

ESSAY ON IMMANUEL OF ROME .

by

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# B I B L I O G R A P H Y .

BIALIK "Shirath Yisrael".

Cracow 1906.

(This book contains several series of poems by the leading medieval Hebrew poets including those of Immanuel of Rome, a short biographical sketch of Immanuel by the editor, and an explanation of metre and its use in Hebrew Poetry).

BERLINER "Gesammelte Schriften", Vol. I.

(This work contains various Mss. <sup>copies</sup>, pertaining to our subject).

BRODY, H. "Monatschrift No. 2, s. 6".

Beilage der Jüd. Presse, 1896.

(This magazine article points out, among other things, several verses by Immanuel, which show his dependence on the Spanish Hebrew Poets).

BRODY, H. & ALBRECH, K., "The New Hebrew School of Poets".

Lemcke & Buechner, N. Y., 1906.

(This book contains the important poems of 35 different Spanish-Hebrew poets, edited with a preface, a dictionary of Hebrew words, etc.).

CHOTZNER, J., "Hebrew Humour & Other Essays".

Luzac & Co., 46 Great Russel St., London.

(Among various essays is one on "Immanuel di Romā, a Thirteenth Century Hebrew Humorist and a Friend of Dante, pp. 82 - 102).

DAVIDSON, ISRAEL "Parody in Jewish Literature".

Columbia University Press, N. Y., 1907.

(Here there is a brief discussion of Immanuel of Rome, as parodist in which the author states "Immanuel is to be regarded as the father of exegete parody and one of its best masters".p.19).

DELITZSCH, F., "Zur Geschichte der Jüd. Poesie".

Leipsic 1836.

(pp. 52, 144. The author here characterizes Immanuel as a poet, and gives his appreciation of him).

FEDERN, KARL "Dante and His Time".

McClure, Phillips & Co., N. Y., 1902.

(This standard book describes the times of Dante, and affords a background for our study of Immanuel).

GRAETZ, H. "Geschichte" 3rd ed. VII 264 ff.

Oskar Leiner, Leipzig, 1894.

(Besides the history of the Jews of this time, we are given a detailed sketch of Immanuel and his relation to some contemporaries. The date of Immanuel's birth is discussed in detail).

GEIGER, A. "Judische Zeitschrift" V 286 - 301.

(This article deals thoroughly with the various discoveries concerning Immanuel's work, made by leading authors up to Geiger's day. The author presents his own views and deals particularly with the question of friendship between Immanuel and Dante).

GUDEMANN "Geschichte der Erziehungswesens  
und der Culture der Juden in Italien".

Alfred Hölder, Wien 1884.

(Chap. IV of this work treats fully of the literary history of Immanuel's day, gives a comprehensive biography of Immanuel and describes his various works, and also prints three of his Italian sonnets. Note VII considers the question of friendship of Immanuel and Dante).



HIRSCHFELD, HARTWIG "Immanuel of Rome and Other Poets  
on the Jewish Creed".

Jewish Quarterly Review, Broadway & York Sts.,  
Philadelphia, May, 1915.

(In this article the author compares various Mss. copies of  
the "Yigdal" poem, and offers proof to show Immanuel is the author  
of this poem).

HOLZER, DR. J. "Zur Geschichte der Dogmenlehre in der jüdischen  
Religionsphilosophie des Mittelalters".

M. Poppenhauer's Buchhandlung, Berlin, 1901.

(Dr. Holzer edits Maimuni's Introduction to Perek Chelek  
with Hebrew and the original Arabic texts. This "Introduction"  
reveals a source for one of Immanuel's Liturgical poems).

IMMANUEL OF ROME "Machbaroth",  
edited by J. Wilheimer with introductory  
biographical sketch of Immanuel by Dr. M.  
Steinschneider.

Michael Wolf, Lemberg, 1870.

(This is the chief work of Immanuel and constitutes the  
source book for his biography, and for the history of the Roman  
community of his day).

JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA, Article "Immanuel"

Article "Al-Harizi".

(The Article "Al-Harizi" gives also a description of the  
so-called Makamma form used by Harizi and later by Immanuel hav-  
ing been adopted originally from the Arabs).

KAUFMANN "Gesammelte Schriften"

Frank. a/m 1908.

(In the essay "Manoello and Dante" Kaufmann discusses the  
relation between the two poets).

MAIMUNI "Mishnah Torah" Wilna, 1900.

(The Hilchoth Yesodai Hatorah reveals another source for one  
of Immanuel's liturgical poems).

MILLER, F. I. - KUHN, OSCAR "Studies in the Poetry of Italy".

The Lakeside Press, Chicago, 1901.

(The authors describe the literary history of the age prior to and including the Renaissance, and discuss Provencal poetry in the chapter "The Origins of Italian Literature").

RHINE "The Secular Hebrew Poetry of Italy".

Reprint J. Q. R. Phil. Dropsie College, 1911.

(pp. 344-348, text of Immanuel, and the literary history of his time).

STEINSCHNEIDER "Jewish Literature" translated from German

Longman, Green & Co., London, 1857.

(The author gives a brief account of Immanuel and in a note discusses the pronunciation of the word "Machbaroth").

VOGELSTEIN & RIEGER "Geschichte der Juden in Rome" I 430 ff

Mayer & Muller, Berlin 1896.

(This is the fullest and most complete account - bibliographical, literary and historical of Immanuel and his works we have).

ZUNZ "Literaturgeschichte der Synagogalen Poesie".

Louis Gerschel, Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin 1865.

(The author, after Luzzatto, credits David B. Jehuda Dajan with being the author of the "Yigdal" poem as we find it in our liturgy).

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The following is an additional list of authors and their works bearing on our subject, which may be of interest for further investigation.

I regret most of these were not obtainable at the Hebrew Union College library.

BERLINER "Pletath Soferim".

H. Skutsch, Breslau, 1872.

(Some fragments of Italian exegetes are herein given.

Immanuel, of course, was one of the prominent).

BERNFELD "Achi Asaf" Vol. IV.

DELITZCH "Zwei Kleine Dante Studien".

DUKES "Litt. des Orient, 1849, p. 15

(Immanuel's interpretation of Ps. 60, V. 10 is here discussed).

ERSCH UND GRUBERS "Real Encyklopadie", "Dante"

(This proves Dante's "Inferno" and "Purgatorio" were not published before 1314 and 1318 respectively).

GEIGER "Jüdische Dichtungen der Spanischen und Italienischen Schulen," P. 55 f. Leipzig, 1856, p. 58 ff.

GRAETZ "Monatschrift" 1880 p. 135

(A notice is here found with respect to the meaningless phrase in the "Inferno" VII I "Rafel mai amech izabi almi" from which it has been inferred Dante knew Hebrew having learned it from Immanuel).

KARO, JOSEPH Orach Chayyim ch. 308.

KRAUS "Dante, sein Leben und sein Werk, sein Verhältnis zur Kunst und Politik", Berlin, 1897.

(This is a particularly valuable book for it treats not only of the supposed friendship of Immanuel and Dante, but it discusses at length Dante's relation to Can Grande (pp. 367 ff) toward which Immanuel also sustained a vital relation).

LATTES, M. "Notizie e Documenti",  
Padova, 1879.

(Author contends the sonnets written to Bosone by Immanuel are unJewish).

LUZZATO "Appendice" to Camillo Ugoni's "Work on Italian Literature".  
Mailand, 1857.

MERCURI "Lezione nella quale e frattato se Dante veramente fosse  
morti nell 1321, Neapel, 1835.

(This work also contains the famous sonnets which are supposed to prove the friendship of Immanuel and Dante).

MODONA, LEONELLO "Unua Poesia Inedita di Manvello Guido in  
"Vessillo Israelitico 1885 Part 12, XXXIII  
(The author quotes the poems of Immanuel referring to Can Grande).

MODONA, LEONELLO "Rime Volgari di Immanuelo Romano" (Nozze Segre-  
Modona) Parma. 1898.

(This article gives the following information:

- (1) The sonnet of Immanuel to Bosone.
- (2) The text and translation of Cino's sonnet.
- (3) A monograph showing Dante's influence on Immanuel, as shown by "Tofeth" the XXVIII chapter of the "Machbaroth".
- (4) Four sonnets by Immanuel written in Italian, and also a long comic poem in Italian.
- (5) Some of the later products of Immanuel, --pp.27; 3, n. 3; 37, n. 10, 27-34; 13, n. 73; 40, n. 78)

MONATSCHRIFT XLII 120, n. 3

(Fl. servi argues against <sup>the</sup> exaggerated influence of Immanuel on Dante).

PAUR, TH. "Jahrbuch der deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft", Vols. III -  
IV.

(These volumes give valuable reflections on the relationship between Dante & Immanuel. Cf. especially III 423, 447, 451, 456,

461, IV 429, 671

(III 451 gives us references to Hebrew phrases in the Divine Comedy, Inferno VII,1; XXI, 67.)

(IV 671 contains Italian sonnets from "Letteratura e filosofia opuscoli per Pasquale Garofalo, Duca di Bonito, Naples, 1872.)

RAHMER'S "Literaturblatt", 1879 n. 5

(This article treats of the identiciation of Daniel, Immanuel's guide in his "Tofeth", with Dante".

RIETI, MOSES "Mikdash Meat" edited by Goldenthal, Wien, 1851, p. 106<sup>a</sup> note.

STEINSCHNEIDER "Heb. Bibliographie" XIV, 100  
 "Ozar Nechmad" II, 229  
 ( M. Sider) - - "Orient" I, 123-124  
 "Heb. Bibliographie" IX, 52 f.

(Sonnets between Bosone & Manoella, Cino & Bosone).

"Buonaroth" 1876, 85 (III, p. 2).

ZUNZ "Gesammelte Schriften" III 284

(This shows the impossibility of Immanuel's guide thru Hell and Paradise, Daniel, being identified with Dante, for in Mach. XXVIII Daniel is called דניאל ).

The following is a complete list of Immanuel's works. The sources for this information, the editors and places of publication of those works which have been edited are indicated.

<u>THE WORKS.</u>	<u>WHERE MENTIONED.</u>	<u>EDITIONS.</u>
-1- Migdal Oz	Mach. I 9, b, 17 XI 85	Mss.
(Immanuel speaks of having composed a work בְּעוֹר עוֹר הָאֲלִיּוֹת Zunz, "Ges. Sch." III 183 gives its title as "Migdal Oz") (This work treats of symbolic interpretation of letters of the alphabet).		
-2- Eben Bohan	Mach. I 9, b, 14	Mss.(Mun.)
(This work is a sort of Biblical Hermeneutics which in four parts treats of (1) omissions, (2) additions, (3) interchangeable and other forms of speech).		
<u>COMMENTARIES ON BIBLE.</u>		
-3- (Excepting the minor prophets and the Book of Ezra, Immanuel wrote commentaries on the whole of the Bible).		
Proverbs	Mach. 9 b, 9, XXI 173 <sup>a</sup> , 44	Hagiographa Venice, 1487.
(This is the best and most interesting of his commentaries according to all authorities) (This commentary, says Vogelstein "Gesc" I 427 is completely dependent on Serachya's "Comm. to Prov.").		
Song of Songs	Mach. I 9, b, 36	Perreau, Corfu 1882
Job	Mach. I 9, b, 36	Perreau, Corfu 1884
Kohелеth	Mach, I 9, b, 36	
Comm. on Pentateuch	Mach, XXVIII 229a 41	Perreau, Parma (Merr's Archive I 363 f.)
Isaiah	Mach. I 9, b, 21	Mss.cod.de Rossi
Jeremiah	Mach. XXVIII 232 b, 13	Mss.cod.de Rossi
Psalms	Mach. I 9, b, 39	Perreau, Parma 1879-81
Ruth	Mach. XXI 173a	Perreau, 1881
Lamentations	Mach. 4 20	Perreau, Parma 1881
Esther	Cf. Vog."G" 427	Perreau, Parma 1881



## (Commentaries on Bible, Cont.)

Kokeleth	Mach. I 9, b, 36
Daniel	Mach. XXVIII 229 b
Chronicles	Mach. XXI 173a
Ezekiel	Mach. XXVIII 232

(The commentaries offer a symbolic-philosophic interpretation. In the philosophic commentaries an explanation of the meaning of the words of each verse precedes their philosophic interpretation. The basis is Maimuni's philosophy, especially evident in Comm. on Prov. Vogelstein, "Geschichte" I 428, states the commentaries have no independent value of their own. Their sole merit consists in the fact that Immanuel brought the works of philosophers and exegetes within the reach of his contemporaries".

-4-	Machbaroth	Vogelstein "G" I 433,	Brescia, 1491
			Constantinople, 1535
			Berlin, 1796
			Lemberg, 1870
-5-	Machbaroth XXVIII (printed separately)		Frague, 1613
			Frankfort, 1713
	Machbaroth XXVIII (translated in Ital.) "Heb. Bib." XVIII 30		Sepilli
	Machbaroth XXVIII (translated into Judish-deutsch)		Prague, 1660-1662
	Machbaroth XXVIII (parts of last four chapters in Judish- deutsch)		Berlin, 1778
	Machbaroth Introduction (translated by Kraft)		"Jost's Annalen" 1839
	Machbaroth Fragments		Steinschneider "Manna" 1847
	Machbaroth Fragments		Geiger "Jud. Dich. der Sp. und It. Schule" 1856, 58 ff.





# P R E F A C E .

The biographers of Immanuel of Rome have done much, but by no means everything, to give us an accurate personal history of the poet. The principal of these writers, Graetz, Gûdemann, and Vogelstein and Rieger, have, we think, mistaken one essentially important thing: Their own and the world's true relation to their author. Gûdemann and Vogelstein, especially, as much as they esteem the poet, everywhere find it necessary to speak of him with a certain apologetic air. In all this, however, we readily admit the fault is not with their sincerity but with a weakness of historic sense which allows them to confuse certain judgments of one generation with those of another.

It is indeed true Immanuel's poetry was censured as frivolous and erotic by Mose da Rieti<sup>1</sup> in the fifteenth century, who, on this account, excluded the poet from the region of the blessed. For this reason, too, Joseph Karo<sup>2</sup>, a century later, forbade the reading of Immanuel's works<sup>3</sup>.

But it is unhistorical, we think, to accept these opinions as a point of departure for a picture of the poet's character, and then, duly considering the more gracious judgments of the poet's contemporaries, feel the compulsion of an apology. Our revered master, Prof. G. Deutsch, has time and again cautioned us against judging a man in the light of other than his own times if we would understand his true character. We shall, therefore, try to follow this ideal in our own presentation of the poet's life, and shall consider our efforts fully rewarded by some, however slight a degree of success.

The biographers of Immanuel have, we believe, erred in yet one other respect: their treatment of the poet as a self-consistent personality. They have made it their task first, to create the need of Immanuel as a high moral character, and then, to confirm this supposition by no lack

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-1- Mikdash Meat ( ed. Goldenthal Wien 1851) (p. 106,note) אשר הריאנוני  
ולא הנאתי בסליחת אה"ל עטנאף סטשטת הצירונע על לשונותיו ואל דבריו בסתבת  
החשק

-2- Orach Chayyim No. 307, 16. סליחות ודברי חשק כגון סדר עטנאף  
אשר לקרות בהן בשבת ואף בחול אסור

-3- Immanuel Frances in Mathek Sefathayyim, Belin, 1892, pp. 3438.

ספרות ... שירי נואמים שאסור לשיטאם .... דברים שכוערים

of pains or apologies. We, however, have had occasion to observe, among common men, permanent moral personalities are seldom to be found, but among artists and poets, hardly ever. If proof of this were required in the case of our own poet, we should find no difficulty in finding it. It would moreover be most unreasonable to suppose a man, like Immanuel, with such numerous and varied experiences with movements and persons, not to have had his peculiar and diverse feelings, ideas and prejudices. We shall then make it our business to show that this, indeed, was the case.

We hope, finally, not to err in presenting a catalogue of the poet's several attributes, and be thereby satisfied we have measured his life, but we shall strive to portray his character in its rich and living fullness.

# ESSAY ON IMMANUEL OF ROME.

-I-

"History of the Jews of Italy at the  
end of the Thirteenth century".

The end of the thirteenth century found the Jews of Italy enveloped in a cloud of darkness, pierced, however, by silver rays of light. The heaviness of the medieval papacy weighed down their bodies; the buoyancy of instreaming culture weighed up their souls. The passions of the populace, ever smouldering beneath a suspicious calm, the edict of pope<sup>1</sup> and the fanaticism of Dominican and Franciscan inquisitors threatened the Jews thruout Italy, and particularly those of Rome. Attempts to persecute them were numerous. Their cemeteries were desecrated and their tombstones unearthed; the very bodies of the dead were pulled up from the ground, and scattered to the winds. Hopeless and forlorn, the Jews felt what Benj. ben Abraham sang<sup>2</sup>:-

"Repell'd, forlorn and robb'd of every hope,  
Grim-laugh'd to scorn, with wrath of foe I cope.  
My sad heart bleeds, for lo! o'er earth lie strewn  
My countless honored dead, their graves in ruin".

From this time on, the successors of Clemens IV followed earnestly in his footsteps. Even those "Holy Fathers" who cautiously held out a helping left hand to the Jews had an outstretched right hand ready to do valiant service in defense of the church dogma that the Jews must be a perpetual example of Christ's suffering. Gregory X<sup>3</sup>, mild and gentle to all appearances, did not hesitate to renew the "Turbato Corde" of his predecessor<sup>4</sup>.

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- 1- Karl of Anjou entered triumphantly into Rome, May 21, 1265, the year of Immanuel's birth. He was the deadly enemy of Italians. The Jews sought his protection, and this was an occasion for fanatical outbursts against them, and also for the papal bull "Turbato Corde"
  - 2- Vog. "G" I, 242, my own translation of the German.
  - 3- Vog. "ibid" p. 245, Gregory entered Rome, 1272.
  - 4- The "Turbato Corde" was the bull issued by Clemens IV which armed the inquisition with power to proceed mercilessly not only against the Neophytes, but also against all Jews who were suspected of helping to convert Christians. - Vog. Gesch. p. 243.

