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Thesis
on
Yuda Ha Levi,

By
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- Introduction. -

The national life of the Jewish people is a series of sad and happy experiences. Although the sad experiences outnumber the happy ones, still a few moments' contemplation of the periods in which the Jews did enjoy peace makes us forget the sufferings they endured. For these few periods of peace are full of the most splendid results of their intellectual labors. The light of the short interval illumines the dark centuries that preceded and followed.

Especially the history of the Jews of Spain presents these two contrasting features. It tells us of acts of cruelty and of ruthless

persecutions; also of kind treatment and the high esteem in which they were held. It unfolds before us scenes of suffering and also of peace and happiness.

It is not to the gloomy but to the pleasant side that we turn our attention here. We have the scene of honor for one of loveliness and beauty. We turn to a period in which the Jews lived in peace and prosperity; in which science and poetry flourished; - a period in which the Spanish-Jewish culture arrived at its zenith.

Of all the countries where the Jews took up their abode after their disper-

sion, Spain has the greatest ^{interest} for the Jew. The history of the Jews in the Pyrenean peninsula rises to the height of universal importance. Jewish Spain contributed as much to the development of Judaism as Judea and Babylonia, and every spot of that new home of Judaism has become as full of interest to the Jewish people as Jerusalem and Tiberias. Cordova, Granada and Toledo are familiar to the Jews as the City of God itself. When Judaism had come to a standstill in the East and had grown weak with age, it acquired new strength and life in Spain which became a new center for the dispersed race.

The first settlement of the Jews in beautiful
 Asperia is buried in time obscurity. It is cer-
 tain however that they came there as free men as
 early as the time of the Roman Republic. It is said
 that under the persecutions of Vespasian, Titus
 and Hadrian 80000 Jews were dragged off to Spain
 as prisoners. Now numerously the Jews had settled
 in many parts of Spain is proved by the names which
 they conferred upon certain localities. The city
 of Granada was formerly called Jews-town, on ac-
 count of its being entirely inhabited by Jews. The
 Spanish pride of ancestry, which the Jews of this
 country inherited, was however not content with such
 an early settlement but pretended that the Jews
 were already transported hither by the Babylonian

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conqueror Nebuchadnezzar, after the destruction of the Temple. Certain Jewish families the Ibn-Douds and the Abrahams boasted of being descended from the royal house of David.

Upon the soil of Spain the Jews came in contact with a people of the same stock viz; the Arabs who gained a footing in Spain by conquest. The Jews became their allies and thus came under the rule of the Mohammedans. They were kindly treated and obtained religious liberty of which they were so long deprived. Being received into that alliance, the Jews of the Islamic empire were united in one commonwealth. As the Mohammedan empire grew in size the activities of its Jewish inhabitants increased in proportion. The ^{Caliph of Bag} first house of Omeyyad were free from that

narrow-mindedness and means for persecution which characterized the founder and the first two Caliphs.

These rulers loved Arabic poetry, held the acquisition of knowledge in great esteem and rewarded the author of a poem quite as liberally as the soldier who fought for them. The Jews soon adopted the Arabic language which exercised a great influence over them. It had become to them the only source of knowledge, science and society. It also put them on the way of producing a splendid literature. A people using a medley of Hebrew, Chaldean and corrupt Greek was not in a position to create a literature much less to maintain the vigorous muse of poetry. The enthusiasm which the Arabs had for their language and poetry and the care which they took to keep them pure taught the Jews to employ

correct forms of speech. For, the Jews had lost the sense
of beauty and gracefulness of expression during the
six hundred years which elapsed since the fall of the
Jewish nation. They were negligent in their speech,
careless of purity of form and indifferent to exact ex-
pression. The Arabic tongue gave them a correct
taste. It taught them not only a new and beautiful
language but also the language of their fathers.
The enthusiasm of the Arabs for their language &
the Koran evoked also in the hearts of the Jews a
similar sentiment for the Hebrew tongue and its
holy records. The Bible was now more diligently
studied than before. The Jews were forced into ar-
guments with the Mohammedans and in order that
they might not be put to shame they were com-

pelled to make a closer acquaintance with the Bible.
 Hitherto the tattooed men among the Jews turned
 their attention exclusively to the Talmud. Necessity
 at last compelled them to turn to the Bible.

One important consequence that resulted
 from this sudden application to the Scriptures was
 what we may call the Revival of the Hebrew Language.
 Up to this time it was a dead idiom employed only by
 scholars but it remained dead to the generality of men.
 Only those passages had become familiar to the people
 which were frequently read on public occasions. Now
 the students of the Bible in vocalizing the text by the
 signs invented in Babylonia or Tiberias had now
 to apply grammatical rules to those passages which
 were not familiar to the public. This invention

then became a science which finally led to the comprehension of the Scriptures by the public and the introduction of a more general knowledge of Judaism. It had become a means of educating the people.

These two circumstances viz; the contact with the Arabs and the study of the Bible gave birth to the New-Hebraic poetry. Hebrew thought found expression in measured verse. Although the stimulus was given to the Arabs, the Jews, ~~however~~, did not imitate them in every respect. While the Arabic bards sang of the sword of chivalry, of unbridled love and bewailed the loss of earthly pleasures, the newly awakened Hebrew poetry knew of but one object worthy of enthusiasm and adoration, and that was God and His Providence. It knew of but

one subject worthy of affection and pity, and that was the sorrows and suffering of the Jewish people. The psalms of praise and the mournful dirge of lamentation were taken by the new Hebrew poets on their models.

This poetry necessarily assumed a synagogical or liturgical character, because the poet had no other scene of action than the synagogue, and no other audience than the congregation assembled for prayer and instruction. In order to reach the hearts of the people, the poetry ~~therefore~~ could not be entirely devoid of an instructive element.

The form of this new poetry was very simple, since the main object of the poem was to give the reader matter for meditation. But it could not long

remain in this simple form. As the Jews became acquainted with Arabic poetry, they were captivated with the agreeable sound of its rhymes. Rhyme was then regarded as the perfection of poetry. The Mohammedan poets, or the poetasters as they are called, were therefore obliged to adopt this artistic device if they would be well received.

As in the realm of poetry, so also in that of science the Jews did not remain unaffected. So long as before it was under the tolerant rulership of the Caliphate that it was possible for science and philosophy to develop. Many cities of the Mohammedan empire became the centers for all branches of science, such as Europe did not possess until many centuries later. The genius of the Greeks ac-

celebrated its resurrection in Arabic garb. Statesmen vied with men of leisure for the palm of learning. Also the Jews took a lively interest in these intellectual exertions. The history of Arabian civilization has several Jewish names recorded in its annals.

Judaism itself became the promoter of science. While the darkness of the Middle Ages thickened, the spiritual light of Judaism shone forth in all its splendor. The Church was the seat of monastic ignorance and torbidity, and the synagogue the place of science and civilization. In Christianity every scientific effort was condemned as the work of Satan by the officials of the Church as well as by the people. In Judaism the religious leaders and teachers them-

selves promoted science and endeavored to elevate
 the people. For pure condemning knowledge,
 the Rabbins considered it as an aid and sup-
 plement to religion. For three centuries the teachers
 of Judaism were for the most part devotees of science.
 Jewish history has taken an upward flight. The
 golden age of Jewish science has dawned. The past
 was half forgotten in the new life. As the Temple
 was originally the center of religious life, so now
 its place was taken by the temple of learning on the
 banks of Euphrates, where religion found a new
 center for itself. Gradually Judaism assumed, so to
 speak, a European character, and the only country
 of Europe that favored its development was Mohammed-
 dan Spain. Here it found a suitable soil where

it could blossom and flourish.

While Christian Europe sank to a state of barbarism, the Spanish Caliphate was in such a flourishing condition that it almost makes us forget the Middle Ages. Spain was the exclusive seat of science and art, which were everywhere else proscribed or at least neglected. Especially honored in Spain were the favorites of the Muses - the poets. A successful poem was more glorified than a victorious battle. Every great Caliph was anxious and proud to number learned men and poets amongst his friends. Scientific men and poets were appointed to high offices and entrusted with the most important affairs of the state.

The same enthusiasm for science

and poetry seized the Jews who likewise enjoyed the privileges granted to men of genius. It was after the decay of the internal organization of the Jews in the East, that there arose in the Jewish communities of Andalusia a zeal for the various branches of knowledge. Not only Talmud but also philosophy, science and poetry were studied. Varied knowledge was considered to be the most beautiful ornament of a man amongst the Spanish Jews as well as amongst the Andalusian Moslems. The cultured Jews of Andalusia spoke and wrote the language of the country as fluently as their Arab fellow-citizens who were as proud of the Jewish poets as the Jews themselves.

