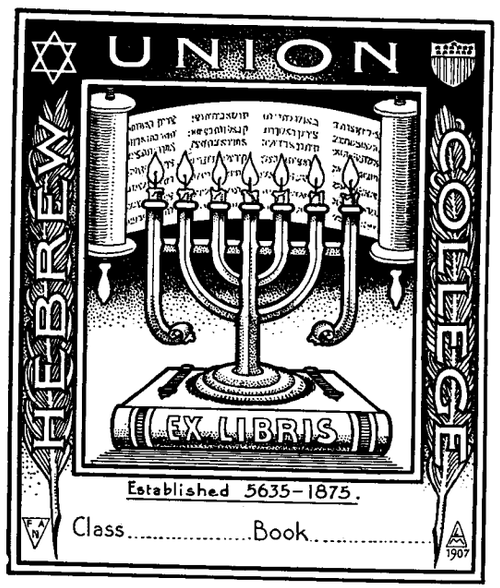

JEWISH TRAVELLERS

Presidential Address

TO THE

Union of Jewish Literary Societies

DELIVERED AT

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

BY

SIR MATTHEW NATHAN, G.C.M.G.

22nd OCTOBER, 1912.

JEWISH TRAVELLERS

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

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I HAVE chosen for my Presidential Address the subject of "JEWISH TRAVELLERS," because each of the two words embodies for me a special and personal interest, and because I hope to convey to you some measure of the fascination which every student feels as he journeys through the centuries with pilgrims, merchants, missionaries, tourists, even with beggars, whose wandering footprints are still visible on the sands of time.

But I must say at once that I have nothing new to put before you. I have made no discoveries in space or time. I have no new theories to inflict on you either topographical or historical. Nor do I propose any complete survey of Jewish travel from the migration of Abraham to the most recent movements of Zionism. I limit myself in two directions. I pass over the wanderings of our people in the Biblical age and the missionary journeys of the Jews who, after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, visited the scattered communities of the race to preach to them either the old faith or the new gospel. And I stop at least two hundred years before our complicated twentieth century and its burning problems of race and religion.

The Dark Ages which followed the fall of the Roman Empire were favourable neither to travel nor to its record. The northern barbarians required some centuries to develop into the nations of the Christian West. Meanwhile the civilisation of Islam blazed up, spreading from Arbaia over Western Asia, Northern Africa,

and South-Western Europe. Mahomet fled from Mecca on July 16th, 622 A.D., and from that date commences the chronology of Islam. Ten years later he died. His immediate successors and the House of Muavieh at Damascus reigned for about 120 years over a united caliphate which at one time extended from the Ganges to the Loire. Shortly after 750 A.D. Kairouan and Cordova became centres of independent African and Spanish Mussulman kingdoms, while the Abbaside dynasty ruled in Bagdad over Asiatic Islam. At this time the Christian world was divided into two. The old Eastern Empire still had its centre at Constantinople. The Frankish Empire under Charlemagne had its chief seat at Aachen. Between these five divisions—the two Christian Empires and the three Mahommedan caliphates—Jews wandered to and fro.

The earliest whose name and mission have come down to us is one ISAAC, who was attached, probably as interpreter, to an embassy consisting of two Frank nobles sent by Charlemagne to Haroun-el-Rashid, the Caliph at Bagdad. All we know of Isaac is contained in two short references to him in the annals of Eginard—a contemporary record written by the Emperor's Secretary. I will quote these passages, which have a quaint ending.

"801 A.D.—L'empereur se rendit de Spolète à Ravenne, y demeura quelque jours, et gagna Faire ; on lui annonça là que des ambassadeurs d'Haroun, roi des Perses, étaient entrés dans le port de Pise ; il envoya au devant d'eux, et se les fit presenter entre Verceil et Yosée. un deux (car ils étaient deux) était Perse d'Orient et envoyé du roi des Perses : un autre, Sarrasin d'Afrique. . . . Ils annoncèrent à l'empereur que le Juif Isaac qu'il avait envoyé quatre ans auparavant au roi des Perses avec Sigismond et Lanfried, revenait avec de grands presens. Quant à Lanfried et Sigismond ils étaient tous deux morts. Alors l'empereur envoya le notaire Erchinbald en Ligurie, pour préparer une flotte qui apporta l'élephant et les autres choses qu' Isaac menait avec lui. . . .

"Dans le mois d'Octobre de cette année le juif Isaac revint d'Afrique avec l'élephant, entra dans le port de Vendres, et

passa l'hiver à Verceil, parce qu'il ne pouvait traverser les Alpes couvertes de neige.

"802 A.D.—Le 20 Juillet Isaac vint et amena l'empereur l'élephant et les autre presens, que lui envoyait le roi des Perses ; le nom de l'élephant etait Abulabaz."

Isaac on Abulabaz crossing the Alps would make a picture worthy of the brush of a David, but we cannot help regretting that the envoy did not place on record some account of Bagdad at the time of his visit, which was that of the City's greatest splendour. Shortly after this time, in 817 A.D., was written in Arabic *The Book of Ways*, describing the routes followed by Jewish merchants, called Radanites, probably from Rai (Rhazi), near Teheran, the commercial centre of the surrounding countries. These merchants, with the advantage derived from their neutral position, from the dispersion of their fellows over many lands, and from their ready acquisition of foreign tongues, carried on a large part of the world's trade. This is a translation of the description :

"They journey from west to east, from east to west, partly by land, partly by sea. They take ship in the land of the Franks, on the Western Sea, and steer for Farama (Pelusium). There they load their goods on the backs of camels and go by land to Kolzum (Suez) in 5 days' journey, over a distance of 25 farsakhs (parasangs). They embark in the East Sea (Red Sea) and sail from Kolzum to El Tar (port of Medina) and Jeddah (port of Mecca) ; then they go to Sind, India, and China. On their return to Farama they again embark on the Western Sea. Some make sail for Constantinople to sell their goods to the Romans ; others go to the palace of the King of the Franks to place their goods. Sometimes these Jew Merchants, when embarking in the land of the Franks in the Western Sea, make for Antioch (at the mouth of the Orontes) ; thence by land to Al-Jabia (?), Al-Hanaya (on the bank of the Euphrates), where they arrive after 3 days' march. There they embark on the Euphrates for Bagdad, and then sail down the Tigris to Al-Obolla. From Al-Obolla they sail for Oman, Sind, Hind, and China. These

different journeys can also be made by land. The merchants that start from Spain or France go to Sous Al-Akca (Morocco) and then to Tangiers, whence they march to Kairowan and the capital of Egypt. Thence they go to Ar-Ramia, visit Damascus, Al-Koufa, Bagdad, and Bassora, cross Ahwaz, Persia, Kirman, Sind, Hind, and arrive at China. Sometimes they likewise take the route behind Rome, and passing through the country of the Slavs, arrive at Khamlij, the capital of the Chazars. They embark on the Jorjan Sea, arrive at Balkh, betake themselves from there across the Oxus, and continue their journey toward Yourt, Toghozghor, and from there to China."