Jacopo Savelli who became pope 1284, gave expression to that highly enlightening sentiment that the life of a Jew or a Saracen is worth but half that of a Christian<sup>1</sup>.

It would take us outside our field to discuss the hardships of the Jewish community of Rome. We must content ourselves, at this point, with merely observing the ecclesiastics of those days and of the days following, felt hurt neither in conscience nor in heart when they embraced the solemn duty of pressing the Jew for money or goods.

The remaining thirty years of this century found the Jews of Italy in an atmosphere of comparative calm<sup>2</sup>. The power-hungry popes, not yet masters of Rome, were too busy, scheming for riches and lands, to concern themselves with enforcing edicts<sup>3</sup>. The church capitol was still in the hands of Colonnas and Orsinos, Ghibellines and Guelphs. Confusion had already begun to spread. The lords of provinces, both petty and great, engaged in constant warfare with each other. The irony of circumstance decreed that the outward storms of Italy bring an inward calm for the Jew.

Fortune indeed smiled upon the Jews of Italy. Many of them, we are told, lived in luxury, some even owned country villas<sup>4</sup>. This state allowed diligent study of Talmud, arts and science. The labors of Hallel di Verona and Serachjah ben Schealtiel were blossoming into fruits.

-1- Vog. "Gesch." p. 251.

-2- Graetz, "Gesch." p. 257.

-3- We ought, however, mention this quiet was relieved, now and then, by sudden storm. On July 1, 1295, Elia, of the family of Pomis, gave his life that the massacre of his fellow-Jews might be averted. - Vogelstein "Geschichte", p. 256.

We also should recall the incident which occurred a quarter of a century later. Pope John XXII at the instigation of his sister, and the clergy, issued an edict for the wholesale expulsion of the Jews. Providence, however, was kind, and the Jews, thru their representative at the Papal court at Avignon, succeeded in having the decree lifted. - Graetz "Gesch." VII 260 ff.

-4- Mach. I, 6 a - והלך היום לכל בני ישראל בית סדרת ואמרו פיוס קישב זיס על שדה  
also XIII 81 a - ערש רעננה סקנתו תחת צמנו ותחת תגנתו.  
and XXVII 212 a - דגים יל

Youths were eager for learning <sup>1</sup>. Men travelled beyond the boundaries of Italy to continue their studies. Men from foreign lands were invited to Rome to discourse on learned topics<sup>2</sup>. The life of the Jewish spirit which, in Provence, was ebbing, from the harshness of Talmudic study, and papal persecution, was, in the land of Italy, freshly unfolding itself. The electric touch of the new current of secular culture, moreover, vibrated thru the soul of Jew as well as Gentile.

This indeed was an age of new life and quick spirit<sup>3</sup>. Bold in its nervous literary activity, it unearthed the works of antiquity. Gifted with a Dante, it quickened enthusiasm for poetry. Made rich by a new-born vernacular literature, it gained self-esteem. Culture hastened the growth of Italy's spirit. Princes established universities. Lords and men of means, despite helpless emperor and benumbed pope, entered into rivalry for the building of courts where poets and scholars were given generous invitation to cultivate the arts<sup>4</sup>. Nor was the effect of this wanting upon the Jews.

Rich Jews, whether from mere desire of imitation, or from keen interest, like their Italian lords, sought to found seats of learning, and give glad welcome to Jewish authors and poets.<sup>5</sup>

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- 1- Mach. VIII 69. Immanuel relates how he and some companions broke open a case of books at Perugia, which had been left in their charge temporarily by a bookseller from Spain, on his way to Rome.
  - 2- Gudemann "Gesch". p. 108.
  - 3- I. F. Miller "Studies in the Poetry of Italy", p. 173.
  - 4- Graetz "Geschichte" VII 259 mentions Robert, King of Naples, one of the most influential of these patrons of letters, who sought learning from a Jewish teacher and on occasion proved himself friendly to the Jews.
  - 5- Graetz "Geschichte" VII 259.



The encouragement, thus held out, went a great way to induce Jewish authors of Italy to brave competition with their more experienced brother-artists of Provence and Spain. Most prominent, among these, were the poets Leone Romano<sup>1</sup>, Judah Siciliano, and Master of them all, Immanuel of Rome<sup>1</sup>. These men, together with others of their day, set for themselves the task of harmonizing Jewish knowledge with the new Italian culture<sup>2</sup>. At home in Jewish lore, these poets were, at the same time, widely read in the encyclopedic studies of their time, and skilled in the several spheres of endeavor<sup>3</sup>.

Perhaps it were not amiss, apropos of our subject, to reveal the attitude of mind, on the pursuit of secular culture, entertained by learned Jews of that day. For it must be remembered, philosophy and science were yet far from being graciously received by the largest number of Italian Jews<sup>4</sup>. An extract<sup>5</sup> from Immanuel's "Commentary on Proverbs" will, I think, well serve this purpose and will, at the same time, afford an insight into the poet's breadth of view, which is the very keynote of his character. The absence of the original compels us to render into English, its German translation by Gûdemann:

Immanuel on Prov. 26:13

אמר צלל שחל בדרך אורי בן החובות

"The sluggard says: There is a lion  
in the way, a lion in the street."

"This proverb refers to those who are slothful in the acquiring of knowledge, and who regard it as dangerous as a lion who is about to be offered up as a sacrifice. Say they, "How dare we busy ourselves with the natural sciences whose masters are but so many atheists and scoffers of

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- 1- Mach. VI 43 b, 57, tells us of a group of poets, contemporaries of Immanuel - ב.צ.י. רומי, שירי חכמי רומי וג'
  - 2- Gûdemann, "Geschichte" p. 111.
  - 3- Ibid. - The culture of the age embraced Theology, philosophy and jurisprudence. The last was acquired by the Jews thru the study of Talmud. Medicine, too, was cultivated, particularly by the Jews.
  - 4- Mach. XX 165.
  - Cf. also Vogelstein, "Geschichte" I 272.
  - 5- Gûdemann, "Geschichte" I p. 119, Extract translated in German.

religion; who, moreover, ascribe no authenticity to our own doctrines? Or how dare we read in logic which, under the veil of sincerity, practices deception on man? Of philosophy, we certainly wish to know nothing, for it is the offspring of Aristotle and others who had no faith in our law." These fools, however, forget we must accept truth from any who offer it. Moreover, these sciences which the fools term "foreign" (חִלּוּזֵי אֲרָצוֹת) were Israel's very possessions of yore. They were originally expounded in our language. Unfortunately these writings have been lost in the course of our weary wanderings. It is true that kings and sages of peoples made pilgrimages to Solomon to be instructed in these studies. These peoples now possess them, while we, by reason of our wanderings, have suffered their loss. It is certainly a miracle that we will have with us the twenty-four books of sacred Scripture. It is, accordingly, probable that physics, metaphysics and other sciences whose principal masters are said to be Plato and Aristotle, originally were in Solomon's possessions. We observe, too, music, so distinguished a study, was, at first, cultivated by such men as Asaf, David, Samuel and others, yet today there are none amongst us who know aught of it, but it is cultivated exclusively by Christians. As for logic, it does not lead one to error but rather sharpens the understanding, and builds the preparation for all other studies. Who therefore brands this a "foreign" science and wishes to know nothing of Plato and Aristotle because they were not Jews, is like the sluggard who says, "A lion is in they way"<sup>1</sup>.

After reading this account, it is needless to remark how fully the learned Jews caught the spirit of the time. We need not wonder, then, that this spirit was carried over into the realm of Hebrew poetry. We feel it was this very force which allowed the Jewish poets of Italy to build a place of honor once again for the decadent Hebrew muse. For secular Hebrew poetry<sup>2</sup> had seen its last days of glory in Spain a century before, in the songs of Juday Al-Harizi<sup>3</sup>.

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-1- It will be observed Immanuel employs the Allegorical method of the day. In describing philosophy as an original Jewish possession, he does what his Christian contemporaries did when they declared ancient sources their own, for they contained prophecies of Christ's coming. This leads Gudemann "Gesch." I 121 to state Immanuel wrote thus as a matter of reprisal.

-2- Rhine, "J. Q. R." Reprint p. 344 ff.

-3- Mach. I Introd. - Immanuel, not always prone to bestow excessive praise, regards Immanuel with the highest esteem. ל' יהודה חתני. ספר חנוכה במלצות ושירות לא שצרוס הלאשונים

After him, the icy breath of pope, friar and disloyal Jew settled upon all joyousness of spirit, and left Hebrew verse empty of all thought and feeling. Three quarters of a century passed, and there arose in Italy a man of genius, who gave freely of his time and talents to restore secular Hebrew poetry to its former splendor<sup>1</sup>.

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-1- Zunz, "Synagogalen Poesie", 104, tells us, liturgical poetry in Italy flourished as early as the 10th century. The first Italian-Hebrew poet to introduce a non-religious subject was Benj. ben Abraham Anan, a Roman physician who wrote בשם גיא חזין a satire against arrogance and wealth of the nobility. But properly speaking, Immanuel was the first Italian-Hebrew poet.



# IMMANUEL OF ROME.

"A pen - to register; a Key --  
That winds through secret wards;  
Are well assigned to Memory  
By allegoric Bards."

-- Wordsworth

Immanuel<sup>1</sup> was born of noble and intelligent parents -- a fact not to be lightly esteemed. While still a youth, his father died<sup>2</sup>. but a pious mother<sup>3</sup> still watched over him. Born in an age the most wonderful Italy had yet seen, and in a condition the most advantageous<sup>4</sup>, where his mind, without pressure of any kind, was free to follow its natural bent, he avails himself of every opportunity, and with extraordinary eagerness absorbs Scripture and Talmud<sup>5</sup>, the philosophy of Maimuni and that of the Greeks, Arabs and Scholastics, becomes at once master of post-Talmudic and Kabbalistic works and of the principal secular spheres -- Mathematics, astronomy and medicine,

-1- Mach. Introd. also Vog. "Gesch." I, 421

Immanuel was born in Rome 1270, (M. I, 14). His parents came from the noble family Zifroni (Place of Origin, called Ceprano, --Vog. I, 299)

Authorities differ on the date of Immanuel's birth.

Vogelstein, "Gesch." I, 421 thinks it is 1270.

Steinschneider, "Introd. to Mach." gives 1272.

Graetz, "Gesch." VII<sup>1</sup>, 265, gives 1265, VII<sup>2</sup>, 289, gives 1270.

Immanuel composed his Divan in 1328. He was less than 60 years of age at the time. This means the date of his birth was a short time after 1268 -- Vogelstein "Gesch." I, 421 f.

-2- Mach. I, 10 b, 2; Mach. XIII, 103, 28, are the only references to Immanuel's father Shelomoh, contained in his whole work. His failure to speak oftener of his father leads us to suppose he knew little of him.

M. I, יבין עליה בשעת השכל אבי

M. XIII, אבי יהודה בעדן פורח

-3- Mach. XXVIII, 130<sup>a</sup>, 35. Immanuel praises both his mother Justa and his mother-in-law Brunetta as pious women.

-4- Mach. I, 3, אלהם ביום חורבן עירא ויהיה להם נחמה

(There are many other references to the same fact.)

-5- Mach. XI, 85 - works of Maimuni I, 9b math.

XVIII, 132b  
Hebrew Gr.

IX, 75 - Greeks, Arabs & School XVIII, 133, 17 Astron. Mach. I, 9a-b.

VIII, 66b,  
XVIII, 132.

VIII, 66- Kabb.

XXIII, 180-3 Medicine, furnish us with many details.

travels carefully and widely over the fields of Hebrew and Italian poetry, taking all that his masters<sup>1</sup> had to offer, cultivates the Hebrew<sup>2</sup> and Italian<sup>3</sup> languages to perfection and gains a reading knowledge of several others<sup>4</sup>, - till, in short, at the touch of his memory the book of present and past opens wide before him. Withal he spares of his time and talents for the public<sup>5</sup>, ministers to the sick<sup>6</sup>, and writes numerous works on Scripture, Kabbala and Grammar<sup>7</sup>. But even these do not justly gage his powers. It is only his final and most lasting work, the

-1- The following were Immanuel's teachers.

Mach. XIII, 101, Jehudah Siciliano - whom he awards the palm for verse, Immanuel claiming for himself superiority in rime-prose only.

Jehuda had to spend his talents to earn a livelihood - Graetz, "Gesch". VII, 293. Only one of his works is known to us, called -Vog. "Gesch." I, 327. (Stein. "J. L." 171).

Mach. XII, XXVIII, Leone Romano, to whom Immanuel feels he owes much and awards him the highest place in paradise. Leone was instructor of Hebrew to King Robert of Naples. He was author of a Hebrew-Italian Glossary. Vog. "Gesch." I, 327.

Mach. XXVIII, 230, Benjamin - None of our authorities mentions him, though Immanuel says: אשר לעזני תורה בימי חורבן שם היה הרב ונביטן רבי יאליסי

I offer as suggestion he is Benj. ben Joab (c.1284) whom Vogelstein mentions "Gesch." I, 278.

Immanuel was thoroughly acquainted with the Spanish-Hebrew poets, having as he himself says, imitated them.

Mach. VIII

Mach. IV, beginning.

Immanuel was likewise versed in the Christian poets, whom he also imitated.

Mach. IX

-2- Bialik "Shirath Yisrael" p. 74, - Immanuel is master of the Hebrew language in all its treasures and choicest possessions.

-3- Immanuel's sonnets in Italian prove this.

-4- Mach. IX, 76.

-5- Mach. XXI, 173 and many other places. Immanuel was president or head of the Roman Jewish community, at whose requests he wrote several letters. - Mach. I, 9, (Immanuel also did some preaching). פאונד זיין

-6- Mach. XXIII, 180, ביום כס"

-7- See our list preceding the Preface.

Machbaroth<sup>1</sup> which reveals the nature of the poet in its surprising versatility, and universal range. Not only are many and varied themes - metric poems, prayers, songs of lamentation and elegies, songs of praise of famous men, novelletes, satires, exegetical dialogues, liturgical and philosophic poems, poems of "In Memoriam" and, more especially, songs of wine, women and love<sup>2</sup>, - composed with singular facility, but they are clothed in a variety of forms, borrowed, now, from his Jewish predecessors<sup>3</sup>, now, from his Christian contemporaries<sup>4</sup>, and with admirable readiness moulds the Hebrew language to fit themes and forms which had, but a short time before, found their way into Italy<sup>5</sup>.

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- 1- Stein. "Jew. Lit." p. 326, note 38, remarks the correct vocalization of the word מבשרות is doubtful. (It may be read מבשרות or מבשרות or מבשרות ) מבשרות is the plural of מבשר (root פג "to join"). Immanuel uses the plural to differentiate his work from "Machbaroth Ithiel" of Al-Harizi. I have found, however, Immanuel uses מבשרות (M. Int. I, b, bottom) for it rhymes with מבשרות in the following phrase.
- 2- Mach. XIX, 151, Prayer. There are more than fifteen prayers in the Mach. The citations refer but to an example.  
 XXI, 174, Lamentations, IV, 38, Liturgical,  
 XIV, XXIII, etc., novelletes, I, 12, Woman,  
 XI, 87, exegetical dialogue,  
 XXI, 169, Poem "In Memoriam".
- 3- Mach. VIII, Imitation of Al-Harizi - Immanuel however works over the method of Harizi.  
 IV, Imitation of Gabirol.  
 "Monat, Beilage, J. P." No. 2, p. 6, 1896-H. Brody. Immanuel's dependence on the Spanish-Hebrew poets is referred to. We shall have occasion to touch upon this phase, again.  
 We observe Immanuel introduced the changing rime instead of the Spanish-Hebrew monotonous one.
- 4- Mach. IX, ראיתי בן שירי הנזירים The song of excoitation, on p. 74, is found here for the first time in Jewish literature, so far as I have been able to learn. Immanuel, in this, imitates a Christian author.  
 Mach. XI, 81, The medical theme is borrowed from old Italian poetry of Burchiello da Forenze. - Vogelstein "Gesch." I, 433.  
 Mach. VI, 44, Question and answer dialogue borrowed from old Italian novels. Cf. "Le Novelle antiche" ed. Biagi (Firenze 1880, n. 86) - Vogelstein "Gesch." I, 433.
- 5- Delitzsch, F. "Zur Gesch. J. Poesie", p. 52, 144, "Immanuel was the first to introduce the sonnet form into Hebrew." The sonnet, it will be remembered, first entered Italy thru Fra Arezzo (c. 1275).

Nor was the poet's literary zeal confined solely in Hebrew verse. He expresses himself masterfully in the vernacular, which is the more greatly to be admired, since the Italian language was just emerging from its infancy. No biographic sketch of Immanuel can be full, I think, without presenting his skillfully wrought Italian sonnets<sup>1</sup>. Since none of these sonnets, save one,<sup>2</sup> has been rendered into English, we take this opportunity of doing so. The German translation of Gudemann<sup>3</sup> must again serve in place of the wanting original.

### THE ITALIAN SONNETS OF IMMANUEL.

#### I. On Love.

"Love has never recited the Ave Maria. Love knows no law, no creed. Love hears and sees nothing. It knows no mass. Love is omnipotent, (*una pura signoria*) who insists upon obtaining what she craves... Love allows herself to be robbed of pride, neither thru a pater noster nor magical incantation, nor does she, because of fear, avoid doing what attracts her. (?) Amor alone knows what ails me, to whatsoever I may object, she answers, "This is my will!"

#### II. On Political Parties.

"I love nothing and hate nothing (?) belong, in Rome, either to Colonna's or Orsinis, as it pleases my fancy, readily to this or that. I am completely a Ghibbine, and rejoice with the Guelphs. In Romagna, I am Zappetino. (?) I am a bad Jew and no Saracen. Nor do I follow the Christians. Yet, of each, I cull the best. Amongst Christians, I find eating and drinking noteworthy, with the good Moses, little fasting, and with Mohammed dissoluteness is worthy, whereby religion ceases from the girdle downwards."

