

DAVID FRIEDLÄNDER

AN

EMANCIPATOR

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF GOTTFRIED
BRUNO, MY FRIEND, WHO LONGED
TO ALL INJUSTICE RIGHTED, AND WHO WOULD
HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO KNOW THAT ONE OF HIS
PUPILS ENDEAVORED TO SAVE THE NAME OF DAVID
FRIEDLÄNDER FROM THOSE WHO MALIGNED HIM
UNJUSTLY.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. Ritter *

"Ritter, Dr. Heinrich Immanuel,
Geschichte der Jüdischen Reformation
Zweiter Theil - David Friedländer."

2. M. Philippson *

"Philippson, Martin - Neueste Geschichte
des jüdischen Volkes"

CHAPTER I

THE FAMILY OF DAVID FRIEDLÄNDER

Joachim Moses Friedländer, founder of what was "one hundred years ago, one of the most illustrious families of Germany,"¹ was born in Silesia in 1712. His father, Moses Levin, moved to Königsberg in 1722, because the East Prussian administration had acted humanely towards the Jews. There, Moses Levin became the leader of the Jewish community, a leadership maintained by his family for more than a century. He died in 1736, a well-known and wealthy man, who had secured his wealth thru ^{the} trading privilege he had acquired. It is not known whether Joachim Moses came to Königsberg with his father. It is known, however, that he studied in Prague under Eibeschuetz. In 1736, he married Hinde Fischel, daughter of Levin Fischel, a Schutzjude, and assumed the name Friedländer. On the death of his father-in-law in 1739, he inherited the latter's trading privileges. This trading privilege contained too many handicaps, and in 1756 Joachim Moses went to Berlin to see the king to petition for elimination of a few restrictions. Due to the pressure brought to bear by jealous Christian rivals, Joachim Moses' petition was denied. The Seven Years' War, which set in immediately thereafter, filled the coffers of Joachim Moses, while emptying those of the king. In 1764, the persuasive melodies of Jewish gold overpowered Frederick, and on the payment of 1000 thalers, Joachim Moses was granted a general privilege, *titulo oneroso* for himself and his five children, who were living then. This gave him the right to trade in all things as a Christian merchant, except where the use of a bushel and scale were involved.

1. Gotthard Deutsch in American Israelite - June 1914.

Both he and his children were permitted to visit unhampered the annual markets and fairs of Prussia and Lithuania. He was also granted the right of residence without tax and the permission to buy a home in Königsberg. On June 28, 1775 he secured full rights, the bushel and scale restriction being eliminated, and the privilege being extended to include all his descendants. Shortly thereafter, he died. (1775)

Joachim Moses had succeeded his father as leader and representative of the Königsberg Jewish community. Whenever difficulties arose, between the Jews and the government, Joachim Moses would attempt to smooth them out. He also became an ardent advocate of enlightenment among his correligionists. Up to that time, it had been the custom of the Jews to educate their children only in Talmudic and similar studies. Secular culture was regarded as profane. Merchants, however, especially those who like Joachim Moses, came in frequent contact with the regents of the German provinces, felt the inadequacy of the exclusively Hebrew training they had received, in meeting and dealing with the officials. These merchants were eager to prove to the eyes of their rulers that the Jew was not the inferior creature he was thought to be. They consequently, began to feel the need for secular culture. Besides that to a successful merchant, a knowledge of the three fundamentals, reading, writing and arithmetic was indispensable. Therefore the Königsberg merchants began to train their children not only in the ancient Hebrew lore, but also in the elementary secular studies. Joachim Moses had seven children, six sons and one daughter, and they received such a thorough education that they ranked among the most cultured families of the city.² His sons, Bernhard, Mayer and Wulff became famous art and book collectors. They, too, handed down the tradition