The Jews of this time did not only travel in merchandise. JACOB IBN TARIK, or Aben Scheara, as he is called in Hebrew, is said, about the year 820, to have carried astronomical books from Ceylon to Bagdad, and Joseph of Spain to have introduced to the Western world from India the so-called Arabic numerals. While Bagdad was the centre of West Asiatic learning, Moslem Spain became the home of civilisation in Europe. The Western orthodox Caliphate, according to Major Martin Hume—

"stood in splendour for nearly three centuries, and under the cultivated and benign Kaliphs of Cordova, the Jews of Spain lived honoured, prosperous, and free. Their great trade in slaves, in silks, perfumes, arms, and jewels from the East flattered the pride of Arab princes and nobles. The thirst of the Arabs for knowledge and culture compelled them to turn to the Jews, who alone possessed it. One bookish Kaliph after the other sent Jewish bibliophiles throughout the East searching for books for the splendid libraries that grew up in Cordova, Toledo, and elsewhere."

The Jews also were working on their own account. The Jewish physician and minister of Abderrahman III sent messengers to the Jews of Egypt and to the Prince of the Chazars in South Russia and probably elsewhere to impart and receive information with regard to the state of the Hebrew communities. No doubt some idea of future political unity was at the back of this correspondence, and it must have been recognised among

the Jews that frequent communication between the far-apart synagogues was necessary for the maintenance of the race and of the religion.

Through the ninth and tenth centuries the movement to and fro of Jewish travellers engaged in the traffic of merchandise and knowledge went on; in the eleventh a change took place. The tolerance which had distinguished the earlier domination of Islam gave way to the practice of the sterner principles of the Koran, and Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land, at first freely permitted by its rulers, were impeded, and Christian residents there and in the neighbouring countries persecuted, mainly by the Fatemite Caliphs who had ruled in Egypt since 969 A.D. This brought on the Crusades between the end of the eleventh and the middle of the thirteenth centuries, and an evil time followed for the Jewish communities, left decimated and ruined in the wake of eastward-flowing Christian fervour. Thus, according to Israel Abrahams, "there grew up among the Jews a class of travelling mendicants and a class of poor itinerant students, who wandered from place to place to sell their wares or to learn the Law." At the same time visits to the sacred places of the Jews became a devout practice among them, and it seems likely that a desire to seek a land where members of their faith could live in peace and security was one of the motives influencing the travellers who recorded their journeys at the close of the twelfth century.

To the wanderings of a mendicant and a right clever one I will later on refer. It is as an erudite exegetist and a brilliant if erratic controversialist that the traveller of the twelfth century, of whom I shall first speak, is best known. ABRAHAM BEN MEIR ABEN EZRA, or IBN EZRA, as he is often called, was born in Toledo about 1088, and spent there the first fifty years of his life attaining some celebrity as a mathematician and an astronomer. His circumstances, affected by the impoverishment of the town by continual wars, then led him to seek a livelihood abroad. Accompanied by his son, he visited Rhodes, North Africa, Egypt, and Palestine, communed with the learned men of Tiberias, and stayed in the City of Bagdad, where there were great schools of Jewish learning.

Thence he returned to Europe and settled in Rome (1140) at the time when Arnold of Brescia was starting a spirit of enquiry which rudely shook the Papacy. Ibn Ezra, also a reformer in his way and hostile to superstition, made in Rome his first essays on Biblical exegesis, and wrote a treatise on Hebrew Philology. In the summer of 1145 he was in Mantua grinding at grammar. Thence he went to Lucca, where he dwelt for eight or nine years, gathered a circle of pupils about him, occupied himself much with the study of astronomy, and commenced an exposition of the Pentateuch. In 1155 he moved to Rhodez, in the South of France, where he was in touch with Spanish Jewish culture. His love for travelling led him in his seventieth year to London, where he enjoyed good circumstances, had many pupils, and wrote a kind of defence of the Sabbath. This suggests that in his earlier voyages Ibn Ezra may have been in Cyprus, where, according to a later traveller, the practice of keeping Sabbath from midnight to midnight obtained. In the autumn of 1160 he visited Narbonne. Five or six years later he was again at Rhodez bringing out more books. He died, at the age of seventy-eight, at Calahorra, on the borders of Navarre and Aragon, probably on the road to his birthplace. On his death-bed he applied to himself the verse from Genesis which says, " Abraham was seventy-eight years old when he escaped from the curse of the world." Graetz, from whose history of the Jews most of the foregoing is taken, describes Ibn Ezra as energetic, ingenious, witty, but lacking in feeling and full of contradictions. From an excellent universal history published in London in 1781 I have extracted the following panegyric, based on certain older authorities :

" He had been a great traveller and a diligent searcher after learning, was a good astronomer, physician, poet, and critic, in which last science he hath excelled all who went before him ; and is chiefly admired by the Christians for his judicious explications of the sacred books."

In a footnote to this description is a list of Ibn Ezra's works, which included one called *The Beginning of Wisdom*, and this treats, among other things, of cosmography. In this and in some

other of his works there appear to be references to the different countries he visited, and to Arabia and Persia. A careful examination of these from a geographical point of view might well repay the labour it would involve.

Next in time, but first of all in importance among mediæval Jewish travellers, comes another from Spain—BENJAMIN of TUDELA. His Itinerary, written in clear, fluent rabbinical Hebrew, was first printed in 1543, and has often since been reproduced in the original and in various European languages. It has been the subject of vastly different appreciations according to the standpoint of the critic and of his time. The first English translation, which was not complete, appeared in *Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625), where it is stated that Benjamin was " worthily reckoned one of the greatest travellers that ever lived." In Harris's Collection an extract from the translation of the Latin versions is given with a suggestion that though there may be exaggerations in the relations with regard to the Jews, there are no grounds for doubting the fidelity of other parts of the work. The Rev. Mr. Gerans, whose inaccurate translation from the Hebrew was published in London in 1733, cannot for his life " comprehend why so many respectable men have paid so much attention to so contemptible an author," and concludes a dissertation on the Itinerary by an exhortation to Jews to be no longer stiff-necked, as were their fathers. Though by Pinkerton (1808) Benjamin was allowed to be an able judge of what he saw, it would seem as if Gerans's hostile opinion was generally adopted in this country until Asher's learned work, which came out in 1840–41, finally established our traveller's reputation for accuracy in the record of what he saw and was told. According to Raymond Beazley (1901), " a new chapter of mediæval travel begins with Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela. His records are the earliest contribution of the Hebrew race to geography . . . in the twelfth century their learned men first condescended to study earth knowledge as a science, or at least as a body of fact."