"Thus," to speak in the language of the

historian, "Jewish Spain became the place of civilization and of spiritual activity - a garden of fragrance, joyous and happy poetry as well as the seat of earnest research and clear thought." While all around was darkness, here in Jewish Spain the light of culture was shining. While almost all Europe was preparing to wage holy war against the Saracens to rescue an empty tomb; while the Crusaders in their bloody march caused desolation everywhere, here in Jewish Spain divinely-inspired men were engaged in the promotion of civilization by science and poetry. There, all was a barren waste filled with the din of clashing arms and the groans of dying men, here in Jewish Spain was blossoming the

garden of culture. Here Sahunadists, philosophers and poets assembled in a spirit of friendship whose leaves witness to their nobility of mind. Here the poets sang each other and praised the men of science. The life of culture of this period truly resembled a garden, rich in odorous blossoms and luscious fruits. From this garden arose voices of sweet song in pathetic and musical words of poetry. And the sweetest songs that gladdened the hearts of the hearers came forth from the lips of Yada Ha Sri. He was the prince of poets and was recognized by his contemporaries as a master of song and as the most brilliant luminary in the literary firmament. On him is centered all the culture

of this period, as he ranks high as a scholar,
as a philosopher as well as a poet.

Sketch of Life of Yuda Ha Levi.

Israel's second David, the sweet singer
Yuda Ha Levi was born in Castile, Spain 1086. His
full name is Abulhasan Yuda ben Samuel Ha
Levi, as it was the custom among the Jews of that
country to give themselves Arabic names.

We are furnished with very little informa-
tion about his outward history which contains
little that is extraordinary. That which has come
down to us is for the most part fragmentary. The
only sources whence the few facts of his life could be
gathered are his poetry and a few letters to his friends.
Of his father we know nothing else than that his
name was Samuel.

Of the circumstances in which our poet grew up we know nothing. He seems, however, to have grown up in plenty without being compelled to struggle with adversity. This happy condition fostered in him the spirit of independence which is discernible in his poetry. This independence however was not of a haughty character. The nature of his education we can judge from what he became. Born in Christian Spain he attended the college of Alfasar at Lucena, where he became master in Hebrew Literature. Not only Hebrew, but also Arabic, philosophy, science, metaphysics, all the rich intellectual treasures of his age, he held within his grasp.

When but a youth, the muse claimed him as her own, and at this early age he wrote poetry

which bears the stamp of artistic polish and loveliness. His early poetry bubbles with youthful freshness. It is not the expression of a sorrow-stricken soul, for no sadness, no misfortune befell his youthful days. The happy experiences of his friends were the theme of his song. When a brother-poet met with a disappointment in love, he hastened to comfort the sufferer with soothing words of poetry. As long as he was young he wrote sparkling lyrics in which he glorified his numerous friends. He sang of wine and pleasure and composed riddles in verse.

Yaka chose the medical profession as a means of gaining a livelihood. He seems to have been a proficient physician as his medical skill was much sought after. From one of his poems we can infer that he

even acted as royal physician at the court. But this medical practice which was exclusively confined to the body was not consonant with the natural bent of his mind. It was foreign to his poetic soul. Consequently we find in his poetry no allusion whatever made to this subject. He had more faith in the healing power of God than in his own skill. When he himself was stricken with a disease and prepared the medicine he himself, he says;

"This draught that I myself combine,
 What is it? Only Thou dost know
 Of well or ill, if swift or slow
 Or fast shall work upon my pain.
 Ah, of these things alone is Thine
 The knowledge. All my faith I place,

"Not in my craft, but in Thy grace."

He was a poet; he was a philosopher but no scientist in the true sense of the word, i.e. he was no materialist. As ~~an~~ ^a able physician as he was he produced no work on medicine. His soul could not be satisfied with such knowledge. He wanted to go at once to the never-failing fountain of wisdom. The following letter which he wrote to a friend, when advanced in years, is interesting: -

" * * * * I occupy myself in the hours, which belong neither to the day, nor to the night, with the vanity of medical science, although I am unable to heal. The city in which I dwell is large, the inhabitants are giants, but there are cruel rulers. Wherewith can I quiet them, whilst I spend my days in curing their

illness! I had Rebel but it continues infirm. I cry & ask that he should quickly send deliverance unto me, ^{and} give me my freedom, & enjoy rest, that I might roam to some place of living knowledge, & the fountain of wisdom."

Medicine was not his choice. This did not absorb all his faculties and energies. The nurse early claimed him as her own and to her he will be faithful. Poetry he valued as something holy, not to be used for profane purposes. A poet, he maintained, must be born and not made. He mocked at those who laid down rules about metre and rhyme. The truly inspired poet makes his own rules and will never be guilty of any inaccuracies.

There was another thing that claimed his

affectionate and that was Judaism. His religion was dear to him. In it he saw more than the non-poet. And so poetry and Judaism were blended together and formed one main object of his life. Zion was the subject of his poetry. Upon the glorious city he bestowed all that was highest and dearest to him.

The soul of Yehuda Levi was drawn by invisible chords towards its home. After he had concluded his immortal work, the dialogue of Alchazar, he entertained serious thoughts of starting on his journey to Palestine. It was in the year 1140 that he undertook this sacred enterprise. Great were the sacrifices that he made for this adventurous resolve. He exchanged a peaceful and comfortable life for one of disquietude and uncertainty. He left behind him

his only daughter and her grandson. He gave up his ret-
 lege which he had established at Toledo parted from a
 circle of attached pupils, bade farewell to his numerous
 friends and left his home forever to live the remainder
 of his life in the Holy Land and in sanctified earth
 to find his grave.

Whence he came, friends and admirers flocked
 around him. At Cordova and Granada he was well re-
 ceived by the most famous men of those cities. His
 journey through Spain resembled a triumph. With
 a few faithful companions he took ship on board a
 vessel that was bound for Egypt. At sea he composed
 many songs all expressive of his faith in God. The rude
 forces of nature, the wind and the ocean wellnigh
 threatened to overwhelm the frail vessel. The engulf-

ing deep yawned ready to swallow it up. His health was impaired. Death itself was staring at him, when "between him and death there intervened only a board." Yet his soul was firm. His faith was not shaken. To his God he could yet sing and Him still praise in words of poetry. His ideals were his trusty companions, and these gave him new courage. Of the sea he sang songs which for faithfulness of description and depth of feeling have few equals:

"The sea rages, my soul rejoices;

It draws near the temple of its God."

He arrived safe in Alexandria, and this safe arrival he celebrates in a thanksgiving song. In Egypt he was well received by the greatest men. The homes of the most distinguished men were open for

him. Although the aim of his voyage was to go to his Zion, he could not refuse the pressing invitations that he received. His friends urged him to give up his purpose and remain altogether with them. It was with great force that he tore himself away from such dear friends. He went to the port of Damietta, where other friends requested him to remain with them, who attempted to dissuade him from going to Palestine by picturing to him the dangers which he would encounter. Nothing availed. He must go where his soul longs to dwell.

He seems to have at last reached the goal of his desire. He arrived at Jerusalem, his beloved Zion, where he remained only for a short time. And what a change there took place in that valorous soul. He gave

dependent. All that was around him; all that could keep alive in him the thought of Israel's glorious past and future failed to sustain his drooping spirit. After all that longing and earnest praying only to tread the ground of the Holy Land, his soul is overcome with disappointment.

"Mine eye longed to behold thy glory," he says,
 "But as if I am deemed unworthy,

I could only tread on the threshold of thy Temple;

I must also endure the sufferings of my people;

Therefore I wander aimlessly about,

As I dare not pay homage to any other being."

His great soul at last grew weary of that high and daring flight. Or, is this but an illustration of man's inability to reach the highest? As soon

as one height is reached, another towers above it. Yet the height this poet attained to stands out from the distant past as a monument to his greatness.

His last words and thoughts were of his beloved Zion. A legend says that while he was singing his mournful songs of Zion a Mohammedan horseman rode over him and crushed him to death. The year of his death and the place of his grave are unknown. Thus reads a short epitaph which an unknown admirer wrote for him:—

"Piety, meekness, and magnanimity
Declare, 'Here rest we with Judah'."

His purity of character and nobility of mind may be best judged from the love and veneration in which he was held by all with whom

he came in contact. All recognized the wealth of his inner piety and pure morality. The admiration which was showered upon him did not destroy his modesty.

The Jewish people has long since crowned him with the laurels of poetry. If Spain could lay aside its prejudices and abandon its measure of greatness set up by the Church, Yuda Ha Levi would occupy a place of honor in its Pantheon.

He was indeed a chosen one to whom the epithet "image of God" might justly be applied. He was a perfect poet, a perfect thinker and a worthy son of Israel. In him the Spanish-Jewish culture arrived at its zenith.

Poetry of Yuda Na Levi.

The early poetry of Yuda Na Levi is the expression of the happy fulness of youth. Being himself happy he wanted to see others happy also. This is discernible in his early productions. We can see his joyful and sympathetic spirit delight itself in acts of benevolence. This virtuous quality is indeed common to loving, sincere and truth-seeking souls. He had a great admiration for the beautiful. Love was to him something more than passion. How different is he from Solomon ben Gabirol whose sullen seriousness has clouded the clear sky of his early youth. We shall see later on that Na Levi was also earnest and serious; but in his

youth he lived happy in the bright sunshine of youth. He was true to himself. Therefore his youthful poetry is unaffected. It is natural.