2. Das Handlungshaus Joachim Moses Friedländer et Söhne zu Königsberg 1.Pr.

of secular culture, begun in their family by their father. Meyer engaged as tutor for his children Isaac Euchel (1756-1804), noted satirist, who ridiculed Jewish traditions and doubted the divine origin of the scriptures, and yet remained the friend of Hartwig Wessely, the great champion of tradition. Meyer's eldest son, Michael, became a famous physician. He practiced in Paris, where he published several medical books of considerable note. The daughter married a Berlin Schutzjude, Bendix, whose grandson is Edward Bendeman, the famous painter and author of "Jeremiah on the Ruins of Jerusalem." His son is Felix von Bendemann, retired admiral of the German navy, who recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of his service. Bernhard, the oldest son, and Abraham, the youngest son, married granddaughters of Veitel Heine, the financial right-hand man of Frederick the Great. A grandson of Joachim Moses, John Friedländer, married Aemalie Heine, a cousin and supposed love of the poet. Another grandson, Samuel, became alderman in Königsberg in 1809, and a great-grandson, Edward von Simson, was president of the first Reichstag.³ The Seeds of culture planted in the Friedländer family by Joachim Moses blossomed and bore fine fruit. Of all the descendents of Joachim Moses Friedländer surviving to this day, not a one has been left in the Jewish fold.⁴ They have carried with them to their new religious circles the cultural, spiritual and charitable tendencies of their Jewish ancestors, and thus are still disseminating the spirit of Judaism, and are factors in the progress of civilization.⁵

David Friedländer, the "fourth son of Joachim Moses, destined to play a leading role in the political and religious emancipation of the Jews in Germany, was born in Königsberg on the sixth

3. Gotthard Deutch in American Israelite - June 1914

4. Das Handlungsbans Joachim Moses Friedländer et Sohne zu Königsberg 1. Pr.

5. Ibid

of December, 1750. Like his brother, he received a thorough education in Hebraics, and also in the rudiments of secular culture. He too, was trained to become a merchant. His youth was ideal. He had all the advantages that a wealthy and cultured home make possible. He had leisure and opportunity to dream dreams, and see visions. His imaginative mind began to spin out Utopias, which were later to be torn ~~and~~ to shreds by the harsh realities of life. His own words speak for themselves of the ideal surroundings of his youth, of his dreams and visions and of his rude sophistication and brutal disillusionment. In his introduction to the "Letters about the Morality of Commerce", he attempts to overcome the aversion of a young man for the apparent dishonesties imperative in a commercial career. He says: "I can speak thus to you for I have experienced in my own life the gamut of these unpleasant perceptions Born of middle-class parents, who loved us tenderly and spared us nothing which might ennoble our conception or purify our ideas, we knew of need and want only from hearsay. We became familiar at an early age with the conveniences of wealth, because we knew no more pleasant use of our pocket money than the satisfaction of our small personal desires. Since the acquisition of money cost us neither trouble nor work, and since we could therefore not be aware of its true value, we believed that it was as easy for men to practice all the virtues as it was for us to dole out alms. If, in the bloom of youth, one has the good fortune to be raised by cultured people, to live one's early years in good health and plenty, and to have acquired the principles of morality, one's imagination creates for him an alluring picture of all humanity, where no shadow nor false colour spoils the portrait. I recall very clearly that I took Grandison as an example, and considered it easy for me to equal him in other fields. Moral prin-

ciples are so attractive, are in such complete harmony with all that is true and beautiful, that they exercise an indescribable charm over the unspoiled mind of a refined lad. In this period of ecstasy one cannot conceive how it is possible to stray away even one hair's breath from the path of righteousness. The base passion of the spirit, of covetousness appear to have no reality in nature. Not true, my dear friend. I read your soul correctly. This is the dream of your early youth, even as it was mine." 6a