The latest and best English translation of the Itinerary is that of Marcus Nathan Adler (1907), who had access to MSS. not available to his predecessors, and has added to Asher's notes new ones based on the most recent geographical and his-

torical investigations. Mr. Adler was satisfied from internal evidence that Benjamin's absence from Europe must be placed between the years 1166 and 1171 A.D. Having started from Tudela and travelled through Catalonia, Southern France, and North Italy, he found himself before the end of the earlier year at Rome during the brief residence there of Alexander III, the pontiff who excommunicated Henry II of England and fought Frederick Barbarossa, the great Emperor of the West. It was in the early days of the papal and imperial struggle in Italy, of Guelphs and Ghibellines, when the Genoese were constantly at war with the men of Pisa. Passing through the South of Italy, then part of the Norman Kingdom of Sicily under William the Bad, and through a large part of the Eastern Roman Empire in Europe, Benjamin came to Constantinople, where the rule of Commenus Manuel had been upheld against the attacks of Sicilian King and Seljuk Sultan by foreign mercenaries, for " his own people were as women who have no strength to fight." The empire still included the islands of the Levant, Cyprus, and Lesser Armenia, which were visited by our traveller.

Some years before Benjamin had started on his journey, the second Crusade and an attack on Damascus had failed (1148), and before it was over, Saladin, acting on behalf of his uncle, Nur-ed-din, Seljuk, Sultan of Aleppo, had set aside the Fatemite caliph (1171), made one empire of Egypt and Syria, and threatened from South, as well as North, the Latin Kingdom in the East. The country west of the Dead Sea, Jordan and Lebanon, when Benjamin traversed it from south to north, was still in the hands of Almaric, fifth successor to Godfrey de Bouillon. East of this boundary, which, after staying at Jerusalem, he crossed on his way to pleasant Damascus, were the Seljuk Turks. These people, who constituted one of the waves of Eastern invasion, had in the middle of the eleventh century practically taken possesion of the whole Abbaside caliphate, but had subsequently allowed the foreign governors of their princes to establish small independent dynasties under the name of Atabegs. In the latter half of the twelfth century the caliphs, who had retained a nominal position, were animated by the stirring events of the Crusades and, with the favour of that Mosul dynasty of Seljuks,

which afterwards culminated in Saladin, recovered in part their dominion, restoring for a time the glory of Bagdad. It was in the peaceful reign of the Caliph El-Mostanjid that Benjamin, coming from Aleppo and following mainly the course of the Euphrates, visited the city. It was then a great centre of Judaism where, under a prince of the captivity, invested with authority by the caliph, forty thousand Jews dwelt in security, prosperity, and honour. It is doubtful whether Benjamin went further east than Bagdad, where he probably wrote down what he heard of the countries beyond from the reports of the pilgrims and merchants who gathered there.

Persia, with much the same western frontier as at present, but extending to the east so as to include Khiva, Samarkand, and Ghazna, had for some time been ruled by an Ispahan dynasty of Seljuks, of whom Sultan Sinjar, fifteen years before our traveller was at Bagdad, suffered defeat at the hand of the Ghozze Turks from beyond the Syr Daria. Benjamin, in his account of the occurrence, appears to mix up these Turks with the Tartars pressing on them from further east. Communication between the Near and Far East was in this age by sea. The island of Kishm was the trade centre of the Persian Gulf to which great quantities of spices were brought from India, shipped from Quilon on the Malabar Coast. Pepper and ginger were cultivated on this coast ; the climate was intensely hot, and the inhabitants included Jews who were black. We know from other sources that at Quilon Chinese met Arab traders. Benjamin is the first traveller to mention China by its modern name, and to refer to the typhoons in the China seas. He fails, however, to give us those dozen sentences on the condition of the Empire at the time of its great prosperity under the Sungs, which would have added so much to his reputation as a chronicler. Equally remote, so far as the obtaining of reliable information was concerned, seems to have been the interior of El-Yemen, the account of large independent Jewish tribes said to be there being, if not entirely fantastic, at any rate greatly exaggerated. When Benjamin, after references to Aden and Abyssinia, reaches in his narrative Assouan, we get some real facts about Nubia and Egypt, doubtless collected during a prolonged stay at Alexandria. The homeward

journey was by Sicily, where King William the Good, succeeding to the Bad, had recently attained his majority. Short references to Germany, Bohemia, Russia, and France (where the city of Paris belonged to Louis VII), and a few expressions of pious aspiration close the Record which was brought to Castile in the year 1173 A.D.

I have not attempted to give any list of the places visited or described by Benjamin or to précis his observations on them. The complete itinerary is available in the modern book to which I have referred and is worth reading. In a few cases little more than the names of towns and their distances from others are given, but in most some reference is made to the size, and in many to the occupations and peculiarities of the Jewish communities where these existed. Until Bagdad is reached the names of the principal members—248 in all—of these communities are recorded, and some of these names occurring in the works of other authors, usefully corroborate the narrative. The nature of the commerce of towns and the routes of trade are indicated. There is a description of each of the five great cities where Benjamin is believed to have sojourned long, viz. Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Bagdad, and Alexandria ; and of many of the peoples of the East : of the Wallachians, who were swift as hinds and swept down from the mountains to despoil and ravage the land of Greece ; of the Hashishim or hemp-smokers, who went on any hazardous enterprise at the bidding of their Ancient Man ; of the Druses, who were pagans of lawless and vicious character inhabiting the mountains and the clefts of the rocks ; of the Tartars, who worshipped the wind and lived in the wilderness and had no noses ; of the people on the Malabar coast, who read the stars and were black in colour but honest in commerce ; and of the Nubians, who went about naked and had not the intelligence of ordinary men. A few fables adorn or disfigure the record, but no one denies now that it is a valuable contribution to the history of the Jews and of commerce in the twelfth century.

We do not know the date of our traveller's birth or death, or any other information with regard to him than can be deduced from his itinerary or is contained in the preface to it. That

preface is by another but contemporary hand, and the translation of it is this :—

" This is the book of travels, which was compiled by Rabbi Benjamin, the son of Jonah, of the land of Navarre—his repose be in Paradise.

" The said Rabbi Benjamin set forth from Tudela, his native city, and passed through many remote countries, as is related in his book. In every place which he entered he made a record of all that he saw, or was told by trustworthy persons—matters not previously heard of in the land of Spain. Also he mentions some of the sages and illustrious men residing in each place. He brought this book with him on his return to the country of Castile, in the year 4933. The said Benjamin is a wise and understanding man, learned in the Law and the Halacha, and whereever we have tested his statements, we have found them accurate, true to fact and consistent ; for he is a trustworthy man."