These qualities we find especially in his erotic poetry. Although it may seem at the first glance to be affected, yet it is truthful. For, we must remember that he was living in a country inhabited by Arabs whose ardent and burning feelings of whatever nature are very intense, and so is the language in which these feelings express themselves. His similes, his ideas are Arabic. His songs of love emit an Oriental fragrance. The breath they breathe is perfumed. Yet they are untarnished by sensuousness. When he longs for his love and when he must part from her, the feelings given

expression to all of the poet's nature. Let us take a few selections for example.

Love Song.

"See'st thou o'er my shoulder falling
Snake-like ringlets waving free?

Have no fear, for they are twisted
To allure thee unto me."

Thus she spake, the gentle dove,

Listen to thy plighted love:—

Ah, how long to wait, untill

Swat heart cometh back (she said)

Laying his caressing hand

Underneath my burning head." *

When his beloved proves untrue to him,

* translated by Emma Lazarus.

he gives vent to his grief with all the pathos of a broken-hearted lover. His sorrow finds expression in these beautiful words:

Separation.

And so we twain must part! Oh linger yet,

Let me still fix my glance upon thine eyes.

Forget not, love, the days of our delight,

And I our nights of bliss shall ever prize.

In dreams thy shadowy image I shall see,

Oh even in my dream be kind to me!

Though I were dead, I none the less would hear

Thy step, thy garment rustling on the sand.

And if thou waft me greetings from the grave,

I shall drink deep the breath of that cold land.
 Take thou my days, command this life of mine,
 If it can lengthen out the space of thine.

No voice I hear from lips death-pale and chill,
 Yet deep within my heart it echoes still.
 My frame remains — my soul to thee yeams forth.

A shadow I must tarry still on earth.
 Back to the body dwelling here in pain,
 Return, my soul, make haste and come again!

To the same period belong the epigrams
 and riddles in which he displays much wit and
 a tendency to moralizing. Like the dramatist he
 also makes use of the picture of the dove taking

up its nest with the raven. The dove symbolizes the white hair of the head and the raven the black hair. She speaks of the faithless friend who disappears when the gold is gone. She compares the wine pitcher to the body. As the pitcher is heavy when empty ^{and} light when filled with wine, so the body is heavy when devoid of spirit but light when animated by it. It was a favorite pastime of the Arabians to compose riddles. The genius of our poet lent itself admirably ^{to} this sportive spirit. The following will amply serve as an example.

What is which when ^{'tis} in tears
Our hearts with gladness thrill,
But when it bright appears

With pain and sadness fill:

Ans: (The heart is broken in need.)

Eye it has and yet is blind,

Of service it is to human kind;

Raiment it makes, both large and small,

And still itself is bare of all.

Ans: (The world.)

Would true friendship ye maintain

Neither come and leave it;

What we would part we cut in twain,

While we remain uninjured.

Ans: (The two parts of a heart.) *

A unique kind of poetry which found favor in
 those times was the wedding hymn composed in honor
 and praise of the young couple. This festive event
 of the wedding was one with which the whole commu-
 nity was concerned. It meant the reception of a
 new family in society. It assumed a religious sig-
 nificance. These circumstances offered the Jewish
 poets an opportunity to glorify such an event of
 love and religion. These wedding songs are really
 beautiful. We possess many of them bearing dif-
 ferent forms and conveying different sentiments.
 Now they picture the longing of the lover for his
 beloved, now the bashful glances of the bride. In
 most of the songs it is the mutual love that forms
 the theme. Here is one of them.

A dove of rarest worth
 And sweet exceedingly;
 Alas, why does she turn
 And fly so far from me?
 In my fond heart a tent,
 Should age prepared be.
 My poor heart she has caught
 With magic spells and wiles.
 I do not sigh for gold,
 But for her mouth that smiles;
 Her hue it is so bright,
 She half makes blind my sight.

* * * * *

The day at last is here
 Filled full of love's sweet fire;

The train shall soon be on,
 Shall stay their fond desire.
 Ah! would my tribe could chance
 On such deliverance. *

Such poetry could not exist among
 the Arabs whose practice of polygamy bestows
their love upon many women. Their jealous
 disposition caused them to keep their wives out
 of the sight of men. For this reason the wed-
 ding songs of Yuda Ha Peri are his own and
 not patterned after the Arabic fashion. They
 are distinctively Jewish. It is to the glory and honor
 of the Jew that they, notwithstanding their readi-
 ness to adopt Arabic customs, could yet

Translated by Henry Levy from the German by St. Leger.

withstand the influences of Oriental immorality.

We now come to a different kind of poetry which is after all the same outpouring of the soul of the same sympathetic and warm-hearted poet.

He stood in the most friendly relations with the noblest men of his time. With many he formed a life long friendship. He knew what true friendship was. For him it did not consist merely in praises but in honest openness. He sympathizes with his friend, praises him, shares his sorrow and sometimes he utters a gentle upbraid. When he has to part with his friend he expresses the deepest sorrow. And all

this is without exaggeration, - a fault which was generally committed by the Arabic poets. He knew how to moderate his language. Of this friendship-poetry there are many specimens.

Perhaps it will be of interest to notice here the relation in which he stood to the commentator Abraham ben Ezra his contemporary and countryman. Ben Ezra intimates in his commentary on the Bible that he received from Yuda Biblical explanations which he designates by his name. Nothing of this sort is left us by Ha Levi himself. Their friendships does not seem to have been very close, as there exists no evidence of their ever having written to each other.

With Moses ben Ezra he formed an

everlasting friendships. When the philosopher writes to Ha Levi "Our hearts were as one: now parted from thee, my heart is divided ~~into~~ two," he begins his response as usually:—

"How can I rest when we are absent one from
another?"

Were it not for the glad hope of thy return
The day which tore thee from me
Would tear me from all the world."

So another friend of his Ha Levi expresses this sentiment,

"If to the clouds thy boldness wing its flight,
Within our hearts, thou ne'er art out of my sight.
It is the earnestness of a matured manhood that

speak in these poems. They contain nothing frivolous.
 When he feels no longer. We listen to a man who knows
 life, understands how to rise above his circumstances and
 to come out of his struggles with cheerfulness. Notwith-
 standing his feelings of sorrow and his indifference to the
 pleasures of life he still finds something pleasant in life.
 The greatest happiness he finds in his own soul. The
 greatest treasure is the consciousness of his independence.
 "I have sown the seeds of love" he says, "but they did not
 sprout." Now and then he is satirical and reflects on
 the use and value of time. He now speaks of idleness,
 the world etc. Now we can see the future philosopher
 and religious poet. He also speaks of the ways of God
 and of the necessity of resignation when we can not com-
 prehend them. We can see the gradual unfolding

of his poetic soul. At each stage there is a reflection of what passed within it. Everything which man has from his early youth to his old age we find expressed in Ha Levi's poetry. The final stage of development of this poetic soul we shall see when we come to his religious poetry.

Yuda Ha Levi's religious poetry is the truest expression of his poetic soul. Although he busied himself with themes apparently foreign to the religious mind, he did so in his youth when the passion of love was the most predominant of his feelings. He would be sportive for he had not yet felt the bitter pang of misfortune, disappointment and rough contact with the world. His early poetry, whatever nature manifests the

intensity of his feelings. Now, when he awakens to the deeper meaning of life, and man's relation to the universe and God, it is but natural that these later feelings should be intense.

This will explain to us his sudden apathy to the art of poetry. For a long time he left it uncultivated. He became more serious. It was the truth that he sought. The superficial glitter of showy things could no longer satisfy him. Or, was it his dislike for form that stimulated him to seek after truth? However, it was action and reaction. A deeper earnestness he dimmed his joyful spirits. The perfection of form could not give him satisfaction. The magnificence of description could not take the place of the reality of the thing. The witty strokes which cause the agree-

able surprise could not please him. A deep meaning must be contained in the beautiful form. Poetry must be the child of wisdom as he says, "Wisdom is a wide sea upon which floats the song."