Well equipped for the commercial career, he was to follow, and with high ideals and lofty aspirations, David Friedländer left and set out for Berlin in 1771, where he wished to affiliate with the idealistic movement. His father's prestige and influence paved the way for his financial and social success in Prussia's capital. He immediately had access to the finest and wealthiest Jewish circles. Within a year he married Blumchen Itzig, one of the many daughters of Daniel Itzig, the most affluent Jew in Prussia. The marriage was a happy one and lasted until the death of Friedländer's wife in 1805. The couple had several children, none of whose descendants remained Jewish. Thus surrounded by wealth and culture, Friedländer began his career in Berlin at the age of twenty-one, and continued active in the cultural and particularly in the Jewish movements. This lasted until 1835, when at the age of 85, ~~he~~ wearied and worn out, he went to his eternal rest.

6a . Ritter

CHAPTER II

THE PHILOSOPHICAL, INTELLECTUAL AND HISTORICAL
BACKGROUND OF FRIEDLANDER'S LIFE.

It was to a Berlin, teeming with intellectual rejuvenescence to which young Friedländer came in 1771. The tidal wave of revolt against authority, usually known as the Renaissance, which had innundated Europe and which had produced the Protestant Reformation in Germany in the sixteenth century, swept on thru the seventeenth century and began to surge with destructive results at the existing religions and political institutions in the eighteenth century. Coincident with the accession of Frederick the Great, to the throne of Prussia in 1740, the modern age began to dawn in Germany, when English ideas began to exercise an influence through translations of Locke, Hume and English moralists. Previous to this, the Wolff-Leibnizian- rationalistic metaphysics had dominated German thought. To this now was added the empirical philosophy of Locke, and the result was a combination of rationalism and empiricism, which conceived the universe as a rational theological order, which can be made intelligible to reason, because it is the expression of reason. The task of the cultured man now became the clearing away of all superstition, in the solving of all mysteries and the illuminating of everything, by the light of reason. Thus the Aufklärung or enlightenment movement was called into being in Germany. The logical inferences from this new philosophic system are very evident. All human institutions, political, religious and economic and social must be scrutinized and examined in the light of reason. Those whom examination and analysis declared unfit, must be changed. The results of plumbing these existing institutions are the

revolutions of the latter part of the eighteenth and nineteenth and twentieth century.

During the reign of Frederick the Great, the enlightenment movement confined itself largely to the religious field. Frederick the Great, had in his youth flirted with the intellectual and cultural tendencies which had received their impetus from the Lockian philosophy. He had become a great admirer of French literature and poetry, and cultivated his aesthetic potentialities. To his father, Frederick William I, who had hoped to make Prussia a powerful militaristic state and who had laid the foundation of the Bismarckian militarism, these feminine tendencies of his son and successor, were a great source of worry and anxiety. His vision of a powerful Prussian state would be shattered by this dreaming son. He, consequently imposed severe and harsh military discipline on Frederick, to the extent that the latter attempted to escape to England for release and relief. Frederick was thwarted, saw the error of his ways, acquiesced, and eventually acquired the stern and militaristic qualities of his father. On his ~~xxx~~ accession to the throne of Prussia, Frederick immediately ~~re~~ established the freedom of the press, only to revoke it shortly thereafter. His toleration was confined only to religion, for he himself was irreligious. He, nevertheless, encouraged literary endeavors, and invited famous men to his court, where he gave them stipends and treated them liberally. Among those who were attracted to Prussia by Frederick was Voltaire, the French deist, arch-enemy of the Church, and political philosopher. Voltaire's shrieking laughter at priest-craft found a powerful echo in the Prussian court, and the critical spirit which produced the *Aufklärung* freely assailed traditional religion. Lessing offered to the world in

his *Wolfenbüttel Fragmente* the radical negations of *Reinhardt*. The theological rebels dared not ^{for} focus their attention to politics, but they had established the method, which was to result in political change.

