance of reforms made a hundred years ago, than flexible in their adjustment to present needs and ideas. We have learned from experience, we have seen the actual results of Dr. Wise's religious philosophy, and we know that his expectation that the general standard of intelligence would reach high enough to accommodate itself to the religion of rationalism, has not come to pass. Can it ever do so, since life and human nature are not always rational? His ideas took cognizance of the mind only. There are, of course, individuals who live in the rarified intellectual atmosphere of the mountain peaks, but the majority of mankind, on the plains and in the valleys of human thought and life, cannot do so.

When Dr. Wise was warned, as happened on a number of occasions, to be careful about going too far in the matter of reforms, (for the Cincinnati Bene Yeshurun congregation was essentially an orthodox German one), he declared that neither he nor the rabbinate was responsible for them, that it was the people who demanded them. In proof of this statement, he cited the fact that reforms in Judaism began with a layman, Mr. Israel Jacobson of Westphalia in Germany, in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The result of Mr. Jacobson's activities was the establishment in 1818 of the Reform-Temple-Verein, which grew into the permanent Hamburger Temple and became the pattern for all the Reform temples in Europe and America. The rabbi, therefore, was simply carrying out the wishes of the people. The following paragraph will serve to illustrate his philosophical approach to the

foregoing idea. "It is a great mistake," he said, "to imagine that one stands very high above his generation. What one thinks, a thousand others have thought simultaneously, although they could not realize it in speech or deed. Favored minds are eminent prisms. They collect the rays of thought in the focus, and clothe it in proper speech or deed, which strike the chord of the thousands, because they have had the same thoughts or feelings and lacked the means to express or realize them. A narrow minded generation produces no broadminded genius. What is not in the generation, cannot converge in the favored mind's focus, however pure the focus may be. None ever maintained that a Solomon grew up among the Hottentots, or an Aristotle among the Wallachian peasantry. Great minds are the factual demonstration of a great age environing them . . ." This he said in January of 1896. Yet three years later, when the radical rabbis in the reform pulpits were attempting to undermine all the foundations of Judaism, the logical results of his own teachings which he, however, had not foreseen, he takes an entirely different stand about the part that people play in the making of religion. On April 20, 1899, the following paragraph appeared: "When those self-made reformers say, 'We Jews made the Bible, the Talmud and all the commentaries, and all being spirit of our spirit, we can also undo it if we want it so,' they tell a falsehood. Not we Jews, but some very few of us have done it, and hammered it into the brains and souls of the masses in the hard fought battles of truth against ignorance and stupidity. It is not the spirit of our spirit; it is of the spirit of the few God-inspired and enlightened souls that rose among us by the grace of God. Who are we, what right have we to obliterate the spiritual gifts of those men of God, those princes of peace, those mighty men of righteousness? Evidently none. All that is left for us to do is simply to ascertain what of all that is ordained was intended for all eternity and all mankind, and what was intended originally for a certain age or country. This

is all that reformers are permitted to do. You dare not destroy other people's property." The fact the he did not see that "simply to ascertain" was as much the privilege of other people as himself, is naive, to say the least.

It is true that a great many customs and traditions of European orthodox Jewry should have been abandoned, but it is also true that the alert mentality and natural adaptation of the Jew would have found the solution for those of its problems which were really obstacles in the way of life in America, without the bitter controversies which Dr. Wise instigated by attacking those things which have been habit so long that people feel about them rather than think. Any American born Jew or Jewess of European orthodox parents has seen this painless transformation take place in their own homes and lives.

INCONSISTENCIES

Concerning Oysters

Women in the Choir

To Wear or Not to Wear Head Covering

Dietary Laws

Passover Dishes

Methods of Animal Slaughter

CHAPTER VI

INCONSISTENCIES

*M*ANY INCONSISTENCIES can be noted in Dr. Wise's articles on the dietary laws, on what could be considered as having permanent value in the laws of Moses, and what was intended only for temporary use. This method of course gave him a wide margin and Biblical sanction for whatever subject he had in mind. He made the Pentateuch extremely flexible, to cover his own arguments. At one time he proved that oysters were "trephah" according to the laws of Moses. A few years later he proves, according to the same laws of Moses, that oysters are "kosher." The article in explanation follows: August 28, 1890—"A new defense of

Moses and his dietary laws was lately published in the Berlin *Morgenzeitung*. It is said there, it is a well-known fact that domestic cattle will not eat the grass growing upon graves. Especially cattle with cloven hoofs show a decided aversion against such food, even in the dried state. This is explained thus: the animal chooses its food not by taste, but chiefly by its sense of smell, which is most highly developed in animals of cloven hoofs, as for instance, cows, sheep, goats, etc. The earth is porous and acts both as a filtering and draining apparatus. The fluids which the decomposing bodies first produce, which are changed then into gases, are of a very poisonous nature, and rise to the surface of the earth. The plants absorb from the ground those chemical ingredients, poison and all, and change them into vegetable matter. The highly developed sense of smell in the animals with cloven hoofs protect them against eating the poisonous plants, while other animals do eat them, and with them also the poison which they contain, and this poison remains, of course, in the flesh, blood and bone of the one-hoofed animal. The same has been scientifically established in regard to fish without fins, and all shell animals, the oyster included. They absorb the poisonous ingredients of the water in which they live. Whether Moses knew all that, we can not tell; but we do know it ought conscientiously to exclude from our diet all such animal food against which Moses cautioned his people . . . Those who believe in Moses have good reasons to respect his dietary laws, evidently based upon a more profound knowledge of nature than other lawmakers possess."

This editorial testifying to the fact that oysters are not kosher, was written as stated in the year 1890. Five years later, on May 23, 1895, another editorial appeared testifying to the fact that oysters are kosher. Dr. Wise, at that time, wrote: "Rabbi Dana, the distinguished editor of the New York *Daily Sun*, and Rabbi Wise, the aged editor of the *Israelite*, differ on the momentous question whether oysters, as sold in the markets of New York

City, are kosher or trephah, although outside of religion, politics, and President Cleveland's administration, those two gentlemen generally agree as is becoming loyal citizens and knights of the quill. The case in question is this: Rabbi Wise maintained that according to Talmudic dictum oysters are 'kosher,' i. e. the Jew may eat them without being an 'anarchist.' The distinguished editor of the *Sun*,—or more likely one of his adjutants—says no, oysters are 'trephah,' i. e. no law-abiding (Rabbinical or Mosaic) Jew must eat them. Wise says, the shell of the oyster is the same protective casing to this bivalve, as the scales are to the fish, against the poisonous gases in the water—this is a piece of science—and his antagonist of the *Sun* says no! Wise referred to no science at all; he avoided that point altogether, and in this he is perfectly right. It is not the scientist to whom the rabbi spoke. Men who feel conscientious scruples in eating this or that kind of meat cannot be convinced contrary to their belief by any scientific demonstration. According to science, oysters are certainly 'kosher,' for they are well protected against the poisonous gases in the water, and they do not thrive in contaminated water; they are nutritious, as easily digested as a soft-boiled egg, and, as that now deceased rabbi said, they are quite palatable."

"According to Moses also, oysters do not belong to the class of forbidden food. The text in Leviticus xi. and Deuteronomy xiv. does not say so, as it does concerning the swine and other animals with one sign of cleanness; . . . in the case of fish and other aqueous beings, he mentions none at all being forbidden, except those which have no fins or scales . . . No marine animal is actually unclean, and none is expressly forbidden to be used as food except the scavengers, and the sign of those scavengers is that they have no scales. Therefore the Talmud holds that in fish one sign of cleanness suffices. The oyster is no scavenger, it cannot even thrive in contaminated water, as your oyster men will tell you. Nor is it at all certain that Moses meant any marine animal except fish

and creeping things in the water. But those people from the interior of Poland that never saw an oyster, perhaps never heard of the existence of such a thing, care no more for Moses than for science in matters of this kind. The Talmud and inherited custom are their sole guide. Therefore Wise said oysters are kosher according to the Talmud, and so they are, even if our venerable colleague of the New York *Sun* or his adjutant, whoever that may be, does not submit to Wise's rabbinical authority, and all the saints of the New York ghetto raise the mad dog cry of heresy at his heels. They howl all the time anyhow, and there is none to be disturbed by them."

Outside of the marked inconsistency between his earlier and later attitude toward oysters, it is also interesting to note that Dr. Wise uses the Talmud to support his views in favor of oysters at the same time that he condemns the orthodox for adhering to the Talmud and inherited custom. But whether oysters are kosher or not kosher according to science, Moses or the Talmud, their appearance alone should be sufficient to condemn them as food.

A few more examples will be given illustrating Dr. Wise's ability to quote Scripture or the Talmud as authority for any changes in justification of Reform departures from old customs.

Away back in 1856, when Reform Judaism startled the orthodox by introducing women into the synagogue choirs, Dr. Wise offered the following interesting argument: "If authority is required, is the following not conclusive? We read in Nehemiah vii. 67, of the returning captives 'And they had cantors and cantrices.' We also read I. Chronicles xxv. 5, 6, 'All these were children of Haimen, the seer of the king in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Haimen fourteen sons and three daughters. All these were on the hands of their father in song in the house of the Lord.' "

On the removal of head covering in the synagogue, another controversial point, Dr. Wise wrote on November 22, 1872: "We

have remarked before, that it was prohibited nowhere in the Bible or Talmud to conduct divine worship in the synagogue bare-headed, and that it was allowed to enter the temple of Jerusalem and stand before the altar with the head uncovered . . . ” He also wrote concerning this matter on November 12, 1891, as follows: “We have frequently called attention to that Mishnah in ‘Taharoth’ from which it appears that the ancient Hebrews, dignitaries excepted, generally went bareheaded, also in the temple up to the altar even. The same appears also from the Bible in the case of Elishah and the petulant boys (2 Kings II, 23-25). The boys insult the aged prophet, calling at him, ‘Go up, bald head! go up, bald head!’ Those petulant boys could not possibly know that Elishah was bald headed if his head had been covered. The coats, also the girdle of the prophets, are described in Scripture, but there is no mention anywhere of their hats, caps or turbans.”

In this way, Dr. Wise could find authority for all changes the Reform movement wished to make from inherited Jewish custom in order to more closely approximate the general Protestant form of worship. And when this authority was neither expressed, contained or implied in the Decalogue, or other laws of Moses, he could find it in the Talmud, the Mishnah or other literature of Israel.

Time had tied the Gordian knot of detailed observance in the home and in the synagogue. Driven into the ghetto life and deprived of every civil enjoyment and natural contact with the outside world by the meek and humble followers of Jesus, Judaism saved its life and reason by complete absorption and preoccupation with the home and all its affairs, glorifying the minutest details into a religious duty. And through the centuries, the habits of the body became interwoven with the spiritual fabric of the heart and soul. “Old sores,” Dr. Wise called these customs and ceremonies, which needed to be cut out of the body of Judaism with bold strokes. For this purpose he employed the Alexandrian

sword of Reform, a cruel and painful process, except for those who were already so calloused that they could feel nothing. For the others, the knot tied by time and circumstances could be unbound only by the same healing hands, already at work.

As early as June of 1862, Dr. Wise informed the orthodox that "the words of God were entrusted to Israel to perpetuate and promulgate them among all nations, and you place the light of truth behind the opaque barriers of your observances and errors." Reading the writings of Isaac M. Wise, an outsider would readily come to the conclusion that Orthodox Judaism concerned itself entirely with the details of physical living, and that morality and spirituality were strangers among them, when in reality all that Reform had done was to lift the ethics and monotheism from orthodoxy and call it a complete and rational faith, just as Christianity had taken certain portions of Judaism unto itself, and both sought to destroy the source from which their strength had come. For Christianity is simply a compound of Judaism and Paganism, its moral and ethical phases being entirely Jewish, its ceremonies and ritual pagan.* These are plain, unvarnished facts. The morals and ethics of Reform Judaism also came from Orthodox Judaism—Reform merely took away the forms and ceremonies of orthodoxy, but could add nothing of a moral or ethical nature.

Orthodox Judaism had ministered to all the needs of life, material and spiritual, physical and ethical, yet it never closed the doors to reason and philosophy, as the literature of our sages amply proves. Deprived of the life of the outerworld, it created a life of its own, rich in spirit, sublime in hope and courage, clinging to God with a faith and a fervor that made its people one with the Author of life.

Dr. Wise's outstanding argument for the need of Reform in

*Dr. Samuel Max Melamed, in his "Spinoza and Buddha—Visions of a Dead God," believes Buddhism to have contributed largely to the formation of Christianity.

Judaism in America was the disappearance, in the main, of the first Spanish-Jewish orthodox immigration. Yet today we know that Reform did not keep the succeeding wave of German-Jewish immigration faithful either. Had not the third wave of immigration into America brought the Orthodox Russian Jews in large numbers, it is doubtful whether Judaism in America would have had a long history. And Russian Jewry, also, in America, has lost many of its sons and daughters through intermarriage. In a land predominantly Christian, it is hardly possible for most Jews who intermarry to retain their faith. They drift, and the tide soon carries them out to the sea of assimilation. Can Judaism, then, survive in America, since both Orthodoxy and Reform have failed here? Both types represent extremes, a swinging of the pendulum from one side to the other. Orthodoxy stayed too much at home, Reform has traveled far away from it. The solution of the problem would indicate a fusion of the best elements developed by both groups, and each has much to its credit. Judaism in America should not be disfigured by doubtful adjectives. The word "Reform" does not have a happy connotation. Judaism does not need reforming; it needs re-living.

And yet, while Dr. Wise pointed to the lost Spanish orthodoxy as justification for Reform, he nevertheless attributes his literary labors in America to one of their number, to whom he refers in his *Reminiscences* as "Mrs. F.", a native-born Jewess of Portuguese descent, whose love and enthusiasm for Jewish history and literature, and belief in his ability, inspired his first writings. He says of her: "May God forgive this woman all her sins. First she made a Jewish editor of me, and then also a Jewish historian."

Dr. Wise believed that the "historical consciousness of being a scion of Israel and the energetic intelligence peculiar to the denomination," would be sufficient to keep the Jew faithful to the religion of his fathers. Today, of course, we have ample proof

that such is not the case. Jews are human beings, like all other people, and their loyalty depends on their training and associations. The fence around the Law is still necessary. The wholesale removal of all time-honored customs and ceremonies has only meant the adoption of the ritual of other faiths which make greater demands and requires more strict obedience. Freedom from one set of ideas or rules only means attachment to another set, so why should we not abide by our own? Especially should this be easy in America, which interferes legally with no man's religion. Dr. Wise was willing to abolish the landmarks of Judaism because he felt certain that Christianity was doing likewise with its dogmas. How he really could have believed this is puzzling, in spite of the reasons he gives. In a book written by John Uri Lloyd, entitled: *Felix Moses, The Beloved Jew of Stringtown on the Pike*, Mr. Lloyd gives a very clear picture of the religious ideas prevalent in the state of Kentucky, during the life time of Felix Moses, which corresponds with the years in which Dr. Wise lived in Cincinnati, the last half of the nineteenth century. Mr. Lloyd states that even the most ignorant backwoodsman in the wilds of Kentucky was saturated fanatically, with some form of Christianity. And even if Dr. Wise's oft repeated prophecy that Christianity would be a myth by 1900, had come true, would it not have been wiser to wait until that time before discarding Judaism?

He laughed to scorn the rabbinical dietary laws of washing and salting meat. "The best point in sanitary religion," he wrote in October of 1884, "was lately made by the Grand Rabbi of Marseilles (France), who wrote to a London paper that the immunity of the Jews there from the cholera epidemic has its cause in the culinary observance of salting the meat and after an hour washing it well before it is boiled, stewed or roasted. That simple cause produces that grand effect, so wise were our sages. Ladies and gentlemen, doctors and patients, take up the 'Yoreh De'ash,' chapters 69-78, and study the important secret of how to protect

yourselves and others against the ravages of the cholera, and forget not to read the London papers on those particular points of microbiotics." Yet he had also stated at another time that "most diseases to which men are subject now have been carried into the human organism with the animal flesh used for food, and especially in the blood thereof." Certainly the washing and salting of meat should go far to eliminate this danger. With regard to the cholera victims, he said: "We have witnessed the ravages of the cholera in Prague, Albany, N. Y., and Cincinnati, in 1832, 1849 and 1866, and we know that the immunity of 'kosher' Jews from prevalent epidemics is not true. We have seen this very thing also in the yellow fever districts. It is only in so far as the Jew is no habitual drunkard and generally a prudent man, who observes sanitary laws and measures and listens carefully to the physician, that he is exempted from prevailing epidemics."

