

TITLE.

THE JEWISH ELEMENTS IN THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

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PREFACE.

This thesis is concerned only with the Jewish elements in the life and works of Benjamin Disraeli. If a few points of extraneous matter apparently seem to have been brought in, they were incorporated advisedly for the purpose of elucidating some subsequent material pertinent to the subject proper. This thesis will include all the thoughts of Jewish interest in both the life and written works of Disraeli.

This thesis makes no claim to originality, that is, as far as the material presented is concerned. The points discussed in this thesis have been touched upon by various authors at different times. But to my knowledge no author has ever attempted to bring all the material of Jewish interest under one heading. For this reason this thesis has been written. Thus it is not a contribution in the sense of making new discoveries, but I hope it will be a convenient help to those who desire to appreciate the Jewish side of Benjamin Disraeli.

Thus far, most of the books written on this remarkable genius emphasize the literary and political aspect of the man. The gentile author, as a rule, is interested mostly in the general career of Lord Beaconsfield. The anti-Semite will stress the point of his Jewish origin, and will try to show that he was a fanatical Jew, a foreigner who tried to impose his eccentric personality upon England. The average Jew has been content to look upon him merely as a convert who had forsaken the ranks of Judaism. This thesis, it is hoped, will correct that impression. I am convinced that Disraeli was a true Jew at heart and one of the most ardent and loyal champions of Jewish emancipation.

ANCESTRY.

The Name of "Disraeli"

When one first comes in contact with the name, "Disraeli" he is struck by the peculiarity of it. Surely the name is not a common one among the great number of decidedly Jewish names that have been thus far recorded. Altho this identical name, "Disraeli" has perhaps never been borne by any other person, yet it is a fact that quite a number of names similar to it have been in use and are still carried by some people, today. The names I refer to, of course, are the very common name of "Israel" and the name of less frequency, "Israeli". In all likelihood, one of these two names was the original name of "Disraeli". Some of his biographers have offered the explanation, to the effect, that when the family came to Italy they italianized the name "Israel" by prefixing it with a "D" and adding the final letter "i"⁽¹⁾. This explanation seems plausible in light of the fact that many Italian names actually begin with "D" and end in "i". And since Israel was such a common name in Spain from whence migrated Benjamin Disraeli's ancestors, the theory seems plausible. But on the other hand another theory seems to be just as logical. This is the explanation given by Mr. Lucien Wolf. He claims that the name was originally "Israeli", which is not an italianized form but Arabic. It simply means "Israelite".⁽²⁾ It has been pointed out that the term "Israeli" is a coined Hebraicon used in the Bible.⁽³⁾ It is used in the Bible as a designation of a man's tribe. And in Spain the same principle seems to prevail. Very fre-

quently we come across a case where a man's first name in Hebrew is given and for his surname he was merely called, "Israeli". As an illustration we may cite the case of Chasdai Ibn Shaprut who was referred to as, "El Israeli" which meant, "The Jew". This custom of designating the Jews thus originated most likely in Moorish Spain. And gradually it seems that the name became a permanent surname for many Jews. Isaac ben Jacob Israeli the eminent Spanish astronomer of the Fourteenth Century, Isaac ben Solomaon Israeli the famous African physician, and Israel Israeli of Toledo Spain may be cited as illustrative of cases where the name became a permanent surname.

In Lord Beaconsfield's memoir we are told that when his ancestors sought ² refuge in the Venetian Republic, they, as soon as they landed, renounced their Spanish name, and "from gratitude to the God of Jacob who had led them through unexampled (4) trails and unheard of dangers" assumed the name of D'Israeli. This change of names has taken place very frequently among Spanish Jews who left Spain after the memorable date, 1492. If we look in the synagog archives of London and Amsterdam we can find many such changes. E.G. we will find cases like these: Elihu Israel alias Bento Lopes; another case, David (5) Israel alias Prospero Dias. In the light of these facts it is reasonable to assume that the Spanish name of the Disraeli family was at one time different from the name "Israeli". Monypenny seems to be of the opinion that the name did not take the form of D'Israeli until the grandfather of Lord Beaconsfield came to England. He seems to infer this from the fact that the great-grandfather of Lord Beaconsfield was a one Isaac Israeli. But Lucien Wolf who made a thorough Study of the Genealogy of Lord Beaconsfield gives the name

of the great-grandfather as Isaac D'Israeli. If this be the fact then the opinion of Monneypenny is unfounded. Yet Monneypenny may be right in making the assertion in the light of Wolf's observation to the effect that, "Israel is not Disraeli and there is no trace of this latter name anywhere previously to the first marriage of Lord Beaconsfield's grandfather' in 1756, when his name was spelled with "D'". In the light of this observation it is difficult to see how Mr. Wolf refers to the great-grandfather as D'Israeli. Evidently this is an obvious contradiction. What we do know for a fact is that the name "D'Israeli" was borne for a time by the grandfather of Lord Beaconsfield. Whether he prefixed the "D'" is a matter of speculation. The "D'" most likely is used in place of the equivalent expression in Hebrew, "ben" meaning "son of". His father, i.e. Lord Beaconsfield's father, Isaac D'Israeli spelled it with "D'" all through his life. For some reason or other Lord Beaconsfield contracted the first two letters and simply signed himself, "Disraeli".

A fact worth mentioning in connection with the name Disraeli is the very important observation made by Mr. L. Wolf. He tells us that there is no trace in the public records of Venice, either municipal or Synagogal of any family named Disraeli or Israeli, previously to 1821. If we accept Lord Beaconsfield's own statement to the effect that his ancestors flourished for two centuries under the protection of St. Mark, it is strange, to say the least, that a trace of this name is not noticed. Mr. Wolf claims that all the local Jewish registers of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Tombstones were investigated.

Chapter II.

ANCESTRY.

In obtaining facts about the ancestry of Lord Beaconsfield, unfortunately, we are compelled to rely, for the most part, upon the account narrated by himself. If Lord Beaconsfield were an accurate historian we would welcome at least this one account. But as we know for a fact that his imagination and power of fancy were sharply and highly developed we must look upon his account of certain facts as influenced by his love for the romantic and the fanciful. Mr. Lucien Wolf in two brilliant articles in the London Times has shown very clearly how fancy and imagination crept into Lord Beaconsfield's account. ⁽¹⁾ Unfortunately little has been done in regard to investigating the facts concerning Lord Beaconsfield's ancestry. Most of his biographers accept the account given by Lord Beaconsfield without questioning the facts at all. They accept everything at face value. For our account we shall take what seems plausible from Lord Beaconsfield and we shall add the observations of Lucien Wolf who made a special study of the subject.

Concerning the early ancestry of Lord Beaconsfield we possess no facts whatever. Disraeli, in his memoir intimates that his early ancestors came from Spain. ⁽²⁾ He says they left Spain during the latter part of the Fifteenth Century. Altho there are no facts to corroborate this tradition yet it seems plausible in light of the fact that many Jews actually left Spain after the year 1492. It is quite possible that his ancestors may have taken refuge in the Venetian Republic at that time. Georg Brandes one of his principle biographers makes the statement that Disraeli's ancestors resided in Andalusia, Aragon and in Portugal. For says he, the acquisition of landed property was not denied to the Jew

in these places. Where Mr. Brandes obtained his facts concerning the exact residence of the early Disraelis, I do not know. Benjamin Disraeli says nothing about it and neither does any other biographer state the exact place of residence. Lord Beaconsfield in his memoir would have us believe that his ancestors resided for almost two centuries in the Venetian Republic, "under the protection of the lion of St. Mark." If we accept the tradition that his ancestors went to Italy immediately after 1492 then we must accept the fact that his people might have been flourishing merchants there for over two centuries. But on the other hand when we search for the name of Disraeli in all the records of the supposed vicinity in Italy and there is not to be found a mention of the name Israeli or Disraeli previous to the year 1821 the fact or rather the tradition of the long sojourn in Italy may be questioned.

As definite information concerning the ancestry of Lord Beaconsfield we may begin with his great-grandfather whose name was Isaac D'Israeli. As we already mentioned, his biographer refers to him as Isaac Israeli. We know very little about him. He came from the Levant and married in Ferrara. He married a woman by the name of Rica Rossi. It has been suggested that she was related in some way to the famous Azaria dei Rossi. Of this marriage were born three children. They were Rachel, Venturina, and Benjamin. Rachel was born in 1741 and died in 1837; Venturina was born in 1745 and died in 1821; and Benjamin was born in 1730 and died in 1816. Lord Beaconsfield gives 1817 as the date of his grandfather's death. Mr Wolf may be correct for it wasn't until after the death of the grandfather that Isaac Disraeli the father of Lord Beaconsfield permitted his children to be baptized. The baptism occurred in 1817.

Of the two girls we know nothing except ~~for~~ the statement that Mr. Wolf makes to the effect that the two girls kept a girls' school in the Ghetto. Mr. Wolf claims that 'Disraeli is responsible for this latter statement, but I must admit that I was unable to locate it. Lord Beaconsfield, in his memoir, claims that his grandfather had a brother who was a banker in Venice. Mr. Wolf discredits this statement based on the observation that there is no written record of it and he reasons further that if he were a banker he certainly would not permit his sisters to run a girls' school in the ghetto. Personally, I believe that this is no argument against the fact because the girls may have been doing that work purely out of philanthropic motives. Lord Beaconsfield also states that Horace Mann knew this Banker brother. If we search thru the diary of Horace Mann no such fact is revealed.

When we come to talk about Benjamin D'Israeli, (Sr.) the grandfather of Lord Beaconsfield, we take our stand more on terra firma. Many facts of his life have been recorded. Benjamin D'Israeli was born in 1730. Until he was seventeen years of age we have no recorded facts of his life. In 1747 his father deemed it wise to send Benjamin over to England. What the motive was we are not so sure. It is possible, as Mr. Picciotto suggests, that the Jews felt that there was more chance of freedom of conscience there. Before we talk about his life in England let us correct a general impression about the country from which he came. It is generally believed that he came from Venice. But this is not correct. He really came from Cento in Ferrara. We know this from the deed of denization which he signed in England in 1801, stating there that he was " of Cento in Italy." As a matter of fact

we know that there was a Jewish colony established in Ferrara long before the exodus in Spain. And immediately after the year 1492, Jews sought refuge there. When Benjamin D'Israeli reached the shores of England it didn't take long before he became connected with an Anglo-Italian house. It didn't take long before he entered business for himself. But it did take a long time before he really succeeded in business. For some reason or other he did not mix much with the Jewish community. He rather held himself aloof. And the tendency toward alienation from his group of fellow-men was increased by his marriage which took place in the year 1765. His wife detested Judaism. We shall have occasion to discuss her a little later. Perhaps one of the reasons of his laxity in affairs religious was due to the liberality of English institutions in general. It is said that he contributed liberally to the synagogue and that he increased his donations with the increase in his wealth. ^{see (3)} His tax (the finta) in the synagogue was first 10s and gradually it was increased until it was in 1813, £22, 13s, 4d. He only held a minor position in the synagogue once and that was the office of Inspector of the Hes-Haim, or Charity school. This was in 1782. When he first came to England, Geo. II, was then king. Lord Pelham was the minister at that time and he was favorably disposed to the Jews. It was in the year 1740 that Benjamin Disraeli became an English citizen without civil rights.

Benjamin D'Israeli had married twice in his lifetime. He married his first wife, Rebecca Mendez Furtado, in 1756. She was the second daughter and fourth child of Gasper and Clara Mendez Furtado. She was also the sister-in-law of Aaron Lara, the broker. There was one child by this marriage. She was born in 1757

and when she was fourteen years old she was married to the son of Aaron Lara. Rebecca Furtado died in 1764. One year later Benjamin D'Israeli married again. This time he married a Sarah Shiprut de Gabay Villa Real. She was the daughter of Isaac Shiprut. Thru her paternal grandmother she was a descendent of the Villa Reals -- a fact which later Lord Beaconsfield took much pride in relating. Lucien Wolf suggests that Isaac Shiprut may have been a descendent of the famous' Chasdai Ibn Shaprut. But there are no facts to establish this conjecture. By his marriage to Sarah Shaprut great wealth and credit was brought to him. From the time of his marriage his wealth steadily increased and it wasn't long before he had amassed a fortune. He played his hand at the stock markets and later was made a member of the stock exchange, even being appointed on a special committee. For a time he was involved in serious financial difficulties but, as fortune had it, he pulled through successfully.

From this marriage was born an only child, a son, Isaac. Concerning this Isaac Lord Beaconsfield said in his memoir, " My grandfather had only one child and nature had disqualified him from the cradle for the busy pursuits of men. " Isaac was born in 1766. No doubt it was the one great desire of the father to have his son Isaac carry on his work in the world of business. He must have been terribly disappointed in him when he learned that the inclinations of the son were in quite a different direction.

Benjamin D'Israeli remained a Jew until the end of his days. He did not renounce his faith ever. It is true he was an inactive Jew. He died in 1816. At his death a will was left. He left about L 35.000. In later years when his grandson

Lord Beaconsfield was in the height of his glory he restored the tombstone of his grandfather. The tombstone may be seen to this day in the Jews' cemetery at Mile End, in the East of London. (4)

Of the wife of Benjamin D'Israeli we know very little.

She was a descendant of the Villa Reals, a very prominent family in England. Lord Beaconsfield writes thus of her, "My grandmother, the beautiful daughter of a family who had suffered much from persecution, had imbibed that dislike for her race which the vain are too apt to adopt when they find that they are born to public contempt." To Lord Rowton, Lord Beaconsfield referred

to her as a "demon". (5) She lived until 1825 and was buried in Willesden Church. "She was informally a Protestant at the time of her death." (6) It has been suggested, and I believe it is quite probable, that George Eliot, in delineating her character of the mother of Daniel Deronda, had the grandmother of Lord Beaconsfield in mind. (7)

And now we come to discuss the life of Isaac D'Israeli, the only child of Benjamin and Sarah D'Israeli. It is generally believed that Isaac was born in Enfield, but Lucien Wolf seems to believe that he was born at Great St. Helens, on May, 11, 1766. (8)

He was duly initiated into the Abrahamic covenant by Isaac Carriac de' Payba. (9) For a personal description of Isaac let us quote from the one given by his son, to wit: "A pale pensive child with large dark brown eyes, and flowing hair, had grown up beneath this roof of worldly energy and enjoyment, indicating even in his infancy, by the whole carriage of his life, that he was of a different order from those among whom he lived." (10) Isaac was not at all happy in his home. Perhaps the environment was too materialistic for his highly developed literary soul. The boy would love to run to his mother and embrace her but when

he would almost come in reach of her, she would behold his awkward manners, notice his excited ways, his unfashionable costume, and then she would burst out "into derisive laughter". This angered Isaac greatly. He was really unhappy in his home. The mother only saw in her child "a future of degradation"⁽¹¹⁾ When the boy got to be a little older he was sent to school in Amsterdam. There a friend of the father saw to it that he was placed in a proper school. But, as Lord Beaconsfield said, "the school was too near home and his mother, though she tormented his very existence, was never content if he were out of her sight."⁽¹²⁾ Isaac was a precocious youngster. His tutor could teach him little, for Isaac was "generally occupied in writing bad odes." He was a great reader. Before he was fifteen he had already read through the works of Voltaire and Bayle. And when he was eighteen he return^{ed} to England a confirmed discip^{le} of Rousseau. Later he was sent to France. Here he remained until 1788 right before the outbreak of the great events in Europe. He returned to England after a profitable stay. He learned to know great men and came home with some very valuable books. Isaac came back and told of his ambition to be a poet. The idea hit his father like a thunderbolt. His hope of seeing in his son a great commercial man was gone. Isaac has no inclinations whatever to be a business man. The idea was repulsive to him. In fact Isaac answered his father's hope by telling him that he had written a great poem against trade, wherein he showed that trade was the ruin of mankind.⁽¹³⁾

Georg Brandes describes Isaac D'Israeli as being "of a shy, retiring nature; in his youth he was inclined to melancholy; in his manhood he was a collector; as an old man was given up

to contemplation, too critical to be satisfied with his own performances and too retiring ever to gain confidence in himself."⁽¹⁴⁾ After one knows a little about him one can understand what a true description Brandes gives. Brandes significantly deduces from the traits of Isaac that his son Lord Beaconsfield neither inherited the weakness (i.e. the distrust of own powers) nor the virtue (i.e. the absence of vanity) of his father.⁽¹⁵⁾ Isaac D'Israeli spent most of his life in seclusion. If he was not at his books in his library he usually could be found going in and out of the old book-stores. He was on the continual lookout for old and rare books. Isaac Disraeli showed no interest whatever in politics. It has been said that he did not even understand them. It is quite obvious that this was another trait that his distinguished son did not receive from him. Yet Isaac was a skeptic of the highest order. He had the power of bitter sarcasm, a trait that was quite evident in his son. He was a man of sincere convictions. His son says, "Most certainly he, throughout his long career, never wrote a sentence which he did not believe was true."⁽¹⁶⁾ Of course this is a bit exaggerated but nevertheless I am convinced that there is truth in it in the main. He was an "advocate of the discomfited and the oppressed". It is quite strange that, as one glances through his works, he fails to find any allusions to the passing events of D'Israeli's age. Surely he lived through one of the most exciting ages of civilization. His being occupied with dust-covered manuscripts, I suppose, is the real reason for his total disinterestedness in the passing events of his time.