#### III. On Victor.

"Should St. Peter and St. Paul, on one side, Moses and Aaron on the other, and also Mohammed and Trivichan seek to win me over to their party, and though each of these importune me ever so strongly, it would be difficult, indeed, to believe any one of them, and I should be still less able to say which of these pleases me most. Long live Victor. I side with him at all times. Guelphs or Ghibbines, Whites or Blacks - each to his taste. I remain in the back ground, unallied. I have still plenty of time to enroll in a party. Until death, I shall always be prepared to aid Victor."

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- 1- Gudemann, "Gesch." I, 141. "Only three Italian sonnets of Immanuel are known". These were published some 40 years ago. See Paur, "Jahrbuch d. deutsche - Dante Gesel." IV, 671, taken from "Letteratura e filosofia, etc." Garofalo (Naples, 1872). Steinschneider, "Buonarrotti", 1876, p. 85, concerning authenticity of sonnets. Lattes, "Mose, Antologia israelitica", II, 263, for contrary opinion. (I have been unable to secure these volumes to verify the references. I quote from Gudemann - C.)
  - 2- Chotnzer, "Hebrew Humour", p. 102, translates Immanuel's sonnet on "Amor".
  - 3- Gudemann, "Gesch." I, 141.



These sonnets won for Immanuel a distinguished place in Italian literature<sup>1</sup>. His sonnet, "On Love" has been characterized, a poem unexcelled by any medieval poet<sup>2</sup>. The freedom with which he refers to such terms as "Ave Maria" and "Mass", which must have offended his orthodox correligionists<sup>3</sup>, reveals a bold independence of mind which is wanting among generations of Jews who lived after him. We wish to restate: Immanuel was a free spirit, in whose mind the Jewish tradition of the past, and the secular culture of his day blended into an harmonious whole which he, in turn, gave forth, having first breathed into it the spirit of his own peculiar individuality.

We admire the poet's broadness of vision. For, in this, he stands out boldly, a peer among even the most celebrated of his contemporaries who lean heavily on a background of narrow church mediavalism. In a time when Giordano Rivalto<sup>4</sup> preaches with supreme contempt against reading the Old Testament because it is Jewish, Immanuel pleads with his fellow Jews to acquire learning other than Jewish<sup>5</sup>; and in a day when a man of profound learning, deep vision and universal heart - Dante - but not yet freed from the cold shackles of the church, damns the unbaptized virtuous souls<sup>6</sup> and eases his doubting mind by a false humility<sup>7</sup>, Immanuel, the Jew, guided by an enlightening sense of justice, awards a high place in paradise "to the pious of all nations<sup>8</sup> who have searched into truth diligently and who have learned who their creator was".

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-1- Gûdemann, "Gesch." I, 141 f.

-2- Geiger, "J.Z." V, 298 f, I quote from memory, and am unable to obtain the book at this time to verify this reference.

-3- Cf. extract from Immanuel's "Comm. on Prov." where he upbraids those of his correligionists who fear secular culture.

-4- Gûdemann, "Gesch." I, 121.

-5- See note 3.

-6- Dante, "Inferno", IV, 25. "Purg." III, 40 ff. VII, 4 ff. Quotations are cited by Geiger, "Jud. Z", V, 299.

-7- Dante "Paradise" XIX, 70 ff. "Who are you that would thus in judgment sit?"

-8- Mach. XXVIII, p. 230, b, 7.

This was not an impulsive expression of the poet's soul. Breadth and appreciation for truth were part and parcel of his nature. Even in our own time of widespread culture, we may search in vain to discover a more enlightening precept than this<sup>1</sup>; "If a man hath sinned against thee, forgive him that very moment, and if hath served thee well, remember this forever." And if we recall the moral standard of Immanuel's day, we must honor him the more for his singular and broad outlook. This outstanding feature in our poet's character has been clearly perceived and best expressed by Th. Paur<sup>2</sup> who observes "...moreover, the work of Immanuel is guided by so fine a spirit of tolerance towards those not of his own faith, such humane liberality in matters of creed which must be sought for with the lantern of Diogenes amongst the Christians of those days." We dwell upon this point, for much has been written<sup>3</sup> in depreciation of the poet's character, without a just appreciation of the finer virtues he possessed.

Those who are inclined to speak lightly of Immanuel, see in his, a weak, sensuous and backbone-less character<sup>4</sup>. They easily perceive this in the poet's sonnets, "On Political Parties", and "On Victor," for which there seems to be at least, apparent justification. Güdemann, in answer to these critics has, I think, put the matter well, when he states, in respect of the poem "On Political Parties", "the political conditions of those days allowed the Jews no active interest in party matters. We ought, therefore, not be too sensitive to the air of cynical indifference displayed by the poet, for this, indeed was his only means of revenge against an enforced political inertia. Moreover, the ecclesiastics of those days were wont to upbraid the political factions.<sup>5</sup> It is assumed they acted from the higher motive of picturing men's faults. It would be unfair, then, to credit Immanuel with less lofty intention.

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-1- Mach. XXVIII, 229a, 27, אם חטא איש מיד שכחתי ואם הטוב עשיתי

-2- Paur "Jahrbuch der d-Dante Gesell." III, 447. quoted by Güd."Gesch". I, 137.

-3- Cf. Delitzsch, "Zur G". p. 44.

-4- Güdemann, "Gesch." I, 142 f.

-5- Güdemann, "Gesch." I, 142 f. Benardin of Siena (born 1380) wrote similar poems reflecting apparent lack of character.

We readily acknowledge the worth of our author's position. We agree with him on point of fact: the sonnets reveal an air of cynical indifference. But we differ with him on point of interpretation: we feel the poet is guided neither by impulse of revenge, nor by wish of moral reproof. It seems our author's view is apologetic. Regarding, first, what critics have said in depreciation of Immanuel's character, he feels the need for disputing it. This he does by crediting the poet with moral motive which he, then, proceeds to read into the sonnets. It is a better way, however, to try to conceive clearly the spirit of the poems, and let the matter rest, without reading one's own conjectures into them. In these sonnets, then, we observe two elements. The first is the poet's non-Jewish interests which, again, reflect his breadth of view. His reference to the political parties reveals this. The second is a new phase of the poet's nature, the satirical or humorous. We catch a glimpse of this when he remarks, "I am a bad Jew", but it is brought in greater prominence by the words which follow: "with Mohammed, dissoluteness is worthy, whereby religion ceases from the girdle downwards". Immanuel laughs, not so much at the vanities of the religions, as at those who would profit by them, and close their eyes to the higher influences, to reverse the figure, from the girdle upwards. It is an opportune moment to touch upon that phase of Immanuel's nature which is mirrored in the sentiment just expressed.

#### THE POET'S CHARACTER.

A great deal has been said and written by critics deprecating the character of the poet whose real self, they say, is expressed in just such lines as those of the sonnets. We have referred to their position which holds Immanuel's is a weak, frivolous, and sensuous nature, whose boldness of humour knows no bounds and whose tongue defies all restraint<sup>1</sup>. He is a victim of bubbling wit and caustic satire. He sacrifices virtue without the slightest feeling of shame. The sacred language of the prophets becomes in his hand a mere vehicle for conceits, and loses its purity and refinement. He is overpowered by sensuality, and, at the

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<sup>1</sup>- Delitzsch "Zur. Gesch." p. 52.  
Graetz, "Gesch." VII, 266.

moment he sings sacred and uplifting melodies, he drops suddenly to the coarse and vulgar<sup>1</sup>. His obscenity converts the completely veiled Hebrew muse into a thinly-clad dancer who invites the gaze of the passer-by<sup>2</sup>. His vulgar abuse of Biblical verse, his loud mouthed ostentation, his bold self-appreciation, his ridicule of the sacred, his exaltation of sentimental love place Immanuel in the class with those reverent church dignitaries who bow the knee on Sabbath that they may indulge in practices of illicit love the rest of the week<sup>3</sup>. His songs of wine, woman and love well merit the title bestowed upon him by his correligionists<sup>4</sup>.

Such is the view of Immanuel's character entertained by a number of his critics who give us the impression of regarding the poet's nobler side a jewel buried in a ton of chaff<sup>5</sup>.

Of course, these critics do not deny the poet possesses some virtue. One of them is generous enough to credit him with bearing his enemies no grudge, with faithfulness toward friends, and gratefulness to benefactors, with sympathy and unselfishness of nature, sharing his knowledge with others freely (for other possessions he had lost).<sup>6</sup>

There is another class of critics who, not satisfied with this view, go to the other extreme, and regard Immanuel all virtue and no vice. They look upon the poet's humour, wit and songs of love as mere harmless expressions which ought give none offense<sup>7</sup>.

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- 1- Th. Paul. "Jahrbuch d-d-D.G." IV, 429, "und gerade im Lande der Seligen, der Muthville des Humors den Ernst der Didaktik abzustreiten sucht, auch in der überirdischen Welt behauptet der Schalk Sein Grundrecht." - Quoted by Gudemann, "Gesch." I, 131.
  - 2- Graetz, "Gesch." VII, 266.
  - 3- Delitzsch, "Zur. G.", p. 52.
  - 4- Vog. "Gesch.", I, 434, some of his contemporaries called him יאיר קטן.
  - 5- Cf. especially Delitzsch.
  - 6- Graetz, VII; 266.
  - 7- Steinsch. "Jew. Lit." p. 175, "In Immanuel's day not only passages from the Bible, but Halacha and Piyyutim were travestied and made to apply to frivolous and obscene objects without its being felt as any insult to these much revered writings. We have pieces and works of this kind by Kalonymos, even earlier Abraham Bedarshi in a serious panegyric, parodied the Easter Hagada, etc."



They refer to the poet's reverent nature<sup>1</sup>, to his deep, earnest sentiments which are weighty with experience<sup>2</sup>, to his religious seriousness<sup>3</sup>, to his high conception of domestic love in a day when one might little expect this<sup>4</sup> to his moral earnestness in insisting upon diligent and systematic application of study<sup>5</sup>, to his righteous indignation against hypocrisy, and mean parsimony<sup>6</sup>, to his high ideal of a public servant<sup>7</sup>, and to his social disposition<sup>8</sup>. They regard his self-adulation as a huge consistent fiction, in harmony with the form and style of the poet's work<sup>9</sup>.

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- 1- Gld. "Gesch.", I, 128, While Italian novelists ridiculed the ecclesiastics, Immanuel does not, in the least, offend against the Rabbis and Sages of yore.
  - 2- Gld. "Gesch.", I, 128: "er schlägt mitunter einen tieferen Ton an, tritt warm für Wissenschaft, Sittlichkeit und Religion ein, erhebt sich zu schwungreichen gebeten und stellt Lebensregeln auf, welche eine reiche Erfahrung, eine scharfe Beobachtungsgabe und sittlichen ernst bezeugen."
  - 3- Mach. XXVIII כי שלא יזכה להיות באמת באמת ואם יהיה כביש וישיע  
 Im. "Comm. on Prov." to ch. 22, v. 8 אל תהג גבול עולם אשר עשי אומרך  
 (Gld. "Gesch." I, 125) כי לית היתר יהיה כלום ואלו הן המעשים  
 To "Comm. on Prov.", I, 7. "just as without religion no knowledge is possible, so without knowledge no religion is possible".
  - 4- Immanuel ever praises his wife highly though a married woman in medieval romance was lightly esteemed.
  - 5- Gld. "Gesch.", I, p. 125, Quotes Immanuel "Prov." v. 18, "Earnestness and systematic application in study alone show love for it. Snatching morsels of knowledge ... is idle effort."
  - 6- Mach. XXVIII, Gld. "Gesch". I, 133
  - 7- Mach. XXVIII, p. 226a, 5. וכמו שהיה להם לבחור חזק... יהיה בין חזק ערים ויענין אל ד קום... לא ילך על האגבים ולא פנה אל רהבים ד
  - 8- Mach. XXVIII. Immanuel condemns those men, otherwise pious, who neglect the interests of the community in the matter of selecting capable representatives while they are most exacting in getting good business agents.
  - 9- Vogelstein, "Gesch.", I, 429.

We think, as is so often the case, each of these views emphasizes one particular phase of character analysis to the exclusion of the other. There is, so far as we can see, no basis for expecting the poet to be everywhere uttering moral precepts, just as there is none for thinking him altogether void of moral character. It is just as erroneous to think he is an angel, as it is to deprecate his various moods as of the devil's concoction, and thereby be running the chance of meriting a proper application of Aesop's fable of the somewhat too ambitious quadruped. Our reading of the Poet convinces us of his two-fold nature. At times, he is in a deep, serious and reflective mood, and at others he is conceited, sensuous and even vulgar. When Immanuel speaks of himself<sup>1</sup> as "The awe-inspiring one of the great multitude", he is quite serious in this belief.

If it is contended his self-praise was uttered in a frivolous spirit, and that the Poet did not intend it should be taken seriously, we refer to that serious passage<sup>2</sup> in which he denounces his enemies, and, by contrast, declares his reputation spotless and deserving of men's commendation. It is certain this passage rings with sincerity. Nor does the ceaseless repetition of the worth of his verses<sup>3</sup> appear, any more, as humorous. The truth of this is seen fully when he boasts of his superiority in verse, to Judah Al-Harizi<sup>4</sup>, in rime-prose, to Judah Siciliano<sup>5</sup>, in understanding of Scripture to his predecessors<sup>6</sup>, and in general to Christian poets<sup>7</sup>. We must, however, state, in fairness to

-1- Mach. I, 2. עורץ המון רבה, נחמד להשכיל, מאד זמנו.

-2- Mach. I, p. 10, b. 10-13. ובחר שם טוב אשר על לבי הוצא כספי וזהבי אשר בו יתהלל המתהלל

- "This passage is especially significant for Jeremiah (IX, 23) uses the phrase "יִתְהַלַּל הַמִּתְהַלָּל" in speaking of God." "If one must boast let him boast of this, that he knoweth and understandeth me, that I am the Lord," etc.

-3- Mach. I, 3. איה שיריתך הנצחית/ אשר לא נברא בכל הארץ ובכל הגוים

There are innumerable passages in the Mach. referring to the same fact.

-4- Mach. XI.

-5- Mach. XIII.

-6- Mach. I, XVIII, XXVIII.

-7- Mach. XI.

Immanuel, he frequently bestows high praise on others<sup>1</sup>, though this is not, generally the case. Himself-praise offends less deeply than does his vulgarity which, at times, is nauseating, inspite of its apparent humour<sup>2</sup>. We are, therefore, fully convinced of the poet's frailties, and for this reason, we do not think he is altogether a high moral character.

Nor can we entirely agree with that other view which unhesitatingly and peremptorily stamps the poet as wholly frivolous and obscene. Such an opinion omits from consideration the rich and deserving humorous nature of the poet which, we have said, is mirrored in his sonnets, "On Political Parties", and "On Victor", and of which there is almost an embarrassment of proof in his Machbaroth. His innumerable and ingenious fancies, his exceedingly clever puns, his many epigrams, his countless plays on words - all are the expressions of a mind scintillating with genuine wit. Observe, for example, the pun in the verse which is a reply to his neighbors who complain at his studying out aloud at midnight<sup>3</sup>:

הָיָה לִי עֵצָה בְּקִנְיֵן הַתְּבוּנָה הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר  
הַשִּׁבְיָנוּתִים יִשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְאֵלֵינוּ וְנִסְחָרָה וְהָלַל לָנוּ (הַשִּׁבְיָנוּתִים)

Or, consider the still more clever one when the Poet contrasts the activities of his adversaries engaged in the hording of wealth with his own in acquiring wisdom<sup>4</sup>:

וְכִבֵּר בְּאֵלָיו אֲנָשִׁי הַסִּגְוָלָה

כִּי הַפְּרוּסָה אֵינָנָה תִּהְיֶה וְהִיא אֵינָנָה טַעֲמָה

Or still another which illustrates his puns on Biblical Names<sup>5</sup>. He speaks of misfortune, and says:

נִוְחָם יִשְׁתַּר מַעֲרִיבִי כִּי אֵין לִי עֵצָה וְנִחְסָה

His play on words<sup>6</sup> is, at times, highly interesting. When for example, he describes the fickleness of the gazelle he asks;

עַל סֶה עֲלָסָה עַל סַעַל סָה עַל סָה עַת יִשְׁקֹוּ עַת יִדְוֹר  
אוּ בֹ פִּתְמוֹן אוּ יִדְ פִּתְמוֹן וְתִצְוֹן לִי דִוֹר אוּ לִנְדִּוֹר

-1- Mach. Int. I, a, - Harizi, Elsewhere, Judah Siciliano, etc.  
Mach. XVIII, 132, David Kimchi:

-2- Mach. VI, exegetical dialogue, p. 42.

-3- Mach. I, p. 10, bottom.

-4- Mach. I, p. 9a, 2nd line from bottom. ( גִּירָה ) has the double meaning of eud, and penny, and ( מַעֲלָה ) has the double meaning of regurgitation and exaltation. H. A. R. 2

-5- Mach. IV, 30, 13, We take our illustrations, at random.

-6- Mach. VII, 53.

וְהָיָה דְּהַדְּמוּתִים וְהַשְׁמָרָה לִּי דִוֹר קִסְמוֹ הַפְּרוּסָה לְשִׁירָה וְשִׁמְחָה  
(סִחָר) הַכִּיָּלִי כֹל אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכָו יִשְׁטָא  
(שִׁר) כִּי הוּא יִרְאֶה לְהִטָּךְ אֶת הַיָּדָיו מִן יִשְׁטָא  
(סִחָר) בְּסֶה הַכִּיָּלִי נִתְעַב  
(שִׁר) כִּי הוּא יִפְתָּח לְבָבוֹ מִן יִרְעָב

"Why, O girl, due to what crime,  
Why is he now tranquil, and now disturbed"?  
Either she desires him or she withholds her hand,  
Saying, "Lodge here, friend!" or "flee!"