So wrote the Reverend Isaac M. Wise. Concerning kosher and trephah regulations, he said: "It makes them (the Jews) narrow-minded, exclusive; it produces in them all the effects which superstition generally produces down to irreligion and immorality." This charge certainly is as ugly as it is untrue. Irreligion and immorality were almost unknown to orthodox Judaism, as Dr. Wise himself had spent a great deal of time and energy to prove, among other things, to the Christian world, through his writings. As for the orthodox custom of using two sets of dishes, one for milk products and one for meat products, this custom can easily be rationalized by anyone who wishes to do so. Under this double arrangement, dishes last just twice as long, so it cannot even be called an extravagance. And life does offer more variety by this method. It makes food more interesting. And food being one of the necessities of life, it should not be spoken of contemptuously. Not only ladies must live by it. "A kitchen and stomach religion," Dr. Wise termed it, "philosophy in pots and pans." Today the best minds in the dietetic world have dis-

covered that the combination of meat and milk products in the same meal is a dangerous one. Food and food combinations have become an all-important subject, as the realization of the importance of food on the health and temper of the individual is becoming better known. Whether the laws in Judaism concerning the separation of meat and milk were due originally to wisdom or to accident, modern science has proclaimed them wise. One of the frightful customs of the pagan peoples was to boil a young kid alive in the milk of its mother, the while a wild dance went on around the fire in honor of one of their numerous gods. It was to prevent the children of Israel from imitating this barbarous custom, that Moses is supposed to have made the prohibition which has been construed by orthodox Judaism into the separation of all meat and milk products.

It is undoubtedly true that orthodoxy carried its regulations too far, but for this the ingrown cramping ghetto life was responsible. In America, in due time, all would have adjusted itself within reasonable limits.

As for the special dishes for Passover, Dr. Wise's comment was as follows: "Those who waste their religious and moral sentiments in small and insignificant observances, which make them neither better nor more useful, diminish and impair their religious and moral capacity. Experience proves this abundantly, it requires no logical evidence. Religious ceremonies and observances are all right, if they serve any religious purpose, or moral end. When any of these ceremonies or observances have lost their significance, they become burdensome because useless, and nugatory because they are made a sort of excuse for the neglect of the main duties. This seems certainly to be the case with all expansions and extensions of the Mosaic laws . . . Where they have lost their significance, they are dead and must be decently buried. None of those past biblical presumptions are more clearly

useless now than those kitchen and table laws and observances, of which Moses and the prophets knew nothing."

Though Dr. Wise called the separate Passover dishes a "superstition" who brought up in an orthodox home does not know the thrill of living for a week in an entirely different world composed of different food and dishes? The old rabbis or laymen who were responsible for all these rules and regulations must have been saturated with modern psychology in their effective work to keep life from becoming boresome. The intensive cleaning done for this holiday can also be rationalized. It is our modern American Spring house-cleaning, given an aura of holiness, in addition. Could anything be more delightful? Let no mere man, of any shade of religious belief, laugh at the institution of Passover customs or Spring house-cleaning. Without the physical frame of material environment, the spiritual qualities of the picture cannot be made manifest. So it will be found that all old customs can be given new meanings, and the old lamp, if rubbed anew, may produce the genii who will transform the cold gray of life into roseate hues for our sated twentieth century Aladdins.

When Germany in 1894 decided to use the Jewish mode of slaughtering animals as a health measure for the food served the German army, Dr. Wise was delighted. In reporting the matter through his paper, he said: "After a scientific study and a series of experiments extending over a number of years, the German Imperial factories for preparing food for the army have ordered the general introduction of the shechitah, the method of slaughtering cattle adopted by the Rabbis and based upon the Mosaic laws. This is certainly the most remarkable tribute to the wisdom of the old Jewish dietary laws that has been offered in modern times . . . Our interest in this matter centers in the fact, that so many long centuries before anybody in Christendom thought of establishing sanitary and hygienic law, or of preventing cruelty to animals, or even to man, long before these sciences were known, those ancient

Hebrews had introduced this mode of slaughtering animals which now science and experience agree is least painful to the victim and most protective to the flesh eater. This is a very important chapter in the history of culture, for the practice was general among the Hebrews in their country and in the dispersion and always considered a divine commandment. It is a silent yet eloquent witness testifying to the higher moral culture among the ancient Hebrews. Although all these laws concern the slaughterers more than the flesh-eaters, yet from the humanitarian and scientific standpoints, it remains admirable, that those ancient Hebrews knew and practiced that which the nineteenth century, but yesterday, as it were, did find out."

So it was that when the Christians adopted any Jewish custom Dr. Wise applauded their good judgment, but when the orthodox Jews practiced the same custom, his words were not those of praise. In an editorial written in February of 1892 entitled "Shechitah and Bedikah," he stated: "We ought to insist upon Shechitah and Bedikah as general laws to be carried out in practice, but not as a specially Jewish matter, a religious observance, which it evidently is not . . . That kosher and Trephah business has become a huge superstition among the Hebrews, so huge indeed that it bedims and overclouds all religion and concentrates upon itself the entire religious sentiment, especially of women, with whom the kitchen has become all in all in Jewish life. Its nugatory effect is visible everywhere, especially among the immigrants, many of whom look like starved beggars, denerved paupers, when they happen to come in places where they cannot have what they call 'kosher' meat, and must live on the poorest fare. It prevents them from settling down in small groups over the land which would be their redemption from inherited debilities and elevate them to free citizens of a free country. It crowds them together in large cities to increase the proletarian class and ruins their prospects in life . . . And yet the so-called orthodox congregations,

consisting chiefly of such immigrants, together with their rabbis and leaders, have nothing better to do than to uphold with might and main this kosher and trephah institution; do almost nothing else than fostering this superstition, although they must know that any belief not sanctioned in 'Thorath Mosheh' is a superstition . . . We do not mean to say that Shechitah and Bedikah should be abolished; we mean to say that the conscience of men should be eased by the conviction that this is not at all a religious matter and has nothing to do with Judaism. There are higher duties, and they must not be subjected to this or any other superstition."

The inconsistency in his argument here is that while he continually refers to Shechitah as a superstition, he also states that it should be adopted as a general practice for all people. One statement conflicts with the other.

HOLIDAYS AND HOLY DAYS

The Sabbath

Sunday Morning Services

Passover — Shavuoth — Succoth

New Year — Yom Kippur

Chanukah — Christmas — Purim

Ninth Day of Ab — Destruction of the Temple

CHAPTER VII

HOLIDAYS AND HOLY DAYS

WITH REGARD to Dr. Wise's views on the observance of holidays and holy days, his stand on the holiness of the Sabbath never changes. He fought for the observance of the 7th day Sabbath as commanded in the Decalogue, and for its observance both by Jew and non-Jew. As early as 1857, he found cause to censure the Cincinnati school board for holding examinations on Saturday, and the Republican state convention for convening on Saturday. "The School Board of this city," he wrote, "shows so little respect to the Jewish pupils of the different schools, that the examinations for promotion to the Intermediate or High School, are invariably

held on Saturday. Will the School Board please inform us why the examinations never occur on Sunday? There is much said about making the schools accessible to all religious denominations; for this is the aim of all public schools; still, the School Board of our city does not know, that they should not occasion children to violate their Sabbath. The duty of that Board plainly is to change that day, or give us an account why they did not fix upon Sunday for that purpose."

"The Republican State Convention comes on—Saturday. Why not Sunday? It appears that those men wilfully and obstinately ignore the existence of Jews in this State. Puritan bigotry and atheism, together with a few dozen more of ISMS, having politically amalgamated into a party called Republicans, they of course can on one side take no notice of religion at all, and on the other side the Jew must be ignored. Let us hear, gentlemen, why is this convention not on Sunday?"

"The Sabbath of the Decalogue," he stated on October 13, 1871, "was proclaimed and ordained under the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, the Sunday Sabbath which arrogant clergymen call the Lord's Day, was ordained and proclaimed by the Emperor Constantine, the man stained with the murder of his wife, his son and his colleague—the same sort of a Christian as Henry VIII was. The Sabbath of the Decalogue at once was introduced and kept by all Israel because it was a Divine command. 'And the Children of Israel observed the Sabbath, to make the Sabbath an eternal covenant to all their generations.' The Sunday Sabbath was not observed, so that the Emperor Leo, toward the end of the fifth century, issued an edict prohibiting work to be done on Sunday, although the Council of Laodicea had resolved 'that none should Judaize and suspend labor on the Sabbath, but work on this day and honor the day of the Lord, as much as possible to rest Christian like.' The Sabbath of the Decalogue is a memorial to the Creator of the world, the Redeemer of Israel and the Teach-

er of Truth; while the Sunday Sabbath is intended to distinguish an alleged fact which no child with common sense will ever believe. The Sunday Sabbath, an imperial-papal institution, maintained by the inconsistency of Protestants, is not thought of very much in Catholic countries, although the day was given to Catholics only, in order to separate them from the Jews. Nevertheless, Christian friends always ask us again, why we did not adopt their Sunday; nevertheless, the yesterday-saints want us to keep divine service on Sunday, to accommodate the Sabbath breakers and mental fops. Never! The Protestant world has to come to us, we can not go over to the opposition."

His objections to a Sunday temple service were strenuous. "Mark it," he wrote in March of 1879, "those who say we do not worship with you because you do so on Saturday, would not worship on Sunday, which is their society day. Those who say we cannot worship with you because your ritual contains too much Hebrew, will not pray much in any other language." "But this is not the question, they say, we do not wish to profane the Sabbath or to canonize the Sunday, what we want is to give a Sunday service and lecture to those who cannot attend divine service on the Sabbath. There can be no wrong therein; you may worship God, teach and preach at any time. We ought to be grateful to those gentlemen who are no rebels and wish to do missionary work among Sabbath-breakers. Also in this case the utilitarian principle is damnable. You confirm Sabbath-breakers in their opinion that they are Jews after all . . . All the good that could be obtained by a Sunday service can be fully reached by a Friday evening service, strictly within the pale of Judaism and to the satisfaction of all parties. Make proper arrangements everywhere for the Friday evening service and lecture." "You might just as well expect to overthrow the rock of Gibraltar by striking it with a fiddlestick," he said in February of 1885, "as to expect to transfer

the Sabbath of the Decalogue to the Pope's Sunday by the bombardment of words against it."

With regard to the High Feasts, the three national holy days (Chaggim) ordained in the Mosaic code—Passover, Shavuoth, and Succoth, besides the New Year and the Day of Atonement, he believed all these would come to be observed by mankind generally as a universal religion:—Passover, as the first redemption of humanity from slavery—Shavuoth, in celebration of the giving of the Ten Commandments, civilization's foundation—Succoth, as a universal Thanksgiving Day—New Year, a day of meditation for all, and the Day of Atonement, as a universal day of forgiveness for all.

Of Passover he wrote in April of 1856—"Passover is in commemoration of the great event of Israel's departure from Egypt. This was the first declaration of independence recorded in history. Then a nation was born that has since revolutionized the world in its political, social, religious and juridical conceptions. Then the embryo of civilization was created which since then, has grown up to gigantic manhood. Passover should be a feast of all civilized nations, for then the savior of mankind emerged from its doom of Egyptian tyranny." "Gratefully remember our heroic ancestors who knew how to sacrifice everything that is dear to man," he wrote in his Passover editorial for the year of 1861, "and maintained liberty of conscience. Forget not to remember Gideon, Samuel, David, the glorious Maccabees and Bar Cochba by the side of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Adams and old John Hancock. When you remember Moses and Aaron as they stood before the despot Pharoah, forget not England's Cromwell and Italy's Garibaldi; for there shall be one Passover to all nations."

In his Passover editorial for the year of 1880, Dr. Wise said: "Why should not we, in these United States, at least, give up the Passover and celebrate the Fourth of July in its stead? Why should not citizens of France or Switzerland do the same?

Because we celebrate not the natal day of liberty for one nation, but the day when the exalted idea of freedom for all nations was born—born as the will of God . . . Not for one nation, but for all, was freedom born when Israel went out of Egypt. As long as there is any despotism in Church or State anywhere, as long as the symbol of the cross stands above the symbol of freedom, we cling to the freedom personified in the Passover feast; for it is Israel's mission to bear those great truths to the very end of all falsehood. Anyhow, we prefer the (Matzoth) unleavened bread of freedom, to the bread of mysticism, and the wine of gladness to that which represents the blood of a man. . . .”

Yet although Dr. Wise preferred and enjoyed the unleavened bread of freedom, he criticizes a Mr. Montagu of London, for sending a shipment of Matzoth to the Jewish soldiers in South Africa during the Boer War in March of 1900, just a few weeks before his death. He wrote, on March 8th of that year; “According to the decision of Moses Maimonides, this (shipment of Matzoth) was unnecessary. That great rabbi Moses laid down the law that in time of war all dietary laws are suspended for the soldiers. Ask the Chief Rabbi to show you this law in ‘Rambam.’” It did not seem to occur to Dr. Wise that Maimonides must have meant that in time of war dietary laws are suspended in case of necessity. As long as Mr. Montagu was able to forward the Matzoth, why should his act have been questioned?

In his editorials on the Feast of the Weeks—Shavuoth, Dr. Wise again states his belief in the universal acceptance of this holy day. “On this day,” he wrote in May of 1860, “the sixth of Sivan, the revelation of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai took place, and it was celebrated by Israel in all lands and in all centuries, ever since history records . . . This day the constitution of all civilization was handed down to man. How grand and sublime a thought! . . . It is therefore a feast of the intellect, a high feast to Israel, an important day to mankind. Once the na-

tions will awake from their long and dreary dream, once they will throw away their idols and their superstitions, and then they will worship One God, and rejoice on the day when He made known

His will to man; then the world will celebrate one great
FEAST OF WEEKS."

In an editorial entitled: Shavuoth in Cincinnati—Dr. Wise describes the celebration of this festival in 1875. "Most of the business houses were closed," he wrote. "The temples and synagogues were handsomely decorated. Confirmation in three places of worship brought multitudes to the sacred shrines. All standing room was occupied. Choirs, cantors, and organists did their best, rendering classical music in a most happy style. Between twelve and half past twelve o'clock, the doors of the temples open and the current of men, women and children, with joyous countenances and in festive garbs moves out and onward each to his respective home. From two to seven p. m. the streets of Cincinnati are full of gay and elegant ladies and gentlemen, who go to see their friends whose sons and daughters have been confirmed. All Cincinnati is in motion, the promenades are alive with smiling countenances, black eyes, blazing gems, silk, broadcloth, etc., as though the golden age had suddenly come back upon us. In the house of the confirmed ones, there is gladness over the gifts received, the pleasant calls and congratulations. All parlors are in the holiday garb, plenty of wine, fruit and cakes, ice creams and lemonades, good times everywhere. It is a holiday as beautiful, as common and well-established, both in the temple and family, as it could possibly be made . . ."

Scenes like the one pictured above must have been rare indeed a quarter of a century later. Writing under the date of June, 1898, in an editorial entitled: "A Silent Contemplation After Shavuoth," Dr. Wise asks: "What will become of our dear Judaism when we are no more? We may say, be not afraid of your stern orthodox

partisans if they are honest. Fear not the unscrupulous radicals if they are truthful. Beware only of the indifferent and masked actors that change their color like the chameleon, and like the fox scent their way into the poultry pen. Earnest, upright and truthful men endanger no just cause, the lukewarm hypocrite mildews every tender plant."

The articles on the Feast of Booths, Succoth, also emphasize universalism. In one of his early editorials on this holiday, written in September of 1855, Dr. Wise says: "There is no feast among any nation or religious creed, which has so much pure morality and humanity at its base, it is actually a feast of Israel, which cannot be imitated or replaced by human institutions . . . Let Israel celebrate this feast, until the nations be united before God, fraternized in purity, and tied together by the bands of joy, until poverty and misery be exiled from society by universal charity."