Isaac D'Israeli was the favorite of his maternal grandmother, Esther Syprut. This grandmother did not like her own daughters very much because of their indifferent attitude to

Judaism and because of their want of filial duty toward her.

Thus when she died her whole fortune was bequeathed to Isaac ^{W.S. 11/1 (17)}

In 1802 Isaac married Maria Basevi, the youngest daughter of an Italian Jew named Naphtali Basevi. He was a wealthy merchant and very prominent in the Synagog. He settled in England sometime later than did the father of Isaac. Through this marriage Lord Beaconsfield may claim that his lineage goes back for four generations on the soil of England. The mother of Maria Basevi was Rebecca Rieli, her grandmother was Sarah Cardoso and the latter's father was Jacob Ahoab Cardoso. All of these just mentioned were people born in England. Lucien Wolf says that this family was descended from the famous Isaac Cardoso of Spain. He lived in the fifteenth century. ⁽¹⁸⁾

Concerning the life of Maria Basevi we have no material whatever.

In the famous memoir of Lord Beaconsfield not one allusion is made to her. This is really surprising. After Lord Beaconsfield completed this memoir and sent it to his sister Sarah for her perusal, she commented highly upon it and then made the comment to her brother that she felt the omission of her mother's name most keenly. Whether it was a wilful omission on the part of Lord Beaconsfield or whether it was a careless blunder we are not in a position to say. We do know that the mother died after forty-five years of married life, passing away in her seventy-second year. To Isaac and Maria D'Israeli were born five children. Sarah was the oldest, born December, 29, 1802. Then came Benjamin, who was born in December, 21, 1804. After him followed Naphtali, who died in infancy in 1807. Then came Raphaël (Ralph) in 1809 and finally Jacobus (James) in 1813. To the life of Benjamin Disraeli we shall devote a special chapter. Of Sarah we can say that she was a brilliant woman.

She was the beloved sister of Benjamin . With her he carried on most of his private correspondence. She seems to have been his confidant in all matters. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Sarah was to have been married to William Meredith. She was waiting for his return from a trip in the East. But Meredith died of small-pox when he was in Alexandria. Sarah never recovered from this shock. She remained single to the rest of her days. Until his father's death, Isaac D'Israel brought up his children in the Jewish faith. For Benjamin his eldest son he made special provision for his religious instruction in the school of Mr. Potticary. It is quite strange that he should have put himself out that much to see to it that his children had religious training. It was strange because Isaac was more of a freethinker in religious matters. And also is it strange when we consider that his father was an indifferent Jew and his mother was altogether irreligious. Surely he could take no example from them . He was a regular subscriber to the synagog but never was a regular attendant. He paid his finta (or temple tax) of L 10 per annum regularly. But he did not mix with his community. He was an almost ultra-liberal in his religious belief. He was willing to be known as a Jew but not to the ^{extent of} believing in the traditions of Judaism. . I believe that the following comment of Mr. Monneypenny is quite true of the man: " Isaac D'Israeli, though he ceased to be a Jew, never became a Christian, and apparently he saw no reason at first why his children should not remain in the same amphibious condition." Were it not for the exacting attitude of the orthodox elders in the Synagog. that caused Isaac to withdraw, I am thoroughly convinced that Isaac would never have consented to have his children baptized. His having them baptized was certainly not a case of loving Judaism

Where is P. 14?

"A person who has lived out of the sphere of your observation, of retired habits of life, who can never unite in your public worship, because as now conducted it disturbs instead of exciting religious emotions, a circumstance of general acknowledgement, who has only tolerated some part of your ritual, willing to concede all he can in those matters which he holds to be indifferent; such a man, with but a moderate portion of honour and understanding, never can accept the solemn functions of an elder of your congregation, and involve his life and distract his business pursuits not in temporary but permanent duties always repulsive to his feelings.

"I lament the occasion which drives me, with so many others, out of the pale of your jurisdiction. The larger portion of your society bears a close resemblance to the tribe of Ephraim, whom Hosea curiously describes, chap. VII. 8, ' Ephraim had mixed himself among the people! Ephraim is a cake not turned! That is, a cake upon the hearth, baked on one side, and raw on the other, partly Jew, and partly Gentile ! Why have you so many Ephraimites? The cause of this defection is worthy of your inquiry. Gentlemen, allow me to add, that whenever the governed are unruly, some defect will be discovered in the governors. Even the government of a small sect can be safely conducted by enlightened principles, and must accommodate ^{vv} itself with practical wisdom to existing circumstances, but above all with a tender regard to the injured feelings of its scattered members. Something like the domestic affections should knit us all together-- a society existing on the voluntary aid of its members is naturally in a feeble state, and if it invests

itself with arbitrary power, a blind precipitation in a weak body can only tend to self-destruction. Many of your members are already lost; many you are losing! Even those whose tempers and feelings would still cling to you are gradually seceding.

" But against all this you are perpetually pleading your existing laws, which you would enforce on all the brethren alike!

" It is of these obsolete laws so many complain. They were adapted by fugitives to their peculiar situation, quite distinct from our own, and as foreign to us as the language in which they are written. Some of you boast that your laws are much as they were a century ago! You have laws to regulate what has ceased to exist; You have laws, which through the changes of human events, prove to be impediments to the very purposes of the institutions, and for the new circumstances which have arisen, you are without laws.

" Such, Gentlemen, is my case; invincible obstacles exist against my becoming one of your elders, motives of honour and conscience! If you will not retain a zealous friend, and one who has long had you in his thoughts, my last resource is to desire my name to be withdrawn from your society.

" It remains for you, gentlemen, to set a noble example of dignity and political wisdom. Let the award of the Mahamad be revised because they have erred in the choice of a fitting person to become a Parnass.

" At all events you have my warm wishes for a happier day. Do not shut out the general improvement of the age. Make your school flourish, and remember that you

have had universities ere now; a society has only to make itself respectable in these times to draw to itself the public esteem. Believe me I have not come like Sanballat the Hornite, who with bitter derision impeded Nehemiah in his zealous labour of rebuilding the walls of the Holy City, scoffing at him for receiving the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish (Neh. IV.2) -- I am, gentlemen, with due respect, yours, Isaac D'Israeli.

" 6 King's Road, Bedford Row,
Dec. 3, 1813."

Thus we see from this letter that Isaac D'Israeli showed deep feeling for his race. He certainly would have^{been} willing to remain if they would^{have} let him have his view. He had no intentions of breaking away until they had acted so narrow in the matter. He only wished to follow those portions of Judaism in which he believed. He had no interest in the ceremonial or ritual side of Judaism.

Upon receipt of the above letter the congregation deemed it wise to keep silent for a while. After three years or so they renewed their demands. D'Israeli then sent them a final letter in which he officially resigned from the congregation. It was immediately after his resignation that his brother-in-law, the renowned architect, George Basevi, also resigned. It is interesting to note that altho Isaac had withdrawn from the synagog he is reported to have participated in "an essentially Jewish gathering, the opening of the first synagog of the west London Congregation of British Jews." (22)

In 1833 Isaac D'Israeli published a work under the title "The Genius of Judaism" In this work he ridicules the idea of the Hebrew conception that the laws concerning health and food

were revealed as divine truth to last for all eternity. In his works he has quite a number of passages that allude to things Jewish. In his "Curiosities of Literature" he has a chapter on "The Talmud," also a chapter on "Rabbinical Stories" and also a chapter on "The Jews of York." It is not in our province to go into details about his works. Suffice it to say that he shows evidence of having been quite familiar with Hebrew lore.

Isaac D'Israeli was a real literary man. From morning until night he sat and pondered over manuscripts and wrote constantly. Like Milton he became blind in the end. But even in that state he continued to have his work dictated. One fact of great interest in his work is that he was inclined to be an orientalist. When all the other literary men did not dare to depict oriental life, D'Israeli did. He knew the East well. He had had, as his son pointed out, "the advantage of the guiding friendship of the distinguished Orientalist, Sir William Ouseley." Who can tell but that Lord Beaconsfield inherited this trait of the love for Orientalism from his father.

Many people of great reputation thought highly of his works. He had the admiration of men like Byron, Scott, Southey, and Rogers. ⁽²³⁾ Concerning his relations with Scott, his son writes, "When my father many years afterwards made the acquaintance of Sir Walter Scott, the great poet, saluted him by reciting a poem of half a dozen stanzas which my father had written in his early youth." Scott told Isaac that if he had kept on he would have been one of England's greatest poets. He must have been sincere in his remark, because, as Lord Beaconsfield pointed out, ⁽²⁴⁾ Scott incorporated the poem in his "English Minstrelsy." D'Israeli's home was constantly the scene of many literary men.

This was a decided advantage for his son. Young Benjamin Disraeli looked back with much pleasure and profit upon these meetings that were held in his father's home.

When Isaac D'Israeli died he was buried in a Christian cemetery. In the parish church of Bradenham we find the following epitaph:-
(25)

" Sacred to the memories of Isaac D'Israeli, Esquire D.C.L. of Bradenham House, Author of the "Curiosities of Literature" who died January 19, 1848, in his 82 nd year; and of his wife Maria to whom he was united for forty-five years. She died April 21 st 1847, in the 72 nd year of her age."

"Their remains lie side by side in the vault of of the adjoining chancel".

Before we close our account of Isaac D'Israeli let us mention ^{that} one of his biographers erred in referring to Benjamin Disraeli of Dublin, as the uncle of Lord Beaconsfield. It has been assumed that he was the half brother of Isaac D'Israeli. This is not true. Mr. Lucien Wolf has proved that that man was a money lender and was not a Jew. He was a Protestant of Huguenot extraction. And I may offer another argument against his being an uncle. His name was Benjamin. In those days the father ⁺ did not name their sons after themselves. Since the father of Isaac was Benjamin it would be impossible for him to have named his son Benjamin. Hence to refer to Benjamin Disraeli as a half-brother of Isaac is absurd.

Chapter III.
Benjamin Disraeli.

A Brief Sketch of His Life.

Our thesis is concerned only with giving the Jewish elements in the life and works of Disraeli. For this reason we are not interested in the complete details of his biography. His general biographers have covered this ground well enough. We shall limit ourselves in this sketch merely to the outstanding incidents in his life that are pertinent to our subject under investigation.

As we have already mentioned, Benjamin Disraeli was the second oldest child of Isaac and Maria D'Israeli. He was born December 21, 1804. At the time of his birth his father lived at 6, King's Road, Bedford Row. When Benjamin became eight days old he was duly initiated into Judaism by going through the rites of circumcision. Benjamin's other brothers also went thru the same rites. David Lindo, a relative of his mother, performed the ceremony over Benjamin. In the registry of the synagog of Bevis Marks may be seen the original birth record and entry of the circumcision. The following is a facsimile of the record as it appeared in the Jewish Chronicle of December 1904. :

<u>Child's Name.</u>	<u>Father.</u>	<u>Mother.</u>	<u>Surname.</u>
Benjamin.	Isaac.	Maria.	D'Israeli.
<u>Day of Week.</u>	<u>Jewish Date.</u>	<u>Christian Era.</u>	<u>Circumcised</u>
Friday.	17 Tebet. 5565.	Dec. 21, 1804.	D.A. Lindo.

Between the years 1813 and 1817 Isaac D'Israeli experienced all that unfortunate misunderstanding with the elders of the Bevis Marks Synagog. It wasn't until 1817 that he definitely severed

all connections with Jewish interests. One reason why the whole affair culminated in that year was due, perhaps, to the fact that his father died just a few months previously. Evidently he had some respect for his father's faith and would not cause him any aggravation in his life-time. However, altho D'Israeli broke with the Synagog, he himself never became a Christian. But he did permit all of his children to become baptized. There are several accounts of the baptism of the children. In Lord Beaconsfield's own account he gives the following: "It was Mr. Sharon Turner who persuaded my father--after much trouble-- to allow his children to be baptized. He, one day, half consented, upon which Mr. Turner called on the day following and took us off to St. Andrew's, Holborn." Like many other statements of his, this account too was inaccurate. As a matter of fact all the children were not baptized in one day. His brothers James and Ralph preceded him by a month and his sister Sarah followed him by a month. So Beaconsfield's account can positively be discredited. There is another account which attributes the baptism of Benjamin to a Mrs. Ellis, and she is supposed to have done it while Isaac D'Israeli was absent. (1) On the face of it this story, too, does not seem plausible. But the most probable story of all seems to be the account that the poet Samuel Rogers, a dear friend of Isaac, influenced him to have Benjamin converted. As one writer pointed out, he was not kidnapped like young ^{ra} Motora but Rogers persuaded Isaac that by having Benjamin baptized all disabilities would be removed from the boy and that all England would be open to him. Whatever the facts previous to the act of baptism were, the truth remains nevertheless, that Benjamin Disraeli became a member of the Christian Faith July 31, 1817. He was baptized at St. Andrews, Holborn.

An exact copy of the record of baptism is found in the Gentle-
man's Magazine of December, 1875. A reproduction of it follows: (2)

When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents' Name Christian Surname	Abode	Quality Trade or Profession	By whom Ceremony was performed.
1817 July 31 NO.633.	Benjamin Son of Said to be	Isaac and Maria. about 19.	D'Israeli. King's Road. Born.	Gentleman.	J. Thimbleby

By this act, theoretically, all the opportunities of England were open to him. He was now at least a Christian in name. All the disabilities that were attached to the Jew -- disabilities that stood in the way towards his rise, politically and socially, were by the act of baptism removed, theoretically, from the path of Benjamin Disraeli. Instead of using the word "theoretically" it would perhaps be more correct to use the word, "apparently". Altho he was a baptized Jew the fact of his Jewish origin was thrown in his face on many occasions in his life-time. But we can say this much for Disraeli, that he never made capital out of the fact that he was a Christian and thus try to gain their favor. On the contrary, he knew that they would never forget his Hebrew origin and so instead of looking upon it as a misfortune, he used it to exalt his origin to the heights and tell all his fellowmen what a privilege it was to say that one comes from that noble stock, the Hebrews. We shall not dwell on this point now but will discuss it in full in another chapter.

Of the early school life of Disraeli we are not in possession of much material. Most of the data on this period is to be found in the autobiographical passages in his books, Vivian Grey and Contarini Fleming. As a matter of fact we know that young Benjamin attended school at Blackheath, which was one of his first

places of learning. Besides Benjamin there was only one other Jew by the name of Sergius who attended. Both of these boys at that time were professing Jews. We are told that when all the boys knelt down for prayer, Benjamin and this Sergius stood back. We are also informed that a Hebrew master would come to the school once a week and give the boys instruction in Hebrew. ⁽³⁾ He attended this school between the years 1813 and 1817. ⁽⁴⁾ Between the years 1817 and 1820 he was a parlour-boarder at a school kept by Mr. Cogan, a retired Unitarian minister.

In both Vivian Grey and Contarini Fleming we get a fair picture of the early life and experience of young Benjamin Disraeli. In the characters of both Vivian and Contarini we see reflected some of the early incidents in the life of Benjamin. Both heroes are pictured as being the most original and clever boys among their fellow-students. They are especially pictured as leaders. In Vivian Grey the hero is called a "^{ti}sedicious stranger." Before leaving the school he said, "that if he could devise a new and exquisite method of torture he would apply it to the teacher who was the first to apply the word 'stranger' to him." It is most probable that this is an autobiographical passage. We must remember that the early school of Disraeli was anything but a Jewish school. Prejudice was rampant. Their conception of the Jew was terribly perverted. The literature that had been published to that time depicting the Jew was anything but complimentary to him. The Jew was pictured in the worst light. They only thought of him as a vulgar, mean, avaricious, miserly, and contemptible sort of creature. They thought of him as a Christ-killer, a cheat, a usurer or a low-down coward. Imagine then a Jew trying to learn in the midst of a crowd who cherished such thoughts against his race. They called him a stranger and he resented it.

As we glance over the early portraits of Benjamin Disraeli we can see the semitic features stand out very clearly. He was a handsome youth but his face betrayed his nationality at once. And it was brought home to him many times that he was different from those among whom he dwelt. The passage in Gontarini Fleming (page 5.) is quite expressive of the feelings that he must have experienced as a boy. " They were called my brothers, but Nature gave the lie to the reiterated assertion. There was no similitude between us. Their blue eyes, their flaxen hair, and their white visages, claimed no kindred with my Venetian countenance. Wherever I moved I looked around me, and beheld a race different from myself. There was no sympathy between my frame and the rigid clime whither I had been brought to live." (5) There is no doubt about it that he was looked upon as a foreigner. No doubt they ridiculed his religion and his race. Georg Brandes analyzes the feelings exceedingly well -- the feelings that Disraeli must have experienced at that time. " To feel yourself disgraced without being conscious of any fault! To be looked down upon because of your appearance, your father, your people, your religion your race. He learned for the first time that he was a Jew, and all that the name implies. Why should he suffer all this?" (6) Such was, undoubtedly, the experience of his early school life. There has been much conjecture as to ^{the} fact of his intense Semitism in later life. It may be true that much of it was inborn. But I think that the greater amount of it came from the bitter experiences of his early life. In that respect Disraeli was an epitome of the entire race. That is to say, that his Semitism increased under the oppression and ridicule of the anti-Semites. Did he not go thru these experiences, he never would have been such an ardent booster of his faith and apologist for Judaism.