This dislike for poetry was still more augmented by the great number of poets who attracted themselves to the masters of poetry. Let Na Leri himself speak on this point. He will tell us what was to him poetry and how it should be cultivated. He says in his *Kuzari*, " * * * We see how they acquire the art of versification, and how they busy themselves with the measures. With great display they present astonishing things about their art. The man whom God has endowed with the gift of song, knows the exact measure and carries the law within him

without violating it. They try in vain to be like that gifted man, although he appears to have the promise of verification." In another place he says, "Music and Song were from early times valued by Israel. The most respected class of the people, viz; the Levites were intrusted with this charge. While cultivating this art they were to be free from care and anxiety, and receive their means of life from the people who contributed to their support by giving tithes. Then, they could devote themselves to song, and the art was held in great esteem. Among such a people with such masters in song as Samuel and David, poetry and song could thrive. Nowadays this vocation is degraded. The cultivation of this art is transferred to the female slaves in the lowest classes of men. At that time the holy tongue

stood for the strongest expression of every emotion of the
 heart. No established form of verse was required for the
 song. The verse has taken on such form as the
 song demanded. It was the content of the poem that was
 valued. It was the living word that produced the desired
 effect, and it was that alone that could move the
 hearer. The artificial versification could not but do
 violence to the language and its natural music. Even
 now we are proceeding on the wrong road when we
 borrow foreign forms of verse for the Hebrew language.
 He is said to have expressed his regret at having bor-
 rowed for his poetry forms of verse for another language,
 and commends others not to do it.

We must not however take this regret and
 advice too seriously, for we may safely assert that

the Muse of Yuda took a higher flight in his last years and that he did not reject the artistic form which he knew to handle with grace and ease. The truth of the matter is that it was not form that he despised but that he was yearning after the real. And when one is dissatisfied with one thing, he will find fault with many other things. The true poet can not hate form.

Yuda's great soul was longing after something higher. Hence we have his religious poetry. But it is certain that he left the art of poetry uncultivated for a long time and that his friends were surprised at his silence.

At all events his Muse was not silent long. She resumed her heavenly flight. Indeed this time the flight was heavenward. The object of his poetry was

to be of a more serious and more worthy nature. He consecrated his lyre to God. The gift of song which was bestowed upon him must be dipped in the source whence it came and resound in pure and holy accents. Thence now on the praise of God and prayer to Him were to be the purpose of his poetry. "For Thy songs, O God! my heart is a harp," he exclaims.

Truly enough, in some of these hymns, we seem to hear clearly the human strings intrude. The truest faith, the most living hope, the widest charity, is breathed forth in them. They have naturally been cherished by his fellow-believers in the most sacred parts of their liturgy. The poet questions where God is to be found and he himself answers;—

"Lord! where art Thou to be found?"

Hidden and high is Thy home.

And where shall we find Thee not?

Thy glory fills the world.

Thou art found in my heart,

And at the uttermost ends of the earth.

A refuge for the near,

For the far, a trust.

"The universe cannot contain Thee;
Now then a temple's shrine?"

Though Thou art raised above men

On Thy high and lofty throne,

Yet art Thou near unto them

In their spirit and in their flesh.

Who can say he has not seen Thee?

When to! the heavens and their host
Tell of Thy fear, in silent testimony.

"I sought to draw near to Thee.

With my whole heart I sought Thee,
And when I went out to meet Thee,
To meet me, Thou wast ready on the road.
Ow the wonders of Thy might
And in Thy holiness I have beheld Thee.
Who is there that should not fear Thee?
The yoke of Thy kingdom is forever for all,
Who is there that should not call upon Thee?
Thou givest unto all their food." *

The religious poetry of Yehuda reflect the in-

* By Lady Magnus.

nermost working of his soul. It penetrates in the heart of man and with relentless force tears out the growths of sanity.

Yuda followed in the footsteps of his predecessors. He came across many beauties where the epic element predominates. He is incontestably greater in those poems which contain his own personality. It is true he discovers the God in nature and conceives Him through his own reflections, still this conception would be far from conviction if it had not been formed through immediate comprehension. He felt the presence of God in himself, in his misgivings, in his love for the infinite, and in the light which illumined his soul. And because he found Him in himself he could find Him every-

where. Therefore his hymns are a wonderful mixture of anxious seeking and joyous finding, of mysterious obscurity and clear recognition. These religious poems were soon destined to be used in public service. Luzzatto enumerates 300 of them, 167 of which can be found in different Mecklenburg.

Humility had surrendered to the will of God he announces as the highest aim of man's life. Repentance he declares to be the way to this end.

"When I remove from Thee, O God,
I die whilst I live; but when
I cleave to Thee, I live in death."

Nothing as yet disclosed the true greatness

of the poetic genius of Yuda Ha Leri. His importance as a poet lies in those poems that breathe a national spirit, as there have their source not in mere poetical sentiments but in earnest and impassioned conviction. Here we can see his whole being rise upwards in ecstasy. When he sings of Zion, of its past and future glory and when he veils his head in mourning over its present slavery, do we find the true spirit of his poetry.

On this point, however, there is a difference of opinion. While almost all the authorities I consulted seem to think that the greatness of Yuda Ha Leri rests upon his national poetry, Abraham Lieber in his monograph of Yuda Ha Leri clearly states that it is his religious poetry that bears the most

testimony of the greatness of Yuda. Gratz, Kerpel
 and Kiempe have nothing more than a passing
 remark on the religious poetry and give great pro-
 minence to the songs of Zion. Geiger on the other
 hand dismisses the songs of Zion with a few words
 and devotes his attention to the religious poems. He
 says that the Jewish poets notwithstanding the na-
 tional spirit that breathes in their productions, do
 not display characteristics that are more than na-
 tional. Their education is too broad for them to be
 confined to their own people. As poets, they must also
 give expression to their own individual emotions; as
 philosophic and broadminded men their views
 must correspond to their extensive knowledge. Al-
 though they were absorbed in the history of Israel

and dwelt upon certain features of it, still they also turned to higher themes. It is their religious poetry, which is subjective in character, that best shows their poetic ability. For this reason Juda's greatness should be determined by his religious subjective powers. Such is the standpoint ~~of~~ taken by Geiger. I think that this is a correct view. Still, a poet's reputation does not rest so much upon the intrinsic value of his work as upon the ~~impressive~~ effect it makes upon the reading public. Now does it happen that the early productions of a poet are considered as masterpieces, while his later productions which certainly came from a more matured mind hold only a second place? Bryant's *Thanatopsis*

which was written in his nineteenth year is considered
 to be his masterpiece. This is so because of the
 effect it produces upon the mind. And so with
 Yuda Va Lavi. It is not his religious poetry,
 which is indeed the truest expression of his soul,
 but his national poetry, especially the Songs of
 Zion, which are unsurpassed, that mark him
 off from the rest of the poets and place him high
 above all. The Songs of Zion determine his great-
 ness because they are unique and matchless.

For a long time, it was customary
 among the Jews for their most celebrated men to
 contribute religious compositions to the liturgy.
 In Palestine and Babelon, where the houses of
learning flourished, there was a prevalent taste for

for religious poetry. Already since the seventh century in different parts of the world where the Jews took up their abode, Judaism was entrusted with this divine charge. Italy, North Africa, Germany had their religious poets. Spain was not behind them. The hymns are mostly epic in character. The adventures of Israel in which is mirrored his relation to God form the most essential and vital part. Also God's grace is discernible in His wonderful manifestations and deeds done for Israel. The past history of Israel filled the soul of the poets with enthusiasm and zeal. They were transported with joy at reflecting on these tokens of grace. Sufferings which had been long forgotten filled their hearts anew with pity. Although their poetry is more lyrical.

when they descend to the present age, in the main it
 is the feelings of the people of Israel that they picture.
 It was their people's sufferings that brought tears
 to their eyes; and their degrading condition of slavery that
 filled their hearts with commiseration. It is seldom
 that the poet's own feelings are given expression
 to. The poets dwell upon the future glory and national
 resurrection of their people. This alone can offer
 them consolation. These characteristics belong also
 to the productions of the Spanish poets, the most touching
 of whom is Yuda Ha Levi. He was the national
 poet, and hence it is that his songs seize upon
 the Jewish reader with irresistible force. Let us take
 the following as an example;

Israd, The Dove.

1.

Thy undefiled dove,
 Thy fondling, Thy love,
 That once had, all that,
 On Thy bosom her nest -
 Why dost Thou forsake her
 Alone in the forest?
 And standest aloof,
 When her need is the sorest?
 While everywhere
 Threatens snare;
 Strangers stand around her,
 And stare night and day
 To lead her astray.

While in silence she,
 On the dead of night,
 Looks up to Thee,
 Her sole delight.
 Dost Thou not hear,
 Her voice sweet and clear:
 Will e'er Thou forsake me?
 "My darling, My One!"
 And I know that beside Thee,
 Redeemer, there's none!"

2.

How long will Thy dove
 Thus restlessly rove
 In the desert so wild,
 Mocked and reviled?

And the maid-servant I saw
Came furiously on,
Dart after dart,
Pierced through my heart,
Stood birds of prey
Lie soft in my nest,
While I, without rest,
Ran far, far away.
And still I am writing
And contemplating;
And counting the days,
And counting the years;
The miracles ceased
To prosper appear;
And wishing I learn

About Thy return.

And asking my sages;

"Or the end drawing nigh?"

They sadly reply;

"That day and that hour

But to Him are known.

And I know that beside Thee,

Redeemer, there's none!"

3.