There are entire poems<sup>1</sup> given up to such plays on words which we shall later illustrate.

We cannot pass by without referring to one or two other examples. In the description of the beauties of the gazelle whom one day he met in her garden<sup>2</sup>, we find:

וּבְּעֵינֶיהָ לֵב פָּרִים יִצוֹר וּבְנִי דָם פֶּאֶר פֶּאֶרָה  
and, in his poem ridiculing woman<sup>3</sup>:

כִּי נִפְתַּח פִּתְחֵי כֶּה נִרְוֶה קִיּוֹנֵינוּ

His epigrams, in some instances, compare favorably with those of Shakespeare. Of time<sup>4</sup>, he remarks:

שְׂחָקִי עַל הַזֶּמֶן וְהַזֶּמֶן בִּי שוֹחֵק

"I mocked time, now time mocks me".

Compare this with:

"I wasted time, now time wastes me".

- Rich. II

Another epigram on time is this:<sup>5</sup>

כִּי טוֹבוֹת הַזֶּמֶן וְרָעוֹתָיו כְּדוֹסוֹת  
וְהַבּוֹטְחִים בּוֹ שֶׁשְׁלֵוֵם כְּנֶהְמוֹת

"For good or evil, time doth little care  
Who trust in time like beast must ever fare".

Immanuel's poems contain some sound psychological observations<sup>6</sup> which are as meaningful and to the point as some of the great English Bard's,

יִצְרָא לְבָנָו בְּרִשְׁעוֹ אֲמַי צִינִיו יִהְיֶה הוּא אֲשֶׁר כָּלָנוּ  
לְפָנָיו בְּסִסְיוֹרֵינוּ וְאַחַר נִאֲקֶה כִּי צִלָּתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

The same thought is expressed in the words:

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars  
but in ourselves that we are underlings."

- Julius Caesar.

- 
- 1- Mach. III, 23 middle.
  - 2- Mach. IV, 31, 24 - H. Brody - "Beilage d. J. P." M.2, S.6, points out Immanuel's dependence on the Sp. H. poets by citing this verse.
  - 3- Mach. I, p. 13.
  - 4- Mach. I, p. 3.
  - 5- Mach. I, v. 8, 3rd line from bottom.
  - 6- Mach. IV, 35.

We can thus easily observe the versatility of our poet as well as his skill. Frequently, he delivers himself of some clever but unsavory sayings. The poet took offense at a letter<sup>1</sup> which a poet, Joab, sent him. Immanuel expresses his disappointment that the letter contained nothing refreshing:

שְׁחָתָהּ הָאֵגֶרֶת הַתּוֹלִיד  
וְאֵיךְ אֵלֶיהָ וְיָאָם מִצָּרָתָהּ לֵה בְּתוּלִים

The humorous nature of Immanuel is more strikingly manifest in some of his poems on "Woman" and "Love" which we shall presently consider.

We hope, now, we have made this clear: Immanuel's humour and wit are not only gross and common, but, often, chaste and entertaining. On this account, we feel it is unjust to regard the poet solely with a forbidding air.

We realize exposition rather than admiration is required in our work. We hope, therefore, we have succeeded in delineating the poet's character, without calling our feelings into play. This view-point, which is blind neither to virtue nor defect, assigning to each its proper place, prepares us for a better understanding of Immanuel's poems.



# THE MACHBAROTH.

## Explanatory Note.

### Literary History, Structure, and Style.

The MACHBAROTH is the name for the collection of individual poems, dialogues, and novelletes<sup>1</sup> written by Immanuel of Rome at various periods of his life<sup>2</sup>, and put into their present arrangement in his last years<sup>3</sup>. The book consists of an introduction stating the occasion and purpose of the compilation<sup>4</sup>, and twenty-eight chapters. Only the second, third, twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh, and twenty-eighth chapters bear a superscription which indicates the subject to be treated in that chapter<sup>5</sup>. The twenty-eighth chapter seems from its contents and prefatory remark<sup>6</sup> to have been an independent product of his pen. This chapter is an imitation of Dante's "Inferno" and "Paradise". These chapters are bound together by no single theme<sup>7</sup>. Their form alone gives the work the semblance of unity. This is the so-called Makkamat form<sup>8</sup> employed by Harizi and Arabian in origin. This is the plan of each chapter: a discussion between the Poet and the Sar<sup>9</sup>, a character whose function it is to ask and answer questions, and thus prevent a one person performance, is conducted in rime-prose, and is followed<sup>by</sup> a poem which embodies usually the essential thought discussed. Each poem is preceded by the introductory phrase וְיִשְׁכַּח אֶת שְׁמוֹ or וְיִשְׁכַּח אֶת שְׁמוֹ. This is the form of every chapter save those in which dialogues, letters, or novelletes are presented. Here rime-prose<sup>10</sup> is used almost exclusively.

- 
- 1- Cf. above, p.      for a list of the various themes treated in the Mach.
  - 2- Mach. Int. p. 1. חֲבֵרַת קִצְוֹת בְּיָמֵי הַמְּצֻרִים, וְיִשְׁכַּח אֶת שְׁמוֹ
  - 3- Mach. I 3. הָיָה הַמְּצֻרָה וְהַקְּצֵה רִיבֵּינִים מְרִיבִים
  - 4- Mach. Int. The occasion was a Purim gathering of the poet and his acquaintances at Ferno. The purpose was to prevent plagiarism on the part of someone who claimed, Immanuel's poems as their own.
  - 5- This has been observed by Chotzner in his essay referred to.
  - 6- Mach. XXVIII, p. 220. אֵלֶּיךָ מְחַבֵּר עֲשֵׂנוּלָהּ בְּכִי שֶׁלֹא
  - 7- Mach. Int. I. The author regrets he was unable to follow Harizi in this respect.
  - 8- Jew. Enc. "Al-Harizi". The Makkamat form is rime-prose interspersed with poetry. This form was used by the Sp.Heb. School of Poets.
  - 9- The Sar is Benjamin of Ferno, Immanuel's patron, to whom the book is dedicated. - Mach. XXVIII.
  - 10- Rime-prose, or the so-called Melizah, consists of short, snappy phrases whose final words rime. In the Mach, these phrases are taken from every corner of the Bible and Talmud, and are applied to profane objects.

The poems vary in their form. Usually, the Spanish-Hebrew poetry serves as model. The sonnet form, which Immanuel was the first to introduce into Hebrew verse, is also quite prominent. There is, moreover, a variety of metre and in the number of feet to a verse employed. While much of the verse is full of charm, it is not well done, and polished thruout. There is plenty of fancy, but also lack of grace.

The novelletes are written in the style adopted by Italian novelists of the time. Immanuel, however, treats of local themes, and in this respect, differs from his Italian contemporaries who have a wider range of field.

The style of the rime-prose is frequently and grossly exaggerated<sup>1</sup>, so that it is difficult to discern fact from fiction. The poet himself states his conception of style to include the fictitious<sup>2</sup>. The satires and parodies unite zeal and earnestness with frivolous expression.

In general, the subjects treated of in the Machbaroth, while embracing a variety of themes and forms, are circumscribed in content, and include, for the most part, the homely and domestic<sup>3</sup>.

The poems which we are now to consider, are the expressions of a man of moods and passions. This we hope to show as we go along.

- 1- Mach. I, 3. The poet speaks of his woes as: קוֹסֵי בֵּית הַתְּהַלָּלָה, וְהַגְּבוּעוֹת  
וְהַתְּהַלָּלָה, וְהַתְּהַלָּלָה וְהַתְּהַלָּלָה וְהַתְּהַלָּלָה  
 which point to artificial rather than real suffering.
- 2- Mach. VIII, 63 אֵינִי חוֹבֵה הַפְּשׁוּרָה אֶשְׂזֶם כֵּן אִישׁ בְּמַעֲלָתוֹ וְלֹא חֶשְׁלִיג קָצִית  
עַל הָאֵמֶת בְּסִלְיָתוֹ
- 3- Chotzner has suggested Immanuel wished to do for his Jewish readers what the Italian novelists did for theirs. But Immanuel could employ only those limited experiences known to his readers.

# THE POEMS OF IMMANUEL OF ROME.<sup>1</sup>

## POEMS OF DEJECTION AND REFLECTION.

After the poet, on the advice of the Sar, resolves to arrange his poems into a unified whole, he beseeches God to guide him that he may not falter in speech. He opens his volume with the invocation<sup>2</sup>:

All hail, fair Muse, come reign o'er realms of song,  
O lift thy Voice, arise, o'erwhelm this throng!  
Ye strains of music, breathe o'er souls of night,  
Let sons of death now speed o'er paths of light!  
Swift bend thy bow, cold keen-edg'd darts prepare,  
Quick pierce thy foes, all faithless hearts nor spare!  
Yet softly flow song sweet and low, of love,  
On each soul rest as dew rich blest above!  
Now speak to all, Immanuel's on high,  
Sing bold my name, for man of God am I!  
O soul of life, return to realms of peace  
Of God thy Lord whose love doth never cease!

The poet prays for strength to compose such verse as will confound his enemies. The fact of Immanuel's bitterness against his enemies who caused him great suffering is one which the poets speaks of frequently. An entire series of poems is given us to this theme. The poet tells the story in the lines:

When I observe obedient sons grow bold,  
Laugh him to scorn whose love of yore they told;  
When I discern by time's swift hand all lost,  
My wealth, my wage, my trove of rich, proud cost;  
When I behold how fools all these obtain,  
Shall then my heart rejoice, not weep in pain?

The poet relates he had been rich and prosperous but that he had given security for a friend who had ruined him<sup>3</sup>. Robbed of his wealth<sup>4</sup>, and already advanced in years, he was driven from his home<sup>5</sup> with the jeers of his former friends to bid him farewell. To this theme, he devotes a poem of greater length.

- 
- 1- In the following translations of Immanuel's poems, I have tried to follow the original as closely as possible. I have selected those verses for translation which seemed to me to convey the principal thought, or which contain particular features of the poet's style.  
 -2- Mach. I, Introd. Immanuel terms the invocation כתי וראשית אונן  
 -3- Mach. I, p. 3. כימי חיי ערבותי לרצני ותקצתי לזר כפי  
 -4- Ibid. כן גר יגשוש  
 -5- Ibid. He wandered for some time, till he found refuge at the home of Benjamin of Fermo, a rich Jew of Ancona, who afforded him asylum.



When I observe how time doth daily fly,  
 Sun's splendor gone, entombed in even' sky,  
 When oft deep-pain'd, I see my days speed by,  
 My tent's proud pin in broken fragments lie;  
 When I behold the world's fell hand new born,  
 Fast clutch my robe till wide its folds stream torn,  
 Deep griev'd at time and foe, what can I say,  
 Deprived of kin, of friend and minstrel's lay?  
 Thus sad of heart, I weep, beat palm on palm  
 And heav'ly sigh. "Ah, me! there is no balm."

.....  
 If I my friends with peaceful words now hail,  
 "Why ask our peace, thou/sinful man", they rail.

.....  
 O treach'rous child of time, fore'er be curs'd,  
 Fair earth lie dead, let shame swift quench thy thirst.

.....  
 Time was when I, a lord of men, high dwelt,  
 In praise and joy the love of friends deep felt.

.....  
 When princes sang my songs of spirit sweet,  
 While soft and gentle hearts with kindness beat.  
 It is not now, for lo! all things have chang'd,  
 Alone I dwell, all friends from me estrang'd.  
 Alone, ensnared, bold fools my riches gain,  
 My golden threads now shorn, I hope in vain.  
 Though robb'd by time, "the wise of mind" they cry,  
 "Fixed statute breaks, fair law he dares defy:"  
 Thus me they scorn and mock, these hateful fools,  
 These sodomitic sons who leap grave rules.  
 No more they turn to see my widom's staff  
 Engulf all princes staves, yet harsh their laugh;  
 No more my thought, my sacred mantel's pow'r,  
 Which swept o'er Jordan's banks and lofty tow'r.  
 For lo! my land is lewd, gone far astray,  
 Time's turn'd base Gomer, I Hosea, pray.  
 O God of life, stretch forth thy speedy hand,  
 And raise the low, restore him to his land.  
 Who lifteth hills and maketh seas sing low,  
 Now still my grieved heart fresh-torn by woe.  
 Whilst I behold my days in wrath speed by  
 And yet I observe how time doth daily fly.

The poet feels deeply on his fate, and time's deception which has made him an object of contempt even to the ignorant. He pictures his misery in a series of figures, most of which are borrowed from scripture.

"The world's fell hand clutching his garment of pride," אָמַרְתָּ אֵלֶי תִּבְנֶה  
 וְנָדוּ תִבְנִינִי בְּכַף פְּעִיל הַיּוֹם וַיִּקְרַע  
 his "golden threads" of wealth, appropriated by the unworthy, "time" compared to "Gomer", the faithless wife of the prophet for whom He, like  
 "Hosea" must suffer - כִּי אָמַרְתָּ אֵלַי תִּבְנֶה וְאֵס גֹּמֶר אֶמְצֵא וְאֵנִי הוֹשֵׁעַ  
 יוֹאֵל וְיָאֵם הַזֶּה הוֹנֵי יֶאֱכָר נַפְשִׁי אֲבִדָה יְהִי פִּוְרֵעַ

all these depict his misfortune. The poet is filled with bitterness and indignation at his enemies whom he terms: אֲנִי נִבְלָה וְהַדְרֹגָה וְהַרְוֹעַ

It is interesting to observe the poet's self-praise. "My wisdom's staff" inviting comparison with the "Staff of Moses," "My Mantle" recalling the mantle of Elijah, are figures which reveal this.

It has been said by some one "indignation makes verses". But we more than conjecture he referred to that indignation whose sister is love. We respect the heart whose love for the good which we esteem, leads it to denounce the wrong. Mere expression of crude impulse makes little poetry. Much of the effect of this poem is lost both because the poet injects a narrow, selfish element, and because his woes appear fabulous. Yet there is a touch which shows Immanuel was not blind to the beauties of nature. This is reflected in the line:

אַרְצָה פְּסָנִי יוֹם אֵינוֹם נִסְעָה וְלֹא אֶרְצָה הַדֵּר שֶׁקָּשִׁי וְהוּא שׂוֹרֵץ

and again in,

צוֹר סִחָתִיב הָרִים יוֹם רִיגָץ

There is some religious sentiment, too, in the prayer which concludes the poem. The same feeling is found in the words, rime-prose, later:

הַשָּׁקֵט וּבִטּוֹחַ בָּאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָר

The language of the poem is biblical interspersed here and there with Talmudic phrase, such as הַנִּבְרָא וְהַיּוֹלֵץ. The poet is especially fond of Biblical names which he uses in various ways to suit his purpose. He wishes to observe that time but echoes the cruelties of his friends, so he says:

יֹאכֶר פְּסָנִי עָלֵי אֲשֶׁר הָם יֹאכֶרִי הֵם יֹאכֶרִי תִּזְכֹּר  
וְהוּא בִּלְבָבִי

The poem has sixty lines, and each line, six feet. The first foot has two Tenuoth, the next four a Yathed and two Tenuoth, and the last, a Yathed and three Tenuoth. For example,

אַרְצָה פְּסָנִי יוֹם אֵינוֹם נִסְעָה וְלֹא אֶרְצָה הַדֵּר שֶׁקָּשִׁי וְהוּא שׂוֹרֵץ

We have made reference to Immanuel's self-praise which has occasioned such harsh comment. There appears to be evidence that the poet did not intend this to be taken seriously. For in another poem he sounds a note of exaggerated self-abasement, and which is far from an expression of genuine humility. It seems as though, in both cases, on

the whole, the poet aims at mere literary effect. There is however, a strain of honest grief in the lines<sup>1</sup>:

Have gates of death now open'd for my soul,  
 Have paths which bring forth life now closed their scroll?  
 Has time's mean hand grown short for lending aid,  
 Or to redeem now ever feels afraid?  
 A threshold I, whose boards are griefs piled up,  
 The Ephod I with Hoshen's pois'nous cup.  
 The vulgar acts of brutes, men say, are kind,  
 But my kind acts are vulgar, cry the blind.  
 Should I now strive, for me 'twould be in vain,  
 Though Samson I, Delilah's strength would drain.  
 A faded leaf! its voice doth me affright,  
 Who late rul'd men, high honor'd in their sight.  
 Of yore I reign'd, a chosen prince on high,  
 Yet these now scoff, I mortal men belie.  
 My year of nought, of woe, now carries child,  
 Its griefs are double burden'd, nor are mild.  
 My tears of grief would make all clouds seem dry,  
 On days of flood when rains stream from full sky.  
 My bitter foes all strut like Zion's mount,  
 I, Ebel's cursed height, myself account.  
 All dust born beings the gift of life is giv'n,  
 Not so my life, 'tis merely loaned by heav'n.  
 Should I contend though with a group of ants,  
 An ant could bear me in its mouth perchance.  
 And now my land hath godless prov'd to me,  
 As though of yore, its robe I ne'er did see.

Alas, thou world! for myriads wide they hand,  
 For myriads spacious, yet for one no land.  
 Time lays my heart asleep within it's lap,  
 Then gives it strangers who its whole strength sap.  
 As moving beasts (of fields) whom men would kill,  
 Within a maiden's lap, first think to still.  
 I think my time is fire, events, it's fuel,  
 Myself, the docile lamb for slaughter cruel.  
 Should I, then o'er my many woes now weep,  
 My tears would dry all streams tho' ocean deep.