The hardships that he encountered in his early years were not so easily forgotten. The slurs that were cast upon him and his race only tended to harden the character of Benjamin Disraeli. He grit^{ted} his teeth under the ridicule and determined in his boyhood that he was going to fight it through and make good. He knew that the odds were heavily against him, yet with his farseeing eye he looked into the future and planned carefully all details that would work toward reaching his final goal. He was possed^{sed} of that enviable trait, self-confidence. And on top of this he had an indomitable ambition. These two qualities gave him enough courage to make life interesting. What he wrote in Contarini Fleming is true of himself. "Indeed, existence was int^olerable, and I should have killed myself had I not been supported by my ambition." (7) From the very first he was determined to succeed. "Forti nihil difficile" are the words which he inscribed on the banner of his first election. This supreme trust in his capabilities was characteristic of the man from early childhood through all his later years.

In 1821 Benjamin Disraeli found himself working in a law office, in the company of Messrs. Swain, Stevens, at Frederick's Place, Old Jewry. He remained in this office for almost three years. He was the private secretary to one of the busiest partners in the firm. Disraeli did not regret the years he spent in this law office. He once wrote of this experience, "It would be a mistake to suppose that the two years and more that I was in the office of our friend were wasted..... when the clients arrived I did not leave the room, but waited not only to learn my business but to become acquainted with my future clients. They were in general men of great importance-- bank directors, East

(8)

India directors, merchants, bankers." In this office he must have gained a fine insight into men and human nature. This experience stood him in good stead in later years. It was at this period in his life that his father made him some sort of offer to continue his studies at Oxford, but for some reason or other he did not avail himself of the offer. Ambitions of a different nature were spur^ring him on. It is my opinion that while he was in this office the dreams of one day becoming Prime Minister of England were taking root in his mind. The question was, how was he going to accomplish this goal. It is true that he was a Jew, yes, a converted Jew. But that made no difference. He still would be greatly handicapped. Some way, he must have figured, there must be, in which he could come to the front. He had literary talent and he knew it. He was going to employ it as an instrument in introducing himself before the English public. Once that he would be in the public eye, he felt that a beginning would be made on the road to success. And thus it was at the age of twenty-two, "he went to bed a nameless youth" and awoke to find himself famous. He had written his first novel, Vivian Grey. It took England by storm. It was a novel depicting the political situation of the day. It was well done. Men discussed it and were most anxious to meet the author of Vivian Grey. When the author was discovered the gates of society were flung open to Benjamin Disraeli. The first great step on the ladder of fame was achieved.

Disraeli was a very handsome youth. " he had long raven locks, eyes bright with intelligence and vivacity, a regular nose, and a complexion of ultra-romantic pallor." ^(c) His great ambition was to make a name for himself. He was going to do it

even at the expense of being notorious. He was going to appear as a dandy in society. This would attract people's attention. And it worked. He was a pragmatist in this sense. In his book called Sybil he once wrote, "Everything in this world is calculation." ⁽¹⁰⁾ Yes, this was certainly true of Disraeli. He calculated everything. He calculated his career with almost mathematical precision. One book followed another. He wrote continually. He also wrote political articles for the newspapers. Steadily he was becoming well known to the public. He showed real literary talent. His books we shall discuss in another chapter. Suffice here to say that Bryce, the eminent writer, said of Disraeli, "He might have been a great satirist, but he resolved to become a great statesman. For such a career his Hebrew detachment gave him some eminent advantages" ⁽¹¹⁾. This statement is true. Disraeli was not content with being an author. His early literary works were merely a means to an end. He was determined to make his mark as a statesman. Ambition there was. Talent there was. Talent and ambition backed by solid knowledge. But oh the obstacles! He saw the dark road ahead of him. He had made ^{up} his mind to succeed and there was nothing to stop him in his undertaking. Thus in 1832 he threw his hat into the political ring. He stood as a radical candidate for a small district in England. It is not in our field to discuss his politics. Suffice it to say that he started out as a radical liberal. His early struggle to gain a place in the House of Commons is a long one. We cannot go into details. Suffice it to say that he ran for five years in succession and was defeated four times. Yet he did not give up. He had "sticktoitiveness". He had perseverance and patience that were marvellous. But he won out in the end. He ran a fifth time and in 1837 Disraeli was elected as a member for Maidstone.

"Everything comes if a man will only wait", wrote Disraeli once, in his famous book called "Tancred". He waited for his political chance and at last it came. This was the beginning of his long career in Parliament. It was quite coincidental that the beginning of his political career should also mark the year of the reign of Queen Victoria, with whom Disraeli became so intimate. In his first speech in the House of Commons Disraeli spoke on a certain phase of the Irish question. As we already said, he dressed like a fop. His clothes were very odd. As soon as he stood up to speak a slight laughter spread throughout the place. His speech was interrupted by laughter and hissing many times. He was unable to finish his speech because of the rudeness of his adversaries. But before he sat now he made a threat which certainly did come true in later years. He said he was not at all surprised at the reception which he had experienced; that he had begun several times many things and he had often succeeded at last; that he would sit down now but the time would come when they would hear him. (12) Nothing truer was ever said. Years later Disraeli became the big man in Parliament and men trembled when he spoke. It wasn't long before Disraeli definitely took his stand on the side of the Tories. They were the biggest and most influential party in England. Disraeli was slowly gaining his way into fame. His position was becoming more secure right along. Especially did he strengthen his position through his marriage to Mrs. Wyndham Lewis, in 1839. She was the wife of his colleague who was on the same ticket with him when he ran for Maidstone. She was wealthy. Thus social position and financial independence was brought to him through this marriage. In the conflict with Peel over the Corn Laws, Disraeli took the side of the Protectionists. This was a big conflict. The protectionists were a wealthy group but fortunately they had

no able speakers to represent them and thus Disraeli was picked as the leader of their side. This struggle put him in the lime-light and gave to him a great deal of prominence. When Bentinck and Peel died Disraeli was the big man in the House of Commons. In 1852 Derby was chosen as head of the Tory party. It was by Derby that Disraeli was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. A few months later the famous Mr. Gladstone attacked most vehemently, the budget of Mr. Disraeli. This was the first struggle that was the beginning of the conflicts between Gladstone and Disraeli. The Derby ministry fell on account of this attack. For fourteen years after this Disraeli became leader of the Opposition. Besides contending with a hostile majority, Disraeli had a hard time getting all the constituents of his party to back him. It wasn't because they did not like Disraeli the man, but it was because they feared they couldn't put any trust in Disraeli, the man who descended from the Jewish race and whom they suspected of having foreign ideas. On many occasions especially in the year 1861, they threatened to put him out of office for they feared that it was on account of him that the party was lagging behind. Lord Derby was with him all the time. At last the time came when he and Derby carried the Reform Bill through successfully. This was one of the greatest triumphs of Disraeli. Lord Derby's health was rapidly declining and in the year 1868, when Derby had to resign on account of his health, the position of Prime Minister fell to Benjamin Disraeli. At last he had reached his goal. For the first time in the history of England a man of Jewish descent was elected to the enviable position. Disraeli knew his name thoroughly. Bryce said of him, "What he lacked in eloquence he made up for by practical adroitness. No more consummate parli-

amentary stragetist had been seen in England."⁽¹³⁾ In 1876 he passed into the upper House. Besides being the Prime Minister of England he had many other titles,-- Lord Privy Seal, Earl of Beaconsfield, Viscount of Hughenden, and Knight of the Garter.

Thus we have traced briefly the growth of the man who started from obscure corners, determined to make his mark through the thick of hostile enemies, and ultimately reaching the goal that he set for himself in early manhood.

RACE THEORY.

It was Bryce who referred to Disraeli as the man of a few large ideas. This certainly is a true observation in the study of Benjamin Disraeli. He was possessed of a few big ideas, to which he subordinated all his thoughts, and he pushed these big ideas to the limit. One of these hobbies of his was his philosophy of Race. He was always willing to talk on this subject. To him, Race was the greatest thing on earth. The greatness of Humanity, in his mind, depended upon it.

Disraeli first began to enunciate his views on Race in his famous book called *Coningsby*. This book was published in 1844. Three years later, he repeated his conception, only in more details, in his other great book called *Tancred*. These two books are novels and thus he expressed his own thoughts through the intermediacy of his characters. Later in life, he felt as though he ought to embody his beliefs in essay form and thus in his political biography of Lord George Bentinck he devoted an entire chapter to a discussion on the Jews, in which chapter quite a good deal of space is devoted to further expounding of his Race ideas. We shall make no attempt to discuss these books in the above order for that will not be necessary.

Disraeli starts out with the epigrammatic^a proposition⁽¹⁴⁾ that "all is race, there is no other truth." From this he proceeds to analyze all the deductions from this premise. He says, "Progress and reaction are but words to mystify the millions. They mean nothing, they are nothing, they are phrases and not facts. All is race. In the structure, the decay, and the development of the various families of man, the vicissitudes of history find their main solution."⁽¹⁵⁾ Disraeli was a great individualist and he be-

believed in the greatness of individual character. But to him, "it is only as a personification of the race that the individual appears great." His picture of Sidonia, his hero in Coningsby, and of Eva in Tancred confirm this thought. To him these two characters are great just because they are so representative of their race. Disraeli would make nationality depend upon race. In his whole conception, the point is clearly developed that without the conception of nationality depending upon race, nationality is unexp¹ainable. It would be artificial in that case and thus would be perishable. One reason Disraeli believes that the Jewish race has stood the acid test is because its nationality was the outgrowth of a pure race. And his idea is that a pure race is made by blood. Says he, " Language and religion do not make a race-- there is only one thing which makes a race and that is blood." ⁽¹⁶⁾ And his next point is that a pure race is indestructible. From the truth of this proposition he explains the miraculous existence of the Jew. Says he, " The fact is you cannot destroy a pure race of the Caucasian organization. It is a physiological fact; a simple law of nature, which has baffled Egyptian and Assyrian Kings, Roman Emperors , and Christian Inquisitors. No penal laws, no physical tortures, can effect that a superior race ⁽¹⁷⁾ should be absorbed in an inferior, or be destroyed by it." In his book, Lord George Bentⁿock, he repeats the same thought when he says, " The world has by this time discovered that it is impossible to destroy the Jews..... (many examples quoted)..... all of which proves, that it is in vain for man to attempt to baffle the inexorable law of nature which has decreed that a superior race shall never be destroyed or absorbed by an inferior." ⁽¹⁸⁾ Disraeli was certainly sincere in this view. He loved to repeat it again and again in a thousand different ways. He took great delight

in the fact that he was a descendant of a pure and noble race. He delighted in dwelling on the superiority of his race and showing how it has kept its purity for thousands of years. He loved to show off the greatness of the Hebrew people: And to him its greatness was due to the purity of race. In George Bentinck, he says, "That greatness results from physical organization, the consequences of which are shown in its energy and enterprise, in the strength of its will and the fertility of its brains."⁽¹⁹⁾ Disraeli was never backward in proclaiming to the world just what the Jew has accomplished and contributed to civilization. It was with ~~super~~-pride that he would tell of the work of the Jew. In the preface to his book Coningsby he comes out very strongly with the following declaration: "The Jews were looked upon in the middle ages as an accursed race, the enemies of God and man, the especial foes of Christianity. No one in those days paused to reflect that Christianity was founded by Jews; that its Divine Author, in his human capacity, was a descendant of King David; that his doctrines avowedly were the completion, not the change, of Judaism; that the Apostles and the Evangelists, whose names men daily invoked, and whose volumes they embraced with reverence, were all Jews; that the infallible throne of Rome itself was established by a Jew; and that a Jew was a founder of the Christian Churches of Asia."⁽²⁰⁾ Disraeli knew all these things to be facts and since he saw that the Jew was not getting credit for his contribution to humanity he took it upon himself to utter the truth on every possible occasion. In his own words, he says, he "thought the time had arrived when some attempt should be made to do Justice to the race which founded Christianity."⁽²¹⁾ To him, Race was the "key to History." This thought he brings out clearly in the novel that he wrote in his latter years, in his

book called 'Endymion'. Says Baron Sergius in Endymion, " No one will treat with indifference the principle of race. It is the Key of history."

His doctrine of race implied a belief in Aristocracy. He said, " It is entirely to the equality of man and similar abstract dogmas, which have destroyed ancient society without creating a satisfactory substitute." (22) In Coningsby he brings out the point somewhat clearer. Says he, " An ^munmixed race of a first-rate organization are the Aristocracy of Nature. Such excellence is a positive fact; not an imagination, a ceremony, coined by poets, blazoned by cozening heralds, but perceptible in its physical advantages, and in the vigour of its unsullied idiosyncrasy.,.,.,. He (Sidonia) was persuaded that organization would outlive persecution." (23)

Wherever he discussed the idea of race he had the Jew in mind. To him the Jewish people represented a pure race. And because they were pure he explained all their talent in all fields upon that fact. He did not look disinterestedly upon the success and high qualities of the Jew. He marvelled in them because he himself was a descendant of that race. He always felt his own blood thrill whenever he recollected the history of his race. He was continually possessed of the thought that he was a part of the Hebrew race. He perpetually thought himself to be identified with the fortunes of his people. The Race lived in him and he lived in the race. There was a mutual conflux of thought acting as the connecting link between Disraeli and his race.

PRIDE OF ANCESTRY.

There never was a man, living or dead, who ever took such intense pride in his ancestry. Disraeli has been accused of many things ⁱⁿ which people claimed he was not sincere. . But of all the

accusations, strange to say, no one ever claimed that he was insincere in the pedantic show of his intense pride that he took in his ancestry. In fact that was about the only thing they admitted was sincere of Disraeli. And they ¹explained this pride by saying that he was by birth and nature of a strong oriental temperament. He was a foreigner and naturally he would put his Jewishness on a higher plane than he would his love for England; such was the opinion of many of his adversaries and opponents.

The fact is he did have a deep sympathy for his race and he took immense pride in the fact that he was a Jew by birth. He revelled in the aristocratic nature of his ancestors. He felt that he was a great link in a noble chain. In his book "The Young Duke," the statement is made, and undoubtedly it is the feeling of Disraeli, "How immeasurably superior to the herd is the man whose father only is famous! Imagine, then, the feelings of one who can trace his line through a thousand years of heroes and of princes."⁽²⁴⁾ This statement expresses the feelings of Disraeli correctly. He did feel that he descended from a royal houses of princes. This was just the difference between his race and other races. Whereas they came from ordinary common stock, he came from a people that were the aristocracy of the earth and people who held direct communion with God. He looked upon the Hebrew Race as a greater people than any other group. For this reason he felt it a privilege to consider himself a descendant of that line. And I have no doubt that Disraeli was absolutely sincere in the matter. He did not brag of his ancestry merely to appear pedantic. He did it because it was in his very blood. And blood will tell. Again I repeat that had Disraeli not been baptized as a boy and had it been left to him to decide when he became of age, I believe that he would never have gone over to the other side. He would have

remained a staunch and loyal Jew to the very end of his life.

Disraeli used his ancestry as a weapon to ward off any gratuitous remark or slur that was cast against him. A noble ancestry, he thought, functions just in that capacity. Through his character, Fakredeem, in Tancred, Disraeli expresses his view. Says he, "What is the use of belonging to an old family unless to have the authority of an ancestor ready for any prejudice, religious or political which your combinations may require?"⁽²⁵⁾ And thus, from this point of view, Disraeli held up his ancestry as a shield against all taunts from his adversaries. If they called him a parvenu he flung back the retort that it was they who came from a "parvenu and hybrid race, while he himself sprang from the purest blood in Europe."⁽²⁶⁾ Whenever any aspersions were cast upon his origin or upon his race, Disraeli would take great delight in reminding his Christian fellowmen to remember that, "One half of Christendom worships a Jew and the other half a Jewess."⁽²⁷⁾ To him the pride of ancestry excelled all other pride in whatever it may be. Says he in one of his books, "There is no pride like the pride of ancestry, for it is a blending of all the emotions."⁽²⁸⁾ Yes, with Disraeli it must have been a very thrilling inner experience. It was in the early school days that he first learned the significance of being a Jew. They made his life miserable, it seems, and his only defense was his ancestry-- the very thing that they made fun of. The pride of ancestry grew upon him. Gradually it embedded itself deeply in his very being. It lodged there as a thrilling emotional quality. It became a part of the man. His only solace from the harsh, cruel, and unappreciative rabble, was to be found in his ancestral Past and the greatness of his Race. This emotion remained with Disraeli, not only in his childhood and youth, but

it was there in evidence in his old age. The story is told that after he had finished reading a radical newspaper one day, he turned to Lord Rowton and said, " Fifty years ago they called me an adventurer and now, when they are very angry, they cannot think of anything more scathing to say of me." ^{24 (29)} The story goes that he paused and reflected awhile and then a twinkle came into his eyes. "Just fancy calling a fellow an adventurer when his ancestors were probably on intimate terms with the Queen of Sheba." ⁽²⁹⁾ This is a trivial story, nevertheless it brings out the point, that even in his old age, after he had attained enviable ^{able} success and had all honors bestowed upon him, his mind still reverted to his ancestors. This quality was an absolute passion with him.