And my old, ev'ning dear ones,

The bright and the clear ones,

Were dragged in their slumbers

By infinite numbers

Of vultures so horrid

To cold climes and torrid,

Far, far away!

And those birds of prey

Try to render them faithless,

And make them give up

Thee, their sole hope!

To turn their affection

From Thee, O perfection!

Thou friend of the friendless!

Thou Beauty sudden!

Ah, where art thou?

My darling, my one!

My joys are near,

My friend is gone.

Fainting in sorrow,

I am here all alone.

And I know that beside Thee,
 Redeemer, there's none!

4.

Oh, hasten, my Love,

To thy poor, timid dove!

They trample with their feet me,

They laugh when I mourn;

There's no friend to greet me,

I am all forlorn!

They fall in their passion,

And wild frantic are,

And all kinds of torture,

And know no compassion.

They drive from land I love me;

There is none to defend me.

The stars there on high
 Hear me silently moan.

And I know that beside Thee,
 Redeemer, there's none!

5.

Didst Thou reject me?

Dost love me no more?

Didst Thou forget all

Thy promises of yore?

Oh, read Thy heavens!

Oh, come down again!

My enemies may see

That I, not in vain,

Have trusted in Thee,

As once upon Sinai,

Come down, my sole Dear
 O'er Thy majesty appear!
 Hurl down from his throne,
 The maid-servant's son!
 And strength impart
 To my fainting heart,
 Ere sadly I wander
 To the land unknown.
 For I know that beside Thee,
 Redeemer, there's none! *

We may well exclaim with Krauskopf,
 Noble Ida Devi, part by the grace of God humbly
 we implore thy pardon for so freely speaking of thee
 and thy glorious work! Would that we had the

* Translated by Prof. E. Loewenthal.

gift to speak of thee as thou deservest. Fill us, thou
sweet singer of Israel, with poetic instinct, and fill
us, too, with thy religious zeal and fervor. Fill us
with such a love for Israel and her cause, that we
too might as thou didst toil for the love of our people
and our God."

Yuda Sa Levi is the image of his people. His
features are the features of his people. When we look
into his eyes and behold the fiery sparks flashing from
them we can tell that his inner emotions of pity
and joy do but reflect the sufferings and triumphs
of his people. On his face we can read the history of
Israel telling us of her deep poetic sentiments and of
her longings for her beloved Zion; of her struggles
and of her martyrdom. All that was felt by the

Jewish people since their settlement in Spain where
 we heard strains of music like those heard from
 the land of Judea and all that was beautiful and
 significant in the poetic unfolding of the genius of
 the Jewish people we can find in his songs. A long
 forgotten world springs into life again in his songs
 whose sweet and melodious strains are the music
 of his lyric poetry and the main source whence this
 music comes is his love for Zion. Zion is the center
 into which his feelings, his hopes and his very life
 terminate.

We hear the strains of music that once
 flowed from David's lyre. His Songs of Zion
 may be compared, in contrast to all other He-
 braic poetry, with the Psalms. When he is truth

ing forth his laments for Zion's widowhood, or
 dreaming of her future splendor, and depicts how
 she will again be united to her God and her chil-
 dren, we fancy we are listening to one of the sons
 of Kora. The rose of Sharon is blooming a-
 gain. The harp once more resounds in sweet
 harmony that once drew a whole people to the Temple
 on the height of Mt. Moriah. Silent the harp
 hangeth on the weeping willow by the side of the
 stream, for Zion's song could not be chanted in the
 land of exile. Now it resounds pure and sweet
 forth is once more struck by the fingers of one
 whose longing eyes constantly turned towards Je-
 rusalem. When he imagines he treads the ground
 of the home of his people, then his music swells

in divine symphony, awakening and elevating the soul. The gates of desolate Zion open. The gilded interior of the temple discloses itself before the eyes of the poet. Here he sees the pious priests and streaming troops of devout worshippers enter. The scent of burned sacrifices and the songs of the Levites fill the air. Jerusalem is once more alive with her people whom God brought back to their home. She was the true national poet. The complaints of Ibn Kabirol may arouse only faint interest; and the sufferings of Moser Ibn Ezra on account of his unfortunate love, may leave us unaffected; but the affliction of Yudas Ha Levi, on account of his dearly beloved Zion, cannot fail to move every heart.

The most famous piece is the Song of Zim which is still recited on the 9th day of Ab in the orthodox synagogues. Oh non-Jewish critic says in regards to Yuda Ha Levi that the world of religious poetry, Milton not excepted has not yet produced anything to equal this elegy.

We are now approaching the last production of the poetic genius of Yuda Ha Levi. We have set forth above the nature and spirit of his national poetry. Israel was his cherished theme, and Zion the subject of his praise and glorification. We have seen how deep and intense was his longing to behold the glorious city. Now he is to realize his hopes and still the yearnings of his heart. Now he will go to Palestine and

then live the life of Orad over again. Then breathing
 the air of Canaan his soul will be satiated. He can
 therefore divine that one of the features of the poetry of
 this period will be expressive of his longing for Zion.
 His soul was filled with the spiritual glory of Palestine.
 For him the gates of heaven were to be found at the
 doors of Jerusalem. The sacred ruins were still suf-
 ficient to inspire him with the thought of the glory
 of Palestine. From Jerusalem came the divine grace,
 and there he desired to live in pious contemplation.

Oh! city of the world, most chastely fair;
 On the far West, behold I sigh for thee.
 And in my burning love I do bethink me,
 Of bygone ages; of thy ruined fane,
 Thy vanished splendor of a vanished day.

Oh! had I eagle's wings I'd fly to thee,
 And with my falling tears make moist thine earth.
 I long for thee; what though indeed thy kings
 I have passed by; though where once up-rose
 That balsam-trace the serpent makes his nest.
 Oh! that I might embrace thy dust, the sod
 "New sweet as honey to my fond desire" *

This deep longing was still more intensified by the unfriendly attitude of the heathen and Christians whom he disliked. However, he did not rebel against the Christian power under which he lived. The heathen rule he considered as the fourth power of the world from whom the Jews had to suffer since the destruction of the kingdom of God. In many of his religious pieces he pictures the hard lot of his

* Translated by Amy Levy.

brethren and pray for their deliverance and the
 punishment of their oppressors. He entertained the
 belief that the end of the last power of the world was
 at hand. This hope stilled the longing of his heart.
 With his poetic mind he already saw the approaching
 end. His poetry of this period therefore besides being
 expressive of his longing for Palestine also expresses
 his indignation at the spiteful audacity of his brethren.
 "How far - wandering dove" he exclaims, "re-
 joice at the loud and clear voice! Thy God calls
 thee: The Arabian power is the fourth power
 of the world according to the prophecy of Daniel.
 This power which rebelled against the Holy One
 finally crumbles. This picture was floating
 before Judas's mind and once in 1130 he

dreamt that the prophecy ^{was} fulfilled.

The sad condition of the Jews caused him to cry out in indignation at the oppression of the cruel rulers. He pictured to himself the ascendancy of Israel in glowing colors. Israel ^{was} to be again a people of God. While he expresses his indignation on the one hand, he expresses his belief in the living God of Israel on the other. And it is this thought that is uppermost in his poetry of this period. Israel is still the people of God and Palestine is still the land where may be seen the glory of Israel. Palestine not only was the country but is still the home of the Jew. There Judah would zealously serve God. There will the light shine upon him. Such a longing could not easily be satisfied. It was only through visions

that his wishes were for him fulfilled. The desire to go to Palestine gained rapid control over him and at last his whole aim of his life was to visit the land of Palestine and there live according to the dictates of his heart. This longing forms the burden of his song. He already imagined himself situated there. The hardships & dangers on such a voyage were already before him. The terrors of the stormy sea were before him. Still, the peaceful calm of the stormless waters with the bright and clear sky expanding over the immense ocean could not but quiet his agitated soul. Wavering between these two anticipations he could not decide what to do. Then, when his soul rises on the wings of poetry he is unconquerable and decides at last upon a certain course. The

struggle which he had endured with himself was a mighty one. It was no easy task to leave behind him his only daughter, and part forever from his beloved friends. I say forever not because the subsequent events made his return impossible, but his determination ~~to~~ ^{that} this pilgrimage was one that will forever separate him from all ties of kinship and friendship. These last remarks will give us an idea of the spirit of his poetry about this period. In his poems now under consideration is to be seen the struggle within him - a struggle between his ideal and affections. His love of God drew him towards Zion and his love for his own with equal force held him back. His ideal triumphs. He finds encouragement in the thought that his life's race has nearly been run. He has attained

to his fiftieth year, and he must now live the remainder of his life in obedience to his conscience and in accordance with his ideal. Nothing can frighten him. The dangers that present themselves before him on such a voyage can not and must not delay him. God is his support. His own soul is his lodestar. Having at last found the faith which he needed, he sings:

On the voyage to Jerusalem.

1.