The poem expresses a feeling of utter despair, and helplessness which, from our modern point of view, reveals an abbreviated masculinity for which we have little sympathy. Such moods become sentimental cronies, not men of strength. The poet laments he is a "threshold of miseries trodden upon by his enemies", "Scoffed at by men who cast his forth from men". Should he express his true grief, his tears would be more abundant than the "moisture of clouds in times of flood." But even in this poem of self-abasement, the element of self-praise is not wanting. He emphasizes, he was a מִשְׁכָּן, the elected of the community, again,

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-1- Mach. I, pp. 6, 7, 8.

a שְׁלֹשׁ קִיּוּנִים , and again, referring to his glorious past, כְּאַיִן  
 הַיָּמִים לֹא הִעֲשִׂיתִי בְּעֵינֶיךָ

The spirit of exaggeration appears in such lines as :

"an ant could carry me off in its mouth, perchance."

Some lines have very little poetic quality, and little else to recommend them. For example, a line like

שִׁנְתָה הַבִּלְי שְׁנֵת חֲבִלִי וְחִלִּי מְעַבְרֶת וְזָרְתָה כְּפִרְתָּה

has its little something approaching merit in the play on the word-sounds,

הַבִּלְי and חֲבִלִי , and a line like

וְאַשְׁכֵּינָה כְּכִיזָה עֲקֵרָה בְּשֹׁחַר וְלִצְרָה אֲנוֹכָה הַיָּמִינָה

which is used merely for the sake of making it rime with the preceding sentence borders on the nonsensical. There is no poetry in the words

וְאַשְׁכֵּינָה כְּכִיזָה עֲקֵרָה בְּשֹׁחַר וְלִצְרָה אֲנוֹכָה הַיָּמִינָה

In spite of our severe criticism, the poem contains some merit. The poet shows a deftness in appropriating biblical expressions and figures. He compares himself to an "Ephod to which is poisonous Hoshen clings", to a "Samson whose strength is drained by enemies who are Delilahs", to a "Mount Ebal" whose foes are as prosperous as "Mount Zion".

There are, however, some pretty thoughts and figures which stamp them at once poetical. When the poet speaks of the "Aspen leaf" (עֵלֶף נִיגַף) or "the moving creatures of the field, asleep in the lap of a virgin" בְּנֵי שָׂדֵי אֲשֶׁר יִתְחַכְּכוּ לֹא לְהִרְדֵּמוֹ בְּחֵיק עֲלִיזָה בְּתוּלָה or when he likens "time to a fire, events the fuel, and himself the burnt offering". זֶמְנִי אֶסְבִּי אֵשׁ וְעִקְרִי אֶעֱצֹם וְאֵנִי הַשֵּׁה לְעוֹלָה

or again, when he reflects "the life of man is merely loaned by heav'n", and his own lot in a "world for myriads spacious, yet for one no land."

אֲבוֹי עוֹלָם רָחֵב הֵיכַל וְתִבְיָה לְרִבְבֵּי עַם וְנַפְשִׁי לֹא תִבְיָה

In these he shows himself a poet of quality.

The language of this, as in the previous poem, is biblical. He employs some philosophic expressions for the sake of effect, to express the feeling that he is the effect of primal sorrow.

וְנַפְשִׁי תִבְיָה אֲנִי כְּעֵלָה קָדוּכָה וְאֲנִי לֹא בְּעֵינֶיךָ

The poem consists of fifty-nine lines, six feet to a line. Each foot contains a Yathed and two Tenuoth, except the third and sixth which have, each, a Yathed and one Tenuoth.

These poems call forth the sympathy of the Sar who urges him to continue writing verse which will serve the double purpose of comfort to himself and exposing the sins of his people<sup>1</sup>.

Full of new courage, the poet, in rime-prose, contrasts his enemies' vices with his own virtues. While they are busy hoarding wealth, he burns midnight oil at his studies<sup>2</sup>. He consoles himself, his foes will die and leave nought behind them, but as for himself, "If I die, my books will not"<sup>3</sup>. He finds additional comfort in the fact that his enemies have worthless wives while his own wife<sup>4</sup> is a model of virtue and beauty,

אשתי ראיה על גביר בן עתה

He thinks of her as a light in his home, Her absence darkens it.

תנגד בתוך אהל ונהג אור רבים ותרעל  
והס לך

When she unveils her face, my tent glows bright.  
If she it shrouds, the day sinks deep its light.

He also attributes his growth in learning and power to her influence.

- 1- Mach. I, 8. יבזה תמצא לך נחמה  
-2- Mach. I, 10. I spend more on oil than they on wine and clothes.  
-3- Mach. I, 9, (9th line from bottom)  
-4- Mach. p. 11 f. וזאמרה בזכות איונה נאיה      גמל יסמך חסדו  
Immanuel married the daughter of Rabbi Samuel, president of the Jewish Community of Rome, who was the victim of a persecution - (Mach. XXI, 173). (I wish to correct Chotzner's error who says, Rabbi Samuel was murdered by highway robbers - Chotzner "Hebr.H." p.84). He frequently praises his wife by whom he had a son whose untimely death, he bewails in two dirges - p. 174. The one beginning with the words      משה קדושי וישב אגפשי etc.



There are other poems of reflection which reflect a deep earnestness. Take, for example, the lines<sup>1</sup>:

The shadows of my youth ascend on high,  
O, that the prophet stayed my shadowed sky.  
When King Hez'kiah wept beside his bier,  
Isaiah spoke, "O King dispel thy fear!"  
My eyes of love are dim and dwell in gloom,  
I see no more, must share Zedkiah's doom.  
Deprived of all, I mourn in silent grief. - - -

These lines echo one of life's deep sentiments, and are permeated with seriousness. But they needs must be turned into the frivolous, for the poet is embittered because his love is spurned<sup>2</sup>:

Let all gazelles be hang'd, for birds a prey.  
I'll spread no sacks, like Rizpah, where they lay.  
How can I now rejoice with ladies fair,  
Sunk deep in mire of age, while none doth care.

There are other lines of a serious nature which hold out a word of counsel<sup>3</sup>:

O youth, regard the day of sad old age  
Which thou wilt flee as bird from lonely cage.  
Therefore, my lad, now rise before the old  
Reverse the aged, this our sages told.

- 
- 1- Mach. IV, 30. These verses argue against the thought, Immanuel retained the fires of youth in his old age.
  - 2- Mach. IV, 30.
  - 3- Mach. IV, 28.



POEMS OF MORALS AND RELIGION.

Our poet is, indeed, not lacking in verses of reverence, which at times reveal a high quality. The following sonnet<sup>1</sup> contains a pretty and earnest thought, which has genuine, moral fervor:

When men resolve to journey cross the sea,  
They fill their troves with wealth and precious goods,  
Think well of future days and store up foods,  
Then spread ship's wings and speed o'er ocean free.  
But woe is me, my grave I now espy,  
My soul must ever roam without sweet rest,  
'Mongst fools' and sinners' souls, a mournful guest,  
For I have wealth, nor food nor hope on high.  
O where's my wealth, and where my precious foods,  
Which I have stored for death's still ferry's sail?  
O where's God's Jew'l and where his gracious goods,  
And my Lord's Law, which lifted me when frail?  
Ah, where those deeds of love, clear light in woods,  
Were these now bright, then I should never fail.

The thought of the unreadiness of the soul for its journey, contrasted with the ship that is prepared to set sail across the sea, on a long journey, certain however of a safe arrival at its destination, is a noble one. Therein we see an exalted mood in which the poet occasionally finds himself. There are other verses which show the poet's mind was centered upon more than the merely commonplace in life. This is mirrored in the following lines:<sup>2</sup>

Alas! how I do fear for my soul's fate  
When I am call'd to give account to God.  
Alas! my dear, why heed not 'morrow well  
And know thy way and where thou mayest rest.  
On day of judgment, how canst thou rebel?  
Be humbled then my soul and seek the best,  
Be purg'd from sin, let sorrow be thy test.

That the poet is capable of expressing a high moral strain, which, at the same time, reveals an earnest trait in him, may be seen from his comparison of the treatment given God and a King of flesh and blood by man. Men hasten eagerly to read the contents of a mortal king's letter. Ought we not, therefore, be ashamed that we do not seek to learn the excellent precepts which God gave to the prophets? Thus the poet says:

-1- Mach. IV, p. 34.

The sonnet consists of fourteen lines and three feet to a line, two Tenuoth and the Yathed in the first and second feet, and three Tenuoth in the third.

-2- Mach. IV, 35.

I have translated a portion of the sonnet which is written in the same metre as above.

My organs are commanded to serve me,  
And I am ordered to obey my God.  
But lo! my living God, I do not serve.  
If thus my organs would act false, I'd die.  
Yet I despise reproof, not they, but I.

There are some excellent sentiments just as serious and lofty as these.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most highly interesting and exalting of all Immanuel's poems is his imitation of Gabirol's poem of two hundred lines which he had dedicated to a friend. Immanuel dedicates his poem to a younger contemporary who is supposed to have strayed away from the path of right. The poet strives to point out to the young man the need for returning to a moral life. There is all the greater need for this since this youth possesses singular powers. Immanuel is profuse in his praises of his younger colleague.<sup>2</sup>

He addresses him:

Thou art the father of all moral life,  
The crown of wisdom, and all love full rife.  
'Ere thou wast born all sacred truth was bare;  
Then God sent thee, thus truth grew strong and fair.

Again he praises highly the intellectual endowments and qualities of character of this young poet, in comparison with whom the biblical heroes Gideon, Jepthah and Joshua are mere weaklings. He begins this poem with an apology for addressing this exhortation. These lines are really remarkable, for they reflect sincere modesty so seldom found in other of Immanuel's poems:

For who am I, and who my house, O friend  
What I write verse; my thought's too poor to spend.  
.....  
My songs now come to speak soft words of truth,  
Not to rebuke, naught save remind, in sooth.  
My verse shall first reprove my sinful soul,  
Which madeth impure love its moral goal.

- 
- 1- Mach. IV, 36. וְיִשְׁרָאֵל מְעֻלָּוֹתָיו בְּכֹחַ כְּחֵינוּ אֵלֶיךָ בִּידֵינוּ נִרְחִיקָה  
וְאֵם יִמְתֵּךְ בְּיָמֵינוּ זָרוּעַ בְּיָדְךָ חֵינֵנוּ נִסְמְעָה וְיָיִשׁ  
הַבּוֹגְדִים לְאַצְהָרִים
- 2- Mach. VII, 57. Immanuel states his poem is an imitation of Gabirol's. He dedicates it to a younger poet. Immanuel says he is older than this young poet's father: וְאֲנִי כְּבִיר לְאַצְרֵי כִּסְיִים

The poet thereupon relates the vehemence of the passions of his youth, and repents of it.

Now sad of heart I weep at folly past,  
Who faithless love in sacred verse have cast.

He exhorts his friend to keep from similar wrong lest society point it's finger of scorn at them, and attribute these shortcomings to their studies of Greek science and culture of which, we have seen, Immanuel is so ardent a champion. Men will say:

The two transgress our sacred Jewish law;  
The two are blind, no light reveals the flaw.  
The two have search'd the science of old grace,  
Have lopp'd a branch, destroy'd religious peace.

Again he bids his friend desist from writing songs of passion which result in evil, and arouse so much antagonism.

וְאַתָּה יְהוֹנָתָן בְּנֵי אֱמִי  
לֹא תִּשְׁכַּח לִי אֶת הַשִּׁיר

Rather let his words reflect piety, and serenity.

But sing of gracious things, sweet words of love,  
My soul shall rest, a light 'twixt stars above.  
Shall we e'er reach the sphere of piety  
By drink or food or song of vanity?  
Or dost thou hope by love of lady fair  
To see thy God who made these debonair?  
Doth God delight in passion, love of clay?  
Will love e'er quench the flames on judgment day?

A note of piety and asceticism is sounded in these words. They tell of an earnestness founded upon life's experiences. The thought of a future day to remind one of his responsibilities, gives us an insight into our poet's spiritual nature. His description of hell's torture awaiting the sinful soul of God's fatal sword, the burning wrath of angels, messengers upon whose shoulders sinners are borne to the land of perdition - the description of these is influenced by the church theology of the day, and lend emphasis to the feeling. The poet presents an additional argument for leading a moral life.

Bethink thee, friend, of countless noble men  
Whose hope was cut by sudden death in glen.  
We see no better reason, then, to hope  
For longer life, we who in darkness grope.

Nay, there is something more than mere prudence; there is absolute necessity for obeying God's commandments. The philosophic argument of

the immutability of natural law is employed.

Behold the sphere and wondrous stars, thou Grace!  
Have they dar'd move their fixed goal or place?  
But lo! we dare remove their fixed goal,  
Transgress both light and heavy law of soul.

The poet continues we neglect not only to practice the law, but even its study. We cultivate habits of trade to the exclusion of interest in the mighty secrets of prophet and sage. Once more, Immanuel shows a high appreciation for religion and the Torah.

We load our ships and ride o'er stormy seas,  
Nor heed time's icy cold or winds that freeze.  
But wisdom, fear of God, we do not store;  
The need for our great journey we ignore.

He appeals to his friend as one who, on account of his unusual talents, is expected to study God's law.

וְהוּא יְצִירָהּ בְּהָרַת עֵץ הַחַיִּים  
בְּאֵי קִרְבָּהּ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לִּי בְּאֵרֶה לְבָרִי אֵם

He credits him with singular virtue, calling him "crown of wisdom", "Prince of his generation", "Distinguished one among men", "Beauty of the Law", and "Father of Knowledge". Such praise of others would not lead one to think Immanuel was really conceited. The poet, of course, is conscious of his superior qualifications as contrasted with those of the unlearned for whom he has nothing but contempt. But it would seem here, at least, the contrast deplores ignorance rather than exalts his own virtues. The poet beseeches his friend to uproot ignorance,

Make keen the sword of pride against all fools.

and together with himself strive for spiritual excellence which is the divine prerogative of man. All creatures except him lack this privilege.

Behold the creatures of the earth and air,  
Behold the camels who great loads must bear.

.....  
But man alone is privileged by a soul  
So clean and pure, the living God its goal.  
To honor Him with our whole heart and might,  
To search the secrets of his works so right.

This poem concludes with an exhortation to man to fulfill his obligations of study of wisdom, and he will attain to prophecy, and spiritual reward according to his ability - a notion perhaps borrowed from Gabirol.



PHILOSOPHIC AND LITURGICAL POEMS.

Immanuel's philosophic observations are based on Maimuni's system<sup>1</sup>.

Upon this Master he bestows singular praise: —

נר חובס כל מחשך

The Machbaroth contain but few scattered fragments of a philosophic character. These, however, are sufficient to show that Immanuel was not only acquainted with Jewish philosophy, but also with the scholastic controversey, between realism and nominalism, of the day<sup>2</sup>. This is learned from his attitude toward Plato whom he assigns a place in hell<sup>3</sup>.

— שם אפלטון ראש לחכמים יצא כי אמר  
כי ליחשים ולחכמים יש חוץ לשכל בדיאיות  
וחשב דבריו נביאות

The poet finds fault with the objection<sup>4</sup> idealism, or scholastic realism of Plato, which takes for granted the real and independent existence of ideas outside the mind of man. Immanuel, like his younger contemporary, William of Ockam (1280-1349) discovered heresy in this doctrine of realism. Ockam, it will be remembered, felt that scholasticism has waxed too powerful, and for this reason he advanced his doctrine of nominalism or terminism to strengthen the supernatural character of dogma. This appears to be the position of Immanuel. Another question in full force at that day was that of the primacy of the will or the intellect. It is likely Immanuel knows of this discussion when he defines the intellect as divine, and containing חכמה ודעת<sup>4</sup>. The fact that he had a knowledge of Maimuni does not preclude a knowledge of the general philosophy of his day, and especially of this particular question which was much discussed in the literature of that time.

Immanuel believes in God,

אשר מלך כל כי המלכים

in the doctrine of creato - ex- nihilo,

הנמצא יסוד עולם איש מאין

in Providence;

הנצח יחד לבס החבין גל כל מעשיהם

in the divine origin of the Soul.

עין לא נפקה עינה לחקות כי  
הגלגלים עשה לנו את הנפש האמת

-1- Mach. XI, 85.

ספרי החכם רבינו משה בן חיים ודברקס עלי באשר ידבק  
על חתם איש הדבור

-2- Graetz, VII, 270.

-3- Mach. XXVIII, 221. That Jews were interested in this controversy is not known from any other source save this.

-4- Mach. IV, 36.

Elsewhere (p. 35) he speaks of the soul's pre-existence which points to platonic influence. The soul says:

אני עוד שם ולא נבאיתי

He entertains the doctrine of Dualism, and its consequent belief in Reward and Punishment. This latter idea he embodies in these verses:

My harden'd spirit, art thou not asham'd?  
For all my passions heed the word of God.  
Yet thou rebellest, know'st no law divine,  
O what wilt thou then do, who art ill-fam'd,  
When hell's fierce fires rage and leash with rod,  
When thou wilt weep, in deep hell tortures pine?

Of Punishment, he again remarks,

אמנם העונש אשר תהיה לנפש המקרצת לא תהיה  
יזע אדום. (כי סוד האשפט) לא נגלה בן קסורו  
כל איש מוצאות מרב יתיגש

And of Reward:

וְנִרְכַּב מִדְּרָכֹת הַמַּעֲשִׂיט מִדִּבְרֵי  
וְאֵל מִדִּבְרֵי הַמַּעֲשִׂה נִגִּיעַ

He still labors under the crude conception of the life hereafter, but he does believe in the separate existence of the soul which he terms

נבש המן, צרת

The 'soul's essence is intellect. He elsewhere expresses a similar high view of wisdom, in a sharp clear phrase. P 121.

אין טוב פ' בדעת לחשיון אכן טוב  
לחשיון בדעת

It is not a mark of wisdom to love, but it is good  
to love wisdom.

The poet devotes a few lines to a discussion of space.