His pride of race was not only an incidental passion with him. The indications of it were not only confined to a few stray passages here and there. He boasted of his ancestry when it was absolutely dangerous to his rise to fame and disadvantageous to his growth in many other respects. He never did conceal his ambitions of becoming a great political figure in England. To do this, it would seem that the most advantageous course to pursue would be to try and suppress his Hebrew origin as much as possible, nay, go even further and emphasize the new faith of Christianity. (for he was baptized.) But no, he does not chose to pursue this course. On the contrary, his pride of ancestry made him come out with his feelings and tell the world exactly how he felt on these matters. In his books he makes his important heroes and heroines Jews and Jewesses and he pictures them in the most complimentary light. He attributes to them all the noblest and praiseworthy race characteristics. He makes them stand for absolute race-loyalty. He imbues them with an intense racial feeling. They sparkle with intelligence and they are wealthy and charitable and good.

Through their mouths he conveys all his pet doctrines on race, religion and politics. It would seem that by thus picturing the Jew in this favorable light he would be offending the delicate, aristocratic sensitiveness of the English. His Hebrew characters stood out in bold relief from among the other English characters and there is no doubt about it that it was hard for the English to swallow this picture of conditions. It must be remembered that the English public at that time had a rather perverted idea about the Jewish people. Disraeli knew what he was doing. He realized the chances he was taking. Yet he felt that truth was the motive that must be employed. And his love of ancestry and pride of race prompted him to paint pictures in his books that would give Justice to the Jew. No matter what the consequences were he was going to take the chance.

Not only was this true of his written word but he followed the same principles right in the House of Commons. In the middle forties, when his fame was just beginning to be established, he dared get up in the House of Commons and take up the cudgel for the Jews. He dared tell that hostile group -- that group of bitter anti-semites--just what the Jews were, how their treatment of them was unjust, what the Jews had done for Humanity, and what they now deserved. He dared expound the Hebrew Religion to them and he dared criticize certain doctrines in Christianity. His love and pride of race would have expression. Silence on these subjects would have tortured him. He spoke out all his thoughts unreserved^{ly}. He did it at the risk of stunting his chances for political growth. We shall relate and discuss the contents of these speeches in another Chapter. Suffice here to relate one of the incidents that transpired in the House of Commons. Lord

Ashley was discussing the question of Jewish Disabilities. He said, in referring to the Jews, " Their literature extended in an unbroken chain from the days of our Lord down to the present time."⁽³⁰⁾ Disraeli did not hesitate to let this statement go by unchallenged. He interrupted the speaker and said, " From far beyond that."⁽³⁰⁾ And then when Lord Ashley said, " True, for the Hon. gentleman (Disraeli) meant, no doubt, to throw into their literature the whole range of historians and prophets of the O.T., Disraeli bubbled up with all the pride that he was capable of and shouted out, " Hear!-- Hear?".⁽³⁰⁾

There is one statement which shows intense pride of race -a statement that had been attributed to Disraeli by many people. Before I make any comments on the statement I shall quote it. The statement runs as follows: " Yes, I am a Jew. When the ancestors of the honorable gentleman who has flung this fact in my face as a taunt and an imputation -- when the ancestors of that honorable gentleman, I repeat, were brutal savages on an unknown Island, mine were priests in the Temple. I feel every fibre of my being thrill with the traditions of my people."⁽³¹⁾ It seems that a great many people who know nothing else about Disraeli seem to know or rather think that Disraeli said the above statement. Now it is very probable that Disraeli made this remark. It sounds like Disraeli. But I must admit that I was unable to find it in any of his works. It is quite interesting to note that his official biographer makes no mention of it and since it is such a striking statement surely this of all other statements of pride would be mentioned first. In all my reading I only came across the statement only once. It is in quotation marks in an article of Mr. James Realf Jr. I cannot state the source of his information. I am convinced that it is not recorded in his ^ospeeches in Hansard. It would seem that it should

be there, since Mr. Realf intimates that this statement was a retort to a gentleman in the House of Commons. I could not find the statement there. But I have a theory about it. I believe the idea is one of those recurrent utterances that is prevalent and ^{which} people attribute to some personage of whom such a statement may have come. In recent times a similar utterance is attributed to Judah P Benjamin. I myself once heard a modern rabbi give the statement in a slightly different form. But the idea was the same.

Because of his liking for and pride of race, his love for various countries became a fact. He loved Venice deeply for the simple reason that it was the haven of refuge for his ancestors. It gave them shelter from the persecutions in Spain. It is very possible that he liked Turkey for the same reason, namely because the Turks showed favor to the Jewish people. It seems that Disraeli loved all people that ever did a ^{good} turn for his race.

In order to justify his intense pride of race Disraeli rested not only upon the laurels of the past of the Hebrew people but he continually pointed to their genius of the present and even predicted what would come from them. He spoke of the ^{present} genius of his race. He said, "The creative genius of Israel never shone so bright; The Greek is exhausted." ⁽³²⁾ Disraeli pointed with much pride to the high positions of State occupied by Jews. He said, "It was not as a patron, but as an appreciating and devoted friend, that the High Chancellor of Austria appointed Frederick Gantz, (a Jew) secretary to the Congress of Vienna." ⁽³³⁾ Again he remarks that "Metternich always employed as many Jews as possible in the public service." ⁽³⁴⁾ In Coningsby he enumerates in a long list all of the great Jewish men of state. Sidonia says, "I had, on my arrival, an interview with the Russian Minister of Finance, Count Cancrin; I beheld the son of a Lithuanian Jew." ⁽³⁵⁾ When Sidonia went ^{to} Spain,

he met the Spanish Minister, Senor Mendizabel; and he says, " I beheld one like myself, the son of a Nuevo Christiano, a Jew of Aragon." ⁽³⁶⁾ It is a mistake, however, when Disraeli refers to Soult as a Hebrew. In his enthusiasm to boast of the Hebrew genius, Disraeli sometimes attributed the wrong origin to men. He made the mistake also in referring to Massena as a Jew. But Disraeli continues and gives more names. In Prussia Sidonia meets Count Arnim, a Prussian Jew. And then Sidonia ends up his speech to Coningsby by saying, " So you see, my dear Coningsby, that the world is governed by very different personages from what is imagined by those who are not behind the scenes." ⁽³⁷⁾ In boasting of the greatness of his race he says, " We hesitate not to say that there is at this present time, and following in this only the examples of a long period, that so much delights and fascinates, and elevates and ennobles Europe, as the Jewish." ⁽³⁸⁾ Disraeli said, " The catalog is too vast to enumerate, too illustrious to dwell for a moment on secondary names." ⁽³⁹⁾ The list of Jewish talent that he speaks of in his book would fill a little catalog in itself. He speaks of Jewish talent as leading in all branches of human endeavor. Of poetry he comments, " Great poets require a public; we have been content with the immortal melodies that we sang more than two thousand years ago by the waters of Babylon and wept." ⁽⁴⁰⁾ He mentions the prophets as the greatest poets of all times and the Psalms etc. In philosophy he mentions Spinoza. Of music he makes the following statement, " Enough for us that the three great creative minds to whose exquisite inventions all nations at this moment yield, ⁽⁴¹⁾ Rossini, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, are of the Hebrew race." He says that all people yield their offering and do homage to "the sweet singers of Israel." ⁽⁴²⁾ In his book "Lord George Bentinck" ⁿ he gives a long list of the Jews who are artists of the drama, dancers,

singers etc etc. Disraeli says, " You never observe a great intellectual movement in Europe in which the Jews do not greatly participate. The first Jesuits were Jews; that mysterious Russian Diplomacy which so alarms Western Europe is organized and principally carried on by Jews; that mighty revolution which at this moment is preparing in Germany, and which will be, in fact, a second and greater Reformation, and of which so little is as yet known in England, is entirely developing under the auspices of Jews, who almost monopolize the professorial chairs of Germany. Neander, the founderⁿ of Spiritual Christianity and who is Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Berlin, is a Jew."⁽⁴³⁾ Then he mentions the names of Benary and Wehl as being Jews. With great pride he mentions the following, " The greatest legislator , Moses, the greatest administrator , Solomon, and the greatest of reformers, Christ, were Jews. What race, extinct⁽⁴⁴⁾ or living, can produce three such men as these," he asks. In his famous book "Alroy," the intense pride of race is carried out to the extreme. It is one long eulogium on the wonders of the Hebrew race. About the same facts as the above are mentioned only with a great deal more of intensity. And in summing up the whole matter of the Jewish genius Disraeli has this to say about it, " The unmixed persecuting races disappear. The pure persecuted race remains. And at this moment, in spite of the centuries, of the tens of centuries, of degradation, the Jewish mind exercises a vast influence on the affairs of Europe. I speak not of their laws which you still obey, of their literature, with which your minds are saturated, but of the living Hebrew intellect."⁽⁴⁵⁾

Disraeli not only gave a onesided picture of the Jew. He did not picture the Jew altogether in a rosy light. He admitted and spoke of their unpleasant characteristics. In one place he

remarks that " Jews contribute more than proportion to the aggregate of infamy and vile. " ⁽⁴⁶⁾ Personally I question the truth of this statement. I have not the facts to prove or disprove its validity. But granted that it is true, Disraeli immediately ventures to apologize for the condition. Says he, "In this they obey the law which regulates the destiny of all persecuted races." ⁽⁴⁷⁾ In other words, he is satisfied that this wicked trait is not an inborn race characteristic, but one that is acquired under adverse external conditions. He ¹explains further that " The infamous is the business of the dishonoured; and as infamous pursuits are generally illegal pursuits, the persecuted race will be most successful in combating ^t the law." ⁽⁴⁸⁾ As far as crime is concerned, Disraeli says that "The Trumpet of Sinai still sounds in the Jewish ear and the Jew is never seen on the scaffold, unless it be at an auto da fe'. " ⁽⁴⁹⁾ In another passage he emphasized the point that "the Jew is sustained by a sublime religion and therefore is rarely demoralized." ⁽⁵⁰⁾ He brings out the fact that the Jew never degraded as much as the other persecuted races. "Viewed in this light, the degradation ^{of} of the Jewish race is alone a striking evidence of its excellence, for none but one of the great races could have survived the trials it endured." ⁽⁵¹⁾

After Disraeli had placed the Jewish race on such a high pedestal, he comes forth with his conclusion, that "no existing race is so much entitled to the esteem and gratitude of Society as the Hebrew." ⁽⁵²⁾ His whole apologetic standpoint was taken, not only for the love that he had of talking about the merits of his race, but for the purpose of combating ^t the prejudices that were held by his Christian fellowmen. It seems that he wanted to reduce their mis-conceptions and prejudices to absurdity and put an end to ^{them} [^] once and forever. That he helped to alleviate

the grievances and hard feelings of the Gentile against the Jew in England there is no doubt in my mind. Disraeli was bold and absolutely fearless in his praise of the Jewish race. At times his utterances were considered as insolence and insult to the Christian ear. But he cared not, for he believed that he was telling the truth. I believe that, to a remarkable extent, Disraeli was responsible for the "change in heart" of the Christian attitude toward the Jew. We shall discuss more of this later. By boasting of the high position of the Jewish race Disraeli pleaded for a high regard of that race from all people. He once said to the people, "If you were sincere, you would acknowledge that it is to the Jews and to Judaism that you are indebted for all your most precious treasures, and instead of contemning and persecuting them, you would hold them in high esteem."⁽⁵³⁾ He pointed out to his fellowmen that it was dangerous to the society of Europe for them to allow the shameful treatment of the Jews to continue. In his famous essay on the Jews he remarked, "It remains for us to notice the injurious consequences to European Society of the course pursued by the communities to this race;..... existing Statesmen should ponder."⁽⁵⁴⁾ And finally he pleads with his fellowmen that they should encourage the Jew. In speaking of the Jew he says, "Their bias is to religion, property and natural aristocracy; and it should be to the interest of Statesmen^s that this bias of a great race should be encouraged, and their energies and their creative powers should be enlisted in the cause of existing society."⁽⁵⁵⁾ His one great wish was to see this condition realized. He was angry at the narrow prejudice displayed by his fellow Christians. And he warned them right in Parliament that if they didn't extend this welcome hand to the Jew he would ixspite of it reach his goal anyway. "They are not a new people who have just got into notice, and

who, if you do not recognize their claims, may disappear. They are an ancient people, an enduring people and a people who in the end have generally attained their objects." ⁽⁵⁶⁾ This utterance reminds us very much of the statement that he himself made in the House of Commons when his enemies hissed him and he said, " I have begun many things many times and at last I have succeeded." In spite of the opposition he made his mark and he predicted the same destiny for his own people. He had confidence in his race.

JERUSALEM.

One could write a small thesis in itself on the effect that Jerusalem, or rather, Palestine, had upon Disraeli. Nothing else proved such an influencing factor in his life as did this ancient country of his ancestors. It influenced his life, his writings and religious points of view. It was the one great source of inspiration for him.

In his youth he had an intense longing to one day visit the home of his forefathers. He wanted to tread upon that holy soil, to partake of the inspiration that was manifested to his fathers of old. He longed to see that marvellous land " which ⁽⁵⁷⁾ was the cradle of the race." He thought of the holy mountains from which went forth the Law that set the standards of living for the entire world. He wanted to see the land of the Temple, the prophets, and priests of Israel. As George Brandes pointed out, " A pilgrimage to those lands (Palestine) was to him not ⁽⁵⁸⁾ only a longing desire but a religion." His own feelings were later well expressed in the character of Tancred in the book by the same name. As suggested by Froude, the main reason why he did not go to Palestine sooner than he did was perhaps due to

financial reasons. I hardly think so, because at the time his father was quite well-to-do, and I am sure that his father would have gladly sent him if he ^{had} cared to go. Whatever the reason may have been, we know, as a matter of fact, that a family by the name of Austens came to Disraeli and fixed it up so that he could carry out his plans. It so happened that a gentleman by the name of William Meredith went with him on the trip as his companion. Meredith was engaged to be married to Sarah, Disraeli's sister, after he came back from the orient. Unfortunately he died before leaving Alexandria and Sarah remained single ⁸ all the rest of her days. Disraeli made this first journey in 1831, that is, he was in Palestine in that year. As a matter of fact he started on the trip somewhat earlier, but he visited other places first. Before he landed in Jerusalem he had been in Constantinople, Syria, and Egypt. The impressions gained from this journey had a tremendous influence on all his written works, especially in such books as Tancred and Alroy. There is no doubt about it that his political theories on the Eastern question were to a great extent shaped by the impressions from his eastern journey. "The Crusaders loved the city (Jerusalem) for heaven's sake, for the salvation which the conquest of it was to procure for them but he loved it for the sake of the race which had built it." ⁽⁵⁹⁾ His passion for Jerusalem formed the romantic side of Disraeli. He had an oriental inclination long before he went East, but there is no doubt that the Palestinian journey heightened his already deep-seated oriental feelings. His father was possessed of the same feeling. It may have been an inherited quality with Disraeli. Whether the feeling was inborn or acquired the fact remains that he was exceedingly happy in this holyland. As Brandes remarked, "Every inch of the land reminded him of Israel's greatness." ⁽⁶⁰⁾

For him, Jerusalem had a world significance. Says he in Tancred,
" The view of Jerusalem is the history of the world; it is more,
it is the history of earth and of heaven." ⁽⁶¹⁾ To him it was a land
peculiarly sanctified and divinely endowed. Tancred says, " I
feel persuaded that the country sanctified by such intercourse
and such events must be endowed with marvellous and peculiar
qualities, which man may not in all ages be competent to penetrate
but which, nevertheless, at all times exercise an irresistible
influence upon his destiny." ⁽⁶²⁾ For this reason Tancred is anxious
to visit the Holyland. For this reason Disraeli himself thought
it to be such a marvellous country. In other words he thought
it to be the great land of revelation. Tancred in his conversa-
tion with Sidonia, the wonderful Jewish character, says "that
inspiration is not only a divine but a local quality." ⁽⁶³⁾ To which
Sidonia answers, " You and I have some reason to believe so; I
believe that God spoke to Moses on Mount Horeb, and you believe
that he was crucified, in the person of Jesus, on Mount Calvary.
Both were, at least carnally, children of Israel: They spoke Hebrew
to the Hebrews; the prophets were only Hebrews; the apostles
were only Hebrews. ... etc. etc." ⁽⁶⁴⁾ Thus we see that thru his
characters Disraeli looked upon Jerusalem as the great land that
inspired the geniuses of all times. Tancred is firmly convinced
that, "Some celestial quality, distinguishing it from all other
climes, must forever linger about it..... I am induced therefore,
to believe that it is part of the divine scheme that its influence
should be local." ⁽⁶⁵⁾ Tancred is intent upon going there. Sidonia
notices his intense longing and says to him, " It appears to
me, Lord Montacute (i.e. Tancred) that that what you want is to
penetrate the great Asian mystery," ⁽⁶⁶⁾ to which Tancred answers, "

"You have touched my inmost thought." Thus we get to understand what Disraeli meant by the rather mystical expression, "The Great Asian Mystery." It was the idea of divine Revelation originating in the ancient land of Palestine. Disraeli uses this expression many times.