Some years later, in 1872, he wrote: "This is the Succoth week—the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles—which is actually the Biblical Thanksgiving Day, after all was gathered in barn and cellar . . . Frequent mention of this feast is made in rabbinical Scriptures, the narrative of eye-witnesses and the words of Hillel uttered on this occasion are put on record . . . It appears that the ancient Hebrews celebrated annually, on their Feast of Booths, their thanksgiving-day, a musical jubilee in the Temple, with a religious character, of course, and a regular harvest festival, a *folksfest*, when the squares and thoroughfares of Jerusalem were ornamented with fruits and flowers, and the multitudes rejoiced 'Before God thy God,' that is, 'minus' the drunken revelries and immoral excesses of the Heathens, in the presence of God and under the eyes of the Law. Modern civilization has yet to learn many a lesson of the ancient Hebrews. The modern Israelite has also to learn many a thing of his ancient sires . . . "

By 1880, however, it seems this feast also had lost its appeal

for the followers of Reform. In his Succoth editorial for that year, Dr. Wise justifies their loss of interest in the following words: "... among American Jews, styled reformers, which means four-fifths of all of them, this feast has lost its sanctity. It comes in the midst of the business season. It comes right after the New Year and Day of Atonement. We are no agricultural people just now to celebrate this beautiful harvest feast. The four articles of the festive wreath suggest no ideas of truth or feelings of piety to the generality of our people, who know not what these foreign fruits mean. It is of no use to carry into the temples the products of the land and make of the feast the vulgar Thanksgiving Day, we want no new symbolism, it is a mere mockery and is looked upon as such by the generality . . ."

In conclusion, as the years went by, Dr. Wise sums up the disinterestedness of Reform Jews in the observance of Passover, Shavuoth, and Succoth, in an editorial written by him about six months before his death, on September 14, 1899, headed: "The National Feasts in the Torah of Moses." "Notwithstanding all changes of climate and other physical conditions which have transpired these thousands of years," he wrote, "notwithstanding also the dispersion of Israel over all zones, so that harvest-time in Palestine is not harvest-time to nine tenths of the Hebrew people—we still celebrate those three national feasts, as well as we can, on account of the historical memorials which they are, and the sublime religious truths which they re-awaken in our memory; and what perhaps, is no less important, to keep in unison and unity with the whole house of Israel and the covenant with God and truth. If thousands of us neglect it, they cannot abolish it, for other tens of thousands cling to it steadfastly. If we do not or cannot observe and practice all the ceremonial customs and observances, it matters not; for all can be reminded of the sublime verities which these holy days represent; and most all will do it when they read these humble suggestions of ours on the national

feasts in the Torah of Moses. It is the resurrection of the spirit from the ruins of ceremonies and outward observances which we desire for the salvation of Israel's sacred cause and mission."

Had Dr. Wise been able to review his own writings through the half century of his work in Cincinnati, had he reread his early flaming articles on the beauty and civilizing factors inherent in all the Jewish holidays, and then observed his later justifications of their vanishing influence, he would surely and sadly have realized that more than a "humble suggestion" on his part would be necessary to impress upon his readers, "the sublime verities which these holy days represent." To Jews who had been brought up in orthodox homes, as Dr. Wise and the older people of his congregation and others had been, his words no doubt recalled the happy memories, the physical and spiritual joys which these holy days, through ceremonies and observances, had crystallized in their memories—but to the children of these German immigrants, taught by Dr. Wise and his pupils in the rabbinate, to consider all Jewish ritual and ceremony as narrow and superstitious, his words could have suggested little idea of truth or feelings of piety, for they knew not what these foreign holidays meant, to them his words could have been only mere mockery, whited sepulchres.

Religious ritual is a means of expression to the soul, as the sound of music to the ear, and the sight of beauty to the eye; it is the cleared road on which we travel through the forest of religious life, which otherwise could not be seen because of the trees. And of all the beautiful signs and symbols in Judaism, what could be lovelier than the mellow candle light which graces every festival's beginning, from the Friday evening service when the Jewish wife and mother asks God's blessing for a week of light and understanding as symbolized by the light and beauty of the freshly lit candles, to the Chanukah service which adds a glowing candle each night until the eighth night reveals a courageous row

of gleaming lights shining through the mist of past history and lighting the way to present and future achievement.

Without ceremony and ritual, religious ideas can make very little, if any impression on a child's mind, for they are as pictures presented in their proper setting; and so the rich treasures of an anciently civilized people were practically lost to a generation or two in Reform Judaism.

Returning to Dr. Wise's views and inconsistencies in the matter of the Jewish holy days.

Of the New Year, the "Rosh Hashonah," he wrote in the autumn of 1878: "Moses made this the 'Day of Alarm,' YOM THERUAH, when the trumpet, the cornet, the SHOFAR, should announce to every one in Israel, God is your Sole Sovereign, renew your allegiance to Him who has reigned, Who reigns now, and who will reign forevermore; prepare to meet your God, rouse, purify and sanctify yourselves as did your sires when they went forth to stand at Mt. Sinai and receive the decrees of the Almighty; prepare, prepare to meet your God as you, against your will, will be summoned by the blast of the last trumpet from time to eternity, from your career on earth before your Judge in the realm of light without night, truth and justice without deception or excuse . . ."

"The world must become one holy land and the human family one Israel . . . for you go to Rome or Mecca, and you stand face to face with the dead man and the dogmas of death, death is the central idea; you enter the sanctuary of Israel and you are before the Living God, the living word, the living principles of humanity and eternity, it is all life . . . Therefore Israel must live co-equal with the family of man . . ."

A decade later, in 1888, he makes no more mention of New Year as a "Day of Alarm," or of blowing the "Shofar" to rouse, sanctify and purify its hearers; now, evidently everyone is faultless and need not be reminded of sins he or she does not possess

or commit. He writes: "Rabbi Chama ben Rabbi Chaninah, the successor of the author of the Mishnah as the head of the academy in Tiberias, had an opinion of the New Year other than that held by the authors of the 'Dinim' and 'Piutim' for this day, as held by the Rabbinic Kabbalistic orthodoxy. In the first 'Perek' of 'Rosh Hashonah' in 'Yerushalmi' it is recorded that he said concerning 'Rosh Hashonah': 'Where is a nation like this (the Hebrew)? It is customary in the world, if one is summoned before the seat of judgment, he wears black garments and wraps in black and lets his beard grow wild, because he knows not how he will be adjudged. But Israel is not so; they dress in white and wrap in white and shave their beards, eat, drink and rejoice, for they know that God will perform miracles for them.' " "This," continues Dr. Wise, "changes the whole character of the 'Rosh Hashonah.' It does away with all fasting, lamenting, weeping and horror inspiring prayers; it does away with all the superstitions piled upon the 'Shofar,' and him who blows that instrument; it makes it a cheerful and joyful holy day for those who trust in the grace and paternal love of God, and are not afraid of Satan's tricks, the shadow of their own guilty conscience. If anything ought to be taken out of the synagogue and buried decently among the venerable remnants of the past, it is certainly the 'Shofar', around which the Kabbalists have raised mountains of superstitions. As regards the Biblical command and the Psalmic mentioning thereof; any trumpet or cornet will do the same service without making the observance ridiculous and without perpetuating the superstitions connected with it. The opinion of Rabbi Chama ben Chaninah is good enough authority for us."

In addition to the wide difference of construction placed upon the New Year between his earlier and later articles, the first one being that of humble supplication before God, and the other haughty confidence in the merits of the supplicants, the quotation from Rabbi Chama ben Chaninah is used to give a false impres-

sion, for the dark picture painted by the rabbi represents the pagan nations, and the bright picture represents Israel's reaction to the Day of Judgment, which interpretation has never changed.

Of the Day of Atonement, he wrote, in September of 1855, as follows: ". . . We celebrate the Day of Atonement as our fathers did, abstain from all enjoyments, repent and confess our sins, pray to God for pardon, and determine upon doing good henceforth." Up to 1880, he recommended fasting on Yom Kippur. "If there be one or another who thinks it burdensome or irrational to fast for twenty-four hours, let him bear in mind that the training of the will, an actual declaration of the mind's dominion over the animal appetites, are worth many more serious sacrifices. Let him remember that it is much less damaging to fast than to believe the absurdities of redemption imposed on man by the popular (Christian) dogmas. We would rather fast with Rabbi Zadok for forty years than sacrifice our reason upon the altar of dogmatic theology. The satisfaction of the mind, the easement of the conscience, the conciliation of the consciousness, the re-union with God and man, the victory over grudge and wrath, over the despotism of the passions, are worth many more serious sacrifices than we do bring in one day."

Here Dr. Wise is able to rationalize the ancient and honorable institution of orthodox, rabbinical Judaism, of fasting on Yom Kippur, in spite of his criticisms of orthodoxy as a religion of superstitions, kitchen and table laws and observances.

His change of opinion on the meaning and importance of "Chanukah" between 1857 and 1899 is also startling. In December of 1857 he stated: "We celebrate these days, a historical event of momentous importance to Israel and no less to mankind at large. It was a combat between Greek superstition and revealed religion, the former controlled then nearly the whole of the civilized world, and the latter was defended by a small band of devout patriots, armed by the will of Providence, to save this sacred trea-

sure from oblivion. If Antiochus Epiphanes had met with success, there would be in our days no Judaism, no Christianity, and no Islam. The 'Fatum,' this blind irrational power would now sway its scepter instead of the Supreme Wisdom, Justice and Peace. The Asmoneans have fought not only the battles of Judah, but also those of humanity . . . "

By 1899 he had so far changed his opinion on the subject of Chanukah, as to write: "Chanukah which we celebrate this week, is unique among religious holidays in that it commemorates a martial event, or a series of them terminating in a glorious victory, rather than a religious episode. The deliverance of Palestine from the yoke of the invader is what appeals to the modern imagination; the rededication of the Temple is after all but an episode."

Chanukah now represents to Dr. Wise, not the combat between "Greek superstition and revealed religion," but a "martial event."

Along in 1883, Dr. S. H. Sonneschein, a radical reform rabbi of St. Louis, Mo. proposed changing the Chanukah date to the 25th of December, or Christmas. Dr. Wise's reaction to this proposal, was the suggested abolition of both Chanukah and Christmas. He wrote: "Christmas is no holiday among American Protestants, and nobody can tell on what day or in what year Jesus of Nazareth was born, if he was born at all. The Chanukah of the Jews is no holiday, because it was instituted (about 125 B. C.) long after the close of the Bible canon, and was never acknowledged as anything besides one of a number of half holidays, dozens of which were instituted at various times, as is evident from the 'Meguillath Taanith' and fell into disuse, as did the 'Chanukah' with the 'Christmas' in our days, outside of a few synagogues and churches."

"Impress your children by words or deeds with rational thoughts, and do not fool them with Santa Claus fables and the thought behind it, if Jesus was not God he was at least a great

prophet, when you know he was neither. Let Christmas alone, let Chanukah alone. Have you no other "Deiges" (worries)?

The result of Dr. Sonneschein's radicalism was the division of his congregation, several years later, into two congregations, those who could not reconcile his ideas with Judaism, forming the new group.

Purim is one holiday which Dr. Wise never criticized, possibly because the *Purim* story occurred in Persia and not in Palestine. In March of 1857 in an article entitled: "Cincinnati—*Purim*," he describes the festivities on this occasion as follows: "The *Purim* feast was a splendid affair to our good people. Fancy dress and masque ball in the *Allemania* and the *Harmony*; crowded halls, cheerful hearts, lively motions, warbling music, delicious refreshments, all in the commemoration of Queen Esther and Mordecai, and the triumph of the Israelites over Haman and their other enemies—rendered the night a joyous and happy epoch of life. In the *Allemania* there were no less than 150 couples, masqued and unmasqued . . . On the whole, it was a splendid affair, worthy of the endeavors of the *Allemania Society*, which is never behind time in doing things nicely and tastefully. It is only a pity, that we have but one *Purim* a year."

In the year of 1885 he wrote of *Purim*: "Tomorrow evening begins this year's *Purim*, the memorial feast of Queen Esther's victory over Haman, Mordecai's ascension to glory in the Medo-Persian Empire, the rescue of the poor Jews who had been sold to a revengeful foe who sought their destruction. There were plenty of Hamans in the history of our people, but not all of them were hanged on gallows fifty ells high, as that particular one in the city of Shushan. It is a beautiful thing to forgive his enemies, especially, says Heine, if they are hanged on gallows fifty ells high . . ."

Although Dr. Wise had no objection to recalling the story of the sufferings of the Jews in Persia because of Haman, he

insisted that we should forget the woes of the past in connection with all other events. The Ninth Day of Ab, in commemoration of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, he believed was no just cause for mourning. He said: "It is true, if Jerusalem had not been destroyed, the Roman law would not have crushed out the nations' heart-blood for so many centuries. It would have been modified and its barbarity counteracted by the free institutions of Palestine, and the great problems of civilization would have been solved centuries ago . . ."

"But Israel has no more cause of lamentation than the rest of mankind, why should we mourn more? There is not a day in the year which is not distinguished by a particular misfortune which has happened to man; why should we mourn on that particular day? The world rises from a long and bewildering delusion of mental and moral slavery to broad and clear day-light; we can mourn no longer."

So Dr. Wise believed. In our day and age, the only appropriate comment on this belief, is "If it were only true!"

*Henry Howe, in *Historical Collections of Ohio*, says of Cincinnati in the last half of the nineteenth century: "The Queen City is the arena of wrestling thoughts. Therefore it has become a city of practical toleration. Extreme radicalism lives side by side with extreme conservatism. Jew and Gentile are at peace. . . . All things considered there seems to be good ground for the opinion often expressed by enthusiastic Cincinnatians that their city is 'the freest city on the globe'." (The "Paris of America" was another of its designations then.)

Time marches on, but civilization doesn't always keep up with it.

“TO ERR IS HUMAN”

Moses Mendelssohn and Reform

Moses Montefiore and the Hebrew Union College

Rothschild and English Orthodoxy

Use of Terms Jew—Hebrew—Israelite

Heine — Disraeli — Spinoza

Race, Blood, and Religion Theories

CHAPTER VIII

"TO ERR IS HUMAN"

*I*NCONSISTENCY MARKED the attitude of Dr. Wise to Moses Mendelssohn, to whom he always referred as THE reformer, yet he must certainly have known that Mendelssohn lived the life of an orthodox Jew, "particular" in his observances of ceremony and ritual, despite his universalistic philosophy.

For several years, between 1882 and 1885, Dr. Wise worked hard to establish at the Hebrew Union College a Chair of Philosophy to be called the "Moses Montefiore Memorial Professorship." Yet Sir Montefiore was an ardent Zionist, and Zionist professors were not permitted to teach at the College. Concerning the famous

English-Italian Jew, the following article, reprinted from an English publication, appeared in the *American Israelite*. It was supposed to have been penned by no less a man than the Prince of Wales, who said: "It is universally acknowledged that there never was a greater lover of Zion than Sir Moses Montefiore, who, when he was Sheriff, had his coat of arms with the word 'Jerusalem' placed on the raiment of all his servants. Yet England had no truer patriot than he; not a man throughout the kingdom exceeded him in the love he bore for his adopted country. It was in recognition of his universal acts of philanthropy that my august mother, the Queen, raised him to the dignity of a Baronet, and Sir Moses Montefiore may best serve as a proof to the anti-Semites in Hungary and elsewhere that a Jew can at one and the same time be attached to the land of his ancestors, and loyal to the ruler of the country of his adoption."

The only comment which this article, dated December of 1885, elicited from Dr. Wise, was that it was a remarkable condemnation of anti-semitism, which was as foreign to the English mind as to the American. Incidentally, the Chair in honor of Sir Moses was never established.

In 1887, the orthodox Lord Rothschild was made the first Jewish peer of Great Britain, and in a speech with reference to the occasion laid particular emphasis upon the fact that the orthodoxy of the British Jews had gained for them the admiration and respect of their fellow-men. In commenting upon his address, Dr. Wise explained that "in England ecclesiastical conservatism was a vital principle, the Church and the Crown being the main pillars of existence among the British aristocracy." His feelings and writings against English Jewry were bitter, whose orthodoxy it seemed, had not come into conflict with the "spirit of the times." "Of what does the so-called orthodoxy of our opponents here and abroad consist besides a conglomeration of observances and ob-

stinate disciplines?" he asked. "The difference between us here and in England is very marked in this respect."