Some five years after Benjamin of Tudela's wanderings—probably between 1178 and 1185 A.D.—Rabbi Pethahiah of Ratisbon made his circular tour through Poland, Little Russia, Chazaria, Armenia, Media, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and Greece. South Russia was then tributary to the Emperor of Constantinople, and mainly peopled by nomaddic tribes, of whose customs the Rabbi gives a brief account. Chazaria corresponds with the Crimea, and among its people, whose reigning dynasty had at one time been converted to Judaism, the Rabbi found persons who had Jewish customs but knew not the Talmud—Karaites, in fact—whom he looked upon as heretics. In Armenia he first came across the Seljuks and calls them Turkomans. Working his way through Nisibis, and by the ruins of Old Nineveh, he came to New Nineveh (Mosul), which in the twelfth century had a large Jewish population. Here he made acquaintance with an elephant and an astrologer, and was taken ill, in consequence of which he had himself carried to the other bank of the Tigris to avoid the death duties imposed by local law on foreign Jews dying in the town. Recovering and following the river, he came by mule or camel, through towns which all had Jewish communities, to Bagdad, the residence of the Caliph El-Mostadhi, who had succeeded to El-Mostanjid in 1170. It was

a great city of turbaned men and veiled modest women, where there were many Jewish families. These, with the Jews of the surrounding lands, were under a Prince of the Captivity, whose powers at the time appear to have been exercised by the President of the Academy, Rabbi Samuel, the son of Eli,

"a prince, full of wisdom, very learned alike in the written and the oral law as also in the science of the Egyptians, whom nothing escaped, who was entrusted (for wonder-working purposes) with the name of God, and knew the entire Talmud by heart."

He "lived in a great house draped with silken hangings and he dressed in gold-embroidered clothes. . . . All the world respected him. Some 60 attendants were at his call to keep the people in order if necessary with the bastinado."

Armed with a letter of safe-conduct and introduction from this powerful if somewhat unspiritual leader, our traveller, with a large escort, made a pilgrimage to the grave of Ezekiel, near where he saw a mound said to be the remains of the fallen tower of Babel. Thence he went to Shusham (Susa), where Daniel's coffin was hung high over the centre of the river to give prosperity to the lands on either bank. Avoiding Persia, where he learned that a vast number of Jews lived oppressed and in misery, Rabbi Pethahiah, after a visit to the grave of Ezra, near Basra, returned to Bagdad. On this occasion he was shown a flying camel and the shining brass gates of the city, said to have been brought from Jerusalem. He went to old Babylon and saw Daniel's house standing in beautiful gardens; from a chamber on the roof the lions' den, and the furnace, formerly fiery but then half full of fever-healing water, were pointed out to him. He next returned through Nineveh to Nisibis, passed westward through Haran to Aleppo, and came to Damascus, which had been under Saladin, Caliph of Egypt, since November of 1174. It was an attractive town lying in well-watered country, and surrounded by flower and fruit gardens; 10,000 Jews lived there. Thence he passed into Lower Galilee, visiting sundry graves here sunk in the ground, unlike the graves in Babylonia, where the water

came near the surface. In Upper Galilee were the burial-places of the prophet Obadiah and of Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephuneh, with shrines over them built of stone. The grave of Jonah was in a garden, of which the fruits were freely given to Jews, and the graves of Jacob and Rachel had also some special characteristics. When Rabbi Pethahiah came to Jerusalem it was still in the hands of the Christians, which fixes the date of the visit as previous to October, 1187, when it was captured by Saladin. Only one Jew lived in the holy city, a dyer, who paid a heavy tax for the privilege. Of Jerusalem our traveller tells us very little. He went to Hebron to see the graves of the Patriarchs and to Mamre, where he was shown the tree under which the angels bearing the message to Abraham had rested. From Mamre the account of the journey suddenly takes us to Greece, where the Jews were very numerous and very badly treated.

It has been suggested that the journey of which I have endeavoured to give the outline and the more material facts, had as an object the search in the lands under the dominion of the Bagdad Caliph, and under the influence of Rabbi Samuel, for a home for the Jews then being cruelly persecuted in Christendom. If such were the object it does not appear from the narrative, except in so far as that makes clear that the Mahommedans showed themselves in Babylonia as honest folk, by the side of whom the Jews seemed to have lived peacefully. Another thing made clear is that Pethahiah had the love of the marvellous common to his time, and noted down more eagerly than anything else tales of miracles connected with the holy graves he visited. For the rest he showed himself an inferior observer and recorder to Benjamin of Tudela, whom he may have known and to whom it is natural to compare him. He reports the trivial and omits the essential and gives no evidence of scholarship. His story, as it has come down to us in the third person, appears to have been badly edited. It is involved in style, very imperfect in arrangement, and bears evidence of being incomplete. It seems possible that a better edition at one time existed. Of the life and character of the Rabbi we only know what he tells and shows us. He was a well-to-do man, who dressed as a gentleman,

and could afford to give the guardian at the graves of the patriarchs a sufficiently big present to induce him to show the real graves, which apparently were never seen by non-Jews or by Jews less wealthy or generous than Rabbi Pethahiah of Ratisbon.

We pass from him to the brilliant mendicant to whom I have already referred. JEHUDA HARIZI, the son of Salomo, started some time before 1216 from Moorish Spain, on a journey to the East. He passed through Toledo, Lerida, Barcelona, Narbonne, and Beaucaire to Marseilles, where he took ship to Alexandria, whence he made his way by Old Cairo to Jerusalem, where he stopped a month, and by Ascalon, Acre, Safed, Damascus, Hims (Emesa), Hamah, Haleb (Aleppo), Er-Ruka (Edessa), Harran, Er-Rakka, Majdal, Nisibis, Al-Jezireh, Sinjar, Mosul, and Bagdad to the Shatt-el-Arab. He returned through Greece probably in the year 1218, and wrote in Hebrew, interspersed with Arabic poems, a detailed account of the journey, briefly describing the places he visited, and their Jewish inhabitants and leaders. Other poems of his have been found dealing with incidents of the voyage. It is clear from these that the main object of his journey was to get money from the charitable, and his praise of those who did, and abuse of those who did not give it to him, only differ from the ordinary beggar's appreciation by being amusingly written in good verses. Here are some translated so as to preserve both sense and metre by Dr. Hirschfeld : —

"Edessa's land has cultured people,
Some e'en are marked for leadership.
Precentor Josef is, indeed, a worthy ;
And Hassan is his peer in merit.
The others, they do love cupidity,
And grant no space for noble deeds.
Ben Salim's is excessive meanness,
Though boasting of munificence,
Raising mountains, charity to evade,
Obstructing, as it were, his hands.