Some writers entertain the thought that while Disraeli was in Jerusalem he contemplated seriously the idea that he should spend his efforts in restoring Palestine to the race of Hebrews. It is quite probable that such a thought may have glided through his mind. His passion for Jerusalem and his race certainly justify the contemplation of such an endeavor. Brandes' remark is quite correct, I believe, when he says that Disraeli gave up the idea thinking that such a task would be a limited proposition. The ambitions of Disraeli were decidedly higher than that. The fact is that his mind was diverted from the thought by the conditions that were raging in England. The so-called Reform Bill was causing great consternation in England, and as Disraeli was vitally interested in it, he was, by it, called back to England.

We can not pass over the subject of Jerusalem without mentioning the fact that Disraeli, if he lived in these days, would be labeled a Zionist. Just as to the prophets, the land of Palestine and the race of Israel were inseparable. When he thought of the race he also had the land in mind and when he thought of the land he associated along with it the people. His passion for Jerusalem really amounted to the idea of a re-establishment of the Hebrews in their own land. His utterances on the subject would lead us to believe that he cherished this idea as a sincere hope. He continually dreamed of such an outcome. He, however, was not the first to advocate the restoration of the Hebrew race. In the early part of the nineteenth century many people advocated the restoration,

of course, doing it from manifold motives. The main reason for the advocacy of such a proposition was political. It was looked upon as a buffer-state and for that reason the power that had Palestine under control would have a decided advantage as far as protection in that vicinity was concerned. No doubt, this was the reason of such a pamphlet from the pen of the Englishman Hallingsworth who, in 1852, warmly advocated the restoration of a Jewish State in Palestine. The motive here, of course, was the guarantee of protection of the route to India. Bismarck, too, entertained the idea. It is my opinion that Disraeli, in advocating the restoration, did it mostly because of his sympathetic feelings for the race. We have already spoken of his intense passion for the country and for the people. His idea was that if the Jews had their own home land again they would be inspired as in the days of yore and the greatness of the race would, there-
by, be assured. We ^{have already} expounded his theory of the purity of the Hebrew blood. By having their own land, he felt that this condition had a better chance of surviving. In "David Alroy" he says, "It must not be, it must not be; the royal blood of twice two
(68)
thousand years, it must not die, die like a dream." The continuity of the race of the Hebrews was of utmost importance in his advocacy of the re-establishment of the people in their own land.

Chapter V.

DISRAELI AND RELIGION.

As a matter of fact, we know that Benjamin Disraeli was not raised in a religious environment. His father's home did not offer him any religious influence. His father, as we have mentioned before, was a free-thinker in religious matters. In fact none of his ancestors seemed to be overly religious. His grandmother was an anti-semitic. She cursed the very idea of being a Jewess. Thus, when we come to note that Benjamin Disraeli possessed a deep religious feeling we search in vain to discover the trait in one of his forefathers. It does not seem as though the characteristic was inherited. And yet, to say that it was entirely acquired would also be far from the truth. There were many forces at work in the molding of the religious attitude of Disraeli. In the first place, he was a Jew, and the religious attitude is more or less an inherent race characteristic. In the second place, his sensitiveness to the anti-semitic remarks increased his love for his people and his religion. These bitter remarks drove him to the position where he had to justify and exalt his religion. In the process of the defense his love for it was increased. In the third place, we might mention the fact, ^{that} for any one who had political aspirations, the religious attitude of the candidate was almost essential. No doubt these were the forces at work in Disraeli. Bryce is quite right in remarking that "he had an historical interest in religion." At the same time he saw a great many beneficial results in the existence of religion.

In "Lothair" he says, "Religion should be the rule of life, not a casual incident in it." In the same book, he has his

Cardinal Grandison say, "Religion is civilization, the highest; it is a reclamation of man from savageness by the Almighty." Disraeli believed that the higher Asiatic religion was an absolute essential for all Europe, for he believed that without it all Europe would again sink into heathen worship.

From his book, "Lothair", we gather that the opinion of Paraclete reflects his own belief as to the personality of the Creator. Says Paraclete, "Is it more unphilosophical to believe in a personal God, omnipotent and omniscient, than in natural forces unconscious and irresistible?" As far as his belief in the soul is concerned we obtain his conception from his book "Venetia". Here he says, "Plato believed, and I believe with him, in the existence of a spiritual antitype of the soul, so that when we are born, there is something within us which from the instance we live and move thirsts after its likeness. This propensity develops itself with the development of our nature." Again in "Lothair" he says, "The soul requires a sanctuary." Disraeli was more or less of a Universalist in his religious views. He did not limit religion to any particular creed. "What is your religion?" asked Lothair. "The true religion, I think. I worship in a church where I believe God dwells, and dwells for my guidance and my good, my conscience." His idea of religion is beautifully brought out by Cardinal Grandison, in "Lothair", when he has him say, "All things that are good and beautiful make us more religious. They tend to the development of the religious principle in us, which is our divine nature." In a speech at Glasgow, Disraeli said, "The spiritual nature of man is stronger than codes or constitutions. No government can endure which does not recognize that for its foundation, and no legislation which does not flow from its foundation. As time is divided into day and night, so religion rests upon the providence

of God and the responsibility of man. One is manifest, the other is mysterious; but both are divine." (1)

DISRAELI AND THE CHURCH.

Disraeli was one who always wished the Church well. He had the greatest admiration for the Church as an institution. He believed in its power for good. He himself was a regular attendant at church. In one of his books he once said, "What the soul is to the man, the Church is to the world." Disraeli looked upon the Church as one of the greatest tools in the early development of England and in his day he considered it as the sacred institution that could and would build up and maintain the 'Semitic Principle' so essential to all the world. In "Lothair" he says, "The Church comes forward and without equivocation offers to establish direct relations between God and man. Philosophy denies its title, and disputes its power. Why? Because they are founded on the supernatural. What is the supernatural? Can there be anything more miraculous than the existence of man and the world? Anything more literally supernatural than the origin of things? The Church explains what no one else pretends to explain, and which everyone agrees, it is of first moment should be made clear." In a speech at Oxford he stated his reasons very clearly as to why he thought the Church was so important an institution. In this speech he brings out the fact that if there were no Church, then man would set up altars in his own heart. He would worship idols etc, etc. In the preface to his book "Coningsby" he said, "The Church is a sacred corporation for the promulgation and maintenance in Europe of certain Asian principles which, although local in their birth, are of divine origin and eternal application."

Disraeli looked upon the Church as an institution that lent much strength to the national character of England. Said he, "The Church of England is not a mere depository of doctrine. The Church of England is a part of England-- it is a part of our strength and a part of our liberties, a part of our national character. It is a chief security for the local Government,..... It is a principle barrier against that centralizing supremacy, which has been in other countries so fatal to liberty." ⁽²⁾ Although Disraeli was a warm advocate of the existence of the Church of England, yet he was not blind to its faults and shortcomings. And he assigns a reason for its decline. In the book "Tancred" he remarks, "The Church of England, mainly from its deficiency of oriental knowledge and from a misconception of the priestly character which has been the consequence of that want, has fallen of late years into straits." ⁽³⁾ Disraeli was not one who was narrow in his religious attitude. In fact he had a broad point of view. It is true that he wanted to see unity but uniformity was not necessary in religion. To him the various Church parties existing at one time were a beneficial idea. Says he, "I look upon the existence of parties in the Church as a necessary and beneficial consequence. They have always existed, even from apostolic times. They are a natural development of the religious sentiment in man, and they represent fairly the different conclusions at which, upon subjects that are most precious to him, the mind of man arrives." ⁽⁴⁾

Disraeli hoped that the Church would be the one great agent in making the world understand the Jew. In other words he wished the Church to be the connecting link between the Christian and the Jew. He asks, "Is it not the first business of the Christian Church to make the population whose minds she attempts to form and whose ⁽⁵⁾ morals she seeks to guide acquainted with the history of the Jews?"

Again he asks, " Has not the Church of Christ - the Christian Church, whether Roman Catholic, or Protestant - made the History of the Jews the most celebrated history in the world?" To understand this statement we must appreciate the fact that what people generally called Christianity he was prone to call ~~it~~ Judaism. Christianity to him was "Completed Judaism". We shall discuss this more in detail in a following chapter. Throughout Disraeli's works we find that he assumes a remarkable liking for the Catholic Church. He looks with admiration on "its active organization, mystical doctrines, magical means and practical ends." But underneath it all the reason for his liking the Roman Church may be given on the ground of the statement in his book Sybil, where he says, "The Church of Rome is to be respected as the only Hebreaco-Christian church extant." He loved anything that had its origin in Judaism. This point firmly established in his mind, it was quite easy for Disraeli to show that the Jews who were the real worshippers of the Semitic principle had a rightful place in England, since the Anglican Church was the Semitic-Principle representative in England. In taking this point of view and arguing for Jewish rights he did not have to deny that the State possessed a creed.

This brings us to say a few words on Disraeli's idea of Church and State. " What I understand by the union of Church and State is an arrangement which renders the State religious by investing authority with the highest sanctions that can influence the sentiments and convictions and consequently the conduct of the subject, whilst, on the other hand, that union renders the Church- using that epithet in its noblest and purest sense- political; that is to say, it blends civil authority with ecclesiastical influence; it defines and defends the rights of the laity, and prevents the Church from subsiding into a sacerdotal corporation." (7)

To Disraeli a union of Church and State meant a guarantee of religious liberty. In expounding this point he said, " I therefore hold that the connection between Church and State is really a guarantee of religious liberty and toleration just as much as we sustain by other means the standard of value. If you wish to break up a state, and destroy and disturb a country, you can never adopt a more effectual method than by destroying at the same time the standard of value and of toleration." ⁽⁸⁾ And in the same speech he said further, " It is because there is an Established Church that we have achieved religious liberty and enjoy religious toleration, and without the union of the Church with the State I do not see what security there would be either for religious liberty or toleration." ⁽⁹⁾

THE SEMITIC PRINCIPLE.

To appreciate Disraeli's conception of Christianity and of Judaism we must understand exactly what he meant by his oft-repeated phrase, 'Semitic Principle'. As we come to understand it we shall see how it was the basis of his whole religious point of view. It was the premise of all his later religious conceptions. He emphasized it in all his writings and speeches, for to him it was the foundation of all his other convictions. In one of his books he writes, " The Jews represent the Semitic principle; all that is spiritual in our nature. They are the trustees of tradition and the conservators of the religious element." The French Revolution was an attempt to overthrow the religious principle and substitute for it a reign of reason. But, as history proved, that was a futile attempt. Reason was not sufficient to guide man on the moral path. Thus reaction set in and under the Romantic influence an

attempt was made to restore the religious principle. It is very obvious how Disraeli fell under the spell of the Romantic movement. His whole conception of Race, Conservatism, and Religion can be explained by it. It gave sanction to these pet ideas of his. Yes we may even say that Disraeli's ideas were molded by the movement. To Disraeli, the movement seemed to be a reaction, Semitic in nature, to 'the Aryan attempts at emancipation'. The reaction was an added proof to Disraeli of the superb strength of the Semitic principle, indicating to him that it was an essential need in the life of Europe. He did not hesitate on any occasion to advocate it and give the Hebrews credit for its origin. In fact this idea was to him the great apology for the existence and the continuity of the Hebrew race. What capital he made of this Semitic principle we shall bring out in the following pages of this thesis.

VIEWS ON CHRISTIANITY.

When Disraeli was twelve years of age his father had him baptized. From that moment he became a nominal Christian. To what extent he assimilated Christianity will be our interest. In general we may say that Disraeli could not be classed as a full-hearted Christian, holding views as he did. Nor, on the other hand, could he be classed as a complete Jew. As a matter of fact he was a mixture of the two, as we shall endeavor to point out. Bryce and Horace E. Samuel, in their study of Disraeli, are about correct when they say that Christianity did not play an integral part in his life, but at best it was merely an intellectual habit with him. As a matter of habit Disraeli became quite a regular Church-member. But it must not be taken for granted that, inasmuch as he was a nominal Christian, he subscribed to all its tenets and doctrines.

Indeed! His views on Christianity were far different from those held by most Christians. Disraeli took issue with them on many fundamental points. In general we may characterize his point of view in the following way. In the first place, he emphasized that Judaism is the fundamental religion out of which Christianity came into being. He elevated Judaism to the heights, giving it a far more important position than Christianity ever dreamt it had. His one great aim was to make Christians realize this fact. In the second place, he tried with all his might to show that Christianity was not a new religion, that it did not supersede the religion of the Hebrews. His conception was that Christianity was merely a continuity of the Hebrew religion; in his own words, that it was 'Completed Judaism'. And in the third place, he set out to prove that Christianity was laboring under some very fundamental errors. In general these three points characterize his attitude on Christianity. Now let us explain in detail some of the points taken up by him.

Disraeli seems to have taken a fiendish delight in telling the Christian world that Jews took a prominent part in spreading Christianity in the early days. Says he, "And when the time was ripe to diffuse the truth among the ethnics, it was not a senator of Rome or a philosopher of Athens who was personally appointed by our Lord for that office, but a Jew of Tarsus, who founded the Seven Churches of Asia." Disraeli refers to the fact that "No one has been permitted to write under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit except a Jew." (10) It is generally held that the small section of Jews that lived at the time of Christ in Palestine rejected Christ. This notion is generally held. Disraeli does not accept it. He says, "Nor is it indeed historically true that the small section of the Jewish race which dwelt in Palestine rejected Christ.

the

The reverse is ^a truth. Had it not been for the Jews of Palestine, the good tidings of our Lord would have been unknown for ever to the northern and western races." ⁽¹¹⁾ Thus Disraeli gives credit to the Jew for the spread of early Christianity and eventually its growth over the whole world. Not only did the Jews help to spread Christianity but he shows where the early Christians were actually Jews. Says Disraeli, " The first apostles were Jews, exclusively Jews; the first evangelists were Jews, and Jews only. For more than a century none but Jews believed in the teaching of Jesus." ⁽¹²⁾ Disraeli believes that all Jewry did not accept the teachings of Christ because, as he says, " When Christianity was presented to the ancestors of the present Jews, it came from a suspicious quarter and was offered in a questionable shape." ⁽¹³⁾

Disraeli pointed out to his Christian brethren how Christianity had appropriated a great deal of the religion of the Hebrews. He showed how Christianity was saturated through and through with Jewish laws and Jewish customs. Says he, " The toiling multitude rest every seventh day by virtue of a Jewish law; they are perpetually reading, "for their example", the records of Jewish History.... acknowledge that the only medium of communication between the Creator and themselves is the Jewish Race." ⁽¹⁴⁾ In all his works Disraeli tells in great detail of all the contributions that the Jews have made and are making to civilization. His list of Jewish talent in every branch of human endeavor makes up a small catalog in itself. He shows how the Jews have been a real factor in building up this world. And, "Yet" says Disraeli, " they treat that race (Hebrew) as the vilest of generations; and instead of logically looking upon them as the human family that has contributed most to human happiness they extend to them every term of obloquy and every form of persecution." ⁽¹⁵⁾ And yet Disraeli asks, "Is it therefore wonderful, that

a great portion of the Jewish race should not believe in the most important portion of the Jewish religion.⁽¹⁶⁾" From this statement, as will be corroborated by others that he made, we infer that Disraeli believed that with the less^{en}ing of the persecutions on the part of the Christians the Jews would gradually turn and embrace the broader viewpoints of Christianity.

When Christianity came into being and developed, the claim was that Christianity had a new morality to offer. They referred to the new scheme of life as the 'new Dispensation'. Disraeli would not admit this proposition. In fact, he resented the claim. He said, " There cannot be two moralities; and to hold that the Second Person of the Trinity could teach a different morality from that which had already been revealed by the First Person of the Holy Trinity is a dogma so full of terror that it may perhaps be looked upon as the infallible sin against the Holy Spirit."⁽¹⁷⁾

The view that Disraeli takes of Jesus is indeed interesting. He does not accept the supernatural origin of Jesus.. To him, Jesus is great simply because his blood can be traced from the royal and aristocratic House of Israel. Disraeli was aware that it was through Joseph and not through Mary that his princely ancestry to David is reckoned. It was the princely descent of Jesus that made him (Jesus) so exalted in his estimation. Whenever Disraeli has occasion to refer to Jesus he always calls him 'Hebrew prince,' or 'Hebrew ruler.' Very frequently he refers to him as the the devout Christian does, by calling him, 'Our blessed Lord.'⁽¹⁸⁾ Disraeli looked upon Jesus as the greatest product of the Jewish race. He claims that no matter what will happen this fact shall always remain.