Eager to offer Judaism, that is, their interpretation of it, to the Gentiles, the rabbis of Dr. Wise's generation strove to eliminate the use of the words "Jew" and "Judaism," which were not palatable to non-Jews. Rabbi Adolph Moses, who preached in the Louisville, Kentucky congregation "Adath Israel," from 1881 until his death in 1902, used instead of the word Judaism, "Yahvism." In an essay with that title, Dr. Moses begins as follows: "Among the innumerable misfortunes which have befallen the Israelites since they ceased to form a state and a nation, one of the most fatal in its consequences is the name Judaism. In the mind of the Gentiles this name indissolubly associates our religion, which is universal in its deepest sources and universal in its scope and tendency, with the Jewish race, and thus stamps it as a tribal religion. Worse still, the Jews themselves who have gradually come to call their religion Judaism, are most of them misled to believe, that their faith is bound up altogether with the Jewish race, that it is a religion for Jews alone and not for people of any other race or nationality. Yet, neither in biblical, nor in post-biblical, neither in talmudic nor in much later times, is the term Judaism ever heard of among the Israelites . . ." To Dr. Wise we were not Jews but "Israelites." He named his paper the *Israelite*, the college, the "Hebrew Union College," the Union, the "Union of American Hebrew Congregations;" his first book published in 1854, *The History of the Israelitish Nation*. Yet in his writings, he never failed to use both the words Jew and Judaism, except in those instances when he explained why they should not be used. His use of the word "Judaizing" was continuous. His contention was that we were Jews by religion only, any person who was a monotheist was a Jew, no matter by what other name he might call himself; that we were neither a race nor a nation; yet, before the Zionist situation became dominant in Jewish world

affairs, he often referred to the Jews as a race and as a nation. In articles on the descent of various famous men, he refers to Jewish blood. To Heine, Disraeli and Spinoza he always referred as Jews, yet if he believed his own argument on the subject, they could hardly be classed as Jews, since they were not Jews by religion. When asked the question: "If a Jew joins any other Church, is he still a Jew?" he replied: "When a Jew joins another Church he certainly ceases to be a Jew, as we understand the meaning of the appellation, and one generation usually suffices to dispose of the last vestige of racial characteristics." "Racial characteristics" is also something he claimed did not exist, since the Jew differed only in religious concept. This thought he repeats in an article written in 1884, in which he maintains that "the Jew almost loses his type in the next generation of immigrants." Yet when he first came to America, in 1846, and accused Spanish orthodoxy of being responsible for the loss by assimilation of America's Jewish immigration in the 17th and 18th centuries, he said to Isaac Leiser, "There were not two hundred families left that belonged to congregations, the great majority having disappeared among the masses, traces of them being clearly recognizable in hundreds of Christian families." The list of inconsistencies is a long one, indeed. Dr. Wise evidently did not care for the term "Yahvism" as selected by Dr. Moses. He preferred "Mosaism;" once he said the name should be "Israelism." "Judaism," he said, "signifies the teachings of those whose ancestors dwelt in the land of Judea or its dependencies. It ought more properly be called Israelism, as the fewest of those vulgarly called the Jews are descendants of Judah."

Yet, as already stated, he was loathe to call apostate or converted Jews anything but Jews, in spite of his positive statement that any Israelite who abjured his faith was outside the pale of his former religion. The following articles will serve to give some indication of this tendency.

DECEMBER 22, 1871. "The true nature of virtue is expressible in a few words. What is virtue? Virtue is happiness. And Happiness? Is Liberty. No further question can be asked, what liberty is, for it is the eternal and indivisible one, one with reason, one with God, one with the absolute which explains itself." These are the words which one Jew, Ludwig Boerne, wrote in his journal when he was 18 years old, and it became the true guardian angel of his life, and the trumpet of resurrection to the Germans, (who are now in the process of resurrecting). Another Jew, Baruch Spinoza, took liberty out of the philosopher's dreamland, and made it practical, human, tangible . . . (Ludwig Boerne was a converted German Jew. Spinoza was excommunicated by the Jewish congregation of Amsterdam.)

MAY 12, 1876. The ex-Jew, Disraeli (Benjamin) has made the Queen of England an Empress of India, and that other Jew, Jesus, has made all the popes and prelates; yet they are not convinced that they could not do without Jews.

MARCH 16, 1883. (A lengthy editorial on the untimely death of two converts, Ferdinand La Salle, the pre-eminent Socialist, and Guillaume Bernays, the "corpus delicti" in the Pelzer trial at Antwerp, both killed in duels in consequence of affairs over their Catholic wives.) Dr. Wise says: "Had La Salle and Bernays preserved their Jewish virtues and associations, they would not have fallen victims of romantic barbarism, and both of them might have become great and useful men instead of being cut off in the prime of life . . . but neither of them had a heart; both betrayed their religion and denied their kin and ancestors. Like other young men they were romantic and inconsiderate freethinkers, or even unprincipled hypocrites, and ran into the abyss of destruction. It is a melancholy lesson which ought to be impressed upon many of our young men."

DECEMBER 28, 1899. While great preparations are being made in Germany to celebrate the 100th birthday of Heinrich Heine, his sister, Frau von Embden, died in Hamburg. She was only two years younger than her brother, and nearest akin to him in temperament and genius. She lived and died a faithful Jewess, and Heine was no Christian, so the anti-Semites declared emphatically, although he was baptized in the Protestant Church and was married to his Mathilde in the Catholic Church. His last works bear testimony that the teachings he received in his parental house remained in him to the very end of his days. The parents of Heine, the late Professor Kaufman proved, were religiously Jewish. When he came to Berlin, he was yet for a number of years a zealous member of the Jewish Society of Friends, and it seems he never became a Christian.

So it seems that Dr. Wise never really resigned himself to the Christianity of Jewish converts, to the "Jews by religion only" theory. As for the references to the Jewish "race" and "blood," just a few examples will be given. In 1861 there appeared a discourse entitled: "The Indestructible Race." In 1878 a paragraph concerning the Black Jews of Malabar, India, refers to them "as Jews in religion though not in race." A year later, he states: "There are Israelites in this country who are as ignorant about the history of their own race as they are about the origin of the Indians." In 1881 in condemning elaborate newspaper reports of Jewish weddings, he says: "Everything which tends to injure our prestige and dignity as Israelites . . . and helps to belittle and degrade us, concerns not one or two or ten of us, but the whole race." Then in the last decade of the 19th century, in opposition to Zionism, many articles appeared expanding on the theme that religion has nothing to do with race or blood, but is of the mind only.

References to Jewish "blood" also were not unusual. In an

editorial written in 1886, Dr. Wise discusses a Jewish wife of Mohammed, and the Jewish blood in the prophet's family. He discusses the Jewish blood in Spanish royalty, and European royalty in general, including England, France and Russia. As late as March of 1895, in an article on the intermarriage of rich Jews into European royalty, he states: "Those who leave us are not of us, or else we would have claim to the best portion of the nobility of Europe, Russia included, in whom there is Jewish blood." A casual survey of these articles would convince the reader that his later objections to words like race, blood, nation, etc. were simply brought into play as a peg on which to hang his hatred of Zionism, for Zionism he was certain was a backward movement which would undo the effects of his own God-inspired work.

DR. WISE'S PRIVATE LIFE

Dr. Wise Plans to Leave his Cincinnati Pulpit

The Death of his First Wife

The Opening of the Hebrew Union College

Dr. Wise Remarries

CHAPTER IX

DR. WISE'S PRIVATE LIFE

*B*ELIEVING THE messianic era was very near, Dr. Wise wanted all to be ready for it by holding one religion, by abolishing all forms and ceremonies which might separate peoples. His religious vision was a world politically free. He should have been an independent writer and lecturer, or lawyer, where his broad views could have come in conflict with no particular group. As it was, he used the rabbinate to propound ideas which are essentially of no religion, but belong to all. In his *Reminiscences* he tells how he was shunned and hated when first preaching in the American pulpit, and how he was forced to change his outer attitude for a time,

but not his intentions. His own words are as follows: "I recognized that I stood alone, and could depend neither for support nor sympathy on Germans or Poles. But since the people desire neither me nor my ideas, thought I, I shall accustom myself to eat my morsel in peace until it shall please Providence to relieve me of my office. I became at once exceedingly amiable, obliging, tractable, polite, careless and sociable. The people came in great multitudes to the synagogue on the following fall holy-days to hear me preach. I declaimed charmingly, hysterical women wrote me anonymous love-letters; eccentric men looked upon me as a demi-god, for I did not mention reform nor progress, but uttered rhapsodies on Israel's greatness and Israel's imperishable treasures. The fall of 1848 found me a half-dead apostle of peace, submissive, humble and despairing. Not one of the hundreds who heard me preach from the pulpit or jest lightsomely in society at that time understood my state of mind. My sufferings were my own." By 1869 his outer attitude and inner intentions were still causing him suffering, when he wrote the editorial on Judaism's *two* distinct missions. "This is our misery," he said, "this is the painful part of the situation. Here you stand with your grand conviction that you do possess the sublime and divine truths to redeem the human family from the miseries of centuries but you cannot break through the shell which embraces the kernel without destroying the fruit. You cannot break asunder the bonds of observances and ceremonies without breaking down the congregation of Israel. You cannot fulfill one mission of Israel without injuring the other. This is the misery of the situation. Therefore Judaism, satisfactory to the Jew, must naturally be unsatisfactory to the world."

Strange views indeed for a rabbi in Israel. Those of his day who called him a "traitor to Judaism," were surely not without justification. Yet his statements were always motivated by his positive conviction that the millenium was about to dawn. His desire to make the world happy was of course, a Jewish manifesta-

tion, although his method was a mistaken one. He himself was ready to sacrifice his emotional Judaism to the end that others might benefit from its intellectual aspects.

In Cincinnati, he was free to expound the most radical ideas in the name of Judaism. For the high holy-days in the year of 1881 he had not received any sermons which he considered suitable for publication, and said: "We do not like to publish our sermons preached on these occasions, as they appear somewhat too bold and incisive for the general reader. Our people here are used to our peculiar style of calling things by their right names. Still, if we can get no better representative sermons, we might write out one of our own for publication."

Yet, although Dr. Wise's congregation is always pointed out as one which had worked in complete harmony with its rabbi, thereby enabling him to carry out his plans for the College, Union and Conference, the actual records indicate otherwise. Two years before the establishment of the Hebrew Union College, after the failure of a number of previous attempts, in the twenty preceding years of his ministry, as already outlined, and one year before the death of his first wife, Dr. Wise had fully intended to change his pulpit in Cincinnati for a much better paying one in New York City. Although the monetary increase was considerable, and not to be despised by any rabbi, in those days, with either a large family or a small one to care for, his real reasons for going were undoubtedly due to the fact that there was a division of opinion and lack of cooperation among his congregants with regard to the establishment of a theological seminary under his supervision. He had made arrangements to accept the New York pulpit without the knowledge of his congregation, although he had been elected to the Cincinnati congregation for life twenty years previous, in 1853. Before leaving Albany his stipulations were that only in the event of his being elected for life, would he accept the position here.

The K. K. Benai Yeshurun of Cincinnati agreed to his terms. He was the first Jewish clergyman in America to be so appointed.

In the year 1872, Henry Adler of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, gave the direct impetus to the establishment of a Jewish seminary by his offer of \$10,000.00. With this financial encouragement, representatives of thirty-four congregations convened in Cincinnati in July of 1873 and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which was to launch the Hebrew Union College, came officially into existence. Moritz Loth, President of the Bene Yeshurun congregation of Cincinnati, was elected president, which office he held from 1873 to 1889.

It was in August, 1873, a month after the establishment of the Union, that Dr. Wise announced in the columns of the *Israelite* his intention to resign from his pulpit in Cincinnati.

On August 15, 1873, the following editorial, in bold type, appeared in *The American Israelite*:

"The editor of the *Israelite* having accepted a call of the Congregation Anshe Chesed, of New York, has tendered his resignation as rabbi of K. K. Benai Yeshurun, of Cincinnati, to take effect at the end of September next. The Anshe Chesed Congregation of New York has elected him for life with a salary of \$8000 per annum, \$15,000 life insurance, and \$1500 per annum if superannuated. It is the first time in the annals of Jewish history in America, that such an offer has been made to a rabbi. The Anshe Chesed Congregation built the temple on Lexington Avenue, Corner Sixty-Third Street, which will be dedicated September 5. This brings the Minhag America permanently to New York, and decides forever the value of all protests and newspaper quarrels, which were spread so profusely during the past two years."

This was in August of 1873. A month later, under date of September 9, 1873, the published Annual Report of the Secretary of the K. K. B. Y. offers the following information:

B. Bettman, Esq., read the report of the Committee appointed to confer with Dr. Wise in regard to his resignation, which was unanimously adopted, paragraph by paragraph.

"To the officers and members of K. K. Benai Yeshurun, Cincinnati, Ohio:

"Gentlemen: Your committee, appointed at the last special general meeting to confer with the Rev. Dr. Isaac M. Wise, on the subject of his resignation, beg leave to report:

"That they have had several interviews with Dr. Wise, at the first of which he stated that, laboring under erroneous impressions as to the relations existing between himself and this congregation, he had accepted a call from the congregation Anshe Chesed in New York. Being informed of your action at the meeting, he expressed regret at having gone so far, and promised to endeavor during his stay in New York, where he dedicated the new temple of the above congregation, to obtain from them leave to withdraw his acceptance of their call . . .

"Resolved, That, reminding the Rev. Dr. Wise of his solemn promise, given to us twenty years ago, that he would devote the rest of his life to the furtherance of the holy cause of Israel, as our rabbi, and in our midst — a promise, of which, under present circumstances, we can not and will not absolve him — we respectfully but firmly decline to accept his resignation."

It is interesting also, to note the opinion of some of the members of the K. K. B. Y. on the subject of Judaism, the College and the Union. In the same report from which the information concerning Dr. Wise's attempted resignation was taken, the President, M. Loth, has this to say: "I also respectfully recommend to you that a committee of five be appointed who shall act with similar committees appointed by our sister congregations, who shall call on and persuade every firm of our faith to close their business on

Saturday, in order that the Sabbath may be more strictly observed; that parents with their children, employers with their employees, shall all attend the divine service 'en masse' and receive the ennobling influence which such attendance impresses on the mind. Let us all make a united effort to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest and mental elevation, which calms the passions, which permits the soul to expand, the heart to beat with a more endearing feeling for humanity . . . I hold that a stricter observance of the Sabbath is as important to the future welfare of our glorious religion as the union and establishment of a theological college. If we respect public opinion, and if we value the respect of our children, we must, as Israelites, all of us observe the Sabbath as the commandments dictate . . ." It will also be remembered that when the College was opened in October of 1875, Bernhard Bettman, president of the Board of Governors, made the following statement in his opening address: "We shall be happy to have amongst us the followers of other creeds, not for the purpose of making proselytes of them,—for that has always been and still is repugnant to the very spirit of Judaism—but that they might understand the parent faith from which their own religion sprung, and enjoy a literature equal to that of Greek and Roman."

From the foregoing it will be seen that Dr. Wise did have opposition to his hopes and ideas in the members of his congregation. His proposed withdrawal from their midst must have hurt their pride considerably. In the twenty years he had spent in Cincinnati, his fame had spread far and wide, and naturally, the congregation which had held up his hands and given him strength felt that they, too, had a share in this glory. To partially atone for the financial loss sustained by not accepting the offer of the New York congregation, "the committee was also empowered to offer Dr. Wise a salary of \$6000 per annum, and free rent for a private dwelling in this city."

In July, 1874, the Council of the Union of American Hebrew

Congregations met in Cleveland, Ohio, and officially called into existence the Hebrew Union College, which was to open in Cincinnati a year and a half later.