Wolff and Lessing, Moses Mendelssohn and Nicolai became the leaders of the *Aufklärung*.^{6b} They exhorted their countrymen to use their reason without fear. It was the thawing of the winter ice. An age of experiment, adventure and rejuvenescence began. The arrows of criticism began to fly. The silent grudges of centuries began to find articulation. Decadent institutions, existing by divine right, began to quake and totter. The old order was changing. During the generation of peace following the Seven Years' War, Germany began to read, think and ask questions. The inquisitive spirit, produced by the combination of the rationalism of Leibnitz and the empiricism of Locke, began to fill the minds of the intellectual bourgeoisie. The roots of the *Aufklärung* were in these philosophic spheres, but the contagion quickly spread, first attacking religion, and then moving on to politics and economics. Up to the time of the French Revolution, there had been no systematic thinking about the principles of the state in Germany. The class of men, who in France, Italy and England were expounding new political philosophies, in Germany contented themselves in perfecting methods of administration. This is due to the Cameralist political beliefs, which since the middle of the sixteenth century, had dominated German political thought. Cameralism concerned itself exclusively with the theory and practice of administration. Its exponents were aware of the deficiencies, not in political concepts but in political administrations.

6b. Germany and the French Revolution . G.R. Gooch.

They did not condemn autocracy even philosophically as had Locke in England, and Montesquieu in France. They sought to elevate autocracy. Their ideal was a benevolent despotism, and in Frederick the Great, and Joseph II of Austria, they realized their goals to a limited extent. The fallacy in their political doctrines is due to the fact that their starting point was the state and not the people. To Locke, Montesquieu, ~~Diderot~~, Voltaire, Rousseau and their disciples, the people occupied the center of the stage. The state existed for the people, for their service. The German pre-revolutionary thinkers accepted the state and its autocratic regime. The only checks they had for rulers were religion and conscience. In Locke, the people are a check to the rulers. The German thinkers were far behind their English and French confreres.

Though the intellectual life in Germany was vigorous, the political was anaemic. With the death of Frederick the Great and the accession of William II in 1786, Prussia breathed a sigh of relief even tho it had admired greatly its warrior ruler. The new ruler was well-meaning, but weak, and dominated by ~~th~~ his ministers. His rule was signalized by a reaction to Christianity. Wöllner, William II's prime minister, was a member of the Rosicrucian order, a religious evangelic organization, whose aims were the rejuvenation of the dying Christianity. A rigid censorship, forbidding discussion of religious and dogmatic questions was immediately set up. The king declared his intention of no longer permitting "that the religion of Christ be undermined, the Bible made a laughing stock to the people and the banners of infidellism, deism and naturalism be openly set up."⁷ The reaction assumed such proportion

7. History of Germany Vo. II P. 227. . Ernest F. Henderson.

that even Immanuel Kant was warned. In spite of this religious severity, the king was tender-hearted and abolished many loathsome taxes. He, however, was not at all prepared to face the problems which the French Revolution prepared for him.

The French Revolution, an outgrowth of the spirit of revolt against authority, created great enthusiasm in Germany. Due to the predominating French influences at the court of Berlin, the German people had been introduced to the theories of Rousseau. ~~Niebuhr~~ says: "His influence was immense, far greater than that of Voltaire. He was the hero of the most clever people of my youth." Lessing, Kant, Herder and Schiller all drank deep from Rousseau's writings. The "Contrat Social" pronounced on some fundamental issues, which no German thinker could raise. While Montesquieu appealed forcibly to isolated students and thinkers, Jean Jacques Rousseau became the hero of the hour. His teachings were continually regurgitated by the intellectuals. Besides, the influence of French teachings, the successful American Revolution which had had many supporters in Germany, paved the way for the acceptance of the new regime in France by Germany. Goethe said that Washington and Lincoln were names that shone in the German firmament. Returned Hessian soldiers had with the hyperbole of yarn-tellers, spoken glowingly of the Utopian republic across the sea. Hence, the French revolution was hailed by the masses in Germany. They saw in the declaration of Rights of Man their own inarticulate longings assume tangible form. Philosophers like Kant and Fichte saw in the new political situation in France a realization of ~~these~~ their own teachings. The literary ~~in~~ salons of Germany toasted the revolutionists. The