"....., These may be dreams, but there is a fact that none can contest. Christians may continue to persecute Jews, and Jews may per-

sist in disbelieving Christians, but who can deny that Jesus of Nazareth, the Incarnate Son of the Most High God, is the eternal glory of the Jewish race!" (19) Whether Disraeli accepted the fact of the Incarnation is difficult to say, but it seems certain that the idea of it was not repulsive to him. In fact, the idea seems to be very complimentary to his race since the Jewish blood plays such an important role in the doctrine. Says Disraeli, " If the infallible mystery of the Incarnation be developed to him (the Jew) he will remember that the blood of Jacob is a chosen and peculiar blood." (20) Disraeli tells of how many men were deified after their death. Such were men like Caesar and Alexander. So was Jesus. But to him this merely indicates the superiority of his race, because it is proof to him that the duration of Jesus's influence as a divine agent will be a fact perhaps for all time, while the other mens' influence will not last. To him there was nothing repulsive in the idea that the Jew should accept Jesus as one of their great men. He said, " Some things they may never agree upon..... but nevertheless, it can hardly be mentioned that there is anything revolting to a Jew to learn that a Jewess is the queen of heaven, or that the flower of the Jewish race are even now sitting on the right hand of the Lord God Sabaoth." (21) Considering the proposition of Disraeli that Christianity was "Completed Judaism" we can readily understand why he ascribed such importance to Jesus, the man through whom the Jewish religion became a fact for the multitude. Says Disraeli, " The Jew may ask whether all the princes of the House of David have done so much for the Jews as that prince who was crucified on Calvary." (22) Again he says, " Had it not been for Him (Jesus) the Jews would have been comparatively unknown, or known only as a high oriental Caste which lost its country. Has he not made their History the most famous in the world? Has he not hung

(23)

up their laws in every temple etc etc?" It would seem from his writings that Disraeli believed in the atoning power of Jesus. In commenting upon this doctrine he says, "The doctrine embraces all time and space - nay, chaos and eternity." ⁽²⁴⁾ There was nothing repulsive to him in the doctrine of Redemption. He doesn't see why the Jews do not admit it. Says he, "Whether presented by a Roman or Anglo-Catholic or Genevese divine, by popes, bishop or presbyter, there is nothing, one would suppose, very repugnant to the feelings of the Jew when he learns that the redemption of the human race has been effected by the mediatorial agency of a child of Israel." To him Jesus was a Jew descended from the royal House of David. Disraeli looked upon him as he would upon any other of the prophets in Israel. Only he made this distinction between Jesus and the remaining prophets. Disraeli thought of the prophets as merely talking to and inspiring the Jewish people. But he says, "Through Jesus God spoke to the Gentiles, and not to the tribes of Israel only. That is the great worldly difference between Jesus and his inspired predecessors." ⁽²⁵⁾

Disraeli, in his apologetics for Judaism, dared attack some of the strong prevailing doctrines of Christianity. He, indeed shocked many Christians by his frank exposition of his views on the doctrine of the Atonement. His views are clearly brought out in "Tancred," in the conversation between Tancred and Eva. Says Eva, "And what do you hold to be the essential object of the Christian scheme?" To which question Tancred answers, "The Expiation." Then Eva shows where the idea of atonement is a characteristic Jewish belief. She repeats the Christian idea and then says, "I acknowledge the vast conception, dimly as my brain can partially embrace it. I understand thus much: the human race is saved; and, without the apparent agency of a Hebrew prince, it could not have been saved. Now tell me: suppose the Jews had not prevailed

upon the Romans to crucify Jesus, what would have become of the Atonement?" (26) Tancred, a bit embarrassed, answers, ".... I must not even consider an event that had been preordained by the Creator of the world for countless ages." (26) To which statement Eva immediately answers, "Ah ! preordained by the Creator for countless ages! Where then was the inexpressible crime of those who fulfilled the beneficent intention?" (26) Thus Disraeli keeps up the argument and shows that the Doctrine is somewhat involved and inconsistent. In his essay on "Lord George Bentinck" he brings out the same points, again asking, "Could that be a crime which secured for all mankind eternal joy?" (27) Disraeli did believe in the Atonement but he evidently did not believe that Jesus was crucified by Jews. He seems to take great pride in the fact that it was through a Jew that the whole world was saved. Says he, "the holy race supplied the victim and the immolators. What race could have been entrusted with such a consummation?..... Persecute us! Why, if you believed what you profess, you should kneel to us! You raise statues to the heroes who save a country. We have saved the human race, and you persecute us for doing it." (28)

With equal force and sincere conviction, Disraeli assailed the idea that the Jews were dispersed through the world as a divine punishment by God. Disraeli emphatically denies that the dispersion came to the Jew because of a crime that he had committed. Against this allegation Disraeli says, "It is neither historically true nor dogmatically sound." (29) In his argument to prove that the dispersion as a penalty was not historically true he says, "At the time of the advent of our Lord, the Jewish race was much dispersed throughout the world as at this present time and had been so for many centuries." (30) Disraeli cites the historical fact that there were many Jews in Alexandria, Rome, and other places at the time.

And finally Disraeli concludes, "From all which it appears that the dispersion of the Jewish Race, preceding as it did for countless ages the advent of our Lord, could not be for conduct which occurred^R subsequently to the advent...." ⁽³¹⁾ And again, Disraeli was not satisfied with the historical proof as an only argument against the penalty-dispersion-theory. In addition to showing that the allegation was not historically true, Disraeli also attempted to prove that it was dogmatically unsound. In proof of this he says, "The imprecation of the mob at the crucifixion is sometimes quoted as a divine decree. It is not a principle of jurisprudence, human or inspired, to permit the criminals to ordain their own punishment. Why, too, should they transfer any portion of the affliction to their posterity? What evidence have we that the wild suggestion was sanctioned by omnipotence? On the contrary, amid the expiating agony, a divine voice at the same time solicited and secured forgiveness. And if forgiven, could the cry of the rabble at such a scene bind a nation?" ⁽³²⁾

Chapter VI.

EFFORTS IN BEHALF OF JEWISH EMANCIPATION.

Disraeli must go down in history as one of the foremost leaders in the prolonged struggle for Jewish Emancipation. Thus far, not much credit has been given him for his most valuable efforts expended in behalf of the Jews. But historians will one day awaken to the fact and realize that it was Disraeli that hastened the obtaining of Jewish rights by many years. It is difficult at first to appreciate this fact, but as one makes a study of the conditions at the time of Disraeli and realizes how opposed England was to giving the Jews civil and political rights, he begins to feel that Disraeli performed the Herculean task, when his efforts in behalf of Jewish Emancipation began to take seed gradually. England was not ripe for granting all the privileges to the Jew. But it was Disraeli that made England see the justice and the advantage it would give England. He began to put forth his efforts for Jewish Emancipation already in his early novels. In these books he merely portrayed the Jew in a wonderful light, thus trying to show the Gentile world that the Jew was not such a despicable character as early English authors had pictured him. Disraeli attempted to justify the nobility of the Jewish character in the eyes of the English reading public. His Jewish hero, Sidonia, is set forth as almost a paragon of perfection. No one can read his "Coningsby" and put the book down without thinking deeply and admiring the greatness of Sidonia. Disraeli gave the English public something to think about. He set out to correct some fallacious notions that were entertained by Englishmen about the Jew. And it is my humble opinion that he succeeded remarkably in the attempt. But it was not only through the pen that Disraeli worked for a better

understanding between Christian and Jew. It was in Parliament itself where Disraeli displayed his most noble and honorable efforts in behalf of Jewish Emancipation. It was at the risk of losing favor with his constituents and at the chance of impeding his rise in the political world that Disraeli dared champion the cause of the Jews. As we shall bring out later, he cared not what the consequences might be. It was a conviction with him and he determined to fight it out to the bitter end. It was a principle of his and he was resolved^{ed} to avoid the opportunity of seeing to it that it was firmly carried out.

Both friend and foe admired his ardent conviction and loyal spirit in championing the cause of the Jews. So much did the anti-semites believe his efforts for Jewish Emancipation to be sincere that they used this fact as a proof of his English disloyalty. They called him a foreigner because of his evident love for the Jewish race. They claimed that his Jewishness came before his English loyalty. Hence a remark such as this: "He has been true to the Jewish people who are really his church and his country."⁽¹⁾ This same author also admits that his (Disraeli's) love for Judaism was so intense that Disraeli falsified in order to put the Jewish race and Judaism^s on the highest pedestal. This author compares Disraeli to Aristobulus. He says, "In literature Lord Beaconsfield has been essentially a Jewish apologist; Josephus and the false Aristobulus simply anticipated his method, or rather,⁽²⁾ he applied theirs with a difference." This author, of course, exaggerated the case. But it must be admitted that there is a kernel of truth in it. In some places Disraeli did claim for the Jew more than he was entitled to. In his list of Jewish talent, that he gives he adds there quite a number of names that are not Jewish. Although this is an error it is not a crime. And if opinion

is in order, I will say that I don't believe that he did it intentionally. In his enthusiasm he merely recorded those names because he really believed them to be Jewish. He perhaps was misguided by the sound of them. He perhaps, had no way of ascertaining the facts. Surely he did not have to invent any names, for if he had taken enough time to investigate, he could have replaced every incorrect name with one which was Jewish. So on this score the anti-semitic has no case against him. It was not a wilful fabrication. There are many inaccurate historians today and yet we would not think of impugning their motives. The fact is that he loved his race and his religion and he was often carried away in his enthusiasm. Even that same author admits "that on the whole, though the error is on the side of courage and manliness, he has been too ostentatiously faithful to it. Judaism and the Jews have been thrust by him with an almost unnecessary pertinacity into English politics and literature." (3) Yes, he was faithful to the Jewish people. He championed their cause on every possible occasion, yes, some occasions he himself created. He let no chance go by where he could get a good word in for the Jew. His heart and soul was for Jewish freedom and he continually worked for this end. And it must be admitted that his words bore fruit. At first England listened reluctantly, but Disraeli persisted in his arguments and after a time he made England see the justice of giving the Jew all his due rights. Disraeli was one of the best friends that the Jewish people ever had. He succeeded in changing a whole nation's attitude toward them. As one writer said of him, "Nay, he subjugated more than a mere nation. He plucked up the deep-rooted prejudices of the eighteen Christian centuries against the "Chosen People." (4) To appreciate his work we must turn to his speeches in Parliament. That he was a man of sincere convictions, of fearless character,

and that he was a real friend of the Jewish people, will be seen from these speeches.

THE JEW DISABILITIES BILL.

There have been several attempts in England, previous to the time of Disraeli, to make the political status of the Jew secure. But it just seems that the English public was frightened about permitting the Jew to hold the rights of citizenship and ^{the} right to public office. Some of the arguments that men advanced against the Jew holding these rights were really laughable and ridiculous. It is not pertinent to our thesis to go into details on this subject. Suffice it to say that in 1753 the Naturalisation Bill was sanctioned by the Upper House. Lord Pelham was then at the head of the ministry and he was a friend of the Jews. He labored hard to see that the Bill should be passed. The Bill provided that any Jew who had lived in England for three years and had not absented himself for three months during that time could be naturalized by Parliament. At least, this was a step forward for Jewish Emancipation. But the triumph of Pelham was not to last long. When the Bill was referred to the lower House, great undue importance and misconstruction was attached to the Bill and a long series of debates ensued. The result was that during the next year the Bill of 1753 was repealed. The Jews were now left where they were before. Not much was done until Macaulay^a wrote his famous essay in 1831. Quite a bit of discussion ensued. Macaulay^a's essay on Emancipation made the Englishmen think. The result was that in 1833 a law for their emancipation was passed. And in 1847 two Jews were elected to Parliament. They were elected, yes; but they could not, as full-hearted Jews, take a seat in Parliament because of the oath which

the successful candidates had to take,-- the oath which read as follows: 'on the true faith of a Christian.' This oath made it exceedingly^g_A difficult, nay impossible, for a true Jew to take office. Thus it was in 1847 that the Jewish question was again brought up for discussion in Parliament. The discussion was begun again to clear away the rest of the Jewish Disabilities and put the Jew on a par with other born Englishmen. One of the shining lights in the championing of the Jewish cause was Disraeli. What took place we shall proceed to tell.

It was Mr. John Russell who introduced the Bill to relieve the Jew from all remaining disabilities. He proposed his motion on the general ground "that every Englishman born in the country is entitled to all the honours and advantages of the British Constitution." He pleaded that religious differences of opinion should not disqualify a man from enjoying the privileges tendered all born Englishmen. Russell pointed out that most disabilities had already been removed and furthermore that the prejudices that formerly existed against the Jew were becoming less and less each day. As proof he cited the case of Rothschild who had been recently elected for a seat in Parliament from the city of London, by the large vote of nearly seven thousand. John Russell, as well as George Bentinck and others, argued in favor of the Bill on the ground of religious liberty.

The introduction of this question again into Parliament created a rather embarrassing situation for Disraeli. He was a young man and had ambitions to someday occupy the highest chair in Parliament. He was a Jew by birth and everybody knew it. Should he enter into the discussion on this bill his position would surely be jeopardized. His chances for future growth in Parliament might be cut off. By entering the discussion it would seem that he had

everything to lose and nothing to gain. He would be running a chance of being misunderstood and his motives might be impugned. He could very easily not present himself at the discussions and neglect registering his vote. This would seem the easiest course to take for a man of Jewish birth -- a man that entertained high political ambitions. But yet in spite of all these disadvantages that seemed to confront him, he decided that he was not going to remain silent, but that he was going to actively participate in the discussion and deliver by speech all his convictions which he had already set forth in "Coningsby" and in "Tancred". He resolved to speak ^{out} his innermost convictions in favor of the Jews, no matter what the consequences would be.

It was his love of his race and desire for ruth that brought Disraeli to his feet in defense of the Jewish Disabilities Bill. Disraeli was not satisfied to take refuge under Russell's motion on the ground of religious liberty. To him this seemed like a subterfuge. He was going to argue for Jewish rights. And to do this he was going to tell of all the good qualities that the Jew possessed and why it would be an advantage to England to give the Jew full rights. The words, 'Religious liberty' were too vague for Disraeli. Therefore he did not hesitate to disagree with Russell by stating, "I may say for myself that I am one of those who believe that there is something more excellent than religious liberty, -- and that more excellent thing is religious truth."⁽⁵⁾ This amounted to saying that he was arguing the question on the ground of Semitism rather than on the ground of religious liberty, as Russell and Bentinck would have it.

Most of the speakers in Parliament insisted on showing the vast difference between Judaism and Christianity. And because of this difference they argued that the Jew must not be given full

privileges. On these grounds they wished to exclude the Jew from certain political rights. This argument was revolting to Disraeli. It was contrary to his views on Judaism and Christianity. As we already pointed out in the chapter on 'Disraeli and Religion', one of the great points upon which he insisted was that Christianity is developed Judaism. In other words he tr^{ied} to reduce the minute differences between them to a minimum. He always dwelt on the similarity between the two religions. And this line of thought he again emphasized in the House of Commons. He was not backward in asking the following question, "Who are these persons professing the Jewish religion? They are the same persons who acknowledge the same God as the Christian people of this realm. They acknowledge the same divine revelation as yourselves. They are, humanly speaking, the authors of your religion." And since Disraeli was going to argue the question on the ground of religious truth he was going to show that the Hebrews possessed a true religion. Thus speaks Disraeli, "Well then, I say that if religion is a security for righteous conduct, you have that security in the instance of the Jews, who profess a true religion. It may not be in your comprehensive form. I do not say that it is the true religion; but although they do not profess all that we profess, all that they do profess is true. You must admit, then, that in men who are subject to the Divine revelations that you acknowledge, whose morals are founded on the sacred oracles to which we all bow, that, as far as religion can be a security for their conduct- for their public morality and justice- you have in the religion of the Jews the best sanction in the world except that of our own Christianity." From the fact that the Jews possess a true religion Disraeli comes to his next point. And this is that the Jews ought to be admitted into English citizenship. Says he,

"The best evidence in the face of Europe of our Christian sincerity is, that we admit the Jews to the highest privileges of citizenship and to the highest offices of the state, without so admitting the professors of other religions. The very reason for admitting the Jews is because they can show so near an affinity to you." (7)

Some of Disraeli's opponents suggested that if the Jews were admitted then they would find themselves in an embarrassing position with ^{regard to} the Church. Disraeli answers this fear on the part of his opponents by saying, "I shall not dilate upon a point already referred to, remarking only that the professors of the Jewish religion are not those who proselytise." (8) We have already developed the conception of his Semitic principle and how he showed that the Jew was essentially a religious character. Disraeli repeated his thoughts in the House of Commons. He told the assembly that they should not fear that the Jew would work against the institution of the Church in England. He said, "The Jew has no thought of establishing his own Church. It is an idea foreign to his nature, - foreign to the result of all his laws, of all his habits and all his traditions." (9) From this fact Disraeli implies that the Jew would support the religious institutions wherever he enjoys civil rights. Disraeli asks, "What possible object can the Jew have to oppose the Christian Church? Is it not the first business of the Christian Church to make the population whose mind she attempts to form, and whose morals she seeks to guide, acquainted with the history of the Jews? Has not the Church of Christ- the Christian Church, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant- made the history of the Jews the most celebrated history in the world? On every sacred day you read to the people the exploits of the Jewish heroes, the proofs of Jewish devotion, the brilliant annals of the past Jewish magnificence. The Christian Church

has covered every kingdom with sacred buildings, and over every altar we find the tables of the Jewish law. Every Sunday, every Lord's day, if you wish to express the feelings of praise and thanksgiving to the Most High, or if you wish to find expression of solace in grief, you find both in the words of the Jewish poets. All the early Christians were Jews. The Christian religion was first preached by men who were Jews until they were converted; every man in the early ages of the Church by whose power, or zeal, or genius, the Christian faith was propagated, was a Jew, and I cannot believe, if you are really anxious for the conversion of Jews --" (10) (interruption) Disraeli never finished this sentence, but he did finish the speech.