"All Majdal's people know enough
Of noble deeds and gentle breeding.
They value nothing more than goodness,
Regarding virtue great as gain.

"Industrious are Nasibin's people,
Unscrupulous in amassing wealth.
They love it and they yearn for it,
And flee from every noble deed.

"Jazira's Jews between two waters
Are fairly good, yet rather hard.
The stream of greed surroundeth them
And like an isle they lie encircled.

"A goodly crowd are Sinjar's people.
Indeed, they are possessed of sense.
Abdul Sayyid, the virtuous,
Knows all the ways of kindly doings,
Yet for cupidity pants his soul
As little birds pant for their nests.
Were he as gen'rous as he's clever !
But he is like a fruitless tree."

The author of these verses was a translator as well as an imitator of the great Arabic poet El Hariri. He died some time before 1235.

In spite of the increasing difficulties in the way of Jewish travellers in the thirteenth century they still passed in great numbers to and from the East. SAMUEL, the son of Simson, a native of Sens, in France, went to the Holy Land in 1210 and prepared a guide to the sacred graves, which was possibly used by a pilgrimage of three hundred French and English rabbis who visited Jerusalem in the following year. In 1268 Moses, the son of Nachman, better known as NACHMANIDES, a learned Kabbalist, travelled there and found, like Rabbi Pethahiah before him, one Jewish resident, who was a dyer by trade.

Generally in Palestine at this time the Jews were neither numerous nor influential, while the state of affairs in Egypt did not permit them to thrive in wealth or learning.

At Bagdad, which had been burnt by Halaku, grandson of Genghis Khan in 1277, and in the countries to the east, the Jews had suffered much in the extinction of the Caliphate by the Tartars, but were favoured for a time by the Khan Argun. In the countries of the West a period of persecution synchronised with the final crusading efforts and was followed by an era of

expulsion. Edward I of England set the example in 1290, which was followed by Philippe le Bel, who sent forth 100,000 Jews from France in 1306. Till that time Montpellier had been a centre of Jewish learning. Among those expelled from there was ESTORI FARHI or ESTORI-HA-PARCHI, the son of Moses, whose family, of some learning, came from Florenza, in Spain, while he himself, born in Provence, had first studied science, medicine, and Arabic, at Tronquetelle, near Arles. At the time of the expulsion he went to Perpignan, and thence to Barcelona, where he employed himself translating into Hebrew a work on medicine. Thence he went to Egypt, staying in Cairo in 1313, and shortly afterwards making his way to Jerusalem, near which town he finally settled, at Bethsay or Bisan (Scythopolis). There for seven years he studied the topography of Palestine and its holy places, traversing the country for the purpose in all directions. The work of considerable value in which he embodied the result of his observations was completed in 1322, and printed in Venice in 1549. It is not known what subsequently happened to the author, whose descendants continued to live in the Ottoman Empire, at any rate up to the middle of the nineteenth century.

We have now come to the time when a great change in travel and discovery was to be initiated by the coming into general use of the magnetic compass. Discarding maps based on the information contained in the itineraries of merchants and pilgrims, practical mariners were making use of charts which the compass enabled them to prepare and follow with accuracy. Using these charts to get from port to port, navigators called them "portulani." At first they only represented the Mediterranean, and various schools of cartography, for their preparation grew up in the Mediterranean, including one in the island of Majorca. A portulano of the world then navigated was made there in 1339, and in 1375 this was improved upon by Jafuda or JEHUDA CRESQUES, who, from his keenness in the work, became known as "the Map Jew," or "the Compass Jew." He added to previous portulani details of the Far East obtained from the greatest of Eastern travel records, that of Marco Polo, and produced for Juan I of Aragon the eight-panel atlas known from

the language of its inscriptions as the Catalan. In 1387, for another map of the world, King Juan paid Cresques the large sum of sixty-eight pounds. Four years later an anti-Jewish riot and massacre of the Jews in Majorca led to his leaving the island and settling with relatives in Barcelona, where it is believed he continued to work at his art. I am unable to accept the suggestion that has been made that the Jehuda Cresques who published the atlas of 1375, having assumed the name of JAIME RIBES, was appointed in the year 1438, by the Iffante Henry, the Navigator, to be director of the seminary for the training of mariners which had been established on the rocky promontory of Sagres. But it is generally admitted that this director was a Jew, and it seems also tolerably certain that Jews rendered service to navigation in Prince Henry's time by contributing to the improvement of the astrolabe, by which the sun's altitude was observed for the determination of latitude and by preparing tables for navigation purposes.

While under the direction of Juan II, grand-nephew to the navigator, Portuguese ships were creeping round the west and down the south-west coast of Africa, the idea of striking boldly across the ocean, which was believed to lie between Western Europe and the Indies, was forming itself in the mind of Christopher Columbus. Juan refused to adopt this scheme, being led, it is sad to say, to do this disservice to geographical science largely by the learned Jewish geographer JOSEPH VECINHO, the king's physician, and a member of his nautical council, who looked upon the project as chimerical, and exploration of the African coast as more conducive to the interests of Portugal. This Joseph, according to a note by Columbus, was sent, in the year 1485, to measure the altitude of the sun (i.e. to fix latitudes) throughout Guinea, a mission which he successfully accomplished. It must have taken him to Elmina, on the Gold Coast, where the Portuguese had just constructed a castle, of which I have seen the remains below the great Dutch fort, which replaced it. A little later we know that he assisted in the preparation of a terrestrial globe for Pedro de Covilhao, who, with Affonso de Payva, was sent to the East by the King by the land route, shortly after Bartholomew Diaz had been despatched to seek a

sea passage. De Payva, after visiting the East African coast, went to Hormuz and died there, the account of his travels being delivered to the King by a Jewish merchant whom de Payva had met on the road and taken on with him. De Covilhao visited Aden and the west coast of India, and returned by Sofala, on the east coast of Africa, to Cairo, where he had arranged to meet de Payva. In the meantime the King had sent to obtain news of his two knights, ABRAHAM OF BEJA and JOSEPH ZAPATEIRO OF LAMEGO. The latter was a Rabbi and a shoemaker by trade, who had previously been in Bagdad and had given the King an account of his travels and of what he had learnt of Hormuz, which, established first on the mainland and since 1302 on the island of Gerun, had taken the place of the island of Kishm as the chief emporium for those Eastern spices which seem to have been held in such high estimation by the nations of the West. Abraham has been described as a linguist. They met de Covilhao in Cairo, whence Joseph Zapateiro was sent by Aleppo to Lisbon with the knight's report on the Eastern seas, and this momentous message :–

"That the ships which sailed down the coast of Guinea might be sure of reaching the termination of the Continent by persisting in the course to the south ; and that when they should arrive in the Eastern ocean their best direction must be to enquire for Sofala and the island of the Moon (Madagascar)."