11 joy however was short lived; the excesses of the revolutionists soon alienated many, the intellectuals always preferring order to liberty. Most of them soon joined the ranks of the counter-revolutionists. It is of interest to note that the Jewish salons of Henrietta Herz and Rachel Levin, tho deploring its excesses, never abandoned the cause of the revolution.^{8a}

The court, of course, began to see in the revolution a grave danger to its own existence. The execution of Louis XVI, the confiscation of church property, the complaints of the emigrés, all ~~xxx~~ served to arouse the king against France. It became evident that the revolution would not confine itself to France. On Prussia sporadic outbursts of peasants did occur. These were easily subdued, and the revolution did not come in Prussia, for the peasants were unorganized, unintelligent, and above all, despicably obedient. Prussia was drawn into war with France and was easily defeated. Her coffers made full by the economy of Frederick the Great, were squandered by his successor, who, besides being a spendthrift, had ~~abolished~~ certain taxes, which added to his financial problems. Revolutionary France, inspired by the newly won rights and filled with a spirit of nationalism, proved irresistible. Her victorious~~sm~~ armies subdued the west bank~~x~~ of the Rhine (treaty of Basel), conquered the Netherlands, mastered Italy, and defeated Prussia and Austria. Whenever the French armies moved, there the cry of *Liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* was carried, and there they established the same political privileges they enjoyed at home.

In Prussia, meanwhile in 1797, Frederick Wilhelm III, had become ruler. He also was weak and could do nothing to stem the armies of Napoleon. Prussia suffered defeat after defeat. To

8a Germany and the French Revolution - G.P. Gooch.

the demands of his subjects ~~he~~ for a release from feudal burdens, the new ruler turned a deaf ear. It was only after the Battle of Jena, when Prussia appeared ruined that Frederick Wilhelm was roused from his lethargy. He appointed able ministers and these urged upon him the necessity of repairing the rotten administration. He was won over and on October 9, 1807, issued the ~~known~~ famous edict which abolished feudalism in Germany. The serfs were freed. Castes could be changed. The members of the nobility were permitted to sell their land, and engage in occupations. The cities were given self-government with slight supervision from the crown. Here reforms were not instituted for altruistic motives, but in order to strengthen Prussia against Napoleon.

The reforms accomplished their purpose. Prussia began gaining a new lease on life. Patriotism began manifesting itself. Fichte and Schleiermacher preached revolution and revolt from the yoke of Napoleon. The Landwehr and Landsturm were organized. Hardenberg came to office and his liberal policies helped reestablish Prussia. The ~~denouement~~ of Napoleon came quickly. The battle of Leipzig in 1814 and Waterloo soon thereafter, ~~finally~~ finished him. Then came the congress of Vienna, and the inevitable reaction to liberal ideas. Bourbonism was restored in France. Monarchs began to fear the loss of their power and frowned upon all sorts of democratic ideas. In Prussia, the king had promised his subjects a constitution. Like most royal promises, it was not kept.

The liberal elements in Germany fought against this reaction. The Turn Verein movement and the Burschenschaft, the students'

13 organization began to object to the reactionary tendencies of court. They soon began to start trouble and in 1819 one of them murdered **Rotzebue**, a conservative historian, supposedly a Russian spy. The gymnasiums were immediately ordered closed; the Burschenschaft was disbanded. Secret orders ~~was~~ arose in their place. The reaction was in the saddle, and firmly entrenched, and the revolutionary ideals of the French were relegated to the limbo of forgotten things. The teachings of Locke, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, The Encyclopedists, Mirabeau, were ~~a~~ once more submerged.

David Friedländer was caught in the swirl of these intellectual and political movements of his time, and many of his activities, for some of which he has been severely criticised, nay, even outlawed, can be understood when seen in the perspective of the conditions of his day.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF THE JEWS DURING FRIEDLANDER'S LIFETIME...