My two-score years and ten are over,

Soon again shall youth be mine.

The years are ready-winged for flying.

What carest thou still of feast and wine?

Wilt thou still court man's acclamations?

Forgetting what the Lord hath said?
 And forfeiting thy will eternal,
 By thine own guilty heart misled?
 Shall thou have never done with folly,
 Still fresh and new must it arise?
 Oh heed it not, heed not the senses,
 But follow God, he meek and wise;
 Yea, profit by thy days remaining,
 Thy hurry swiftly to the goal.
 Be zealous in the Lord's high service,
 And banish falsehood from thy soul.
 Use all thy strength, use all thy fervor,
 Defy thine own desires, awaken!
 Be not afraid when seas are foaming,
 And earth & her foundations shaken.

Bemused the hand then of the sailor,

The captain's skill and power we lauded.

Gaily they sailed with colors flying,

And now turn home again ashamed.

The ocean is our only refuge,

The sandbank is our only goal,

The masts we sway as with terror,

And quivering dare the vessel roll.

The mad wind frolics with the billows,

Now smoothes them low, now lashes high.

Now they are storming up like lions,

And now like serpents slow they lie;

And wave on wave is ever pressing,

They hiss, they whisper, soft of tone.

Alack! was that the rend splitting?

The sail and mast and rudder gone?

Here, screams of fright, then, silent weeping,

The bravest feels his courage fail.

What dead our prudence, or our wisdom?

The soul itself can not avail?

And each one to his God is crying,

Look up, my soul, to Him aspine,

Who wrought a miracle for Jordan,

Exalt Him, oh angelic choir!

Remember Him who stops the tempest,

The stormy billows doth control,

Who quickeneth the lifeless body,

And fills the empty frame with soul.

Behold! once more appears a wonder,

The angry waves are raging wild.

Like quiet flocks of sheep reposing,
 So soft, so still, so gently mild.
 The sun descends, and high in heaven,
 The golden-circled moon doth stand.
 Within the sea the stars are straying,
 Like wanders in an unknown land.
 The lights celestial in the water
 Are glancing clearly as above,
 As though the very heavens descended,
 To seal a covenant of love.
 Arch o'er both sea and sky, twin oceans,
 From the same source of grace are sprung.
 Lixt these my heart, a third sea, surges,
 With songs resounding, clearly sung.*

Emma Lazarus.

Can anything be more beautiful? It is full of pathos and earnestness. He struck the sweetest chord of the human heart that gives forth music sweet and sombre. It has a soothing effect. When only a few years are left, and there uncertain, shall not man devote them to the service of the Lord? When pleasure and youth can no more be ours, let our last days be lived in the best way, devoted to the noblest and highest purposes.

The description of the rising tempest and its subsidence is wonderful and exquisite. He enters into the soul of everything. The ocean and the sky are both from the same source of grace, and his "heart, a third sea, surges, with songs resounding, clearly sung."

"The same struggle he had endured with his

friends. His friends also entertained the hope and
 cherished the wish of Israel's return to his country and
 the regaining of his former power and independence.
 But that hope was nothing more than a hope. The
 intense longing of Yeha Halutz appeared to them fanciful.
 They did not long to return to a waste desert. Also this
 he had bidden. But that was not so difficult. A man
 of convictions and ideals after having conquered him-
 self will not be defeated by any force outside. His en-
 thusiasm was not the sudden ^{impulse} ~~and burst~~ of a vehement and
 fanatic nature. It was the gradual formation of a
 conviction. Nothing can change him. The divine
 has entered his soul. All that is holy and pure &
 true he will love with all his heart. He can not be
 satisfied with anything else. The glittering gems of

a false though enchanting philosophy have no charm for him. It was the truth that he sought and when he found it he adhered to it. He found it in Judaism, which is inalienably connected with Zion, the city of the sanctuary. On a poem, which is as beautiful as its matter is true, he thus expresses his opinion of the Greek spirit which disciples of philosophy so eagerly affected:

"Do not be seduced by the wisdom of the Greeks,
Which only bears fair blossoms, but no fruit.
What is its essence? That God created not
the world,

Which, ever from the first, was enshrouded in myths.
If his words you lend a ready ear, you
Return with shattering mouth, heart void, unsatisfied."

From the German translation by Kresitz.

Therefore he would avoid the path of false knowledge, and seek the truth in the way of God. This is the motive of his attempted pilgrimage and in this he found his true aim of life and his self-realization.

We also meet here with the same friendly correspondence between him and other poets. The correspondence is in verse. Then his noblest and best feelings are given expression to. When a present is sent him he thanks the sender for his kindness and friendship in ^{the} most touching terms. This is the 2nd feature of his poetry of this period. He was indeed a true friend.

Also his early desire for song is awakened. Then three features are blended into one another, so that hardly any particular feature stands out isolated. His nature did not undergo complete change but

gradual growth. What was most predominant in his youth was not altogether obliterated in his latter days. He had no recession, like Wordsworth, to complain of the disappearance of the youthful feelings of love and happiness and joy. With the increase of his years and with the increase of his experience new feelings were being called into existence. And now we see in his poetry once more his youthful birdlines, notwithstanding his more serious thoughts that were occupying his mind.

All these feelings were overcome by that higher one, viz, love of God. Zion was the object of his love, his friendship and of his life. Let us take two more examples that are concerned with his intended project. The following selections are expressive

Of that spirit:

A weary waste the sinful world has grown,
 With no dry spot whereon the eye can rest,
 No man, no beast, no bird to gaze upon,
 Can all be dead, with silent sleep possessed?
 Oh, how I long the hills and vales to see,
 To find myself on barren steppes well-blessed.
 I fear about, but nothing greeteth me,
 Naught save the sphinx, the clouds, the water-edges,
 The crocodile which rustles from the deep;
 The flood forms gray; the whirling water-reel,
 How like its prey whereon at last it sweeps,
 The ocean swallows up the vessel's reel.
 The billows rage - exult, oh soul of mine,
 Soon shalt thou enter the Lord's sacred shrine.*

* Emma Lazarus.

To the West Wind.

Oh West, how fragrant breathe thy gentle air,
Spikenard and aloes on thy pinions glide.

Thou blowest from spicy chambers, not from there
Where angry winds and tempests fierce abide.

As on a bird's wings thou dost waft me home,
Sweet as a bundle of rich myrrh to me.

And after thee yeave all the throngs that roam
And furrow with light keel the rolling sea.

Desert her not - our ship - bide with her oft,
When the day sinks and in the morning light.

Smooth thou the deeps and make the billows soft,
Nor rest save at our goal, the sacred height.

Hide thou the East that chafes the raging flock,

And swell the towering surges wild and rude.

What can I do, the elements' poor slave?
 How do they hold me fast, now leave me free;
 Cling to the Lord, my soul, for He will save,
 Who caused the mountains and the winds to be.*

Sir's last production, so far as we can determine, is one that expresses not his happiness but his sorrow. That poem was written to a friend in answer to the friend's inquiries. It is full of pathos. On reading this poem our sympathy is awakened for the poet who longed, hoped, and sighed so much for his ideal. It is attained but no happiness comes to him. He speaks of his great sorrow. His eyes are full with tears, and his heart is oppressed. Time has robbed him of his health and happiness. Nothing but sorrow is the fruit of his labor.

* Emma Lazarus.

Yuda Ha Levi's Defence of Judaism

Yuda Ha Levi was not only a poet but also a great thinker. Feeling and thought were blended together. Poetry and philosophy were intimately united within him, not as something strange, borrowed, or acquired but as an innate faculty. Just as he gave expression to the national feelings of Israel in his Song of Zion, so he interpreted the national thoughts of Judaism in an ingenious and original manner. Philosophy as well as poetry he employed for the sole purpose to glorify the inheritance of Israel. Such was the object of his monumental work Al-Chazzi, commonly known as Kezari.

Ha Levi can not be called philosopher, however, because he himself is opposed to all philosophy that would

exert its authority in matters of religion. We shall see farther on how he places tradition above all conclusions of philosophy. When we call him philosopher we mean to say that he was philosophic in spirit. He was not only a poet but also a thinker and here in the domain of thought as in that of poetry he stands high. His philosophy and his poetry are the expression of the working of the same great soul. Both one supplement and teach other. His thoughts are pervaded and broadened by a poetic spirit, and his poetry is clarified by his thoughts.

His object was not so much to bring about a friendly relation between two hostile religions as to protect religion itself from the charge made against it by philosophy. Wanted to place religion in an independent position and that it should be the source of truth

for philosophy. Philosophy was now the weapon of argument. It is not to be wondered then that religion was the main object of ^{the} attack of the reasoners. The religious truths themselves no more appealed to the philosophers who require proof for everything. They wanted a positive demonstration of the truth of religion. It was in this way that every system of religion was defended by its respective followers. Each upholder of his faith brought forth facts which were to establish the authenticity of the records and the divinity of their founders. Yuda Ha Levi also took a hand in this contest. He also attempted to prove the truth of Judaism by facts which can not be controverted. He wished that theology dispense with the crutches of speculation and be able to reach its goal without such external aid.