In December of 1874, occurred the death of Dr. Wise's wife at the age of 51. The last decade of her life had been spent in sickness and suffering. Her untimely death left her family and friends sorrowing deeply. In the summer of 1874, in order to divert his mind from his wife's illness, Dr. Wise had begun the outline of the lectures which later composed the book of philosophy called *The Cosmic God*. The dedication reads as follows: This volume is dedicated to the memory of a sainted Mother in Israel, a peerless woman of sublime virtues, a spouse of matchless affection, a parent of angelic benignity:

Therese Wise, nee Bloch.

She died December 10, 1874, 51 years old. To her, my beloved wife, who in life possessed my heart with its best affections, I dedicate in eternity my best thoughts.

The preface to this book, *The Cosmic God*, begins: "This book, conceived in sorrow, composed in grief, and constructed at the brink of despair contains my mind's best thoughts and my soul's triumph over the powers of darkness. My wife, my dearly beloved companion in this eventful life, the mother of my children, the faithful partner of my joys and my sufferings, was prostrated with an incurable disease. For nearly two years she lived the life of a shadow, without affection or clear consciousness, no more herself than the ruin is the castle. I prayed, I wept, I mourned, I despaired; and yet my cup of woe was not full . . . Ruthless attacks upon my character, of restless assailants, from the camp of implacable foes, embittered my joyless days. My energies failed. Insanity or suicide appeared inevitable. In this state of mind, the Satan of Doubt persecuted me with all his furious demons. My

convictions were uprooted, and my faith was shaken; I was myself no longer. Once, at the midnight hour, in a state of indifference and stupor, I opened the Bible, and perchance I read: "Unless the law had been my delight, I should long since have been lost in my affliction." (Psalms 119, 92.) It struck me forcibly: "There is the proper remedy for all afflictions." When those ancient Hebrews spoke of the law of God, they meant the whole of it revealed in God's words and works. Research, science, philosophy, deep and perplexing, problems most intricate and propositions most complicated, I thought, like the rabbis of the talmud, must be the proper remedy for all maladies of the heart and reason. I plunged headlong into the whirlpool of philosophy, and, I believe, to have found many a gem in the fathomless deep. But the costliest of all gems I found is a calm and composed mind, a self-relying conviction. I found myself once more . . . "

In the following year, in October of 1875, the Hebrew Union College was opened. It cannot be doubted that Dr. Wise's intention to leave his pulpit in Cincinnati two years previous, and the death of his wife a year later, had much to do with the efforts of his congregation to establish for him that which he had vainly tried so hard for twenty years to accomplish. And so behind all public movements there can no doubt be found mixed motives, the blending of the personal and the impersonal, the logic of the mind and the impulse of the heart.

The first wife of Dr. Wise lived but half a century. His second wife, whom he married in April of 1876, may double that figure, being now in her nineties.* May she live long and be happy!

*According to the tombstone in the United Jewish Cemetery in Cincinnati, the second Mrs. Wise died on March 14, 1934. Birth date given is August 4, 1843, which would have made her 91 years old had she lived until August of 1934.

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION

*Dr. Wise Outlives His Contemporaries
by a Generation*

Communism

How Jews Have Lost Caste with Each Other

CHAPTER X

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION

WITH HIS COLLEGE dream come true, and his personal life happily adjusted, Dr. Wise was again able to throw himself heart and soul into his work. He had never changed his belief that the most cherished ideals of the 18th century, the universal republic and the Brotherhood of man, were on the verge of realization. So nothing was important to him but the things or ideas which he thought would lead to this happy culmination. The Good-Will movements of today, in spite of encroaching anti-semitism, would have convinced him that this was so. It will be recalled that he described the service in memory of Phillips Brooks, on which

occasion a group of clergymen spoke, consisting both of Jews and Christians as "looking like the approach of the Millenium."

The oasis Dr. Wise saw in the near distance, we know today to have been a mirage. Farther on the dates and palms are growing, and the spiritual waters of salvation are flowing, but many more burning sands of tragic human experience will need to be crossed before the tired traveler will find his Mecca.

It is difficult today to believe that Reform Judaism in America ever attempted to be a proselytizing religion. Certainly none of Dr. Wise's pupils interested themselves in conversion... Nevertheless, the effect of his universalistic teachings at the expense of their particular calling was to make them more concerned with the salvation of the world at large than with their own congregations, which presumably were not in need of salvation. Yet Jewish congregations are also human, and cannot survive indefinitely on impersonal philosophy.

The tragic suicide rate of today,* as a result of financial disaster, may be one of the indirect results of this religion based on cold reason, which did not take into account the mystery of faith, and Judaism as a way of life enriched by human participation in holidays and holy days and other details of Jewish living, resulting in a wealth of spiritual strength and fire, besides which the glare of gold pales into insignificance.

Dr. Wise laid full emphasis as a sustaining religion on the philosophy of Judaism, its ethical doctrines and moral principles, which he called the essence of Judaism. The essence of Judaism, however, is not Judaism. It is a part thereof. The fragrance of the rose is not the rose, it is a part thereof. The essence of Judaism might be called the soul of Judaism, but without the body of Jewish life, it has no home. The fragrance of the rose might be called the soul of the rose, but without the flower body, it would have no source from which to emanate. Life, on earth at least,

*This refers to the suicides resulting from the stock market crash of 1929.

is composed of body and soul. Time has proven, that the Jewish soul leaving its body of Jewish life, finds on earth another home in the body of Christian or other religious belief and ceremony, for it must have a dwelling-place. A human being may be spiritual; but he is not a spirit.

How did Dr. Wise's ideas, which denuded Judaism of all its warmth and life and color, become general? His generation was against him. He tried for twenty unsuccessful years to establish a rabbinical seminary under his direction but was unable to do so until accident and fortune favored him. Even then it is not certain that his ideas would have gained general acceptance had not the Russian immigration intervened which occurred almost simultaneously with the establishment of the Hebrew Union College. The German Jews then became so busily occupied in helping and hating the Russian Jews that they were not able to give so much attention to Dr. Wise's radical views as had been the case formerly. Also their dislike of the newly arrived immigrants who were orthodox made them more willing to accept a religious program which would make a difference between them and the orthodox Russians and Roumanians, thus enabling them to justify the superiority they wished to feel.

In addition, most of Dr. Wise's generation were passing to The Great Beyond. He outlived most of his active contemporaries and opponents by many years. In August of 1897 he wrote: "The death of the good minister of the Ninth Street Congregation last week reminds us that the Israelites of Cincinnati have had bad luck with their ministers, rabbis and cantors, several of whom died within the last thirty years, and none of them was very old. We recollect the following colleagues now in the eternal abode: Lilienthal, Illoway, Zirndorf, Epstein, Kalisch, Goldammer, Berg, Sadler, the brother-in-law of the late Dr. Bamberger whose name we do not recollect just now, Kuttner, two cantors Mayer, one in the Bene Israel and the other in the Bene Yeshurun Temple. It

is a frightful mortuary list. The writer of this record officiated at the funerals of almost all of these colleagues." The list just given refers to Cincinnati only. Of the country in general Dr. Wise continued: "None of the rabbis, preachers, ministers and cantors who officiated in this country when the writer of these lines began to preach in Albany, is any more among the living. They are all gone. Those among them with whom we were personally acquainted and therefore remember most distinctly were: Abraham de Sola of Montreal; Birkenthal of Hamilton, Canada; Guenzberg of Boston; Merzbacher, Adler, Bondi, Einhorn, Huebsch, Kohut, Grossman, Raphael, Rubin, Lyons, Isaacs and Jacobs of New York; Isaac Leiser, Hirsch, Jacobs and Frenkel of Philadelphia; Abraham Rice, Bettelheim and Braun of Baltimore; Falk of Buffalo; Fuld of Cleveland; Adler of Chicago; Tuska of Rochester and his son Simon Tuska of Memphis; Joseph of Montgomery; Gotthelf of Vicksburg; Feuerlicht of Kentucky; Gutheim of New Orleans; Cohen and Vidaver of San Francisco; Mayer and Eckman of Charleston, S. C.; Aufrecht and Eppinger, teachers of the Hebrew Union College."

A week later Dr. Wise concluded: "Reviewing in our last number some of the deceased Reverends of our personal acquaintance, we could not recall the name of Rev. Mr. Shellitzer, who was to his end minister of a Cincinnati congregation and an excellent contributor to the *Deborah*. We overlooked also the late Rev. Dr. Harris who died in office at Richmond, Va. and was formerly one of the teachers in the Hebrew Union College. Besides these we forgot two highly respectable cantors of our personal acquaintance, Rev. Mr. Sternberg of New York and Rev. Mr. Schmidt of Rochester, N. Y." So the list closes, and it is truly an imposing one.

The American born generation of the German immigrants had forgotten the opposition of their parents and most of the men in the list given, to Dr. Wise's ideas, and now recognized in him

a leader who could justify their departures from Judaism under the guise of charity and universalism. It was with the younger people of his later years and the students of the College that Dr. Wise became so influential, and who preached and practiced his ideas. Until a week before his death, at the age of eighty, Dr. Wise had continued his work actively.

Today it seems a pity, that so much energy should have been wasted through bad feeling between the German and Russian groups, for the children of the Russian immigrants are now on the same level culturally and educationally, as the descendants of the German immigrants. It was after all, not so much a matter of religion, as of time.

The influence of the first wave of Jewish immigration into America, the Spanish-Portuguese, has been reduced to a minimum. They held themselves proudly aloof from their German co-religionists who formed the second wave of Jewish immigration flowing into America. It is told that when a Sephardic and Ashkenazic couple married, that is, a German Jew and a Spanish or Portuguese descendant, the parents of the Spanish-Jewish party to the marriage observed the traditional seven days of mourning as for one deceased. The German Jews in their turn, when they had become established, treated with social contempt the wave of Russian Jewish immigration which came after them, and so they also have failed to leave much constructive inspiration on the Jewish religious life of America.

And now that our country has almost closed its gates to new blood, will Judaism in America be able to survive the crushing impact of the large mass of Christian culture? Has the Russian Jew today any more latent religious force than the German or Spaniard possessed? Knowledge of the "Yevseks," the Jewish section of the Communist party in Russia, proves that the Russian Jews, too, can develop among themselves, when power comes into their hands, a group eager to persecute their fellow Jews with

different political aspirations. Just as the non-Zionists in America unjustly accused their Zionist co-religionists of not being patriotic, so the Yevseks in Russia have spared no effort to malign their brethren in religion. Perhaps it can all be explained again by that terrible love and abuse of power which seems inherent in so many people of earth.

In America, too, we have Communist Russian Jews who are doing all in their power to destroy Judaism, in imitation of the Russian program. It is strange indeed that they are blind to the fact that while Russia's aim is to destroy all religion, America's vast Christian population is not similarly engaged. They fail to realize that if their children here are not given a definitely Jewish training, they will be easy and natural prey for a militant Christianity, which has invaded even our supposedly non-sectarian public school system with extended Christmas and Easter programs, and vacations. Because Atheism has become the state religion in Russia, for the present, is no intelligent justification for pursuing the same course in America. Russia's radicalism is the natural outcome engendered by the program of the once worst governed country in the world, which could attribute the evils under the Czarist regime largely to the mishandled power of the Catholic Church there, but America began with the finest constitution in the world. No intelligent and humane person could fail to sympathize with Russia's hopes for social betterment, but surely Judaism never interfered with this idea. As a matter of fact, Judaism contributed the motive power to it. Carl Marx's writings evidence the social philosophy of the prophets of Israel.

Communism is in effect making a new religion of Jewish social philosophy, even as Reform Judaism attempted to make a new religion of Israel's moral philosophy, both groups representing only part of the original Orthodox Judaism.

Will American Judaism profit by the lessons of history? Only time can tell. Reform Judaism has laid great emphasis on those

things in which Jew and Christian can agree rather than on our differences. Would not this also be the right procedure for the various groups within Judaism? We have no theological differences, can we not learn to mutually respect and not condemn our differences on other grounds? The early Reform rabbis, Dr. Wise and his colleagues, believed their conversion program fully justified on the ground that only the belief in one God could promote virtue and happiness. Dr. Adolph Moses, whose writings have already been referred to, in a chapter entitled: "The Religion We Offer To The Gentiles," writes: "Without the belief in the absolute unity, perfection and omnipotence of a supreme Creator, the unity of mankind and universal love have no eternal basis to rest on. Without the idea of the unity of the human race centered in God, and the duty of love flowing from the spiritual kinship of all men, the unity of God is but a useless metaphysical idea. The solidarity and brotherhood of all the families of the earth, in other words, the love of our fellow men, is the perfect fruit of Israel's ethical monotheism. The belief in more than one God, the belief in a divine duality or a divine triad or trinity, the belief in no God or atheism, lead to immorality. Any religion but that which teaches the absolute oneness of the Divine Power, is likely to generate feelings, thoughts, and acts of inhumanity."

Statements like the above look very nice in print, but what are the real facts in the case? Has the knowledge of One God among the people of Israel prevented all inhuman feelings, thoughts, and acts? Do all Jews love each other? The record of Reform Judaism in America indicates quite the contrary. It built up a caste system with false standards of social and financial importance, as strong as that of India. It erected a Chinese wall between Reform Jews and those who were Orthodox or Zionist, and did all in its power to keep that wall in repair. That this ugly dividing line and its evil consequences may be today, beginning to disappear, is not due to the humanitarian efforts of typical

leaders of Reform. Before any religion or group of people set out to reform the world, let them first exemplify their teachings in their own lives, and there will be no need of further missionary efforts. Christian missionaries are in the same sorry position, in their strenuous efforts to Christianize a world which their own untamed savages have turned into a shambles for twenty centuries. Reform and Orthodox Jew worship the same God, yet Reform Jews have made major issues of minor differences, and used them for a dividing line. It would seem, then, that not the particular form of religion is as responsible as the attitude of people toward their faith. Nor can the immorality of the pagan peoples be blamed entirely upon their gods or religion. Their vices were their own, and not in their gods, who merely represented the conceptions of their worshipers. To the Jew, God is all things. If the Christian can see light only by the reflection of Jesus, who are we to take this light from him? God understands all of us, has He not created us all?

Christianity desired the death of Judaism, in order to justify its claim as successor—to rule supreme. To this end even the New Testament was written and named. The pagan peoples, or rather, their leaders, envied the Hebrews their possession of the Bible, the Holy Scriptures, and not having the grace to borrow openly, for were they not the conquerors to whom might was right, became guilty of the classic example of colossal impudence when they renamed the Bible the *Old Testament*, and reduced it to the unimportant position of a mere introduction to the *New Testament*, an incoherent mass of forced and fantastic conclusions based on an incorrect interpretation of Oriental verbal imagery. Reform Judaism, in its turn, sought the death of Orthodoxy, in order to prove that Reform was progress and rightfully superseded the older form of Judaism.

Again, the answer to this riddle of faulty human nature seems

to be, not in religion, but in the love and over-exercise of power which men, or groups of men, on attaining, seek to practice.

Another one of the tragic results of the teachings of Reform Jewish rabbis has been the growing indifference and contempt of many Jews, not only for their religion, but for their kind. From every little village and town, no less than from the larger cities, the cry goes forth: "Our Jewish young men are not interested in Jewish girls, they prefer Gentiles." And not only do universities controlled by Gentiles and supposed to be devoted to higher learning, and free of all prejudice, limit their Jewish registration by divers means, and non-Jewish employers limit or exclude Jewish help, but many a Jew is guilty of the far greater offense of excluding his fellow Jew from the opportunity of earning a livelihood.*

How has this situation come about? Why are present day Jews so ready to condemn their own, so willing to give their lives and their labors, through intermarriage and endowments, to the people who in the main, are so willing to destroy them? Where is the loyalty and the courage their forbears possessed to defend each other? The answer is not far to find. Records prove conclusively that even fifty and seventy five years ago, when the Jews of America were attacked by Christians through social or economic boycott, they banded together and used such measures as were practical to protect themselves. They were not afraid to be accused of solidarity. Rather they considered it a virtue, and rightly so. They did not give aid and succor to their enemies, as do the Jews of this generation, the real anti-Semites, who are always eager to prove that it is better to turn the other cheek to the Christian who has already smitten them, than to stand up and fight like men, when there is just cause for battle. Truly these Jews are good

*Like capitalists of all faiths, they prefer giving charity doles rather than decently paid work.