He certainly was not one bit backward in telling the assembly everything that was lodged in his heart. He left nothing reserved. More than once there was an interjection of, "Oh! Oh! " They were shocked beyond expression at the bold utterances of Disraeli. They had never heard one talk of the Jewish race in such extravagant terms. It appeared to them that he was belittling the tenets of Christianity. They showed signs of uneasiness and of disgust in many ways. They squirmed in their seats and interrupted him many times. The more they grew fidgety, the more Disraeli became infuriated into eloquent outbursts. "Where is your Christianity, if you do not believe in their Judaism?" he cries out. (11) " I say it is because this is a Christian assembly and this is a Christian country, that the Jews ought to find a reception among you." (12) And furthermore he said, " In exact proportion to your faith ought to be your wish to do this great act of national justice. If you had not forgotten what you owe this people, if you were grateful for that literature which for thousands of years has brought so much instruction and so much consolation to the sons of men,

you as Christians would be only too ready to ^{seize} the first opportunity of meeting the claims of those who profess this religion. But you are influenced by the darkest superstitions of the darkest ages that ever existed in this country. It is this feeling that has been kept out of this debate; that has been kept secret in yourselves- enlightened as you are- and that is unknowingly ⁽¹³⁾ influencing you, etc. etc." Disraeli could just as well not have spoken and cast his vote with the Russell group and thus would not have exposed himself to any suspicion. But Disraeli was not such a man. He spoke and uttered his beliefs as they were in his heart. Though he voted with Russell he did not hesitate to tell him that he disagreed with him on certain points. He said, "I say that it is on that ground (religious truth) as well as on ^{the} ground of religious liberty, that I feel bound to give my vote for the proposition of the minister,- for if faith is valued as a sanction for conduct, with what consistency can a Christian people say that those to whom they are indebted for the doctrines of their faith - who profess the religion which every gentleman in this House professes - for every gentleman here does profess the Jewish ⁽¹⁴⁾ religion, and believes in Moses and the prophets." This was stating the case pretty boldly. This was almost too much for them to swallow. A great number of those present resented the insinuation and a distinct cry of "Oh!" resounded through the halls of the House.

Throughout his pleading for the cause of the Jews, Disraeli displayed a ^k remarkable quality of courage. To be as frank as he was in his utterances was indeed an indication of bravery. His line of talk, coming as it did from his innermost convictions, seemed to them a positive insult. Disraeli realized that they

had never heard such language before but he was not going to have any scruples about making his position on the question perfectly clear. Time and time again he reminded them of the fact of his Hebrew origin and try to prove to them that his ancestry was every bit as good as theirs. Yes, he showed that all that they possessed that was of value came from the Jew. He knew that these facts were distasteful to them but he was not going to be backward in proclaiming those things that he sincerely believed to be the truth. In discussing the Jewish question, he courageously said, "It is a question on which men, whatever may be the consequences - on which at least I, whatever maybe the consequences - must speak what I feel. I cannot sit in this House with any misconception of my opinion on the subject. What ever may be the consequences on the seat I hold, I cannot for one give a vote which is not in deference to what I believe to be the true principles of religion."⁽¹⁵⁾ It is very true as on^e a writer on Disraeli remarked, "For the principle of Jewish Emancipation he encountered much ridicule and invective; for it he was content deliberately to relinquish the highest object of his ambition."⁽¹⁶⁾

When Disraeli finished speaking, strange to say there was no applause. Maybe it was not to be expected from such a group who could not comprehend his words. There were quite a number of speakers that followed Disraeli in the debate but not one made any allusion to his speech. The only comment that was made comes to us later thru a letter from his sister. She wrote, "Papa thinks Dis' speech the most important ever delivered in the House of Commons: stamped with all the characteristic novelty and boldness of the orator."⁽¹⁷⁾ The Bill was finally carried by a pretty fair majority. The Conservative party did not vote en masse. Bentinckⁿ and Disraeli voted infavor of the motion while a great many of

the Party voted against it. The leading men in opposition to the Bill were Robert Inglis, Lord Ashley, Gladstone, Goulburn, Bankes, Sir Thomas Adolphus, and Newgate. Those in favor of the motion were such men as Bentinck, Fox the Quaker, Lord Morpeth, and Sir Harry Verney. It is interesting to know some of the grounds upon which certain men opposed the Bill. For example, Lord Ashley opposed it on the ground of Dr. Arnold's statement that "they (Jews) are voluntary strangers here, and have no claim to become citizens but by conforming to our moral law, which is the Gospel." Gladstone, though he voted against the Bill because it was the wish of his constituents, yet was reasonable enough to remark that "we may consistently affirm that Christianity is in the highest degree needful for our legislation, and yet decline to follow out that proposition to a conclusion so rigid as this, that every individual who is not a Christian should be excluded from the possibility of becoming a legislator."

By the successful passing of the Bill it would seem that the Disabilities of the Jew disappeared. But this one triumph was no indication of final success. On the contrary, it was the beginning of a long and bitter struggle. The Bill reappeared for consideration almost every successive year. It would pass in the House of Commons but it met with heavy opposition in the Upper House. Each time Disraeli registered his vote in favor of the removal of the Disabilities. When the bill came up again in 1848 Disraeli merely recorded his vote but did not speak. The absence of his voice must have caused not a little wonder on the part of his colleagues and adversaries. Yes, even Russell, during the second reading of the Bill, noticed his silence and dared put a construction on his refraining from speaking. Russell was just as enthusiastic as ever and was overly desirous of seeing the

Bill pass successfully. His silence was bitterly commented upon. During the next year, (i.e, in 1850) Baron Lionel de Rothschild tried to take the oath in a way that would be in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, instead of saying, "on the true faith of a Christian." Discussion as to the permissibility of this procedure naturally followed. It was in this same year that Disraeli stood up and explained his silent votes at the previous readings of the Bill. He told them that he did not speak because he thought that his efforts would be futile. He said, "Sir, if I thought that anything that I could say would have tended to accomplish an object dear to my heart as to my convictions, my vote would not have been a silent one. But, inasmuch as I believe that my opinions upon the subject are not shared by one single member on either side of the House, I thought that it was consistent, both with good sense and with good taste, that, after having once unequivocally expressed the grounds on which my vote was given, I should have taken refuge in a silence which at least could not offend the prejudices of any hon. member on either side." (18)

And further more he said, " Although I have no wish at anytime to dilate upon the feelings or views which may not be prevalent or popular in this House, I never will relinquish them; and even now, shrinking as I do from offending the feelings of anyone, I will still express my hopes that full and complete justice will speedily be done to the descendants of a race which you acknowledge to be sacred, and the professors of a religion which you admit to be divine." (19)

Thus we note that Disraeli, by his silence, did not mean to withdraw from the discussion. The fervor for his race and for their complete emancipation was still in his heart as it had been in former years. He was still of the same mind. He was quiet

because he realized that his thought was a little above comprehension by his audience. In ^{deed} in 1854 and in 1856, when the Bill came up again, Disraeli could not refrain from letting out his innermost conviction again. In passionate thunder he bursts out, in 1854, and repeats his thoughts of previous occasions. Says he, " When I remember for how much we are indebted to that people, of what ineffable blessings they have been the human agents - when I remember that by their history, their poetry, their laws, our lives are instructed, solaced and regulated - when I recall other considerations and memories more solemn and reverential, I confess that I cannot as a Christian oppose the claims of those to whom Christianity is under so great obligations." ⁽²¹⁾ In his speech of 1854 he became so impatient of England's obstinacy to grant the Jew his rights that he warned England of the fate of other nations who dealt meanly ^{with} the Jew. He said, "I cannot conceal from myself that there is no country in which the Hebrew race has been persecuted which has not suffered, whose political power has not decayed and where there have not been evident proofs that the Divine favor has been withdrawn from the land." ⁽²²⁾ Disraeli would warn England that it is almost useless to oppose the Jew for the Jew was made of such calibre that ^{it} never stopped until it had gotten what it desired. On this point Disraeli said, " They are an ancient people, a famous people, an enduring people who in the end have generally attained their object." ⁽²³⁾ Almost ^prophetic-like Disraeli expressed his opinion that the Jew would one day sit in Parliament. It took courage to make this statement in Parliament, for from the discussions it was quite evident that a great group would forever oppose the claims of the Jew. It seemed that the narrow prejudice would never entirely die out. Yet Disraeli said with all the conviction and fearlessness that he possessed, " Still

it is my conviction, as certain as I am now addressing you, Sir, that the time will come when the Jews will receive in this country full and complete emancipation..... so far as the Jews are concerned I have faith in that Almighty Being who has never deserted them." (24)

Just four years later this prediction was fulfilled when Baron Rothschild took a seat in Parliament. It must have been with greatest joy and satisfaction that Disraeli lived to see a Jew enter Parliament and not have to renounce his belief in his religion.

There is no doubt that Disraeli was absolutely sincere in his utterances. There is no reason for believing that he was not sincere. His principal biographer says of his actions, " It may not be possible to accept in its entirety Disraeli's point of view, but it is difficult to read these repeated and fervent declarations to the House of Commons without being impressed with the depth and sincerity of the religious convictions underlying them." (25)

And again the biographer says, " The verdict of history must surely be that Disraeli's course throughout his Jewish controversy was highly honourable to him." (26)

But, of course, as can be expected, there were many people who accused him of insincerity. They accused him of being a mere pretender and trying to make the best of a difficult job. Of course we cannot agree with such an opinion. If people have not yet made up their minds as to his sincerity, I predict that the time is not far distant when all men will unanimously concede his integrity and will admit that he was sincere.

To come back to the Bill of 1854, we must state that it was not a simple matter this time. It is natural that it would not be so, because, as any Bill drags on it becomes evermore in-

volved. Thus it was with the Bill of 1854. There was another consideration dragged into it. As has well been said, the Bill was really one of procedure. As his official biographers put it, "Here was a Bill doing one thing which Disraeli desired, and other things to which he was opposed: relieving the Jews on the one hand, but also altering the oaths in other ways to please, in his view, Romanising Protestants and Roman Catholics." (27) The complication of the Bill gave cause enough to Disraeli to vote against it. The result was that the Bill was defeated by four votes at the second reading. It would seem that if Disraeli were really so eager for the welfare of the Jews he would have voted for the Bill even though there was a portion of the Bill that did not meet with his approval. Whatever the motives may have been the fact is that he voted against it and his action was attacked by Russell, who dared put a construction^r on his negative vote. Russell, who was real angry because of the failure of the Bill to pass, said the following of Disraeli: "Notwithstanding his great anxiety to see the Jews in possession of those privileges, the right hon. gentleman sometimes stays away and sometimes votes against them: the political convenience of the hour always seems to overcome his attachment to the cause." (28) Russell certainly seems to be harsh in his words. As a matter of fact Disraeli ^{but} only stayed away once and, as it has been proved, his absence was due to illness which prevented him from going to the House of Commons for several days. Disraeli did not let Russell's remarks go unchallenged. He stood up and answered Russell as follows: "I give the noble lord's statement an unequivocal and unqualified denial..... Suppose that I had got up, and said that the noble lord made Parliamentary Reform a mere political convenience - that when it suited him, he made it convenient to quit the

House, and did not vote at all on the subject: and then again, when it suited him, he also knew how to give his vote against that principle. But the noble lord can make no colourable case against me. I never on any occasion quit the House - I never absented myself from any division in which the claims of the Jews were concerned; and, if I voted against this Bill the other night, I tell the noble lord that I do not consider that I voted against the Bill which could have benefited the Jews, but, on the contrary, that I voted against a Bill which I believe would have been of greater injury to the Jews than any measure ever brought forward." What Disraeli meant was that he had no objections to that part of the Bill concerning the Jew, but he was convinced that if the other part which did not please him went into effect it would work harm against the Jew. This certainly was a consistent argument. Walpole, who was considered an opponent of the Jews, saw Disraeli's point and gave him credit for his sincerity in the matter. Even Russell himself, in a rejoinder on the same night, extended an apology to Disraeli. He said, "I am quite persuaded that the right honourable gentleman has intended to serve the cause of the Jews in the course which he has taken."⁽²⁹⁾

The Bill appeared again in 1856 and 1857. Arguments and discussions were continued but without any solution to the problem. Finally in 1858 a compromise was greatly desired. But the form of the compromise was not an easy one to draw up. Finally the Upper House, under the leadership of Lord Lucan, brought forward a resolution which soon became law, to the effect that each House could by a resolution alter the form of the oath. Disraeli indeed must be given a great deal of credit for his untiring efforts in effecting this compromise. Disraeli was a

very busy man at the time that this action was being taken on the Oath's Bill. He was then Chancellor of the Exchequer and at the same time leader of the House. Yet he made time for himself to direct the last final blows that would settle the whole question and permit Jews to take seats in Parliament and not have to take the oath which reads, "on the true faith of a Christian." Thus the matter ended. Thus the gates of Parliament were flung open to all men who could claim citizenship in England. And I believe that I am justified in saying that were a man like Disraeli, who possessed a true Jewish heart, not there in the skirmish to voice the rights of the Jew, then that privilege would have been delayed in coming for many years. Again I repeat that I consider him to be one of the staunchest champions for Jewish rights that the Jews ever had. His conception of religion may have been somewhat different from that held by most Jews, but who can deny that Disraeli had a true Jewish heart, - a heart that throbbed with the main pulse of his people and his religion!

We cannot pass over Disraeli's efforts in behalf of Jewish emancipation without mentioning his good work at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. It is generally acknowledged now that Disraeli was the lion of the Congress. He came there with definite ideas and knew just exactly when to speak and how to ask for the things he wanted. It is not in our province to relate the substance of his work there, but it is interesting to note that Bismarck was so impressed with his ability that he said of Disraeli, "Der alte Jude, das ist der Mann." When he returned to England it was generally admitted that he brought back with him "Peace with Honor". We are not so much interested in his general work there as we are of that portion of his deeds that concern the Jew. The

question of Jewish Disabilities in Roumania was taken up for discussion. Disraeli, as would be expected from him, did not evade this opportunity of pleading for his brethren in Roumania. He talked as fervently on this occasion as he spoke at all times in the House of Commons when it came to taking up the cudgel for the Jews. As a matter of fact, Disraeli was responsible for the clause in the Treaty which provided for the removal of the disabilities in Roumania. It is true that M. Waddington, the Plenipotentiary from France, introduced the discussion for Jewish rights, but it is commonly thought that it was Disraeli who advised the Frenchman. What_ever the facts may be, we know that Disraeli did not shun his duty this time as he did not on any other occasion. He proudly stood up and again at this Congress pleaded the cause of Jewish rights. Gladstone, who was the other English Plenipotentiary, spoke of Disraeli in the following way: "My words described Lord Beaconsfield's conduct about Jewish disabilities as honourable to him, as I think it. And I was glad of an opportunity of so describing it." (31) Mr. Georg Brandes, who saw him at the Congress of Berlin, remarked, "I thought of his genuine sympathy with the common people whose cause he had defended, and with the oppressed race to which he was never ashamed to belong, and whose rights he compelled Roumania to acknowledge at the Congress." (32)

Chapter VII.
Friends and Foes of Disraeli.

In this short chapter it will not be our object to mention all the friends and foes that Disraeli ever had, for this would take up a volume in itself. We shall merely record a few of his friends and enemies, thus giving an idea of who they were.

One of his very closest friends was a Mrs. Brydges Willyams. She was an elderly widow of Jewish descent. She was an heiress of a certain Mendez da Costa and, like Disraeli, she took great pride in tracing her ancestry back to some great family in Spain. Her father was Abraham Mendez da Costa, who came from Bath, and it is known that he died in 1782. Mrs. Willyams was between seventy and eighty years of age when she first took an interest in Disraeli in the year 1851. She was attracted to Disraeli for several reasons. Disraeli was proud of his race and so was she. And there is a possibility that they were related for there seems to have been a tie of blood between her ancestors, the da Costas and Disraeli's relatives, the Laras. That one of the ties of friendship between them was due to their common ancestry is explained by a line in a letter written to her. Disraeli writes, "It is a vindication, and, I hope, a complete one, of the race from which we alike spring."⁽¹⁾ Disraeli was here referring to his book, "Tancred", which he sent to her as a present. A real intimate friendship grew up between the two. She was a brilliant woman and the source of pleasure derived was mutual. Very much of the correspondence that took place between the two is recorded in the third volume of Moneybenny and Buckle's book on Disraeli.

One could write a small thesis on the intimate relationship

that existed between the Rothschilds and Disraeli. Again, the tie that brought them together was, no doubt, the common tie of race. The Rothschilds were a wealthy family, yes, great money-kings in England, when Disraeli was gaining recognition as a political factor in Parliament. Disraeli thought so much of the Rothschilds that he made them his hero-type character in the personage of Sidonia in his novels. One writer seems to think that there was more than a community of race between them. He said, "here is a community of defiance to the prejudices of creed."⁽²⁾ It is quite possible that this was also one of the conditions that linked them together. The Rothschilds were one of the few families in England that seemed to have entrance into the society of English aristocrats. Considering the prejudice that prevailed against the Jews in the middle of the nineteenth century, it is quite remarkable to see the Rothschilds move in the highest circles of English society. But it is quite easy to understand the situation in the case of the Rothschilds. Besides being a very respectable family they were immensely wealthy. When one possesses these two qualities one is always very much in demand. Human nature was no different in those days than it is in our own.