The immediate occasion of writing this book

was the question made by certain disciples of his how he could defend Rabbinical Judaism, and how he could refute the objections hurled against it by philosophy, Christianity, Islam and Karaism. This work is the answer to the proposed question.

It was originally written in Arabic but it was never printed in that language. Judah ben Saul Ibn Liban of Granada translated the *Khazin* into Hebrew. The title which this work bears is "Book of evidence and argumentation in justification of the united religion." As this title denotes, the book was intended to demonstrate the truth of Judaism and to justify the despised religion. The form in which it is cast is that of a dialogue, a form well calculated to arouse interest for the theme and convey a lasting impression. He may have borrowed the form from the

book of Job or from the poetical philosophy of Plato.

The name of Huzi by which this book is commonly known has its foundation in the historical event upon which the structure of the work rests. The substance of that event is as follows. A heathen who knew nothing of the wisdom of the schoolman, or of the three existing religions, but who felt the necessity of placing himself in a spiritual relation with the Creator, is convinced of the truth of Judaism. This heathen is Bulan, the king of Cherson, who himself embraced the Jewish faith. This king Judah employs to give historical character to his work, and hence it bears the name of Chazpi or Huzi.

The first cause that brought about the conversion of the king was a dream which he had. An angel repeatedly appeared to him and addressed to him these

my significant words:- "Thy intention is good, but not so
 the manner in which thou servest God." The king being
 a zealous and pious worshipper with sincere intentions was
 desirous to know the true way in which God wants to be served.
 He was not only intensely religious but also very punctilious
 and strict in the observance of the outward expression of
 that religious feeling. But his practices were of the same na-
 ture as his heathen forefathers transmitted to him. He awoke
 from that dream affrighted and troubled and he thereupon
 called for a philosopher from whom he wanted to learn in
 what manner the Deity should be worshipped. The phi-
 losopher's answer did not satisfy the king. He told him
 the very reverse of that which he expected to hear, viz; that
 God was too exalted to come into any relation with man, or to
 demand any reverence from him. The belief of the king was

rather shaken by such an explanation. This philosopher who was partly the follower of the Aristotelian and partly of the Neo-Platonic system answered the king in the following manner, "Do not be deceived and misled by dreams. God knows neither hate nor love. He is not affected by the wishes and desires of man. He has no particular knowledge of things. How then can He have any knowledge of you, to say nothing of your thoughts and deeds and prayers."

The king did not feel at all satisfied with this craftless exposition. He felt that acts of divine worship must be of absolute value in themselves, for without these piety and moral thoughts could be but of little merit. The worship of God he thought could not be an indifferent matter. If it were so, how does it come that Christianity and Mohammedanism war against each other and even consider them

after as a holy work whereby Paradise might be gained? There-
 fore faith alone is not enough. It is also necessary the right
 way of worshipping God. The struggle between Christianity
 and Mohammedanism proves that external worship is
 of some particular value and absolutely required if the will
 of Allah is to be gained. God must be in some relation
 to man. There must be some hidden mystery in this
 matter of religion which the philosopher can not know.

Thereupon the king dismissed him and called for repre-
 sentatives of the then most prevailing religions. He ac-
 cordingly had a Christian priest come to him to tell him
 of the true religion. He did not think of calling for a re-
 presentative of Judaism at first, because the object con-
 dition of the Jews and the universal contempt in which
 they were held were associated in his mind with the

degraded state of their religion.

The priest played the role of interpreter of the tenets of the Christian belief. The priest said that Christianity believes in an ever-living God and in the creation of the world. Man is descended from Adam. The five books of Moses, the Prophets and Hagiography it accepts as true. Its fundamental dogma is the incarnation of the Deity through a Jewish virgin of the royal house. — The Son of God is identical with the Father and the Holy Ghost. This Trinity is considered by Christianity as a Unity, even though the phrase appears to indicate a threefold personality. The Christians are the real Israelites, and the twelve apostles take the place of the twelve tribes.

As the answer of the philosopher was unsatis-

factory to the king because it did not give him anything positive, so was this answer of the priest little gratifying to the king because it gave him too much. The reply contained much that could not be harmonized with the dictates of reason. The king wanted positive truth, but it must also be ^{conv}incing and satisfactory to the human intellect. He therefore sought further for the true religion.

He now inquired of a Mohammedan theologian as to the basis of the faith of Islam. This representative replied that Islam believes in the eternity and unity of God. It also believes in creation ex nihilo. It maintains that there exists a relation between man and God, i. e. a direct communication. This last is directly opposite to what the philosopher asserted.

One important point of difference between Islam & Christianity, as set forth by the Mohammedan theologians is the anthropomorphic conception of God. Islam discards such conceptions. Mahammed was the last and the most important among the prophets, who summoned all the people to the faith and promised to the faithful a paradise with all the pleasures of eating and drinking and voluptuousness. Those who disbelieved in it were to be assigned to the eternal fire of damnation. The truth of this faith rests upon the fact that no man is capable of producing such a remarkable book as the Koran, or even a single one of its Suras. To this answer the king replied that the fact of God's communication with man must rest on undeniable proofs. The Koran does not afford

such internal evidence of its divine origin. Even if
 can convince an atheist it can not do so those who are
 unacquainted with orotic.

Thus, the Christian and Mohammedan
 representatives contradicted each other leaving the king
 still in doubt. On one point they did agree and this
 is the historical truth of Judaism. Both the Christian
 and the Moslem referred to Judaism for the historic ba-
 sis of their respective religions. The king therefore
 determined to make inquiries of a Jewish sage. The
 latter made the following statement in reply to the king's
 request for an exposition of the main teachings of Ju-
 daism, "The Jews believe in the God of their ancestors
 who delivered the Israelites from Egypt, performed mi-
 racles for their sake, led them into the Holy Land and

raised up prophets in their midst. On short, the Jew believe in all that is taught in the Holy Scriptures."

The king replied being as much displeased with the Jew's answer as with that of the Christian and Mahomedan, "I was right then in not asking of the Jew, because their wretched and low condition has destroyed every reasonable idea in them. You, O Jew, should have promised that you believe in the Creator and Ruler of the world, instead of giving me such a dry and unattractive mass of facts which are of significance only to you." The Jew then replied, "This idea that God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe requires a lengthy demonstration, and the philosophers have different opinions on that matter. The belief, however, that God performed miracles for us Israelites

demand no proof, as it rests upon the evidence of undoubted eye-witnesses."

This is the starting-point of Yuda's defence, viz; the historical truth of what is set forth in the Scriptures. Basing his argument upon this fact Yuda could very well bring forth proofs showing the truth and divine character of Judaism. Philosophy has no definite facts wherewith to set out. It is acquainted with God and religion only from what is to be observed in nature. Christianity and Islam turn their backs on reason, because it directly opposes their cardinal doctrines. Judaism however is in possession of what philosophy is lacking and rejects that which is opposed to reason. Judaism starts from a statement of observed facts which reason can not attack. It takes tradi-

tion as a guide and does not rely upon mere speculation. The Jewish sage asserted that theory and practice of religion must be in harmony to serve God rightly. And this practice can not be found on the way of speculative investigation but only in the field of authoritative traditions. The historical truth of this tradition is admitted by the other two religions although they are so opposed to each other in other respects. The King being convinced of this embraces the Jewish faith.

On his view of the value of speculative thought Yuda Ha Levi not only stood alone in his own but also anticipated many centuries. While other thinkers in Israel before him shrank before the religion in a philosophic garb and sought to harmonize reason and faith, Yuda Ha Levi, conscious of the weakness of

human understanding, proclaims religion the source where philosophy must draw its truth. He consequently placed himself in opposition to the thought of his own time. In this respect we must regard him as a reformer. In philosophy as well as in poetry he set forth his ideas with courage and conviction. All the thinkers of his time, Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan worshipped Aristotle who is called by the Church "The divine Aristotle." His ideas were invested with a sanctity by his admirers and adherents scarcely inferior to that of the Bible. All thinkers placed his philosophical judgments upon God and His relation to the world above the Holy Writ.

They even forced the biblical verses to express philosophical ideas. To such a degree were they imbued with Greek philosophy. Yehuda Ha Levi alone had the courage

to let the bounds bourn and to proclaim, "Thou shalt thou go and no farther." Philosophy has no right to attack well-established facts. It must accept them as incontrovertible truths. Just as in the realm of nature the intellect dare not deny actual phenomena as they are presented, however striking and contrary to reason they may appear, but it must rather strive to comprehend them, so must be its attitude in regard to the knowledge of God. This bold idea which took centuries to be at last recognized by the philosophical world was first enunciated by Yehuda Halevi. In a poem, already referred to, he characterizes Grecian philosophy as a tree that is laden with exquisite blossoms, but that bears no wholesome fruit, and warns its readers against its seductive charms, that dazzle the mind but leave the

heart cold and untouched.