התקין חשב או חרגש מן השקר להיות חשב  
כי חשבש או השיעור או הפחות מלנו יספ  
אם הוא חרגש אך הגשם לבנים בגשם יודג

The question of Theodocy is frequently touched upon by Immanuel, as, for example<sup>1</sup> אֵל מַשְׁפִּיחַ הַרוּחַ

כ, תי"ז תשנ"ח

He answers:

בן ברוך ואלו ש  
ביתא ואלו ש

-1- Mach. VII, 51. - IV, 36

-2- The antinomies are: Space is either intellectually grasped or sensibly perceived. The first is impossible because its limit cannot be grasped; the second is also impossible because how can one thing exist within another?

[illegible]

P.144 A REFERENCE TO PLATO:

אשרו כי נמצא כתוב על חותם החכם  
אשרו כי הלכה עם ההרגל אשר על כל  
דבר אשרו



LITURGICAL POEMS - "YIGDAL".

Of great interest is Immanuel's poem on the Thirteen Articles of Creed. We need no longer dispute that criticism which holds Immanuel, because of his frivolous nature, could not have composed a poem of this character. Our discussion of his moral and philosophic teachings is sufficient to show such a view unfounded.

But that our Poet is not only the author of the longer Yigdal (Mach. IV. 37), but also of the poem in its shorter form as it appears in our liturgy is now, I think, certain. The authorship of the shorter poem has been attributed to David b. Jehuda Dayan<sup>1</sup>, who, says Zunz, uses expressions found in a similar poem of Immanuel. Mr. Hirschfeld contends the poem of Jehudah borrows so freely from Immanuel as to have laid him open to the charge of wholesale plagiarism<sup>2</sup>. Therefore Immanuel, and not Dayan is the author of the liturgical poem. This contention gains further plausibility from the fact that the author's name is interwoven in both the longer and shorter poems.

Mach. IV, 37, line 12 reads:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

Prayer book "Yigdal" line 8 reads:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

I wish to add, this supposition is strengthened by the fact that the author in the shorter poem was compelled to discard the syllable אל in the name יְהוָה, for its presence would interfere with the exact measure of the preceding verse.

But so far nothing has been said concerning the originality of Immanuel's longer poem. It might be argued Immanuel, who imitated other poets so freely, might well have done so in this. I wish, therefore, to submit proof that this longer Yigdal was original with Immanuel. This I have inferred from a comparison of the poem with its sources - Maimuni's "Perck Melek" and the chapter "Hilchoth Yesod Matorah" of the "Sefer Hamada." It will be observed, Immanuel adapts expressions now from the one, and now from the other source to suit his poetic needs. But more than this, the poet takes over and uses whole phrases as they stand in the original.

<sup>1</sup>- Zunz, "Lit der S.P.", p. 507.

<sup>2</sup>- Hirschfeld, "J.Q.R." May 1915, p. 529.

הוא עלת פציאות הנמצאים פ פ' חלק. היסוד הרא	437 1.19	הוא עלת פציאות כל יסודות	
ואלו יעלה על הלכ העדר פציא נתבשל פציאות כל הנמצאים ibid.	438 1.23	נתבשל פציאות כל אשר נמצא אם נחשב פ' יעלה על לב אנוש פסול זה הפציאות בתבונתו	
אלה זה אחר הוא... שאין כיוון אחר פן האחרים הנמצאים בעולם ולא אחר כגוף שהוא נחלק למח ולקצוות	26 28	אחר ויחודו פאר נעלם יחד ולא כגוף אשר נחלק הוא נחלקים בחלקות	
ספר היסוד הקצות יהיה פל			
אין גוף ולא כח כגוף פ' חלק יסוד השלישי	29	לא גוף ולא כח פתוך הגוף	
הוא קדמון בהחלט, וכל נמצא זון בלת קדמון בערכו אליו הרביעי	30 32	קדמון ואין נמצא כקדמות ראשון ואין ראשית לראשית לא נמצאה פצוי נשם קדמון אם נערכו לקדמותו	
כל הנביאים על ידי פלאך... פשה רבינו לא על ידי פלאך שנאמר פה אל פה אומר בן... ונא ותפונה ה' יבינו הלכות יסודות פ' שביעי	44 45	אם יהיה נביא תהי על יד פלאך ואפצא נבואת אכן נבואת הפחוקק פה אל פה ופביש את תפונתו	
איזה נביא שהיה לא דבר לו הש אלא על ידי אמצעי היסוד השביעי			
זהכל תורת ה' תפיסה... אפס היסוד השביעי	46	תורת אמת היתה נמו פיו	
... תורת פשה זאת פועתקת פאת הבורא הש"י היסוד התשיעי	48	לא יחליף אל דת ואפירתו	
יסודת הפשיח והוא להאמין ולא שיכוא... אם יתפסה חכה לו	50	פחכי קץ גאולת	
ופשה יבוא אליו הצבור ביום זה עומד (בין שני הכרובים) היסודות התשיעי (ואפס... מעמידים אותו על חזקת) הלכות י"ז	49	אכן נבואת האמן בית עליו והוא נצב בחזקת	
כי כל הנביאים לא תגיה עליהם ות הנבואה נרצונה אלא כרצון הש"י... ופשה רבינו ע"ה בכל עת שירצה	49	כל הנביאים נבאים הסה כרצון אלהים הי נרצנתו אכן נביאת הפחוקק היא תפיר בכל עתים וכרצונו	

Immanuel's interest in these higher realms of thought enforces our view with respect to the noble and moral phase of his character.

Besides the above poem, Immanuel's prayers must be mentioned. There are upwards of fifteen prayers in the Machbaroth. They are written with deep religion. The prayer is a fine example.

o'ss x

✓ 2

P O E M S O N W O M A N , P A S S I O N A N D L O V E .

The poems of Immanuel on Woman, Passion and Love, on the whole, spring from the other, the humorous side of his nature. But we more than discern in some of these poems an earnest attempt to expose the artificialities, follies and frivolous habits of the fair sex. While, in general, he keeps on laughing at them, careless and indifferent to the language he uses to express his feeling, yet in some of these poems, a vein of satire runs thru the evident humor. That this is true is confirmed by his discussion on unfaithful wives<sup>1</sup>. These he divides into the following classes: (1) those who affect chastity in the eyes of lords but seek to victimize common and vulgar men into satisfying their lusts.

וְנִצְבֹנָה בְּאֲנָשִׁים רִיקִים וּפְחוּזִים

(2) Those haughty and stiff necked who look with disdain upon any save men of the highest rank.

נָא תַעֲבֹד יְרֵךְ לִבִּי חֹבֵב חַיִּין מִשָּׁה

(3) Those fickle ones who, one moment show favor to their lord, and the very next moment, displeasure and indifference.

בָּעֵם תִּרְחֹק בָּעֵם תִּקְרֹב  
בָּעֵם לִפְנֵיהֶם וּבָעֵם לְאַחֲרֵם

(4) Those who, brought low by poverty, cast longing glances on rich men in preference to seeking satisfaction in ways of wisdom.

יִבְיָאוּ הַדְּעִית לְהִנִּיחַ הַחֲכָמָה ..  
וְצִינֵיהֶם אֶל הַיָּן תִּשְׁעִינָה ..

(5) Finally, those whose lascivious and lustful nature is hereditary.

The poet has one of these women say:

שָׂכַחַו אֲשֶׁר אֲפִי לִפְנֵי עֹבֵר תְּהִי מִנְּעָה  
הִכִּי שָׁב לִקְיוֹת אִם בִּי מִבֶּעַ

The poet here exposes the humor of the situation of the woman who walks around dissatisfied but will not air her complaint.

הֵייתִי עֹסֶה זֶה שָׁנָה וְלֹא לִקְרֹחַ יְרֵךְ בָּעֵם אֶתְּ בִּשְׁנָה

That the poet satirises this situation is at once evident when in reply to the Sar who suspects all women of this weakness, he says:

דַּע אֲדוֹנִי כִּי עַל הָרֹב אֶתְּ הַדָּבָר

Still in another merciless satire, he ridicules the vices of woman. He entertains the profoundest contempt for woman in general, and for the

homely, in particular. Woman is the source of man's trouble.

Who gains a woman gains disgrace and shame.  
Such shame will ne'er be wash'd from his fair name.  
A virgin she appears, is harlot low,  
Within her wings the bloods of poor men flow.  
Nor pains, nor griefs will she her father spare,  
Who fears her fall by princes strong and fair.

He minces no words when he accuses the woman of illicit love matches, bringing pain and agony to her father who stands aghast at the image of her downfall. If perchance, she marries but bears no child, she shrieks wildly at her disappointment, and resorts to strange magical practices such as:

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּב וְלֹא יִשְׁכָּם  
וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכָּם וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּב

If a woman weds,

And is she wed, for mirrors will she crave,  
For corsets, linens, rings and pearls loud rave.

The poet refers to the daughters whose indulgence in luxury is a poor example for others. The poet's description of woman's paraphernalia is borrowed from Is. III.

Her nagging importunities for fine dress, jewelry and ornaments justify the observation of the sages:

The cause of want is woman's mad desires,  
Tool of Samael, lord of devil-sires.  
By her are princes robb'd, by her made poor  
By her fair lords are pal'd and thinn'd, be sure.

The poet now enumerates the sufferings - ordeals of fire and stone, and many others, men have experienced thru the wiles of woman. The poet proves his point by referring to history. The very first woman, Eve, caused the downfall of Adam, and the ruin of the earth, so that it produced thorns and thistles for the ever increasing hardships of man. The poet asks, "were not numberless men sacrificed because of Kosbi-bas Zur, and who occasioned the troubles of idolatry in the days of Solomon? - none but woman." Search the records of history and you will find no more than eighty women of importance.

The poet, now, has worked up to a climax and raises a battle-cry of war against woman. It is grotesquely ridiculous to observe how our Hero (the author) is filled with sublime indignation, and calls forth in dramatic tones for a "charge of a heavy brigade".



Bowmen who are right of hand,  
Bowmen who are left of hand,  
Don shining armor!

Quick shoot your keen darts of hate,  
Nor let your just wrath abate,  
Slaughter all women!

Hurl them from sharp rocks above;  
Slay mother with child, her love;  
Strike the rebellious!

Once again the poet enumerate their sins of luxury and licentiousness. The poet addresses himself to woman in prophetic strain

and declares his condemnation of them does not include his beautiful and virtuous wife.

My love's a child of lords' and princes' sires,  
Her neck pur white, her eyes like does afire,  
While glist'ning teeth, a mouth so sweet and fair,  
With rosy lips and lovely voice so rare.  
Her many virtues, who can these relate?  
With her all graces dwell, all florious fate.

This he follows by a few words of a personal character; and then the poem closes with an anti-climax:

An ugly face is woman's only guard.

This poem mirrors faithfully the author's humorous and satirical nature.

#### PROVENÇAL AND PLATONIC LOVE.

PROVENÇAL AND PLATONIC LOVE.

The poet makes much of both Provençal and Platonic love. He adopts the Provençal model<sup>1</sup> wherein the humble lover pours forth his plaint to a lady who is a cold and lifeless abstraction of the highest beauty and virtue. She disdains or is indifferent to her lover's attentions. He grieves at her hardness of heart while he extols her many noble qualities. This was the theme of the poets of the Provence and their many Italian imitators, among them, Immanuel. An example of this is found in his rime-prose description of an ideal lady.

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-1- F. I. Miller, "Studies in the Poetry of Italy", p. 185.



Well has it been said, she has reason, and by spirit alone is led - pure of mind and fair of face - whom none did e'er abase - beautiful and fair to the eye - above all women in morals high - as pretty as the moon and as bright as the sun - skillful in verse and deft in its run - none can take her place nor can silver be her price - she is far from passion or kindred vice - loaths all sensuous sons of Eliyaal - she hath never bent to a Baal (husband) - in wisdom she has reached the highest in glory - she is the crown of verse, the mistress of story - all princes have fought for her hand - she yields not to temptation of land.<sup>1</sup>

This description by the Sar fires a desire in the poet to win her. He contends he will write verse which must win her; like sharp lightning it will break her heart, and bring her down from heaven to earth. His power to do this, he expresses in the verse:

I hold the key to new and wondrous song,  
Not yet e'er heard by men nor spoke by tongue.  
Had Korah's sons then sung my verses well,  
They ne'er would fall within the gap of hell.  
Had Asaf or great Haman with us dwelt,  
Before my songs in fear they would have knelt.

Immanuel has no doubt of his superiority to the great psalmists of old<sup>2</sup>.

The poet thereupon writes three epistles. The first two fail of any effect. The third wins her. She renounces her vows, and craves his love. The Sar, disappointed at the conduct of this lady who is his sister, demands that Immanuel give her up. Without the least compunction, the poet addresses a scurrilous letter to her in which he denounces her weakness in breaking the church vow. Broken hearted the lady dies, and the poet goes into voluntary exile for a long period.

Before we discuss this plot in detail, we must observe the story seems to be a satire directed against the so-called Platonic love, and the celibacy sanctioned by the medieval church. Immanuel wishes to show the impossibility and unnaturalness of such a state - impossible, the poet shows this to be by having the lady yield and speak resentfully of her former cold life, unnatural, by relating the lady's death because her love was spurned. It is only an apparent inconsistency that that the Poet mourns her death and goes into exile. It is readily ex-

-1- Mach. III, 18.

-2- He confuses the Bnai Korah who wrote Psalms with the Korah who in the days of Moses was punished so severely.

explained by the remorse of conscience the poet experiences in being an instrument of her death. Immanuel, by condemning celibacy, shows himself quite modern.

This plot, we have said, opens with a glowing account of the lady and her high virtues. The Sar informs the poet an epistle will reach her at the church.

הנה יוצאת יום יום ועולה על בית  
המדרגה

We are here reminded of two striking similar incidents in the contemporaneous literature of Immanuel's day. In the "Vita Nuova", Dante meets Beatrice at church. In his sonnets, Petrarch meets Laura also at church.

#### FIRST EPISTLE AND THE LADY'S RESPONSE.

In this first epistle to the lady, the poet's appeal is wholly sensuous in tone.

ואם נמצא בשני שדיך אם לא ילני ביניהם דודך  
ואם לחסדקי יריכך כמו האלים אם לא תתנו שם סנוף לצבאים

He pleads he will not rest till his anxiety is quieted, and signs the letter with the words<sup>1</sup>,

"One who will not remove the sceptre of his passion  
until his wishes shall have been realized".

The lady responds she will adhere firmly to the ideals of chastity and wisdom. (This is the Platonic element) She writes:

שמים עין התגאה ועין השכל יפקח

"The eye of passion is closed, only the eye of mind is open."

and again

קצתי במחשדי הזמן ואישועת הנפש קויתי  
"I loath the pleasures of time, and hope only for the  
salvation of my soul."

This last verse expresses the widespread medieval conviction that God is best pleased with those who renounce this life, for the life hereafter.

-1- The poet composes a sonnet in honor of the lady. This is the first sonnet in Hebrew literature. Immanuel adopts the scheme introduced by his older contemporary Fra Arezzo. The form scheme is two quatrains and the sextette. In each quatrain, the first and fourth, second and third lines rime. In the sextette, the first and third, second and fourth, third and sixth lines rime. The scheme in Hebrew is twelve half-lines, three feet to a half-line.

1	2	3	1	2	3
2 Tenuoth	Yathed	Yathed	2 Tenuoth	Yathed	Yathed
	2 Tenuoth	2 Tenuoth		2 Tenuoth	3 Tenuoth

SECOND EPISTLE AND THE LADY'S RESPONSE.

Undaunted by this refusal, the poet determines to send a second epistle:

My heart sinks low in fear, my fair gazelle,  
Within my soul love's torrents rage and swell.  
Have mercy on my soul, thou maid of grace,  
Nor let men say, "he's slain by woman's face".

The argument is similar in character to the first. The appeal is sensuous, but is directed with greater passion.

וקול דמי החושקים יוצאים מן האדמה

The voice of thy lovers' bloods cry from the earth.<sup>1</sup>

If the lady will not hearken to their sighs, who will do so. The second epistle concludes with a rather sound psychological observation.

יש לי תקווה כי זה הק כל יעלה ויעלה בביתך תוכחת  
סגולה ותוכן רצוף אהבה וחמלה

I still have hope, for this is the habit of all ladies; they rebuke openly, but inwardly they are full of love and pity....This is the custom: to refuse at first. By the covenant, I swear, wert thou to yield thy love at once, I should not rejoice so much as I now hope to.

The lover composes a second sonnet of some really good verse. Here are a few lines:

How wise had stars and hosts of heaven seem'd,  
If by her skill their forms with glory beam'd?  
If her fair hand had moulded stars anew,  
'Fore us they'd rise in love and honor true.

The lady wrought up by his persistency resolves to rebuke him most severely. She reproaches him for trying to seduce her from ways of purity and virtue to unclean paths.

מסתווה להסיר הקיים בכלה, והנכבד  
בנקלה... והטוב ברע... והנקי בטמא

She upbraids these lovers who would take her from paths of abiding virtue to ephemeral pleasures - to exchange the noble for the ignoble, the wise for the foolish, the clean for the contaminated! Do not think, sir, all women are alike.

וזאת כל העצמות בגזירה שוה, המצאה כזה  
כי המצא יש בין העצמות, ולא כנשים המצויות  
העצמות

Because I loath the love of flighty son,  
They cry, I yield my love to none.  
But who can make me think time's so unkind,  
To render me a prey to oxen blind.

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-1- This shows clearly Immanuel's own experiences are not referred to.

### THIRD EPISTLE AND THE LADY'S CONSENT.

Unperturbed by this peremptory refusal, the poet resolves upon a third epistle declaring she ought not be so cruel to withhold herself in this fashion.

ויבחר קירות לבך לעיר סתם

He concludes he will not leave her, though he will have to break doors of copper.

דלתות נחושה אשכך  
כי פי ה דבר

This is followed by a poem highly interesting for its form (twelve lines, eight feet, a Yathed and a Tenuoh in each foot). The last two words of each line are the same and usually are puns.