Christians. They practice a precept of Christianity which few Christians, if any, have ever attempted.

The Jews of America who two or three generations ago, fought for their rights like men, were orthodox Germans. But if Reform Judaism is simply orthodoxy minus some of the latter's customs and ceremonies, how could Reform have produced generations of weaker moral and spiritual calibre than their orthodox predecessors possessed? Isaac M. Wise, the main founder of Reform Judaism in America, fought orthodoxy in Christianity as well as in Judaism. His sledge hammer blows against Christian orthodoxy were just as telling as his attacks against Jewish orthodoxy, all with the purpose as already frequently stated, of inaugurating a new universal religion, in his positive conviction that orthodox Christianity would be as dead as a door nail by the year 1900, and therefore that Judaism should be prepared, by excluding all its orthodox ritual and ceremony, to launch the universal religion based exclusively on the Ten Commandments.

In Dr. Wise's day, then, the balance had not been disturbed. He took away as much from Christianity as he did from Judaism. While Jews were being taught to condemn orthodoxy in Judaism, the graver faults of Christianity were also held up to their gaze. But the pupils of Dr. Wise, and the continuing graduates of the Hebrew Union College, did not and do not possess either the purpose or the plan, or the courage of Isaac M. Wise. They continued to hammer away at orthodoxy in Judaism, as had their teacher, but unlike him, they did not treat Christianity in the same fashion, and by this omission created as time went on, the definite impression that Judaism was replete with fault and error, while Christianity gained by contrast in its Jewish listeners all the love and honor which rightfully belongs to the mother religion. The Reform rabbinate has continued this destructive policy until today, not realizing that in wrecking the structure of orthodox Judaism they were at the same condemning all Judaism, for Reform, being

but a segment of Judaism, cannot continue to separate itself contemptuously from its foundation and still remain Jewish, any more than Christianity, after creating hatred among its believers for the origin of its faith, could remain the Jewish sect it started out to be. Robbing Peter to pay Paul is a very poor beginning for any religion. Groups, like individuals, who are really sold on the merits of their own product or religion, have no time or inclination to condemn the works of others, for they find themselves fully occupied in extolling and living the values of their own.

This insidious propaganda carried on by Reform Judaism against Orthodox Judaism has resulted also in the children and grandchildren of the Russian immigration, impressed by the better social and financial condition of the earlier German Jewish immigration, following its example with regard to the condemnation of orthodoxy and incidentally Judaism in its entirety. And so Jews have lost caste with each other. A Jewish employer prefers Christian help, and Jewish men marry non-Jewish women. In losing respect for and love of their holy religion, Jews have concomitantly lost respect and love for Judaism's representatives.

And today, a half century after the establishment of the Hebrew Union College, Jewish leaders of thought and vision, including also graduates of this same institution, who are aware of the harm done to Judaism by the mistaken interpretation of Isaac M. Wise, seek the means whereby to restore to modern Jewry "the realities of the faith which produced the splendid characters of the men and women who once proudly enlisted under its banners, and consequently gave to America and to the world, some of its finest citizens."

INTERMARRIAGE

Intermarriage Adds to Life's Complexities
Harmonious Background Factor in Happiness
Psychic Forces as well as Physical Are Real


CHAPTER XI

INTERMARRIAGE

*T*HE HOME is the unit on which civilization builds, and civilization's success depends largely on happy homes. No home can be happy where religious discord exists, hidden or exposed. In intermarriage, the idea of allowing the child to grow up and then choose its religion, is as fallacious as waiting for it to grow up to choose its own food and clothing. Were it not fed and clothed as a child without its permission, it would surely die in infancy, and the child who grows up without a definite religious background is certainly starved spiritually. The adult agnostic Jew and Christian both had a definite background. If later they choose to desert that background, it is presumed that they know what they are doing. To make an intelligent choice, presupposes knowledge.

But the child who has been brought up without any definite religious training, is surely not competent to make a choice. Of necessity, it will follow the line of least resistance, which in a predominantly Christian country, means Christianity and not Judaism. The intermarried Jew and Christian who have brought children into the world, and allowed them to grow up without any specific religious training in the belief that they were too broadminded to interfere with the choice of their children's religion, have served not the real needs of the child, but their own selfish interests. For whichever way the child of intermarriage turns, it is never completely at home, physically, spiritually, or psychically, but always on the border line and a traitor to one or the other of its parents, unless the parents have both accepted the same faith.

Marriage under circumstances where major considerations are equal, is difficult enough without adding the terrible burden of conflicting faiths and their differing social and educational outlook, which cannot be ignored after the honeymoon, when a man and woman must take their place in a more prosaic world and face the acid test of daily living. Then they must be able to be friends as well as sweethearts and to be friends under such circumstances means having no conflicts on major problems and certainly none on religion which involves the spiritual life of themselves and their children. If the white race should ever have a universal religion, which is not likely, the intermarriage problem would not exist, but in the meantime, we must face conditions as they are, instead of living in a fool's paradise and pretending that conditions are as we would like to have them. The Jews as a minority group, can easily enough be assimilated at any time. There need be no hurry or worry on that score. It is for us to preserve our integrity until the Christian world has made a paradise of earth. Until then, the Jew is more than justified in refraining from intermarriage, for its results are only to add to the problems of civilization rather than to their solution.



CHURCH PROPAGANDA

Christianity Teaches Hatred

A Boomerang Against Christian Progress

How the Church Might Combat Hatred

CHAPTER XII

CHURCH PROPAGANDA

*I*N ADDITION to the injury which Jews, intentionally or unintentionally, have caused each other, and perhaps at the base of such injury, is the fact that we have all been innocent victims for twenty centuries of vicious and pernicious propaganda, begun by the early Church fathers in their desperate endeavor to keep the pagans from following Judaism. To this end, Judaism and the Jews were made obnoxious through the Gospel stories, the infamous blood libel, and in later times, through lies about Jewish international political solidarity, myths concerning financial power, race theories, Nordic superiority, etc., etc. This age-old propaganda

through ceaseless pressure backed by the unlimited power and resources of the Christian world, has resulted not only in poisoning the mind of the Christian against the Jew, but what is even worse and more revolting, many Jews themselves believe these stories, and condemn their fellow-Jews in the same unsavory terms as do the Gentiles of whom they have learned them.

On the normal faults of the Jew there is placed the pitiless glare of powerful search-lights—his virtues are not only minimized to the nth degree, but diabolically made to appear as vices. Thus his intelligence is called shrewdness, his industriousness is termed dominance, his naturalness is called vulgarity, his sobriety even is considered only an underhand method of getting ahead of his Christian neighbor, and so on, and on, *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseum*. To the open-minded observer, this ugly perversion of facts is one of the tragic and unpardonable sins of Christian civilization. Of the religion of the Jew, the ritual which in any other group would be called interesting, colorful, or poetic, for the Jew is transposed into words which have no meaning outside of the language of hate.

This same insidious propaganda is responsible for the desertion by Jews of Judaism in the lands of freedom—Jews who have come to the false conclusion that Judaism and freedom are incompatible, and this in spite of the keen intelligence which Christians have advertised all Jews as possessing. To desert Judaism in the lands of freedom is at the same time to brand it as a religion only for slaves, yet Moses began the active construction of Judaism as a release from the bondage of mental slavery and pagan superstition. Those Jews who have deserted Judaism in the lands of freedom have been the foolish dupes of vicious advertising and their own ignorance of the glory and the majesty of the religion through which men were to live and not to die. Desertion of Judaism can therefore be attributed to definite causes and these are ignorance and cowardice, for it takes both knowledge and courage to repre-

sent an unpopular cause. Neither cowardice nor ignorance are traits which make for the best citizens. For this reason, Jews who give up their Judaism cannot contribute to mankind at large the qualities which make for the real advancement of civilization, the cause which the real and professing Jew has always unconsciously served, for the continuing life of man on earth is justified only in proportion to the degree in which he can raise himself above the animal world and do that which is right in the sight of God and man.

Dr. Wise once said that Christians had suffered more than Jews by Christianity, that the lower classes of Christendom in Europe had always been treated like outlawed dogs. This statement is a profound one. While Dr. Wise believed, however, that only the lower classes had suffered, the truth is that all Christians have suffered from it in the past, as they do now. For all Christians alike are taught to hate. The teaching of the Crucifixion story makes this inevitable. And while this hatred is directed solely against the Jews, hatred is a poison so powerful that its effects can not be limited in one direction only, but spread through the entire system, affecting every phase of life.

Taught to hate—that is surely the crime of the centuries—to poison the minds of innocent children and make them emotionally unsound before they are mentally capable of learning their a-b-c's. Taught to hate, yet told to love, the mind of the Christian child becomes puzzled and uncertain, character is weakened by contradictory teaching, and so hatred of the Jews has been in reality a boomerang against Christian progress and intelligence, the well-used tool of every priest, politician or demagogue who needs to raise a smoke-screen of ugly emotion to protect himself from the results of his own evil or ignorant acts.

What a subject for speculation is the thought of the heights which humanity might already have reached had the light of love and intelligence been its guiding star. For love is life—hatred

is death, death to clear thinking, death to inspiration. No great writer, poet, or musician ever wrote a beautiful thing with hate in his heart. True art never arises from a heart out of tune with God and Nature.

"Thou Shalt Not Covet," is the tenth of the Ten Commandments, last, but certainly not least. "Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor's," said through God, the wise Moses. Hatred, jealousy, greed and envy, always included in covetousness, are the most terrible diseases which afflict mankind and which religion should certainly do its utmost to cure, yet these are the devils Christian teaching deliberately unleashes and encourages against the Jews, confirmed on every bloody page of history.* Dr. Wise put it strikingly when he said: "The world has sinned more against the Jews than a hundred Christs could atone for on the cross."

The teaching of the Crucifixion story is not Christian in any land and in America is unconstitutional, for it definitely incites hatred against a section of the American people. There are of course, many Christians who understand and deplore this evil, asking for a new and better interpretation of the New Testament. On May 19, 1932, the following article appeared in *The American Israelite*: "Revision of the New Testament and of clerical literature and church music to remove those passages which are derogatory to the Jew, is urged by representative ministers of the Protestant faith including Dr. Conrad Henry Moehlman, Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Rev. Allen E. Claxton, and the Rt. Rev. Peter Ainslie, in a symposium, 'Will Christianity Dare?' in the current issue of Opinion.

"I believe the time has come for Christians to take seriously

*In Germany today, Hitler could not have raised the hideously deformed crop of malignant and misshapen ideas about the Jews if the mental soil of the German people had not previously been made fertile and ever ready, as it is in all Christian lands, by the seed of hatred implanted against the Jews, inherent in Christian teaching.

the task of removing from the New Testament the implications that the Jewish race must pay eternal reparation for the death of Jesus," writes Dr. Claxton, pastor of the Trinity Union Methodist Episcopal Church of Providence, R. I.

In his article Dr. Moehlman, Professor of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, declares that Christianity is again come to the parting of the way and that now it must take a stand on two principal ethical problems which face the church as it has in the days of the Reformation. According to Dr. Moehlman, Christian ethics has not had the courage to face the Christian-Jewish issue which is involved in the Christian injustice to the Jew.

Dr. Holmes, of the Community Church, writes that, "To hold any grudge, or to cherish any prejudice and hate, against Jews as a group, because Jesus was slain in Jerusalem would be as foolish, as incredible, as to despise and persecute Greeks today because Socrates was made to drink the hemlock in Athens."

Perhaps a helpful suggestion would be for the churches to teach history along with the Crucifixion story. This would give it proper background and might go far to lessen the evil results inherent in teaching the story without its connections with historical facts. The pupil should know the answers to the following questions: —

1. *What did Rome have to do with Jerusalem?*
2. *What was the power and position of Rome at that time?*
3. *Who was Pontius Pilate and what was he doing in Palestine?*
4. *What rights did the Hebrews of Palestine possess under Roman rule?*
5. *Were the Jews allowed to dispose of any prisoners through capital punishment?*
6. *Whose method of capital punishment was crucifixion?*
7. *Was it ever practiced by the Hebrews?*

8. *What was the specific political charge preferred against Jesus?*
9. *Why was his intended kingship considered treason against Rome?*
10. *How did Rome punish pretenders to authority?**
11. *Who wrote the "King of the Jews" on the cross on which Jesus died?*
12. *What was their object in marking the cross in this way?*

Bringing the story into the realm of historical facts and common sense could not help but be of service to humanity and would be a far less drastic method than changing the New Testament which is hardly likely to find ready favor. What the New Testament needs more than revision is the emphasis on the life of Jesus rather than his death, his teachings—not his funeral, the religion of Jesus, not *about* him.

Yet the only fair conclusion any one can reach is that Christians in the main are far superior to their religion and the teachings of the Church, for with their minds and hearts deliberately poisoned by hatred, surely a frightful handicap with which to be burdened, the majority carry on as civilized, intelligent human beings, and many have surely reached the heights of fine and noble living. It is true that among the latter were and are those who have discarded Christianity as such, the Deists who formulated the United States Constitution, and many others. Dr. Wise said: "The great minds of America among non-Jews were those who took no stock in dogmatic Christianity." Nevertheless there are many also who remain true Christians by the far harder task of distinguishing in Christianity between the wheat and the chaff. To them all praise is due. They are the pathfinders of the future and truly great souls.

*Pagan Rome crucified its victims, Christian Rome burned them alive. Hardly an improvement. Today the Pope of Rome seeks to confuse the issues by tirades against Communism for which Catholicism is to blame, the while Mussolini's armies marched out of Rome to bloody war upon Abyssinia and today endanger the peace of Europe and the world by war in Spain.

LEO N. LEVI

*A Distinguished Layman's Views
on Jewish Life and Learning*

CHAPTER XIII

LEO N. LEVI

*I*N 1904 THERE died in New York City, an able lawyer, outstanding citizen and fine Jew, whose name was Leo N. Levi. Mr. Levi had been national president of the Independent Order of B'nai Brith, from 1900 until his death. In 1905 some of the addresses and speeches of this man were gathered into a volume and dedicated to his memory. In one of these addresses, entitled "Judaism in America—from the Standpoint of a Layman," delivered at the Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in New Orleans in December of 1894, Mr. Levi, after outlining the uncertain position of Judaism in America which he

attributed to the uncertain attitude on the part of American rabbis to the faith of their fathers, made the following comments: "The faith that is based on reason alone, as reason is defined by the so-called reformers, is in the highest sense unreasonable, for it has no stability and cannot be imparted to others. No man can teach a faith that has such narrow limitations, neither can he inspire faith in his reason, for to inspire faith in his reason he must have reason in his faith. The Jews in America cannot with safety permit the demoralization which exists in their synagogues to continue. If they desire to preserve their ancient religion, and impart it to their children, they must insist that their spiritual leaders shall define that religion, adhere to it themselves, and teach it to the congregants. Such a demand made by the members of each congregation upon their respective ministers will, doubtless, result in much temporary demoralization, acrimony and strife. Many of those who are now posing as Jewish Rabbis will doubtless find they must recede from some of the positions that they have held, or must separate themselves from Judaism. But when that is accomplished we will no longer see the sacred doctrines of Judaism assailed from Jewish pulpits to Jewish hearers by so-called Jewish Rabbis. Time and again have the priests among the Jews taught false doctrines; time and again they have been compelled to recant or depart from the Jewish field. When Ezra came he found the law being violated by the priests, and disregarded by the people, and with the aid of Nehemiah, he drove out the false priests and led the people back to an observance of the law. History repeats itself and in this country there will arise someone who, animated with the spirit that governed the life of Ezra, will point out to the people wherein they are disregarding the law, and by inspiring the people with love and obedience for the law, will cause them to scourge from the pulpits the false priests who are scandalizing the ancient faith. . . . The ideal Rabbi, for whose coming they are longing, will be a man imbued with a perfect faith in God's

law as written in Torah; he will study it with a broad and liberal mind, seeking always to comprehend the will of the Creator to the end that he may observe it; he will be imbued with this faith and filled with understanding, devoting himself to teaching and practicing the ancient religion, not as a mere matter of form, but as a vital and forceful agency to accomplish the true development of man's highest nature. To him eloquence will consist in deeds, not words; to him entertainment will only be an incident to instruction; to him theology only an aid to piety; to him ceremonies will be divinely ordered means to a divinely ordered end; to him the human intellect will be infinitely small compared with the infinite mind of God; to him man will be most clearly distinguished from the animal in that he has received by revelation the will of God. Such a man, believing, following, teaching and practicing the doctrine, the rites and ceremonies of Judaism, will stand forth before the eyes of the Jews as a leader to be followed. Around him will be gathered disciples eager to learn and eager to follow, and the multitude will take from his lips, and from the lips of his disciples, the truths which have been hidden from them so long. And as in the days of Ezra, after many years of indifference, the people will gather in the temples to pray with a truly worshipful spirit. It is only then that the doubts, the vexations, the groanings of spirit which now so commonly manifest themselves among the people will disappear, then will the people rest their doubts, their difficulties and their troubles upon the altar of their faith . . ."