Thus Judaism remains unassailed by philosophy as it stands upon the firm basis of historical truth. The Jewish religion was not brought into existence gradually as the final result of preceding events and causes but it entered the world as a revelation. It was revealed to millions of men. Moreover, the miracles that preceded the revelation on Mt. Sinai and those that were performed during Israel's wandering in the desert took place in the presence of a vast multitude of people. The finger of God is visible not only when the Jewish nationality was formed but for more than five hundred years afterwards when the spirit of prophecy was being poured out upon certain chosen men. Hence we can see the genuineness of the Jewish religion. The existence of God is more powerfully demonstrated by the Per-

Latin than could be proved by the human intellect. The foundations of philosophy, Christianity and Mohammedanism Gada believed to be thus undermined. This was the criterion that he set up by which the true religion could be distinguished from the false religion.

Besides the principle of "historical facts" which proves the truth of Judaism, Gada Ha Levi sets forth another theory from which the same conclusions are reached. The people of Israel are the chosen people of God because they are the direct inheritors of that innate perfection of body and mind which God bestowed upon Adam. This view is in every way original and ingenious. The truth of creation being pre-supposed, he starts from the fact that Adam was physically and mentally perfect. No ancestral influences marred this perfection. The ideal

for which man should strive was there already in all its
purity. All truths which are within the grasp of the
human mind Adam possessed in their completeness, without
any previous study. He also possessed the gift of prophecy.
This perfection, this spiritual and moral summum bonum
he bequeathed to those of his descendants whose spiri-
tual organism was best fitted for it. Through the long
succession of generations, this innate moral perfection
was bequeathed to Abraham, from whom in turn it was
transmitted to the fathers of the twelve tribes. The people of
Israel thus represents the heart and kernel of the hu-
man race. It was through the divine grace and es-
pecially through the gift of prophecy, that this people was
fitted for this position. It is by virtue of its ideality, in
consequence of its sublime and moral susceptibilities

that this people represents the highest endowment among the nations. Such an ideal nature elevates the possessor to a very high degree, making him little less than the angels.

Such was the intelligence which Yuda Ha Peri sought. He could not find it in human reason because it is impotent. Human reason builds its systems of thought amid pain and with excruciating slowness. He wanted the intelligence that streams in abundance from the divine fountain itself. From the eternal sun of celestial truth alone emanate all the rays of true knowledge. And that knowledge was implanted in Adam by the Creator Himself.

In order to attain and preserve this divine peculiarity, it is necessary that some particular spot devoted exclusively to it, inasmuch as climate and other

physical environments exert a great influence upon the spiritual development of the race. Canaan was therefore chosen for this purpose. Just as Israel was chosen to be the bearer of the heavenly truth whose light was to illumine the whole world, so had God selected the land of Canaan as the home where the higher spiritual life shall find expression. Upon this soil the divine rays shone with an especial grace. There the majesty of God Himself was revealed.

All the ceremonial laws, the precepts and prohibitions which Judaism ordains are means whereby the divinely prophetic nature in the Israelitish nation might be nurtured and preserved. These regulations, though human reason can not penetrate their real significance, served as vehicles for the preservation of that sublime spirituality. For this purpose,

priests were appointed, the Temple erected, the sacrificial laws and the whole code established. God alone knows how far these laws aid in furthering this great aim. Human wisdom therefore is not at liberty to inquire into their meaning nor change them.

Judaism demands no ascetic life. It does not consider as a meritorious act to withdraw from the world and its pleasures. Slope and idleness it would awaken in the hearts of its adherents. It is the opponent of brooding melancholy and it desires to see in its followers a joyful disposition. A pious man, from a Jewish point of view, does not flee from the world, nor despise life and desire death in order the quicker to attain eternal life. A pious man will rather fulfill the demands of his physical and spiritual wants within

proper bounds. He will keep in equipoise the material and spiritual in his organism. He will be ruler over his passions. He will employ his faculties as willing instruments with the chief end in view to become as perfect as possible and to ^{reach} that sublime degree of higher existence which emanates directly from God. The main aim of the pious man will be to realize a godly life.

Such is the exposition of Judaism as given by Gerdan La Peri, and such is the glorious mission of Israel. The condition of slavery into which Israel had fallen, whilst scattered among the nations of the earth, is according to the view of this poet-philosopher no evidence of decay or a reason for abandoning hope. Though Israel is despised among the nations, her apparent degradation ought not to discourage her children. In the same manner the pro-

perity that attends the progress of Christianity and Moham-
 medanism is no proof of their superiority. Nor is the pove-
 rty and misery, the constant companions of Judaism, a proof
 of its inferiority. On the contrary that miserable condi-
 tion would prove the divinity of Judaism, for poverty and
 misery are bestowed upon with favor by God. How do the
 Christians regard these? Do they not point with exalta-
 tion to their crucified Redeemer as the despised among
 men? They are not so proud of their mighty princes as of
 humble men such as Jesus, who commanded that "who-
 ever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him
 the other also." They are more proud of the humility of
 their apostles who suffered martyrdom than of the
 inflated pride and the greatness of their leaders. The
 Moslems who take pride in the followers of their Prophet

because they endured untold suffering in his behalf. And
 who suffered more than Israel? He is the martyr of
 humanity, since he is among men what the heart is in
 the human organism. Let disease attack the human
 body. The heart will be strongly affected when any part
 of the body is diseased. Likewise when moral disease af-
 flicts the human race, Israel, being the heart, is most
 susceptible to the pain. This is a very strong argument.
 It will be remembered that the King did not assign a
 very high place to Judaism. In his estimation it was
 the least worthy of consideration, because of the low condi-
 tion of the Jews. Their suffering would more than prove
 that their religion must be of such a character as to
 harmonize with their condition. Yoda Ha Geri there-
 fore makes this suffering prove the higher spirituality of Ju-

daism. However we may not readily be convinced by such
 an argument, we must nevertheless consider it forcible,
 because logically speaking it follows from the premis-
 ses laid down by the other two religions. And the King
 was already inclined to believe that that which was common
 to both must certainly contain some grain of truth. Both
 Christianity and Islam pointed to the suffering endured
 on account of their respective faiths as evidence of their di-
 vine character. Judaism therefore is divine, since its
 followers were the greatest sufferers for their faith. The
 words which the Prophet represents the nations of the world
 as saying apply to Israel, "He hath borne our griefs
 and carried our sorrows."

But a better day will come. The Jewish people, in
 spite of the unspeakable agonies it has gone through,

has not perished. It may be likened to a person who is dangerously ill and whom the physician has given up, but who expects to be saved by some miracle. The picture of the scattered, lifeless bones, which at the word of the prophet unite, are clothed with flesh and skin, have a new breath breathed into them and again become living beings, applies to Israel. His dispersion is a mysterious divine plan devised to impart to the nations of the earth the spirit with which he is endowed. Israel resembles a grain of seed which is cast in the ground. It disappears but it is not lost. Lo! It buds and blossoms and flourishes anew, till it arrives step by step to the highest development. Never was this significance of Judaism and its people more eloquently preached. Thought and feeling, philosophy and poetry combined in this original

system of Yuda Ha Geri. His soul was kindled with the
thought of Israel's destiny and glory.

In conclusion we can not do better than cite
here the beautiful poem which Heine devoted to our po-
et-philosopher.

"Ah! he was the greatest poet,
Look and starlight to his age,
Beacon-light unto his people; -
Such a mighty and a wonderer

Pillar of poetic fire,
Led the caravan of sorrow
Of his people Israel
Through the desert of their exile.

Pure and truthful, fair and blameless,
 We his song, and thus his soul was.
 When the Lord that soul created,
 With great joy His work beheld He,

And the kiss that soul of beauty;
 Of his kiss the faint fair echo
 Thrills through each song of His Son,
 By the Lord's grace sanctified.

As in life so in our singing,
 Highest gift of all in grace —
 Holding this, he never falters,
 Not in power nor yet in reverence.

Such we call a genius,
 By the grace of God a poet:
 Over his kingdom,
 Over the thought-world ruling, reigning.

Give account but to the God head,
 Not the people; for in art
 As in life the people can but
 Stay, yet never can they judge us.

.....

And the hero whom we sing of,
 The Yohanna Ben Shalvi,
 Head of all our lady chosen —
 Yet she can of different moulding.

She was not a former Laura,
 Whose fair eye, men mortal starlight,
 On the dunes on Good Friday
 Spread the famous conflagration.

Nor was she a châtelaine
 Who presided at the tourneys
 On her flower of youth and beauty,
 And distributed the laurel.

No fair harvester of kiss-right
 Was she, not a wise professor
 Who did lecture in the college
 Of a court of love right wisely -

She, the fair love of the rabbi,
Was a poor and saddened sweet heart,
Was destruction's woful image,
And was named Jerusalem."