As early as 1838 we notice Disraeli attending a concert at which Baroness Lionel de Rothschild happened to be present. In one of his letters that he wrote to his sister we notice how enthusiastically he raves about her. As a matter of fact, it seems that whenever he wrote to his sister, he never neglected to make mention of the fact that a so-and-so Rothschild also happened to be at the particular social function. In 1839 he once dined with the Montefiores and he mentions the fact that he met Anthony Rothschild there and ^{that} the latter was to marry

Charlotte Montefiore. It is interesting to notice the remark that he makes about the other guests present. He said, "There were the Rothschilds, Montefiores, Alberts, and Disraelis - not a Christian name, but Mary Anne bears it like a philosopher." (3) -
In 1843 he attend^{ed} a most gorgeous ball given by Solomon de Rothschild. Disraeli takes great pride in describing the splendour and magnificence of the affair, and if we can read between the lines, we can note how proud he is to think that a Jew can give such an affair. In 1845 a child was born to Lionel de Rothschild and Disraeli sent him a letter of congratulation, stating therein that he hoped that the child would "prove worthy of the pure and sacred race." (4) - On many occasions we find Disraeli in the home of the Rothschilds. And the visits were returned by the Rothschilds to Disraeli's home at Hughenden Manor. A real intimate friendship existed between the two. It was with real pleasure that Disraeli witnessed the successful election of Lionel de Rothschild as a member of Parliament for the city of London. It was around this election of Rothschild that much of the controversy of the Jews' Bill took place. It must have been a source of great pleasure for Disraeli to champion the cause of Rothschild in particular and the cause of the Jews in general. It must have been a source of great satisfaction for Disraeli to witness the successful passing of the Bill and he himself have the pleasure of introducing Rothschild into the House of Commons.

It must be mentioned that it was with the aid of the finances of Rothschild that Disraeli was able to make the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, a stroke of political genius that brought Disraeli much favorable commendation.

And just one more fact shall we mention and that is that after Disraeli had to give up 10 Downing Street to Mr. Gladstone,

"He had no home" as someone said," except in the home of Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, who surrounded him with everything that princely hospitality, tried and warm friendship, and cultivated taste could offer."⁽⁵⁾

Just as it is not in our province to record all the names of the friends of Disraeli, so is it not in our field to quote all the names of his foes. But we shall merely record a few of his characteristic adversaries.

- One of his very unfair and prejudiced biographers was a Mr. O'connor. His book really is not worth the paper upon which it is written. In his book on Disraeli he says that the author of Romola, "when she drew the portrait of the adventurous Greek, was not unconscious of the resemblance between the creation of her pen and the successful Hebrew who in her own time had attained such mastery over a Christian and a Western people."⁽⁶⁾ Furthermore, this same author contrasts the character of Derby with Disraeli, putting Derby in a brilliant light and of Disraeli saying he "had histrionic tricks worthy of an Eastern showman and perilous flashes of a romancer's imagination."

Disraeli was one of the admirers of Carlyle but we know that the reverse was far from true. Carlyle had little use for all Jews in general and Disraeli he did not like at all. Of all the nasty remarks ever uttered against Disraeli, his was one of the worst. Carlyle called him "a superlative Hebrew conjurer spell-bounding all the great lords, great parties, great interests of England to his band in this manner and leading them by the nose like helpless mesmerized somnambulist cattle to such issue". It must be remembered that in spite of this slur, Disraeli was one of the first men to see that all honour was paid Carlyle

after his death.

One of his most bitter adversaries was the paper, Punch. All through Disraeli's career this paper attacked him in the foulest ways. Caricatures of Disraeli in the most insulting positions were made continuously. Leech was the "artist" of the paper and the one who launched most of this ridicule against him. Yet it is worthy of mention that when Leech's widow died in 1868, it was Disraeli that ordered her pension to be transferred to her children.

Another book that was terribly anti-semitic and more anti-Disraeli was published anonymously under the title of "Political Adventures of Lord Beaconsfield." This book is very similar to the above quoted book by O'connor. It is just as prejudiced and cutting in its remarks against the Jews and Disraeli in particular. This book speaks of Disraeli's career as "demoralizing to the national character, and as lowering the standard and aims of English politics." ⁽⁷⁾ This is certainly an unjust accusation, as we shall bring out in the next chapter. Says this book again, "Sinister interests and powerful influences which are not English sway English politics.....The rulers of the synagogue are more largely than is suspected the rulers of England." ⁽⁸⁾ What a ridiculous remark! The calibre of such an author could lead him to say anything in his prejudice.

Some of the vilest names that ever came from the mouth of man were directed against Disraeli by the great Irish Statesman, Daniel O'Connell. It appears that O'Connell once did a favor for Disraeli when the latter was a candidate for a certain district in England. Later, when Disraeli became a confirmed Tory, he spoke against the Whigs, and certain expressions that he used

were misinterpreted as a slur against Daniel O'Connell. Disraeli asserted on many occasions afterwards that he did not mean to imply that O'Connell was an incendiary and a traitor. Disraeli claimed that the London Times did not quote him correctly. Naturally, O'Connell resented the insinuation, and in a speech at Dublin took the opportunity of attacking Disraeli. In the course of his speech O'Connell said, " I must confess that some of the attacks made on ^{me} particularly one, by a Mr. Disraeli, at Tauton, surprised me..... He stands the other day at Tauton, and by way of recommending himself to the electors he calls me an incendiary and a traitor. Now my answer to this piece of gratuitous impertinence is, that he is an egregious liar. He is a liar both in action and in words. What! shall such a vile creature be tolerated in England.....He is a living lie: and the British Empire is degraded by tolerating a miscreant of his abominable description.....His name shews that he is of Jewish origin. I do not use it as a term of reproach; there are many most respectable Jews. But there are, as in every other people, some of the lowest and most disgusting grade of moral turpitude; and of those I look upon Mr. Disraeli as the worst. He has just the qualities of the impenitent thief on the Cross, and I verily believe, if Mr. Disraeli's family herald were to be examined and his genealogy traced, the same personage would be discovered to be the heir at law of the exalted individual to whom I allude." Disraeli was greatly incensed upon reading this scurrilous attack which O'connell made. Disraeli would have challenged O'connell himself to a duel but knowing that O'connell vowed that he would never fight another duel, Disraeli challenged the son to assume his father's responsibilities. The son, however, refused, stating that he was not responsible for his father's actions. Thus Mr. Disraeli contented himself with

writing a very strong letter to Daniel O'Connell. Parts of his letter read as follows: " Although you have long placed yourself out of the pale of civilisation, still I am one who will not be insulted, even by a Yahoo, without chastising it.....I admire your scurrilous allusions to my origin. It is quite clear that the 'hereditary bondsman' has already forgotten the clank of his fetter. I know the tactics of your Church; it clamours for toleration, and it labours for supremacy. I see that you are quite prepared to persecute.....I am not one of those public beggars that we see swarming with their obtrusive boxes in the chapels of your creed, nor am I in possession of a princely revenue wrung from a starving race of fanatical slaves..... We shall meet at Phillipi; and rest assured that, confident in a good cause, and in some energies which have not been altogether unproved, I will seize the first opportunity of inflicting upon you a castigation which will make you at the same time remember and repent the insults that you have lavished upon

(9) -
(signed) Benjamin Disraeli."

All of the above letters were published openly in the London Times.

Chapter VIII.

CONCLUSION.

-What Is He?-

Disraeli once wrote an essay under the title, "What Is He?" This is the question which we must ask in concluding this thesis. However, to be entirely just, it is not a fair question to ask at the conclusion of this paper, since we did not undertake to present the entire history of his life. If we had discussed his personal traits, his political career, and all the incidents in his life we would be prepared to conclude as to what the man really was. But this task was not in our province. We may, however, ask the question from a more limited point of view. From our exposition of the subject, we may, with reasonable justification, inquire as to whether we today would consider him a Jew. Again, I think it is in our province to discuss the question as to whether he was a real loyal and true Englishman, since many people are prone to think of him as a foreigner who imposed his personality upon England. And furthermore, these people believe that Disraeli subordinated his English loyalty to his love for the Semitic race. Since we discussed his race theory and dwelt upon the Jewish elements in Disraeli, it is incumbent upon us to see to what extent the accusation of his English infidelity is justified. As a matter of convenience we shall discuss the point of his English allegiance first.

Was Disraeli English? This question has been answered in the negative about as often as it has received a positive reply. Even a man like Bryce, whose reputation for fairness is unquestioned, said of Disraeli, "He did not raise, he may even have lowered, the tone of English public life." Bryce is certainly

not one of those who speak as a result of blind prejudice. In a brilliant article on Disraeli he gives the latter full praise and credit for all the deeds which he accomplished. Of course, Mr. Bryce is entitled to his opinion, yet I believe that he was a little harsh in pronouncing the following statement: "Imagine a man of strong will and brilliant intellectual powers, belonging to an ancient and persecuted race, who finds himself born in a foreign country, amid a people for whose ideas and habits he has no sympathy and scant respect." This picture is certainly overdrawn. Bryce is certainly not stating the facts in this description of Disraeli. Bryce's remark is just as off color as is the view of the gentleman who said of Disraeli, "He had manners and the ways of an outsider, - a curious guest looking upon England as upon a chess board for his amusement and his advancement in fame and upon the Queen, the Knights and the bishops as so many pieces in his hands." This is a nice picture but it certainly misrepresents the truth. Disraeli was not such an outsider as he was accused of being. It is true that he wrote much about the Hebrew people and took great pride in talking about Jerusalem, but this, certainly, is no indication that he loved England less. If this is the ground for judging a man's loyalty we would have to suspect many an author for infidelity to his country. Still another writer has this to say about him: "Certainly a century and a quarter of residence in England on the part of his ancestors and himself has left little trace on the mind and character of Lord Beaconsfield. He is in almost every essential point far more of a Venetian and a Jew than of an Englishman." This again, is merely an opinion and to my mind it is not correct. Thus far we have cited merely the opinion of those who claim that Disraeli

was not a full Englishman. Let us now view some of the contrary opinion.

Froude, for example, admits that there is a possibility of misconstruing Disraeli's oriental word pictures. He says that it is very easy for one to conclude that Disraeli was more of a stranger than an Englishman because he lays so much stress on the Far East and its people. But Froude would warn one not to draw this conclusion because it would not be true. In his own words Froude says, " In the English version St. Paul reasons like an Englishman. A Jew reads in St. Paul's language allusions to oriental customs and beliefs of which Europeans know nothing; we have therefore no reason to suspect Disraeli of insincerity because he did not express himself as we do."⁽⁴⁾ If many of those persons who accused him of being un-English would have read his books with this spirit they would have spared themselves their unreasonable remarks about him. As a matter of fact I believe that Disraeli tried to be more English than the English themselves. As Mr. Georg Brandes pointed out, " For Lord Beaconsfield, the great statesmen of England are the decisive authorities; he does not appeal to ideas, but to precedents, not to principles, but to Bolingbroke or Shelburne; he does not quote Shakespeare, but Hansard; he desires to be above all things, national and historical."⁽⁵⁾ In his book, "Sybil" he gives his idea through the mouth of Egremont, saying, " The mind of England is the mind of the rising race." Was it not Disraeli who was most zealous in his efforts to keep the colonies close to England and pervade them with a strong English atmosphere? It was his one great ambition to see England become the great leading power of the world. He was an imperialist through and through. Mr. Horace E. Samuel says of him, " In the same spirit in which he himself had obtained

the foremost place in England, he desired that England should acquire the foremost rank amongst the nations; while, as is shown by his Imperial policy, he infused something of his own picturesque-⁽³⁾ness into the policy of the most prosaic power in Europe." He loved England and he was always heart and soul for his country. A Mr. John Skelton says of him that he was "by race, perhaps, more a citizen of the world. But it is clear, looking to his whole career, that Mr. Disraeli was inspired throughout by a sense of the greatness of England."⁽⁷⁾ Much has been written to show that Disraeli's entire Eastern policy was the result of his vivid imagination and of his oriental temperament. And that fact is also quoted as a proof of the fact that he was a foreigner in England. As a final sentence to refute this conclusion, let me quote the words of an appreciative writer on Disraeli. This author was Mr. George Towle. Said he, "Despite the 'un-English' reputation which many writers have succeeded in giving Disraeli, it can scarcely be questioned that his Eastern policy was thoroughly English in its precedents and bearing. He seems to have followed closely in the foot-steps of Wellington, Peel, and Palmerston et al."⁽⁸⁾ In my opinion also, there is no question about it that Disraeli was thoroughly English and he loved England with the heart of a real patriot.

Now we may ask the question as to whether he was a representative Jew. It is strange to say that Georg Brandes, also a Jew and one of his most appreciative biographers, declares that he must answer the question in the negative. I say it is strange, because as we read Mr. Brandes' book, one would expect him to come to the opposite conclusion. For example, Mr. Brandes remarks that "Disraeli certainly cannot be looked upon as the personification of the many-sidedness of the Jewish race; he is wanting in idealistic

(9)
tendencies." As I finished reading Brandes's book these qualities were just the very ones that he attributed to Disraeli. And as a matter of fact I believe that Disraeli was particularly rich in just these possessions. These are two strong points as to why I consider him a **fair representative** of the Hebrew people. He was ever ready to admit his Hebrew origin and on all occasions showed the gentile world that it was a privilege to belong to that ancient race. He boasted of the Jewish religion and demonstrated to the Christian world that the Hebrew religion was the predecessor in thought of all other religions. Two points that stand out in Disraeli are his idealism and intense practical energy. This has ever been characteristic of the Jewish people in general. It cannot be denied that Disraeli possessed these two qualities in a marked degree. His intense conservatism both in religion and politics are perhaps also due to the Jewish blood that flowed through his veins. He had a tenacity of purpose that was simply astounding. Whenever he made up his mind to accomplish anything one could **wager** that it would be effected in the end. In this trait also he displayed one of the unquestioned traits of the Jewish people. He possessed the calculating foresight of the Jew. He could pierce into the future with almost prophetic vision. He had a concentrative power that was remarkable. The whole world may have buzzed with a thousand varieties of noises, but if Disraeli had his mind on one thing he would remain unshaken by the tumult. In the possession of this trait he reminds us of the experiences of the Hebrew people. He sparkled with wit and was most cutting in his sarcasm. Surely these are Jewish traits. He was more of a Jew than he was a Christian, for he believed that Christianity was merely developed Judaism. On this point Froude has this to say of him: "It would be wrong to say that

Disraeli had no sincere religious convictions. He was a Hebrew to the heart of him. He accepted the Hebrew tradition as a true account of the world and of man's place in it. He was nominally a member of the Church of England; but his Christianity was something of his own, and his creed as sketched in his 'Life of Lord George Bentinck' would scarcely find acceptance in any Christian community."⁽¹⁰⁾ I thoroughly concur in the observation of Froude.

Bryce said of him that he succeeded in making "himself one of the four or five greatest personal forces in the world." Again quoting Bryce, "Whatever judgment history may ultimately pass upon him, she will find in the long annals of the English Parliament no more striking figure."

After Disraeli died, Punch, the paper that caricatured him all through his life, published the following tribute to him:

Success incarnate, self-inspired, self-raised
To that proud height whereat youth's fancy aimed,
Whom even those who doubted whilst they praised,
Admired, e'en whilst they blamed.

The following splendid resolution was passed at the meeting of the Board of Jewish Deputies: ⁽¹¹⁾

" That this Board desires to record its deep regret at the death of the Rt. Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield K.G., and its admiration of a statesman who, during a long and remarkable public career, devoted preeminent abilities and a brilliant genius to the service of his Queen and country. This Board recognizes that the deceased earl has a claim on the gratitude of the Jewish community by reason of his courageous and persistent efforts to raise and dignify the Jewish name and race through the medium of his political works, by his votes in Parliament, his political influence, and by the powerful support he recently gave at the Berlin Congress to the principles of religious liberty."

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- (3) Cf. II.Samuel, XVII: 25.
- (4) See preface to "Curiosities of Literature" by Isaac D'Israeli.
- (5) Cases quoted by Lucien Wolf. See ref. (2)

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- (3) Anglo Jewish History, J Picciotto. p.296.
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- (5) Ibid. p.8.
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- (8) Lon. Ti. Lucien Wolf. Dec. 1904.
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- (12) Ibid. p.10.
- (13) Ibid. p.12.
- (14) Lord Beaconsfield. Georg Brandes. p.12.
- (15) Ibid. p.13.
- (16) Cf. ref. (10) p.38.
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- (4) Ibid. p.8.
- (5) Contarini Fleming p.5.
- (6) Lord Beaconsfield. Georg Brandes. p.23.
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- (16) Endymion. Chapter 56.
- (17) Coningsby. p.256.
- (18) Lord George Bentinck. p.355.
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- (20) Preface to Coningsby. by E. Disraeli.
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