Abraham went on with Covilhao to Hormuz and returned thence to Portugal with a duplicate of the narrative that had been sent by Joseph. But before either of them had started with the message it had been anticipated by the doubling of the Stormy Cape, or Cape of Good Hope, by Bartholomew Diaz in 1486. A pause then occurred in Portuguese exploration towards the East, and before it was restarted Columbus had made for Spain the first recorded journey across the Atlantic and was preparing for the second. It has been claimed that Jews influenced Isabella of Spain to send him on his first discovery, that a Marrano or secret Jew gave it financial support, that five Jews or persons of Jewish descent took part in it, and that

the second expedition, which resulted in disappointment and the disgrace of Columbus, was mainly defrayed from the confiscation of the property of those who were wealthy among the 300,000 Jews expelled from Spain on the day before Columbus's three ships left Seville on his first voyage. I think this very brief summary proportionately represents the Jewish contribution to the discovery of America, except that I would add a few words with regard to ABRAHAM ZACUTO, whose almanac and tables were of service to Columbus. Born at Salamanca, in 1444, of a steadfast Jewish family which had migrated there from France, he studied mathematics and astronomy, and obtained permission to attend the University. He presently became Professor there, and between 1473 and 1478 prepared and dedicated to his patron, the bishop, a nautical almanac. It was translated from Hebrew into Latin and Spanish by Joseph Vecinho, and, printed in 1496, came into general use by Spanish and Portuguese navigators. When the Jews were expelled from Spain, Zacuto settled in Lisbon and was employed by the kings Juan II and Manuel, who frequently conferred with him in maritime matters. He advised Vasco da Gama with regard to the famous expedition which sailed from Lisbon for the Indies in the middle of 1497. Subsequently he seems to have been sent out of Portugal, and in 1502 was at Tunis, where he published a chronicle of some geographical interest. About the year 1515 he died at Smyrna.

When da Gama's expedition was returning in 1498, and refitting on the island of Angediva, near Goa, they captured a man who, it was believed, had come on board the flagship as a spy from the Mussulman ruler of Goa. He proved to be a Jew whose parents had migrated from Granada to Turkey and Palestine, and who had himself wandered to India, where he had first been kept as a prisoner and later employed as harbour master of Goa. He was called by his Portuguese captors GASPAR DA GAMA, or sometimes de las Indias, was taken to Portugal and accompanied as interpreter Pedro Alvarez Cabral on his expedition in the East in 1500. He is reported to have performed various useful services, and Amerigo Vespucci, whom Cabral met at Cape Verd on the homeward journey, referred to Gaspar as

"a trustworthy man who speaks many languages and knows the names of many cities and provinces, who made two voyages from Portugal to the Indian Ocean and journeyed from Cairo to Malacca, a province on the coast of that ocean." Gaspar accompanied Vasco da Gama on his second voyage in 1502–3, and Francisco d'Almeida when he went out to assume the Viceroyalty in 1505. He is believed to have been killed in an unsuccessful assault on the town of Calicut, ordered by that Viceroy.

Jews then, as now, were often employed as interpreters in the East. The great Affonso d'Albuquerque had several, of whom one, originally a Castilian of the name of HUCEFE, became a confidential adviser, was present at the capture of Hormuz, in 1507, and, after Albuquerque had died in disfavour at Goa, went to Lisbon to vindicate his master to the King. Subsequently he returned to India, and went thence to Cairo, where he openly resumed the practice of the faith of his fathers.

ABRAHAM ZACUTO, GASPAR DA GAMA, and HUCEFE had all found their way to the East as a result of the great Spanish expulsion. The Jews who had sailed from the ports of the Peninsula on that sadly memorable August 2nd of 1492, and those who after a short and troubled sojourn in Navarre and Portugal were again sent forth on their wanderings, went to Italy, Africa, and Turkey. Probably the lot was happiest of those who settled down in the domains of the Ottoman Turk. They received protection from Bajazet II, Selim I, and Sulojman I, those strong sultans under whom the Turkish Empire was extended to take in Egypt, Tripoli, Algiers, the Hedjaz, Syria, Armenia, and Mesopotamia. At Constantinople the Jews were specially numerous, and in return for high favour seem to have rendered great service. Among other privileges they were allowed to set up printing presses in the metropolis, and the reports of several Jewish travellers were published there. One who had visited Egypt in 1562 described the countries of the independent Jews. Another who had, in the quality of a physician accompanied the army of the magnificent Suleyman to Aleppo, recorded useful information with regard to the Kurds, the Druses, and others. A third wrote an account of a mission sent by his brethren of the faith at Salonica in 1568, to obtain certain privileges from Selim II. It was about this time that Joseph Nassi, an outlawed Jew from Portugal, rendered valuable assistance to the Sultan and secured for himself the Dukedom of Naxos, and for his people tolerance within the dominions of the Porte.

Another traveller native of the Ottoman dominions deserves a longer notice, though he wandered rather than travelled, and published no account of his wanderings. JOSEFO SALOMO DEL MEDIGO was born in Candia in 1591, the son of a Rabbi whose family, fleeing from persecution, had originally come there from Germany. As a boy he was taught at home the Talmud, Greek, Latin, Italian, and Spanish. At fifteen he was sent to the high school at Padua, where he learned logic, natural history, and natural philosophy, and later, medicine, mathematics—his favourite subject—and astronomy, with Galileo for instructor. While at Padua he made frequent visits to Venice, getting to know its learned men, and was there again in 1613, acquiring knowledge, collecting a library, and writing an encyclopædia of the sciences. After a short stay in his native island, he found the circumstances of life there too narrow, while he was made to suffer for the expression of his philosophic views hostile to the superstition of the time. In 1616 he went to Egypt, where he was victor in a mathematical discussion with a learned Arab, and worked with a Karaite priest on the art of mechanics. Thence he made his way to Constantinople, in which city he got together a Karaite library and came across zealous students of the Kabbala. He made himself thoroughly acquainted with its literature, but though, taught by early experience, he did not let it be known by the multitude that he considered the Kabbala a pseudo science, he was really hostile to its claims on the credulity of the Jews of his time. From Constantinople he travelled through Wallachia, stopping with a famous Kabbalist doctor at Jassy. Thence, early in 1620, he went to Poland, where he was disgusted at the crass superstition and immorality he found.