Leo N. Levi was born in Victoria, Texas. His father, Abraham Levi, was born in Alsace.

It is interesting also, to note the views of this man, more than a quarter of a century ago, on the subject of Jewish education. He says:

"In my judgment Jewish children should be educated in Jewish schools. There they should be taught the liberal sciences and arts

along with a knowledge of their history and their religion. . . . I for one, should be proud to point to Jewish seats of learning. I am proud to point to our charities and our synagogues, and the world esteems us because we take such good care of one another. Let us suppose that we had exclusive Jewish schools, (and we have some already) and that a Gentile should censure us for their institution, what would be the basis of his objection? None but that such schools tend to perpetuate the Jews. Is it not clear that no other objection can be offered, and that we cannot defer to a prejudice that can not be diverted from ourselves without a severance between ourselves and our history, our traditions and our religion? No liberal man can or will censure our exclusiveness in education or marriage; no unreasonable man can be satisfied by a seeming acquiescence to the demands of his prejudice. Let us always find out what is right for us to do and do it; let us discover what is best for us to do and if right, do it, and we need not trouble ourselves about the opinion of the world. The world sooner or later gets right in its opinions, but never from concessions made to prejudice. The sacrifice of principles to prejudice feeds it and makes it grow; the independent practice of right is its deadliest foe."

These excerpts from the writings of Mr. Levi are given in order to illustrate the opinions of men other than those strictly within the pale of Reform.*

Jewish education, however, in Cincinnati at least, had not always gone unchampioned. When Dr. Wise first came to Cincinnati, in 1854, the Congregation Bene Yeshurun, as already stated, had attached to its synagogue a parochial school called the "Talmid Yelodim Institute," which had been in operation since 1849. Of this school Dr. Wise wrote enthusiastically in January of 1860. He said:

"When we make this institute the theme of our particular discussion, this week, it is only done for the purpose of holding it up as a pattern so worthy of imitation to other congregations.

*Dr. Wise had been at variance for many years with the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith which organization he criticized as having no religious program, being merely a lodge which buried its dead.

Education, this great lever to the elevation of mankind, this excellent pillar of fire to lead man into the blessed land of promise, certainly deserves the attention and cooperation of all great and good men . . .

In 1890 he said:

"That T. Y. I. is better than the public schools is evident from the following facts: Our pupils between the age of ten and twelve years are well acquainted with English, German and Hebrew grammar; the pupils of the public schools of the same age have never studied grammar. In Geography, History of the United States, and Arithmetic our pupils must on an average be better than those of the public schools, because ours are admitted more numerous, much younger and with better percentage to the intermediate schools than those of the public schools. Besides our pupils are better versed in Grammar than those of the highest department of the high school, and are better acquainted with the Hebrew than two thirds of all American theologians. They know the Hebrew etymology to perfection and translate anywhere in the Pentateuch and historical passages. We shall say nothing of penmanship and needlework, of which they have but a faint idea in the public schools. All calumnies are in vain. T. Y. Institute is better than the public schools."

Some time between 1860 and 1870 however,* the public school became the medium for the teaching of secular education, and the Talmid Yelodim Institute became the religious school of the congregation. In July of 1873 Dr. Wise described its work as follows:

"The classes proved to be well instructed, in Hebrew grammar especially, and the examinations gave full satisfaction to all present. This Sabbath school proves that very much can be accomplished in a short time by skilled teachers, under the protection of an earnest board of officers; and that all this can be done without the least interference with the public schools. It proves practically that those teachers and managers of Sabbath-schools, who maintain they can find no time to teach Hebrew thoroughly, are in the wrong. There is no want of either time or talent, just give them

*In 1868, when religious zealotry came to an end in Public Schools.

the right sort of teachers who love the beautiful language of the Bible. It proves furthermore, how decidedly wrong our Christian neighbors are who maintain religion and the Bible must be taught in the public schools. Our rising generation learn vastly more of Bible and religion than those of other denominations, and the Hebrew besides. Yet, we want them to learn nothing of the kind in the public schools. We presume that we can do it much better than those ladies and gentlemen who are appointed to give a secular education. Our neighbors have to learn of us where and how religion must be taught."

"The class conducts unaided the entire service, reads the section from the Torah—the girls, too—for the Shavuoth day from the two scrolls, recites its prayers and lessons in faultless English and no less faultless Hebrew, as though these youngsters were the disciples of the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, go through the divine service of two hours without the least stoppage or hesitation, and if it was not for the grand choral and organ music at the intervals, the whole would seem as thoroughly Jewish as it could be made in Warsaw, Wilna, or Jerusalem. It is here, especially, where the antique and the modern in Judaism are happily amalgamated to one grand picture of American Judaism; it is on this occasion especially, when the work of the T. Y. I. and the public schools of Cincinnati present themselves plastically, almost tangibly, to the largest multitude ever assembled in any temple of Israel. The reporter of this, confirmed 1,057 pupils, not one of whom deserted the pale of Judaism, or went astray otherwise, thank God."

Thus wrote Isaac M. Wise forty years ago. Were he alive today, the same statement could not, in truth, be repeated.

Old Mother Orthodoxy had ministered not only to the mind of the Jew, but also to his heart and body and soul. Universal in outlook, in sympathy and understanding, personal and particular in caring for the needs of those who were near and dependent on her. Time moves on, and needs and methods change, yet we still need and should therefore carry on with us the best of Israel's traditions and ideas, whether they be Mosaic or Prophetic, rabbinic or of the mystic cabbalists, in order that we may live, and let others live. This is Judaism.

ZIONISM

The Bible Sanctions Zionism

The Romance of Israel

Anti-Zionists Unamerican

CHAPTER XIV

ZIONISM

*T*HE CONTINUAL quarrel or argument as to whether we Jews should be called a race or people, a nation or a religion, seems to the layman at least, childish and absurd. And to base any argument for or against Zionism on this score beggars the English language to describe. What difference does it make whether we call ourselves a people, a race, a nation or a religion? We are Jews — that is all that the question can resolve itself into; Jews either interested in Palestine or not interested. To attempt to assign scientific reasons for what can only be personal motives, is to imitate exactly the German anti-Semites who have striven so hard and so long to call their personal hatred a scientific deduction. Jews, the German anti-Semites claim, cannot be Germans because they

are a separate race. Yet what the anti-Semites have proved is that they believe the Germans are a race apart from the rest of humanity. If racial lines can be drawn at all, they would first begin at the color line. And Jews are white people. Jesus and the Apostles were also Jews, and it is therefore doubtful if even German anti-Semites would admit they were not white. There is really only one race on earth, and that is the human race, sub-divided of course, into many groups and colors. There is no Semitic race — there is a Semitic culture, and it is the cultural or religious backgrounds which naturally divide people into groups. Group divisions among peoples, as nations in the world, are absolutely necessary. The world is too large, the people in it too many, to be handled under one political, religious or cultural type.

Why is it that the Scotch or the Irish people in America, for example, do not have any arguments as to whether or not they are an alien race here, whether interest shown by them in Scotland or Ireland makes them unpatriotic? It is because all peoples but the Jews accept their background naturally. Our past history of persecution and cruelty at the hands of other nations is enough reason to have made of us a highly sensitive minority group, but surely, here in America, the land of religious freedom, the Jews should be natural. It is here, if anywhere, that we should be ourselves, and lend fearlessly our financial aid and moral support to help our less fortunate co-religionists of other countries to establish themselves in some land where they can be free to live life with a minimum of outside interference.

It is difficult to understand the logic of Dr. Wise's contention that the Mission of Israel and Zionism conflicted, that they were unalterably opposed to each other. The Mission of Israel, he claimed, was to emphasize Monotheism. Surely the Jews of Palestine are not Trinitarians. A group of Jews living in Palestine could in no way conflict with the Monotheism of the Jews living in other lands. American Israel would be free to carry out its own

ideas if a million Jews lived in Palestine, or if none lived there. As for Dr. Wise's continual articles to the effect that the message of Moses and the Prophets could be rightfully interpreted only as universal religion, and that they never envisioned the return of the Jews or any part of them to Palestine as the home-land, let us turn to the Bible and see for ourselves. In the Holy Scriptures, (Edition: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917) we find the following:

Deuteronomy 31:7 . . . "And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel: 'Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt go with this people into the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it . . .'"

Isaiah 14 . . . "For the Lord will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land . . ."

Isaiah 26: . . . "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; Walls and bulwarks doth He appoint for salvation. Open ye the gates, That the righteous nation that keepeth faithfulness may enter in . . ."

Jeremiah 23: 7,8. "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say: 'As the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;' but 'As the Lord liveth, that brought up and that led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country and from all the countries whither I had driven them;' and they shall dwell in their own land . . ."

Jeremiah 50:19. "And I will bring back Israel to his pasture, And he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, And his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead . . ."

Ezekiel 28:25 . . . "Thus saith the Lord God: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob . . ."

Amos 9: 14, 15.

"And I will turn the captivity of my people Israel,

And they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them;
And they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof;
They shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.
And I will plant them upon their land,
And they shall no more be plucked up,
Out of their land which I have given them,
Saith the Lord thy God."

The references to, and emphasis on "their own land," a particular place on the earth's surface, both in Moses and the Prophets, is apparent even to the unscholarly layman. There can be no doubt that Moses and the prophets spoke only to their people, and of their land, judging by their own words. Yet even if these words should be construed only as hopes, and not prophecies, or even if references could be found in the Bible which distinctly stated, which they do nowhere, however, that the Jews were never to return to Palestine under any consideration, the truly noble experiment called Zionism, should be in no way affected thereby. Surely "to rebuild the waste cities, and to make the desert blossom like the rose," requires no apology and should meet with no opposition. The experiences of the Jews in Palestine today might well constitute another chapter in that unfinished Book of Life called the Bible. The Old Testament is the life story of our ancestors. The "moving finger" of their descendants still writes on the manuscript of time.

Yes, the Old Testament is the history of the Hebrews, their trials and tribulations, their sufferings and hopes, their struggles against submersion into the surrounding seas of idolatry and immorality which threatened always to engulf them, and their ultimate victory over the powers of evil and darkness of those centuries. Because of these struggles to overcome the evil, to bring light into darkness, they are universal in their appeal, for all peoples in all ages have struggled against these same forces and do so until this day. But to lift these moral and spiritual discoveries from the people who contributed them and deny them or

any part of them, at any time, the natural and human environment from which they had sprung, is indeed a strange perversion both of the Bible and human nature.

In the history of the world, nothing so poetic, so courageous, so romantic and so practical as the rebuilding of Palestine by the Jews has ever occurred. Here are people willing and eager to toil and suffer all the hardships and dangers of the pioneer in order to feel beneath their feet the ground remembered by them during an absence of 2000 years; to see overhead the skies toward which the kings and seers and prophets of their past had gazed. Other lands of the world's area had from time to time been offered them to escape the cruelty of the Christian countries of Europe. But no land but Palestine could heal the hurt of the ages, balm could come only from Gilead. What a marvelous memory, what lasting love! What an exhibition of faithfulness! And how was Palestine to be regained? By the shedding of blood, by the power of the sword, by might over right, as every other land in this world had been secured and maintained? No, these peculiar people bought every inch of the ground they now possess, paid for the privilege of toiling on the sacred soil, and yet there are people in this world who would offer opposition to them. The tragic part is that the enemies of Zion are not all found outside of Israel's camp, but that there are many within it.

It was Isaac M. Wise who launched the rabid hatred of Zionism in America. His reasons for doing so have already been explained—his actual belief in the near arrival of a universal republic and universal religion which would obviate the need of all attempts for separate group action. How many non-Zionists today believe that the world has become Jewish, even in thought, or theology, that the millenium has arrived when all worship One God, "that corruption and evil have given way to purity and goodness, and that all created in God's image, have recognized that they are brethren?" For Dr. Wise, who believed all these

things were near fulfillment, his course was consistent, but what about those who have carried on his hatred of Zionism blindly and uninquiringly, rigidly orthodox in their observance of the letter of the law as laid down by the early Reform leaders?

According to Dr. Wise and other non-Zionists, Zionism is contrary to Americanism. In other words, they claim it is not possible to be a Zionist and a patriotic American at one and the same time. Yet Zionism is an expression of Judaism, and Judaism, as Dr. Wise emphasized fully and often, can involve no disloyalty to a government whose foundations are laid upon its doctrines and principles. Only those Jews who take up permanent residence in Palestine are concerned politically; for those of us who live in other lands Zionism is an entirely personal and religious matter. Why should the interest of American Jews in the land of the origin of their faith be considered unpatriotic? Do Zionists plan or plot the destruction of America? Do they buy or sell state secrets, or do any of the things commonly attributed to traitors of their country? Is it unpatriotic to be interested in world movements, or concerned for the unhappiness of others? Is it unpatriotic to help those who need our help? These questions, if ever asked of non-Zionists, have evidently not been answered. Who are the people untrue to America—Jews who are interested by every human and humane right and reason in the establishment of a land in the world where at least some of their persecuted co-religionists can live life according to the dictates of their consciences, to try for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness within the safeguard of political autonomy, if necessary, or the 100% (?) Americans who establish commercial factories in other lands for the direct purpose of getting cheaper labor to add to their already swollen coffers of useless greed and gain; the idle rich who take their unearned increment, gotten through American underpaid labor, and dispose of it in the ornate gambling dens of Europe; the "dollar aristocrats" who sell their sons and daughters into

bankrupt European nobility for empty titles? If anti-Zionists wish to point out traitors to America, they have enough to do with the aforementioned classes, and can well leave in peace, and at least not hinder, if they do not wish to help, a movement that holds within itself every high ideal and saintly virtue of which the human race is capable.

American Zionists represent the ideals and hopes which animated the founders of America. People true to the social vision of human happiness through physical and mental freedom, which was the aim of George Washington, and which is the purpose of Zionism, can be false to no man or country. Dr. Wise once wrote that "America has enemies because she is the champion and guardian of liberty. Therefore we say, our country's future is also that of humanity, and the traitor to this country is guilty of high treason to humanity." Since the purpose of Zionism is to establish freedom and liberty for the Jews in Palestine, by the same reasoning, the traitor to Zionism is guilty of high treason to humanity.