בכו נא עיני לבי ה צדיק וצל כל שפלים תלו נא תלוי  
ואסתר צדיק צדיק תחמם נצורה אשר כנונה לבנה  
צדיקה נחמד וסמך ונעמה חם נא גלדי פני נא פני  
Come then my songs and seek my lady's home,  
Complain aloud on all high hills now roam.  
Then sing, "my lovely, pretty, perfect love,  
Thou art so white, so pure as moon above.  
How long wilt thou yet flee, and whence thy grace?  
O lovely pearl, my heart shall give thee place;  
O dwell beneath my shadow of sweet love,  
And don the robe of praise, my gentle dove".

These lines are characterized by a tenderness of feeling which reveals true lyric quality.

These verses at last overcome the lady who renounces her vows, and finds fault with those (among whom she dwelt for twenty years) who are impervious to the blessed influences of love. She invites the Poet to love her and yields herself completely unto his power.

כטוב וכישר בעיניך לעשות בי עשה וחיתה נמשך בגלליך

The lover is so elated and exalted over his victory, divinely given ( "והצלח לוח" ) he hastens to inform the Sar.

The Sar is enraged at the news. He had merely wished to test his sister when he counselled the poet to write her. He demands the lover immediately repudiate her advances. This the poet does in an insulting letter, saying

פשמתי סעיל הרוחות ולבשתי בגדי חשק...  
ואיה עמתי הישנות העלינה

Where is they praise of the eternal essence.

These words break the lady's heart, and she dies. Her lover smitten in conscience composes an elegy, and goes into voluntary exile for a period of ten years.



The poem we have discussed is typical of Immanuel's love poems. There is nothing shockingly sensuous in it. There are several phrases, however, which might convey this feeling. But we pass over these particular instances with the remark Immanuel, here, merely imitated his Italian contemporaries.

#### SENSUOUS POEMS.

Our poet, indeed, wrote verses which rival those of his younger contemporary Boccaccio, if not in form, at least in spirit. The following lines<sup>1</sup> are an illustration:

How great my joy! at last the maid of grace,  
Hath fix'd the day, for me and her the place,  
Hath promis'd honey from her forest fair,  
My heart high trembles for this day so rare.  
My foot shall rest upon her floor of love,  
Can then my foot e'er stumble or ill prove?  
Sweet honey of her love is my delight,  
I care not though hot wrath now strike with might.  
She is my joy, the portion of my life,  
My hope, my joy, my tent of joy full rife.  
I mock at pain, for from her breasts I fill  
My heart, and joy, sweet rest, new strength instill.

These verses while they possess no intrinsic merit, show Immanuel's indifference to convention which itself became a convention.

Some other poems treat of love which strike a romantic chord in all its flowery style and expression. In reply to the Sar's question whether he had some influence over gazelles, in his youth, the poet replies,<sup>2</sup> to be sure, he was complete master of them. The poet relates once he passed a garden where he beheld a wondrous beauty whom God must have formed during his leisure. Her birth was greeted by the resounding song of hills. And today the lights of heaven grow dark before the brilliance of her splendor. As soon as the gazelle saw him, she was smitten, and proposed he could become related to her by a proper choice. She would divide her body into two halves - the upper and lower, placing a girdle between them. Because he showed propriety in choosing the upper, she exclaims:

I swear, I shall place the girdle beneath my feet.

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-1- Mach. III, 25.

-2- Mach. IV, 32.

The power of the lover in his youth is described by lines with a fine swing, whose metre is reproduced in the translation:

Tho she hide in secret places,  
will not I indeed espy her,  
Tho she dwell in farthest sea depths,  
from the sea my hand will take her,  
Tho she soar like bold swift eagle,  
build her nests 'mong stars of glory,  
Tho the heavens gayly greet her,  
then my hand will reach this story.

I will bring her to the earthly,  
on the dust will I swift place her.  
As I wandered on the highway,  
to a garden time did lead me,  
To observe sweet pretty flowers,  
and fair roses in low bow'rs.

There I saw a lovely maiden,  
with fresh incense sweetly laden,  
He who moulded forms and faces,  
hath now made her rule all places,  
The wide world hath seen none like her,  
and her image hath no rival,  
When the honored one was born,  
that day all hills sang loud and joyful.

This poem<sup>1</sup> again is the commonplace theme with its sensual elements, but there is no vulgarity present.

Immanuel was also capable of some fine love pictures. The following is one of his best sonnets<sup>2</sup>:

#### THINE EYES.

"Thine eyes are as bright, O thou sweetest gazelle,  
As the glittering rays of the sun's golden spell,  
And thy face glows as fair in the light of the day,  
As the red blushing sky when the morning is gay.

Thy tresses of gold are as neatly bedight,  
As though they were wrought by enchantment's kind might;  
Thou openest thy lips in a smile or a sigh,  
And thy pearly teeth gleam like the stars in the sky.

Ah, shall I praise the bright charm of thine eyes,  
That moves every heart that win all by surprise?  
For peerless thy charms, and unequalled thy birth,  
Thou art of heaven, all others of earth."

-1- p. 31, line 15 ff. I have found reveal a striking similarity to a poem of Samuel Hanagid entitled "The Stammering Girl" (-Brody, "Sp. H.S." p. 33)

Immanuel -

Samuel -

-2- This is Chotzner's translation given in his essay on Immanuel.



# D I A L O G U E S .

## ON TAMAR, THE BEAUTIFUL AND BERIAH, THE HOMELY.

It is in the dialogues where we find the vulgarity of the poet predominant. The following dialogue between the Sar and the Poet who discuss the respective merits of Tamar, the beautiful and Beriah, the homely, affords a satisfying illustration. The poet and the Sar are hailed by a group of poets in the public square. Two women, beautifully gowned, pass by. The opportunity for a conversation between the poet and the Sar is now found. Tamar, the beautiful, might well have been a window in Noah's Ark which might have let in heaven's light. Beriah, the homely, fills the whole earth with dreadful darkness. Seeing her, men cry out:

אם תחיה זאת תחזור העולם לתורה

In the dialogue which follows, Immanuel agrees to discuss the merits of the beautiful one, while his companion consents to describe the misfortune of the other one. The dialogue has no intrinsic merit, but there are a few good lines. Most of the humor, however, descends to the level of the vulgar and the sensuous.

Immanuel: תמר תשא עיניה השמים ותוציא צדק כססו  
ואל ארץ תביט ותקנין ישיני אדמת עפר

"Tamar lifts her eyes to heaven and its hosts disappear,  
Casts her gaze on earth, the dead quick rear."

Sar: בל'טה תהרג האפאה בעיניה  
ואי ראה אותה השטן ברח סבניה

"Beriah slays the scorpion with her glance,  
If Satan saw her, he would fly her countenance."

The elements of vulgarity to which we have referred are found in these lines:

Sar: בריעה כל דופי יכל הרפה אורגת רפיה  
כפי חקיר וכצואה עוברת

Immanuel: לו היתה תמר בין סלאכי רוס נפשם  
אותה תשאף ולא קבלו עליהם סצות לא תנאף

The humor of the poet is seen here:

7 / בריעה תהתנן איך לא יחזיקוהו היהודים  
 Sar: שמעם בקראם אינה ואיך לא הסליסם השדים  
 לאסובה

At Beriah I wonder why Jews to not hold her up when  
 they read Lamentation,  
 And why demons have not yet agreed on her coronation.

The dialogue concludes with a pretty thought<sup>1</sup> which shows his  
 ability to correlate the devotional with the love elements:

When sun and moon approach my darling dear,  
 They grow more dark and bend in lowly fear,  
 Then praise not sun alone for light of day,  
 For her light too, "Yozer Meoroth" now pray.

#### DIALOGUES "ON MANY THEMES".<sup>2</sup>

This dialogue is preceded by an explanation of its composition.  
 The poet and the Sar were present, on a Purim day, among a company of  
 poets who came from other lands. The poet and his companion were made  
 fun of. Thereupon they determine to reveal their power and skill, and  
 thus show these poets they are empty.

The Sar steps before his audience and challenges any to respond in verse  
 to his own descriptions. By a prearrangement between them the poet  
 rises and volunteers. The first theme they discuss is laziness.

Sar. איזו הדברים שאין להם שיעור הדיקה  
 יהאיון

Poet. ושנת בך על כל דבר עלין

Sar: If the arrival of Messiah depended on my  
 son's waking from his sleep,

Poet: All the Jews would surely perish 'ere  
 Messiah would make his leap.

Sar: My son sleeps in his "pajamas" (כחן הסריסים)  
 till late hours of the morn,

Ref. Poet: And thinks all sons of Israel are  
 surely royal born.

They speak next of drunkenness.

Poet: החדס יצאג והוג יוצא הע"ס

Sar: ואחך שכור סוגר ארצה וראשו כלעז השטית

The theme next discussed is Love and its contrary passion, hate:

Sar: The love of the slothful for sleep is like the  
 hatred of a youth for an old maid.

Poet: The love of man to appear great is as strong  
 as a dungeon prisoner's hate.

-1- Mach. II, 17.

-2- Mach. V, 40-50.

Jealousy is the subject which follows:

Sar: The jealousy of virgin for her in married place,  
Poet: Is like that of the homely for her of pretty face.

And again:

Sar: זנאת עם הארץ אל הרבנים  
Poet: זנאת העקרה לרבת בנים

Woman continues to be a topic. The poet has no restraint when he says: נדיבות פלגית על כל נדיבות עזובה  
כי תתנדב לכל בנפשה ובגופה

This lady's generosity exceeds that of all others,  
For she is generous with her body to all lovers.

The subject shifts to that of parsimony. We have already mentioned the vulgarity of the words.

Poet: בשה הכיילי נתעור  
Sar: כי הוא יפחד לבחוק נקביו מן ירעב

Personal topics, such as ridicule of a neighbor, are taken up.  
Thus the poet says facetiously of his neighbor,

That fellow is as long as the Vav ( ו ) in Vayazatha<sup>1</sup>,  
or the tree of Haman ben Hamdatha - as long as a woman's  
tales, or as days of many ails - as the works of Samuel  
Ibn Tibbon, or the books of Saadya, may he rest in heaven.

The domestic servant comes in for a share of ridicule. The poet states he should kill him, were he not restrained by fear of God. The loquacious element is never wanting.

I hate him so thoroughly - as the rich the poor verily -  
as the drunkard the Nazir (Sober) or the Ishmaelite, the  
Nazir - as the gormand despises thirst, or as soons who both  
Shabbas and New Moon curse.

Woman must again be the theme. Observe the biblical phrase:

מה תשאץ העשן כנבעל בריתה  
שאירה כסותה ועונתה

or once more where the vulgar crops out, לפי תחפוץ היצלה  
לאיש אשר לו צרה, מה תרצה מן האלמנה שוק היסין אלמנה

In addition to these subjects, the author pokes fun at the doctor<sup>2</sup>  
which shows us, after all, human nature then was pretty much the same  
as now. ומה אמרית לרופא אשר פהשת  
הרצחת וגם ירשת

- 1- The ( ו ) of וזאת in "Esther" is a capital.  
-2- A similar incident - XXIV, 146

His opinion of the fastidious is none too flattering.

קיינם בנות המליצת אשר לא ברעו לבד

- B. Ref.

And of those who pray not understanding what they say, he declares humorously. התאמר על הסיוכים כחומר ושבד לבס  
בה עם החומר

These dialogues, it is seen, treat of trivial and domestic themes. There is some humor thruout. The poet evidently intended to ridicule some of the prevalent vices of the day. But we frankly confess we can not understand why the poet should, at times, have selected a vulgar medium. We can merely state the fact, and attribute it to one phase of his nature.

### EXEGETICAL DIALOGUES.

#### 1. Exegetic Parodies.

Before we conclude our discussion of the dialogues, we wish to catch a still further glimpse of Immanuel, the man of wit and humor. One of the best examples of this side of his nature is found, I think, in the twenty-second chapter<sup>1</sup>. The poet enters among a company of jesters, sixty in number. His reputation for wit and effervescent humor had already preceded him. They put him to test by a series of jesting questions השאלות הלהוילל, but not before they distort the meaning of some biblical or talmudic phrase thereby hoping to trip him. The poet acquits himself credibly in each instance. We quote the original, for it is difficult to convey the puns in the vernacular that they would retain their spirit.

The first jester approaches the poet and asks:

כי אבותי אהרן באצוני כי תורה נתנה בסניני  
ואם כיריני זה מאמר והלמיני עשן ואני מאת בנות  
בספר מדוקדק ישן כי הדת נתנה בשושן...  
ואצן ואומר חייך בסניני נתנה התורה והכתוב האומר והדת נתנה  
בשושן הבירה... בלחש סיון שהשושנים נמצאו בו.

Upon the basis of this alone, Davidson declares<sup>2</sup>, "Immanuel should be regarded as the father of exegetic parody, and one of its best masters, although he did not cultivate it sufficiently, but left it in its infancy."

-1- p. 175 - 180.

-2- Davidson "Parody in J. Lit.", p. 19.

A few other examples will give us a fuller insight into the humor and wit of our poet.

The sixteenth jester beseeches the poet to make clear the text,

ראה חיים עם אשה stating "Is it not a thing known to all that every mortal must die?" The poet replies, his friend does not know all the facts. For in that particular case

שט איש היה בחורשה. בעל נפש קדושה וזכאשר ראוהו שכיניו  
בדבר עם הקדשה, אבדו ראה חיים עם האשה

The question of the twenty-sixth jester who distorting the text, asks,

is answered quite cleverly by the poet who says,

צוה התורה זיתים יהיו לך בכל גבולך לצורך אורה  
וזכאכול זיתים חשון עבדך מאב שחזיקים אל העלירה

The thirty-fourth jester offers the interesting question:

נפלאותי... כי הסוכה העיד על נח שהיה איש צדיק תמים ואני שפדתי אחרים  
בקראת חגיגת פורים הסך אלה הן, כי נתחבר עט החן... ואשפיד ולי... והוא אבדו  
ונח באויביהם  
אננס בימי החן לרוב:  
קנתו שכת תורת אבותיו גם חן היום אשר נאצ כנס וחללו וישת חן היין  
וישכר ויתגל כחך אהלו חזל סתקו וטעמו והפך אבס לשנוא עמו

The puzzling idea propounded by the thirty-sixth jester meets with an evasive but opportune reply of the poet וזקתת  
רעה על החלך יחרוש וזקתת  
אשתו חתנו ידוע... שאמר ה' ותלקח אשתו אל החלך אחשוורוש... ואנן ואבדו חין  
כי מי שלקחה נלקח על פי מדותיו ולקח חזר החלך כללים בכל חפצתו. והוא חתן

Another reply of the poet is a gibe at the physician. When he is asked to explain the phrase:

ההודיעני ושמע סבין בלועץ  
ואנן ו' זה דברי אל הרובא לחתוך בסבין האסכרה

he answers it is very clear this means:

His spontaneity of wit is revealed by his quick answer to the fifty-ninth jester:

מה זה שאמר הכתוב יושב בשמים יצחק... והאבות  
היו אבות, יצחק, ויעקב, מדוע יצחק לבדו בעם יעקב... ואנן ואבות.  
אלה שאבדו יעקב גם הם נהרום אבנם משחשים בעמידה  
אבל יצחק לבדו יושב בזכות העקידה

It gives us some satisfaction to observe the quite popular pun of today שאומר ה' חתני אסורים  
שחשבו שגזירותיהם  
שכבר אסור

These questions and answers together with the strain of parody which runs thruout Immanuel's satires stamp Immanuel as a man of clever ability. We ought to refer in this connection, to the eulogy, where a few changes in spelling or by merely separating the words into component



parts, it is turned very easily into a lampoon<sup>1</sup>.

The spirit of lightheartedness and indifference to the serious, one of Immanuel's principal characteristics, finds splendid expressions in the following sonnet:<sup>2</sup>

#### PARADISE AND HELL.

"At times in my spirit I fitfully ponder,  
Where shall I pass after death from this light,  
Do heaven's bright glories await me, I wonder,  
Or Lucifer's kingdom of darkness and night?  
In the one, though 'tis perhaps of ill reputation,  
A crowd of gay damsels will sit by my side.  
But in heaven there's boredom and mental starvation,  
To hoary old men and old crones I'll be tied.  
And so I will shun the abodes of the holy,  
And fly from the sky which is dull, so I deem.  
Let Hell be my dwelling, there is no melancholy,  
Where love reigns for ever and ever supreme."

There remains now to be considered Immanuel's poems on Wine, which, even up to the recent past, have enjoyed popularity with a certain class of readers.<sup>3</sup>

#### POEMS ON WINE.

The best and longest of these poems is the one which begins with the words:<sup>4</sup> וְהָיָה לְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
וְהָיָה לְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ

This song was composed on a Purim day, says the poet, when he and his companion visited a public thoroughfare. There they beheld a rabble making loud noise, and going through disgraceful and vulgar performances. The center of attraction is a reeling drunkard at whose approach the crowds step back. The drunkard now laughs, now cries, now pleads with those about him. He is wholly irresponsible, so that

יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ

The poet presents the point of view of those who "celebrate Purim weekly", and then shows its folly. They say, "water destroyed the people in the Deluge; it was water into which the sons of Egyptian Israelites were ordered thrown by Pharaoh; water engulfed the army of Pharaoh; it

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-1-Mach. XI, 86.

-2- Translated by Chotzner. This and the sonnet "Thine Eyes" are the only poems of Immanuel which have thus far been translated into English.

-3- This is evidenced by the separate edition of this and the Purim songs printed. Cf. list of Immanuel's work.

-4- Mach. XXV, 193-196.



was on water Moses cried שחמו לא החור'ם ; water is the penal-  
 ty for the אשה שטה ; it brought ruin to all but Noah who also  
 faced danger," but if wine be given them there is altogether another  
 story, אם לי יין יתן ביום עינו יתהלך במישורים

*Refer.*

Wine, moreover, declare these fellows, drowns one's sorrow,  
 strengthens his nerves, and rejoices his heart. The only good thing  
 about Paradise is the possibility of being buried in wine.