In the practice of medicine for a livelihood he was constantly making long journeys in Poland, Russia, and Lithuania, visiting the sick on the far-apart estates of the landed nobility, and taking advantage of many hours spent solitarily in their carriages to think out ideas, afterwards to be developed into treatises.

At this stage of his career he began to attract eager disciples, and commenced a correspondence with Sarach, the son of Nathan, who addressed him, in 1621, a great number of questions on nearly every branch of human knowledge. Del Medigo appears first to have replied in 1623, when he was in Liefland, and wrote to Sarach his views as to the Kabbala, and sent him a sketch of the history of Hebrew-Jewish literature. In June of 1624 he was in Wilna, but shortly afterwards went to Germany. He complains of the dirty state of the Jewish quarter of Hamburg, which he left on account of an epidemic, going to Glückstadt in Holstein. This, he says, was no town and brought him no luck. Early in 1828 he was in Amsterdam. Here his picture was painted. A reproduction shows a refined, thoughtful face with small moustache and short beard. He wears a wide-brimmed hat and fur-trimmed coat. In 1629 he allowed himself to be persuaded to publish some of his treatises in Amsterdam, while one of his disciples was producing others at Basle. He shrank, however, from publication, especially of controversial matter, declaring himself to belong to the scholars rather than the teachers. Of his life and wanderings after this we know very little. In 1650 he was seen in Prague, and two years later in Worms. He died at Prague at the age of sixty-six. My knowledge of him is derived from a biography published with a letter to Sarach, the son of Nathan, in Berlin in 1840. He seems to have been exceptionally gifted with memory, insight, and energy, and to have had an attractive personality. Del Medigo's views were far in advance of those of his time. I can conceive great interest in the study of them, but they lie outside the scope of this address.

I must now go backward a little in time to pick up the narrative of Eastern travel with a Jew who flourished when Portuguese and Spanish dominion in the Eastern seas began to be threatened by the more Northern powers of Europe. In 1580 Portugal had passed under the Spanish King, who was at that time already harassed by revolt in his Netherland provinces. In that same year English Drake returned from rifling Philip's treasure-houses and capturing his ships in the Pacific, action leading to his maritime war with England, and to the destruction of the Armada, in 1588. Pedro Teixeira travelled between the years 1586 and 1605. He was of Jewish parents, but seems to have been brought up a Christian, though, according to a recent translator, he was never a Christian "but from the teeth out," whatever that may mean. His parents probably resided at Lisbon. We know nothing of his youth except that he tells us that he was much addicted to the study of history. There are grounds for believing that he also studied medicine, and he shows in his writings considerable acquaintance with drugs and gems. Whatever his training may have been it certainly qualified him to be a careful observer, and this, added to an adventurous spirit, has given us many interesting facts concerning the East towards the end of the Spanish and Portuguese ascendancy, and some useful information with regard to the history of Hormuz, which would not otherwise be available. Pedro Teixeira probably arrived in India from Portugal in one of the ships of the fleet of 1586, and was in time to accompany a punitive expedition to the coast of North-East Africa, which left Goa at the beginning of the following year. Various towns were destroyed, the fleet going as far south as Mombasa. Then, after visiting Sokotra, Muscat, and Hormuz, and cruising for a time in the straits of that name, it returned to Goa in October of 1587. There our traveller joined another large fleet for the relief of Colombo, besieged by a powerful Rajah. This having been successfully accomplished he remained at Goa for the rest of the year 1588. But immediately after its close he was once more with an expedition, this time countering one by the Turks under Mir Ali, again in North-East Africa. Mombasa was burnt and Mir Ali taken captive to Goa. In 1590 and 1591 Teixeira was resident in Cochin, watching, and possibly trying to stem the ravages of Asiatic cholera. Then followed a short residence on the west coast of India, and a long one between 1593 and 1597 at Hormuz; where he studied Persian and the histories of Persia and Hormuz, making a summarized translation of the chronicles of Mir Kwand and Turan Shah. In the latter year he visited North Persia, returned to Goa and sailed to Malacca with a fleet sent there owing to fears of a Dutch attack. During a residence of two and a half years at Malacca, Teixeira studied the fauna and flora

of the Malayan Archipelago. He returned to Europe in 1600–1601, going via Borneo to the Spanish city of Manila in a pinnace despatched to warn the Governor of the Philippines of the entry of the Dutch into that sea, and continuing in a fleet of four new ships bound for the American continent, which themselves narrowly escaped the Dutch. Teixeira landed at Acupulco, whence he made his way by Mexico city, La Puebla and other towns to Vera Cruz. Here he set sail for Spain, which he reached by Havana, Florida, Bermuda, and the Newfoundland Banks after narrow escapes from storms and corsairs. Teixeira was probably the first Jew to go round the world. His journey was eighty years after the original circumnavigation of Sebastian del Cano. On arriving in Europe he settled down at Lisbon waiting for money, which was expected but failed to come to him from Malacca. Whether to look after this or for some other reason, he returned to India by sea for a four months' stay at the end of 1604. He gives no account of how he found things there, but we know from other sources that the affairs of the Portuguese in the Far East were in a perilous state, fifteen fleets having been despatched against them from the Netherlands in the seven years beginning with 1595, and matters having recently been made worse by the activities of the Dutch United and the recently formed English East India Companies. It is perhaps germane to our subject to note that in a contemporary report on the first voyage made to East India by Master James Lancaster for the merchants of London—a voyage which resulted in the capture of a richly laden Spanish ship in October, 1602—we are told, in connection with a conference held in Arabic with the deputies of the King of Acheen: "Now the General (before his going out of England) entertained a Jew who spoke that language perfectly, which stood him in good stead at that time." Thus the employment of Jews as interpreters which we have seen commencing with Isaac, in 800 A.D., was going on with Lancaster's Moroccan Jew 800 years later.

Teixeira's return journey from India overland in 1604–1605 is the subject of his *Narrative of my Journey from India to Italy*. Once more he touched at Maskat and stayed at Hormuz, in the neighbourhood of which he was detained some months by

bad weather. At last he reached Basra, whence he proceeded through the country, which some seventy years before Suleyman the Magnificent had wrested from the Persians, by caravan with some European companions via Kerbela to Bagdad, and thence, after a couple of months, to Ana, doing this part of the journey in camel panniers. In the same manner he passed on presently to Aleppo, where he stayed two months, and to Alexandretta. The voyage from Alexandretta to Venice via Cyprus, Zante, and Istria, was lengthened by bad weather.

It was followed by a tour in Italy, and a journey across the Alps, through France to the Spanish Netherland, where he settled at Antwerp. He is stated to have died there towards the middle of the seventeenth century in the Jewish faith. These statements seem, however, to be based rather on conjecture than on evidence.