Dr. Wise seems unconsciously to have confused the majority, with real Americanism; and so-called Jewish *nationalism*, which is really a misnomer, as its essence is religious and spiritual, with politics as such. Yet all phases of Zionism, including the political angle, are primarily religious, because they are Jewish, while Dr. Wise's religious conceptions were actually political. He accepted no definition of religion or of Judaism except his own. He could see Zionism only as a Russian or Roumanian beggar, dressed in the garb of charity—his vision was closed to the possibility of further mental or spiritual development through the divine light radiating from an eastern or oriental Statue of Liberty. If the Zionists were of any faith except the Jewish faith, the world would long since have sung paens of praise, have glorified them in song and story, have acclaimed them with honor and love, and have marveled at the example they set. And all that the

Jews in Palestine have asked is the chance to live and work but even this is not granted them. Who but those with hearts of stone could help but feel the pity of the situation? Who that dares to call himself by the name of Jew would offer added misery to this people in their hours of struggle?*

Isaac M. Wise could not have been afraid of "political Zionism," although he used that phrase as a red rag to inflame the passions of the uninformed. An immigrant himself, and therefore conscious of his European background, as were most of his time and generation, he worked upon the one angle (unconsciously perhaps) through which he could be sure to reach them—misunderstood patriotism. The man who was fearless in his attack and exposé of Christianity, the religion of the majority, could not have feared the word "political" or any other word. His objections were personal. He simply did not want to see his own particular plan of salvation superseded by any other, and he believed firmly that his plan was God's plan. Is it not strange that he should have claimed to be so bitterly opposed to "political Zionism" when it was only through the political freedom he enjoyed in America that he was able to carry out his own ideas? Political freedom to develop in America has given our country its strength. If George Washington had not believed that political freedom was necessary for life and happiness, he would have led no army against the British government. The attempt of Theodore Herzl to secure legal autonomy for the Jews in Palestine, was animated by the self-same motives. Mahatma Ghandi is considered the greatest spiritual force in the world today, yet his aim is to establish political independence for the people of India. His purpose differs in no way from that of George Washington or Theodore Herzl. The method only varies. Ghandi is willing to starve to gain his

*This paragraph was written in the summer of 1931—when the typical Reform rabbinate of America was still gloating over the Arab-Jewish massacres in Palestine as full evidence of their desire that Zionism prove a failure.

point, Washington was ready to fight for his ideas, and Herzl worked himself to death for them.

The Zionist does not feel himself to be an alien outside of Palestine. No land is alien to the Jew—it is the unrighteous people within the land who make him feel he is not at home. The whole earth is God's. Yet even if all people treated the Jew as a human being, there could still be no logical or rational reasons why he should not have another sanctuary in Palestine, even one politically assured.

Far from being unpatriotic, it is actually the anti-Zionist who is against the American principle of personal liberty involved. Zionism is an educational experience in all the law and doctrine which makes for real citizenship and patriotism in any land. Had Dr. Wise understood the real meaning of America, he would have tried to secure for people in other lands the same political conditions which exist here, so that they also might be free to develop and benefit humanity.

He was certain that God had appointed America the world's sole redeemer. Why tie the world's salvation to one country only? A truly universal conception would have permitted the possibility of a Messiah or a messianic age developing in any of God's lands, for the benefit of all.

The policy of despair attributed to Zionism may in reality, be the truth in reverse. The ancient rabbis who saw the destruction of Palestine were looking for a silver lining in the dark cloud of Israel's misfortunes. Being philosophers, they found it, in the thought that salvation could be found elsewhere than in the temple at Jerusalem. The lining is, and was, beautiful; nevertheless, the cloud remained. Dr. Wise said he was afraid of Zionism, because "it would ultimately result in harm to the Jews of America." It would seem then, that he, after all, was the pessimist who despaired of the progress of human nature, since he evidently did not trust his enlightened American Christian brethren, while

the Zionists do. "The final redemption of Israel," he stated, "can be brought about only by the final redemption of the Gentiles," and he was sure this would not take long. We are not so sure, and do not wish to occupy ourselves, even in the meantime, with the mission of reforming Christianity or Christology, for the Gentiles can do this much better for themselves, as Dr. Wise himself once clearly pointed out. Would it not be more reasonable and natural to assume that the final redemption of Israel could best be brought about in the effort to redeem ourselves and let the example set be the indirect means of redeeming others?

Theodore Herzl was a "false prophet," said Dr. Wise, "a man without religion." Dr. Wise had labored in the vineyard of the Lord for eighty years. Theodore Herzl had in eight years given his full measure of sacrifice, and it was Herzl who voiced the profoundly religious thought that Zionism had been the Sabbath of his life.

In the last few years of Dr. Wise's life, his congregation made strenuous efforts to eliminate the teaching of Hebrew in the Temple Sabbath-School. To this Dr. Wise was strongly opposed, as it had always been claimed by him that without the knowledge of the Hebrew language, Judaism was not possible. In a report written as late as June of 1897, he said: . . . "the Hebrew language, is and will remain as long as I live, a main subject of the curriculum." Yet two years later, just a year before his death, in an article against Zionism, he spoke as follows: "And now, when the Jews of the West began to work and to speak the languages of culture . . . now those Zionists come to whip us again into the dark corners of isolation, wanting us to speak and write Hebrew again, which nobody in all Christendom besides a few theologians, professors and select students understand."*

*The last picture taken of Dr. Wise shows him holding, firmly and affectionately, a cedar-wood cane which had been brought to him from Palestine by a fellow-Cincinnatian. His last steps were thus assisted by a product from the land whose development he had gone so far out of his way to obstruct.

In Russia under the Czarist regime many laws were enacted which cared for all of Russia's people "except the Jews." Reform Judaism in its laudable efforts to love the world uses the phrase that "nothing human can be foreign to them." It would seem that they imitate the czar's policy, and nothing was foreign to them "except the Jews," which meant the orthodox and the Zionists. If the rest of the world is to be loved by Reform Judaism, and the orthodox and Zionist Jews excepted, can this be a demonstration of "pure religion?"

Those who burn with zeal to save or serve the world, should take up, not religion, but law, for religion is a particular thing; law is universal. We need a World Court, a League of Nations, composed of men who would practice "one law for all," who would do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God, or gods. Honest law is the profession which can do most today to serve the world.

There was a time when religion had direct dominion over all things—law, drama, science, art, etc. But the world has come to specialize or particularize these various branches of life, so that religion no longer can call them its own. Secular education developed the mind, but left the heart untouched, and organized religion, Jewish and Christian, in Europe and America, was too much occupied with other matters to attend to the most important one of educating the heart, or building character. The church left it to the home, and the home to the church, which accounts for the dangerous conditions in the world today, threatening its entire civilization.

It is still left for religion to build character, to supply the particular needs which serve universal ideals, to be the foundation stone on which the world rests, inconspicuous perhaps, but eternally necessary.

MISSION OF ISRAEL

The Wonder of Human Life

Variety in Harmony Is Nature's Keynote

"Israel's Mission Is Peace"

CHAPTER XV

MISSION OF ISRAEL

WE AGAIN QUOTE from the collection of essays and sermons by Dr. Adolph Moses, because Dr. Moses states in clear and unmistakable terms what Reform Judaism in the last half of the nineteenth century in America hoped to accomplish, while Dr. Wise left much of his real meaning to inference. With regard to the Mission of Israel, Dr. Moses speaks as follows: "Israel was chosen to be the light-bearer of God's truth, His missionary to teach the nations the knowledge of God, and show them the way in which they should walk. The children of Israel were not to enjoy special privileges and favors, but were to be witnesses of Yahve.

Israel is the servant of God, that will not grow faint nor become weary until he has established justice on earth. The servant of God suffers for the sins of the nations, he is despised and his visage is not like that of a man, his voice is not raised on high, even the bruised reed does he not break. Laden with sorrows, bleeding from many wounds, he is ordained to gather the lost sheep, the nations of the earth, unto Yahve, their Father and Judge.

"Such is the ideal Mission of Israel, as conceived by his seers. Nor has the historic life of Israel in its better days, whenever the conditions of the time favored such a course, been faithless to its high universal mission. . . ."

Reform Jews in America today would hardly recognize themselves in the prophetic picture painted above. It is of course, the same one from which Christianity has drawn its model of Jesus, and which it has never attempted to follow, because of its utter unnaturalness.

Unlike Dr. Wise, however, Dr. Moses did not think the work of converting the Gentiles to Yahvism or Mosaism as Dr. Wise called it, was near fulfillment. He did think that the opportunity offered by America's unique democratic experiment was a challenge to Israel to begin it. And he says: "Our religion is dearer to us than life itself. We would rather be the outcasts of the world than become faithless to our faith. But this very religion of ours demands that we should preach its simple and broad truths to the nations. It is our mission to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. It is our calling to teach the absolute unity of God in opposition to all Pagan adulterations of the faith of the prophets. It is our office to join unto ourselves all those who are brethren in faith, though strangers in blood. The harvest to be gathered is rich, it requires infinite patience, enthusiasm, faith, endless toil on the part of many generations. Say not that prejudices are in the way of our making spiritual conquests. What can not enthusiasm

and faith accomplish with the aid of God? A few Jewish apostles, poor, unknown, despised, overmastered the proud and mighty Greek and Roman world. We have long enough been hiding our light under a bushel. We have, like Jonah, been fleeing from the presence of God and refused to bring his message to the children of men. Let us, even with our feeble power, begin to prepare the day of the Lord. At best, it will take centuries and centuries to accomplish the task. But ours is the duty to begin the work and do it with all our heart, all our soul, all our might. With the all-wise and omnipotent God is left the completion and direction thereof. Let everyone of us consider himself an apostle of Israel's message to the Gentiles. Let every one endeavor to demonstrate by his deeds and words the beauty and nobility of character shaped by the forces of Yahvism. . . ."

The inconsistencies in Dr. Moses's writings also are apparent even to the careless observer. He calls the apostles "Jewish" after insisting that the word should never be used. He speaks of "strangers in blood" when according to the "Jews by religion only" theory, such a difference could never be pointed out. He says that our religion demands that we should preach its simple and broad truths to all nations, and he also claims belief in the prophet's description that "the voice of the servant of God is not raised on high." Verily, Reform Judaism in America had set itself a task impossible of accomplishment.

It is not a common religion the world needs to insure peace, not ideas in common, but ideals. And only one ideal would be necessary to bring the messianic era to pass—an appreciation of the wonder of life, of human life on earth. It is difficult to believe that God gave life to the Jews on earth to carry the world's burden of sin, to live as Jews only until non-Jewish mankind had accepted morality and monotheism. Life, human life, is God's greatest gift to all of us, human life is God's master-piece, and needs no especial mission to justify its existence. We need not apologize

for, nor justify our lives with a particular mission. Life justifies itself, being the visible expression and gift of the Creator. When the Jews of Spain went to the stake, they were not upheld by the idea that they were dying to save mankind or preserve the mission of Israel—they died because they preferred death to living a life that was alien to their spirit. That their sacrifice incidentally helped later to lessen pagan brutality, is true, but it would be terrible to think that God deliberately offered them as a sacrifice for the education of Catholic Spain.

If the ideal of the sanctity and wonder of human life on earth could be impressed upon all peoples, all would be safe, for in the appreciation of that fact is bound up everything that is needed to make life worth while. "Man's inhumanity to man" would no longer "make countless millions mourn." Wars would be impossible, no man would take the life of his brother of any creed or race. Knowledge of birth-control would be the possession of all those who had need of it; useless pain and suffering and overpopulation for the benefit of kings and priests, militarists and capitalists for cheap labor and selfish purposes would disappear. All systems of government would be productive of good, for the men in control would know that abuse of power means unhappiness to man, that power cannot be exercised without affecting human beings. Life which is so wonderful, so strange, and so mysterious would be revered. The stars do not hear, the sun and the moon have no voice, the hills and the mountains cannot see the skies toward which they reach, the grass and the trees can touch earth only where they are planted. To man alone has been given intelligence and laughter; the consciousness of the beauty and the holiness of human life on earth. Let me quote you from a book about the East: "Of a sudden it came to him that life was beautiful. Not effort only, not work nor play, success, achievement, wealth, or fame, or honor, but life itself. To live was good. The hours, the golden hours, were not just empty spaces between two

clock-beats to fill with acts—they were themselves a glory . . . "To sit and let the crystal flood of time pass over him was purest pleasure. To feel the great and glorious stream of the world's life pass on, to be one with nature and to hear her sing. For she goes forward to music. It is not always a battle chant she moves to. In her soul, there are all things. The shout of triumph and the cry of those who fall are there. But there are also other notes—the ripple of the river on its stones, the murmur of the trees, the rhythm of the sap that rises in them, the thunder in the hills. It is the song of infinite harmonies."

Not only by the waters of Babylon did our ancestors weep, but also by the waters of the Rhine and the Danube, the Dnieper and the Volga, the Tigris and the Thames. Understanding themselves, they understood all people, including their persecutors. That is why Jews have lived in all lands, and among all nations—they understand humanity. Loving God, they love life, God's greatest gift, and hold it sacred for themselves and for others.

We do not need to have the same kind of religious customs and ceremonies in common with all others. The culture which develops naturally in a group, belongs to them, and is theirs to cherish and protect. It is for no man arbitrarily to say, you must give these things up, because other people might not understand them, or misinterpret them. Dr. Wise was deeply influenced by the cosmopolitan views of the eighteenth century, which abolished the ghetto walls, and thought that if all men looked and dressed alike, there would be no barriers between them. Yet the era which began so auspiciously for human brotherhood by Mendelssohn and Lessing, ended in the frightful carnage of the World War. Dr. Wise and his contemporaries looked forward hopefully—we look back sadly.

Uniformity ended in chaos. In the world of nature, variety in harmony is the key-note. Think of the wealth of form and color in flowers. Many believe the rose the queen of them all,

yet Nature does not abandon her other flowers for that reason. The rose is beautiful, yet the violet and the daisy also have their place in the scheme of things. The same is true of fruits and vegetables, animals and minerals. Possibly one of each kind would be enough, but the Creator expresses Himself through Nature in countless forms and ideas, and through the human mind in many ideas and forms of worship. We on earth speak of the "music of the spheres" that celestial atmosphere radiating from the stars because of their evident beautiful harmony. May it not be that the various groups composing mankind racially, religiously, nationally, and culturally, release divine melody also, and send up music as a symphony composed of many instruments, the deep-toned viola and the sweet-toned flute, the rich violin and the clashing cymbals, the resounding drum and the penetrating trumpet, all representing various types of humanity, yet when each plays his best, the result is harmony.

Mankind does not attain to perfection by leaps and bounds. The process is always slow and painful. Although the European revolution of 1848, which Dr. Wise thought presaged the dawn of the millenium, brought many fine ideals of human thought into the light, the non-Jewish world is not yet emancipated, and the Jewish world today has no claim to call itself a moral leader. The Jew, and his Christian brother, both struggle toward the realization of the high ideals of human conduct which both religions hold before them. Contrary to Dr. Wise's belief, many more Jews have turned to Christianity than there are Christians who have turned to Judaism. "It is therefore the duty of those who believe in Israel's specific mission," said Leo N. Levi, "unless it be only a lip-profession, to bring to its support the necessary ceremonies which will distinguish its religious life and emphasize its pristin mission, for without concrete forms and institutions the work of human beings cannot be realized." We know today how far the world is from being "Judaized" even in thought, and

while with Isaac M. Wise, we too believe that "truth will triumph," we also know that like the road to God, there are many approaches to truth, which is like a diamond shedding light from many angles. Historic Christianity cannot be reasoned out of existence any more than historic Judaism, Dr. Wise's fixed belief to the contrary, notwithstanding. Both are mighty rivers flowing in their own channels, wide and deep. Side by side, together with the other great religions of earth, for there is room for all, they flow on toward the eternal harbor of happiness which all men seek. The composite mentality of the world is too varied ever to be happy with one religion. Universal principles of right living, of consciousness of the mystery of life, of knowledge to cherish and ennoble it—to spread these ideas is our right, but no longer our exclusive privilege or mission. Many peoples have seen the light; America was founded by men who understood social justice. We who have inherited through our past the love of life as the visible symbol of the Creator, and the desire to use His gifts worthily, can help most by being true to ourselves, to the religion and to the people from whom we have come. In Palestine we created the Book and the philosophy which has meant so much to others, but this assistance was indirect. By personal example it is our duty to live the principles of universal justice and mercy, but we have no mission to preach to others, even if they wanted to listen, of which there is painfully little evidence. The Christian peoples will not, if ever, give up Jesus, either as god or splendid man; they are also able to rationalize inconsistencies.

No, we do not need a universal religion or political scheme, as Dr. Wise thought would solve the world's problems, but universal sympathy and understanding. If people could be brought to see that "all the living of the earth are but a handful to those who are dead," that we who live together on earth, are here for such a little while, they would all be kinder to each other, as people are when isolated on a train or boat, drawn nearer to each

other in the realization of their loneliness. The earth is but a swaying ship, the people on it all "outward bound." Then let us bring to our fellow-passengers on the ship of life the best we have, be true to them by being true to ourselves, which to the Jew means being true to our people and to our God, and all that that implies. Then will we know peace within ourselves, and so will be able to give it without effort to others, for, to those who are near and to those who are far off, "Israel's Mission is Peace!"

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