The poet then takes up his cudgels, and exposes the vulgarity of  
 such notions. The poem concludes with an appeal to remember the ab-  
 stinent Jonadab ben Rechab, and Daniel of the den, for;

מה רב טובם כי נזקרו ביה נזקרו ביה נזקרו ביה

There is another song on the same subject. A few lines will suf-  
 fice to illustrate the spirit of the poem;

יחמו יין עוז אצורתי אצורתי נפש קהזרתי  
 אין בתלואה אם לי תכרע כל דרך עם זה לצדתי  
 כי רבים חמדות אגאל וימי רבים בן הן צורתי  
 זה נוסד' עם רעי כי כל חוצאי יאמר אך צורתי

These verses describe humorously the various fancies born of wine.  
 Wine, apostrophized, boasts of its powers to impart joy, wealth and  
 strength. There is nothing, except this, striking in these poems.

# LETTERS.

The spirit of satire prevails especially in some of Immanuel's letters. His epistle to a younger contemporary poet Joab<sup>1</sup>, is full of this caustic satire. The situation is this: Joab, the poet, had heard Immanuel had insulted him. He writes to Immanuel, at the same time declaring his ability, as evidenced by the "Shir Hayihud", was pre-eminent above all poets. Immanuel, enraged, because of the false accusation, and the poet's conceit, resolves on revenge. He writes back raking Joab over hot coals.<sup>2</sup>

He addresses himself to "him who darkens counsel by words", terming him, "Joab, the captain of tens", to remind him of the forceful contrast with the illustrious captain of David's army. Immanuel proceeds, suggesting the possibility perhaps Joab was somewhat unbalanced when he wrote the letter. He will be glad to help him at any time, "Or", says Immanuel, "perhaps you have dreamt a dream?" Changing his attitude, to one of contemptuous indifference, Immanuel expresses sad disappointment. "I had thought to listen to the roaring voice of a lion, and what is it that I now hear? - a voice of a dove!" He continues he ought warn Joab to prepare for the harvest of his evil seeds. Again, Immanuel sneers, I had thought to read something refreshing when I received your letter, but

ואקרב אליה ולא תמצאני כה בטולה . He thereupon exposes Joab's incapacity, his ignorance of grammar, his misquotations of scripture which show he is at sea in the Bible

ובאמתך שור שיטף במקום שום  
יקרה על היותך בים המסוק באין כשום

Immanuel reminds Joab men say,

ויאב בקי בכל שור מנסה  
וקל בהכנסת כחיסור

It is really wonderful what power Joab has, remarks our poet. He has actually discovered the secret of making

על המבור מלא  
ומלא מבור

-1- Vog. "Gesch." I, 445, after Zunz, "Lit." 501, suggests this young poet is Joab ben Yehiel, author of several religious works. (Immanuel mentions Joab as author of "Shir Hayahid" - 8)  
-2- Mach. VIII, 66.

## NOVELLETTES.

### The Bookseller at Perugia, (Mach. VIII, 68)

The satire of his letters is rivalled by that of the poet's novellets which give him a high place among the forerunners of Italian novelists.

The poet relates the story once, while he and a group of friends were at Perugia, a bookseller from Spain, on his way to Rome, stopped over. He prayed Immanuel to keep diligent guard over a load of books which he had brought with him. He would return from an errand within a few days. Immanuel promised faithfully to do this. As soon as the bookseller had gone, Immanuel and his companions broke open a box which contained some precious volumes. As soon as R'. Aaron, the bookseller had returned, and demanded by what right the box was broken, Immanuel replied quite wittily, "was not our master Moses praised by God when he broke the tablets."

### THE LADY PATIENT.

(Mach. XI, 81)

Immanuel is summoned to visit a sick but prurient lady patient. When he tries to feel her pulse, she immediately withdraws and covers her arm, as the poet sees it, in order to make him all the more desirous of her. Discerning her intentions, the poet-doctor determines to "get even". He places a tile on her wrist and beats upon it with a pan to feign he is feeling her pulse. He then prescribes the following singular remedy: The horns of wolves, the glimmer of the moon, the milk of hens, the pupil of an eye, the breath of a brick, the voice of a dove, the cream of a pigeon, all mixed together and boiled. This is, he said, prescribed by the greatest of all physicians, including Hippocrates, Aben Zohar, and Reazi<sup>1</sup>.

### THE LEGACY HUNTER.

(Mach. XIV, 104)

This story is highly interesting. A man disgusted with his unbearable Zantippi wife, and his imbecile son, resolves to flee from Rome for

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<sup>1</sup>- This we have said elsewhere, is a theme borrowed from the old Italian poetry of Burchiello di Firenze.

the isles of Greece. After a few years he dies leaving his fortune in the hands of the elders of the community with the instructions to surrender it to his son upon his arrival with proper credentials from Rome. A wise swindler in Rome, hearing of this, and knowing how slow the true heir is, determines to get this money. He sets out for the Grecian city, asks for the grave of his supposed father. Here he weeps long and bitterly over the departed souls. The men who accompany him are greatly affected, and offer consolation, begging him to desist. But he will not heed them. He remains in the city for a long period, says nothing about the money, but orders a tombstone to be erected for the dead, and distributes sums of money among the poor. Meanwhile, he attends the synagogue regularly, praying with fervent devotion. He succeeds in obtaining the money, and quickly departs. A short while after, the true son arrives, and without even as much as asking for his father, he demands his money. The people are dumbfounded and refuse to believe he is the true heir. His credentials are thought authentic only by a few. Enraged and unable to get satisfaction, the slow witted son leaves, amidst jeers, for home. He informs his mother he was unable to obtain the legacy, whereupon she immediately discards her weeds. The humor of the situation is self-evident.

#### THE PATIENT WHO WROTE POETRY.

(Mach. XXIII, 180)

Immanuel was called to minister to a patient one day. After prescribing a remedy, he left. He returned the following morning. The patient complained the medicine had no effect, but he beseeched Immanuel to listen to some verses he had written during the night to pass his time away. When asked for his opinion of them, Immanuel says: ✓

#### IMMANUEL'S IN MEMORIAM.

(Mach. XXI, 173)

The words Immanuel composes for a eulogy on himself show even when the poet is quite serious he is unable to free himself from the temptation of humor. In rimed-prose, he sets down those words which he hopes

will be read at his death. He realizes his friends will mourn for him but their spirits will be revived as soon as they read his works. And so for himself, why, says Immanuel, should I fare letter than Noah who had to leave such vineyards, or Solomon, who had to bid farewell to so many beautiful wives.



# H A T O F E T H V e H A E D E N .

## Mach. XXVIII.

The "Hatofeth Ve Haeden" is the most homogen<sup>e</sup>ous, consistent and interesting of all Immanuel's poems. Patterned after the "Divina Commedia" of the Master Dante, it lacks its universal conception and breadth, but has, as we shall see, some elements in common with it.

The Poet states when he had reached the age of sixty, the fear of death had seized him, and his fear was intensified by the death of a friend. He then became filled with a desire to know what would occur in the future life. His prayer is answered. Amidst lightning, tempest, and thunder followed by a still voice. The brilliant figure of Daniel, his guide, appears to conduct him through hell and heaven.

Daniel, and his companion cross on a bridge of a hair's breadth, beneath which are dizzy caverns, and raging streams. They reach the other bank, and stand at the entrance of the valley of corpses in front of which the flaming sword revolves. There they behold all biblical sinners and on the gate of which is inscribed "Here there is an entrance only, not an exit." As then enter, they behold sinners of the past to whom punishment is meted out according to their deserts. There are arrayed all the biblical sinners - Asalia, Absalom, Haman, Ahab, Zedekiah and a multitude of the authors. There too the post-biblical men of sin pine away in grief, Titus, Antiochus and Rahum and Uziah. Funeral pyres, vessels of molten metals, alternating submission in pits of fire and ice, holes crowded with hideous scorpions and lions, laceration from horses' hoofs, suspension from gallows and exposure to vultures and other birds of prey - these and every punishment conceived in the medieval imagination are allotted to these terrible sinners.

In another corner sulks Plato because of his "Ideas", Aristotle, because he believed in the eternity of the universe, Galen, who spoke ill of Moses our Master, Hippocrates, who was stingy with his knowledge, Ibn Sina, the scoffer who denied man's creation by God, and many others of all times. They, then, behold adulterers and adulteresses, and a scene is here presented which is a counterpart of the scene of Francesca da Rimini in the "Inferno", Prodigals who lie stiff in their graves,

unable to stir, at the same time treated to the spectacle of seeing their widows in the arms of other men, Hypocrites who falsely boast of Jewish knowledge, and piety, and without reason call themselves "Rabbis", Parsimonious men who interpret the verse, which declares "Give, give: (Prov. XXX,13) to mean, "box the ears of the poor; Rebellious children, those fathers to their promises, and selecting unworthy men as leaders of the community, Utilitarians speculating on the superstitions of the crowd, the Proud and Obdurate, Slanderers and Betrayers, Skeptics, Sophists, Deceivers who appropriated entrusted goods to themselves, Scholars who were parsimonious with their knowledge, Precentors who prayed in the synagogue with eyes turned to the ladies in the balcony, - and others all who moan and pine in weary grief.

After the description of these various characters and their punishments, the poet is overcome with anxiety at his own fate. His guide reassures him though his sins are many, they are outweighed by his virtues, such as having written so many splendid commentaries. A ladder extends from hell to heaven. This they ascent till they reach the noble and the quiet realms of Paradise, where there is no weariness, no strife, but eternal peace and happiness and where all blameless souls now dwell. Paradise is divided into three spheres. The lowest of these is inhabited by a long row of pious biblical characters, and the Rabbis of the Talmud; among them are also the latter day philosophers Jehudah Halevi and Al-Harizi. In this sphere too rest many of Immanuel's contemporaries - Solomon Jedidjah<sup>1</sup>, The aged Judah Dayyan<sup>2</sup> the pious Shabthai ben Mathithyah and his son Joab<sup>2</sup>, his father-in-law Samuel, and his mother-in-law Brunetta, as well as his mother Justa, Zidkyah Anau and his three sons, the famous physician Jizhak, son of Benjamin<sup>3</sup>, and there also are the Chasidai Umoth Haolam, who strove for the highest and most excellent in things.

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-1- Vogelstein I, 395.

-2- *ibid*, 388.

-3- *ibid*, 382. Anau was born 1225 and died 1297.

-4- This was Maestro Gajo - (v. 253)

The second sphere welcomes Jehudah Romano, the benefactor Daniel, who befriended the poet, and whose praises he and his guide sing. There too is a man who mourns he gave himself over to merchandize to the exclusion of study, but he promises his son will walk in the paths of wisdom.

While this man addresses the poet, from afar the cries resound, "Immanuel is here! Immanuel is here! Now is the time for joyous laughter!"

The poet and his companion enter the third region, where the famous men of old come to pay him homage. David bows to him and summons all his commentators to interpret the 68th Psalm. Immanuel carried off the Palm. Solomon praises the poet as the one who best interpreted his Proverbs, and so Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial and the others - one after the other acknowledge his greatness.

Immanuel now comes before Moses who is seated on an exalted throne, and trembles to know his fate. Moses declares while Immanuel has sinned heavily, yet his commentaries constitute a redeeming feature.

At the close of the description of the characters in Paradise, Immanuel swoons. When he awakes, his guide bids him write down what he saw for posterity.

We have already observed the "Tofeth Ve Haeden" while it is clearly an imitation of Dante lacks in the breadth, universality of thought, and depth of spirituality in which Dante's poem is conceived. That the Tofeth is an imitation of the "Divina Commedia" may be seen from Immanuel's description of "The Valley of Corpses", "The Vale of Dejection" on the gate of which is written, "Here there is an entrance, no exit" which is practically the same as Immanuel's "All hope abandon ye who enter here!" The categories of the Paradise into circles show Immanuel's dependence on Dante's poem.

Much discussion has been carried on concerning the identification of Daniel. Geiger<sup>1</sup> enthusiastically asserts it is Dante, for Immanuel says of him he led me in the path of righteousness thruout the whole world. Kaufmann<sup>2</sup> disputes this quoting Zunz who says Daniel is termed

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-1- Geiger, "J.Z." V. 290, ff.

-2- Kaufmann, "Ges. Sch." ibid.

by Immanuel "Zera Kedoshim" which, of course, precludes Dante. Vogelstein suggests the possibility of Immanuel's patron being identified with this character<sup>1</sup>. But we believe, Daniel is simply a mysterious character, the hero of the book of Daniel, and Immanuel presents him in the philosophic allegoric spirit of the time which is prominent in his "Commentary to Proverbs".

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-1- Vogel. "Gesch." Note 7.

THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN IMMANUEL AND DANTE.

It is the general consensus of opinion<sup>1</sup> that Immanuel is the friend of Dante. Though nothing either in the works of Immanuel or of Dante intimate any such friendship, it is argued, Italian sonnets written after the death of Dante and recently found indisputably prove this. We must, however, mention the fact that the famous Dante Scholar, Th. Paur<sup>2</sup>, doubts the authenticity of these sonnets, and the whole matter of the friendship between the two poets. The following are the sonnets<sup>3</sup>:

-1-

BOSONE TO THE JEW MANUELLO

AFTER DANTE'S DEATH.

Two lamps of life have waxed dim and died,  
Two souls for virtue loved and blessed grace;  
Thou, friend, may'st smile no more with happy face,  
But weep for her, sweet song's and learning's pride.  
And weep for her, thy spouse, torn from thy side,  
In all her charm of native loveliness.  
Whom thou hast sung so oft 'ere thy distress,  
That is mine, too, and with me doth abide,  
Not I alone bewail thy hapless lot,  
But others too: do thou bewail thine own,  
And the the grief that all of us have got,  
In this the direst year we e'er have known;  
Yet Dante's soul, that erst to us was given,  
Now ta'en from earth, doth glisten bright in heaven.

-2-

MANUELLO'S ANSWER.

The floods of tears well from my deepest heart;  
Can they e'er quench my grief's eternal flame?  
I weep no more, my woe is still the same;  
I hope instead that death may smooth the smart,  
Then Jew and Gentile weep, and sit with me,  
On mourning stool; for sin hath followed woe;  
I prayed to God to spare this misery,  
And no more my trust in him I show.

-3-

CINO TO BOSONE AFTER DEATH OF DANTE

AND JEW MANUELLO.

Bosone, your friend Manuello is dead,  
Still keeping fast to his false, idle creed;  
Methinks to the regions of hell he is sped,  
Where no unbeliever from anguish is freed.  
Yet not mongst the vulgar his soul doth abide,  
But Dante and he still remain side by side.

-1- Graetz, VII, 269, ff. Vogelstein "Gesch." 429, Gudemann, "Gesch." I, 140  
Kaufmann, "Gesammelte Sch." I, 152.  
-2- Paur, "Jahrbuch", III, 1871.  
-3- Translated by Chotzner, p. 86.



BOSONE'S ANSWER.

Manuello, whom thou has thus consigned,  
 Unto the dark domains of endless night,  
 Has not within those regions been confined,  
 Where Lucifer holds sway with awful might.  
 Lucifer; who once 'gainst Heaven's lord,  
 In lust for empire drew rebellion's sword,  
 And though he in that loathly prison pine,  
 Where thou hast brought him though he willed it not;  
 What fool will trust this idle tale of thine,  
 That he and Dante should be thus forgot;  
 Well, let them for a time endure their fate,  
 God's mercy will be theirs or soon or late.

Bosone of Aggobio<sup>1</sup> was a trusted friend of Dante and Manuello who according to Geiger and other authorities is none other than Immanuel, who has Italian sonnets to his credit, and who wrote the "Tofeth" in imitation of Dante's "Commedia".

That Immanuel is the friend of Dante is clear from these sonnets, The first of these sonnets shows Bosone was an intimate friend of Dante, for Bosone knows none so well to whom he could pour forth his plaint.

The second sonnet shows, according to Kaufmann, Immanuel's grief for Dante is genuine. His reference to Talmudic thought<sup>2</sup>, and to Sp.-Arabic poetry identifies Manuello as Immanuel.

The third sonnet shows clearly Immanuel was a friend of Dante whom Cino places in hell alongside him.

The fourth sonnet, of Bosone, reveals the judgment that Immanuel and Dante will be united in death as in life. Immanuel then, we are told, died shortly after Dante, about 1330.

Thus it is a noteworthy fact that Immanuel was so broad in his interests as to have cultivated the friendship of the great master.

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-1- Geiger, "J.Z." V, 293 ff. discusses the whole matter of this friendship.

-2- ✓

A N A P P R E C I A T I O N O F I M M A N U E L .

Immanuel stands for the Jew who absorbed into himself the culture of his own and the Italian peoples. Bold in his originality, he outstripped the stagnant conservatism of his fellow Jews. Liberal in thought, he cultivated the acquaintance of All the spheres of secular culture of his day. But he did more: he expressed this in his own peculiar way. While he leans on his Jewish predecessors, and Christian contemporaries, yet he is the first in Hebrew literature to introduce the alternating rime, and sonnet form.

We ought not fail to remember what Immanuel did, in general, for secular Hebrew poetry. It was dead, Immanuel reawakened it.

Nor was Immanuel without influence on his contemporaries. The prominent poet of Provence, Kalonymous, in his "Masecheth Purim exhibits more than a passing influence.

His influence did not die there. If the general current of his thought had no effect upon subsequent generations, his brilliant style certainly did<sup>1</sup>. And if, in the years following men viewed his works harshly, it was not due so much to his failure, as to their hardness of mind, made more serious by the unfortunate persecutions.

His Machbaroth is not without its intrinsic value, and deserves for him the title which the historian Graetz so generally bestows, "Mannkann Immanuel den judischen Heine des Mittelalters nennen".

And above all, Immanuel stands for the broadminded, tolerant and sympathetic Jew, at the same time, loyal to the universal elements of life.

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-1- Rhine "J.Q.R." p. 348.