I may illustrate Teixeira's descriptive powers by a brief quotation from his account of Hormuz :—

"The city is not now very great, though it has been. But the most and best part of it was removed to clear a great esplanade in front of the fortress. The houses are well built, of an indifferent good stone quarried on the island, and of that fished out of the sea, . . . which is light, and best endures the earthquakes from which the island suffers. . . .

"The people of Hormuz are mostly white and well-conditioned, the men courteous, and the women good-looking. They all speak Persian, though not of the best, and all the natives are Moors, some Xyays who follow Aly, and other Sunys, of which last is the king. Besides these there are many Christians, Portuguese, Armenians, Georgians, Jacobites, and Nestorians, and many heathen Baneanes, Bangasalys, and Cambayatys, and about a hundred and fifty houses of Jews.

"Although the isle produces nothing of its own, all supplies are imported in abundance, and everything fetches a fair price and is sold by weight. The climate and air are healthy, and disease is rare in summer, because the terrible heat and profuse sweat dispose of all ill-humours. But in autumn one pays for any irregularities of the summer. To conclude, Gerun is a place of

general resort and open mart for the world, and there are exchanged all sorts of goods, and as much of them as any could wish, brought from many lands by merchants of various nations. . . ."

Then, after a mention of the foundation of the city in 1302, follows a curious little criticism of Portuguese rule in the East :—

"It throve exceedingly for the next two hundred years, so that it dominated the most part of Arabia, and much of Persia and all the Persian seas as far as Bacora. And so it lasted until its conquest by the Portuguese, whereupon it began to decline, by reason of the oppression and violence of the Portuguese captain and his officers, lying too far away from such as might have amended the same."

As a matter of fact, this was hardly the main cause of the decline. Hormuz had been made unnecessary as an emporium for the Eastern trade at the beginning of the sixteenth century by the very occurrence which led to its falling into Portuguese hands, namely, the discovery of the long sea-route to India, and the consequent gradual falling into disuse of the route by the Persian Gulf.

The decay of Hormuz, or Ormuz, as it is now called, which went on slowly in the sixteenth century, has long been complete. When I visited the island in 1891 the Portuguese church and some of the houses could still be traced from the remains of their foundations, and a single gravestone marked the resting-place of a Portuguese knight who died in the year of the Spanish Armada. The fine quadrangular fort still existed as a ruin, but its northern bastions, built of that indifferent good stone spoken of by Teixeira, threatened presently to fall into the sea. A small fishing village of mat huts occupied part of the former town, and a shrivelled brown beggar of great age told me legends that had come down from the distant and splendid past.

Teixeira's references to the Jews are few and unimportant. There were eight or ten thousand of them through all the provinces of Persia. In Bagdad there were two or three hundred

houses of Jews, whereof ten or twelve professed to be remnants of the first captivity. Some of them were well to do, but most of them very poor. They dwelt in liberty in their own ward and had a synagogue. Close to Bagdad also was the tomb of "Joshua the High Priest," held in great reverence. In Kerbela Meshed Ali, a holy city of the Shia Mohammedans, they were not allowed to live at all. On the other hand, in Aleppo, in common with persons of other nationalities, they had houses fit to harbour princes. As many as a thousand good houses stood in the Jewish ward within the walls, and there was a synagogue which they affirmed to be of fifteen hundred years standing. Many of them were rich, mostly merchants, but some were brokers or craftsmen, such as lapidaries, silversmiths, or the like traders.

Teixeira refers to the practice of the Jews in the caravan with which he performed the journey from Basra to Meshed Ali —a practice to which he himself did not apparently conform— of first catching up and then passing the rest of the caravan during the week in order not to travel on the Sabbath. Other writers make reference to this custom in connection with pilgrimages to the Holy Land, in which at the commencement of the seventeenth century Jews certainly outnumbered the Christians of the West. From the diary of one Samuel Jemsel, himself a Jewish pilgrim and a Karaite from Poland, we know that in 1641 one hundred sailed in one ship of the regular fleet from Constantinople to Egypt—some bound for Jerusalem and some for Safed. He himself had embarked at Koslof (Eupatoria) in the Crimea. After leaving Constantinople the ship stopped at Gallipoli and Rhodes, on its way to Alexandria. Thence Samuel went to Rosetta and to Cairo. The account of the first three or four months of the journey was published, but I have not had the opportunity of studying it, nor the three or four other descriptions of the routes and the towns passed on the road to Jerusalem, which were compiled by Jewish travellers in the first half of the seventeenth century. But such travels had ceased to be of any importance. The world knew all it then wanted to know about the East, and explorers turned their attention to the interior of the American continent, to those dimly-guessed lands of the South from which the seventeenth

and eighteenth centuries slowly outlined the Australasian continent and islands, to the cold wastes and seas of the North, and lastly to that long-closed volume of geographical problems—the interior of Africa. From the early part of the nineteenth century, though Jewish travellers were many their records of travel and their contributions to geographical knowledge were few. They were seeking new homes and reforming communities in those countries where a wider tolerance marked a later stage in the progress of civilisation. One effect of the change of feeling towards them—a change no doubt partly due to the efforts and influence of Moses Mendelssohn—was to assimilate the aims and occupations of the Jews to those of their fellow-subjects in the Western countries of Europe. The settlement of Europeans in other continents and exploration with a view to this settlement were characteristics of the nineteenth century, and I propose on another occasion to tell the part played by Jews in these matters.

For this evening you will doubtless be satisfied with having followed the journeyings between the East and the West during eight centuries of the more important of their travellers. We have seen how, in the first age of Mohammedan power the men of our faith carried knowledge and merchandise between Moslem and Christian states ; how, later, the Crusades, beggaring Jewish communities, sent forth adventurous spirits from among them in search of the means to support life—physical, intellectual, spiritual ; how in the age of discovery still sharper trials of persecution and expulsion caused some to seek new homes, while others, often forced to hide their religion, took part in one capacity or another in the great voyages of their oppressors.

We have heard of them in the schools of Bagdad, in the holy places by Jerusalem, in the observatory of Sagres, in the fleets that visited the Eastern seas ; we have watched them studying in the universities of Southern Europe, teaching in the towns of Germany, soliciting alms on the banks of the Tigris, making maps by the shores of the Mediterranean, and practising as physicians in the camp of the Turkish Sultan and in the palace of the Portuguese King. Most significant of all, we have seen them linking up the scattered communities of their people ; bringing

together rabbinists, kabbalists, karaites ; giving unity to Judaism from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean ; and thus preserving for humanity an ancient civilisation which, with all its shortcomings, has enriched mankind and is a potent factor for good in the world of to-day.

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