In the previous chapters, we have endeavored to sketch the political and intellectual forces which determined the course of events in Friedländer's life time, and we have laid particular stress on Prussian history for obvious reasons. We shall now endeavor to trace the influence and effect of this modern spirit on ^{the} ~~the~~ status of the Jew. Realizing that generalization even in the physical sciences are precarious, we shall nevertheless hazard a few generalizations on world history and Jewish history. History moves on in antithetical waves. A mystical period will be followed by a rationalistic age. A liberal century usually precedes reactionary years. The line of demarcation is not clearly definable. There are no exact termini *ā quo* or *ad quem*. The movements blend together. Rationalism begins to gain power, perhaps, when mysticism is at its height and grows to such proportion that it eventually plays the dominant role in the affairs of men and vice versa. A period in liberalism is usually followed by reactionary days. The Jew's condition is always improving during an age of enlightenment and liberalism, and his lot becomes harder with the inevitable reaction. Whether this generalization holds for all of Jewish history, it is not our purpose to establish now, but that it holds good for the period in which we are interested now, we venture to assert no one will dispute. Wherever liberal, the ideals and ideas of the French Revolution ~~the modern political theories have their origin in the French Revolution, and wherever these theories were accepted and adopted, the status of the Jew was improved. Wherever bourbonism or monarchism or reaction set in, the Jew's rights and privileges were curtailed.~~

Since the destruction of the temple by Titus in the year 70, the most important event in Jewish history is the fall of the Bastille on July 14, 1789. The fall of the Bastille is symbolic of the advent of the French Revolution, which marks a new era in the European political conceptions of the status of the Jew. Previous to the Revolution, European governments had never considered the Jew to be on a par with the rest of the citizenry. The church conceptions that the Jew was an infidel, a Christ killer, hence of an inferior species, had dominated all European legislation. This placing of the Jew on a plane of inferiority politically began to end with the advent of the French Revolution. The intellectual forces, which brought about the fall of bourbonism in France, advocated the equality of man. The Jew could not be excluded from that equality. The Encyclopedists in their assertion that all men are created equal, could not consistently relegate the Jew to a lower sphere. He was a man, and should have political rights and privileges. He was to be one of the governed and consequently should have a voice in the machinery of government. The establishment of this new political philosophy in France sounded a death knell to the disabilities which had hampered the free development of the Jew during the centuries of papal and Christian domination. Wherever French armies went, French ideas and ideals were established. In the wake of Napoleon's victorious troops, ghetto walls were demolished and political discrimination dwindled away. Thus, in all the European countries, which Napoleon conquered, the Jews for the time being, gained civil equality and political rights.

The beginning of the eighteenth century saw the Jews suffering from the many disabilities, which had been their medieval

heritage. Of course, individual Jews who had accumulated great wealth, had been able to buy themselves free from many of the restrictions. Wealth has often been, in spite of his spiritualistic propensities, the savior of the Jew. But by the middle of the eighteenth century, the liberal writings began to have their effect on Jewish conditions. When Montesquieu published his "Spirit of the Laws" in which he arraigned Christianity for the maltreatment of the Jew throughout many centuries, a hopeful note was struck. A more hopeful sign was the passage of the English Naturalization Act in March, 1753. The House of Lords passed a bill which would permit Jews who had lived in England or Ireland for three consecutive years, to be naturalized. They were, however, not to be eligible for public office, nor were they to be granted the Parliamentary franchise. The House of Commons also passed the bill, and George II signed it. There was a great opposition in England by the clerics and by jealous Christian merchants, and their cohorts, who thundered so vociferously from platforms and pulpits, that the bill had to be repealed the following year. The reason given by the ministry for consenting to the repeal was not that the Jews were undeserving, but that the measure had created displeasure among loyal subjects. The passage of the bill is significant, for it was a happy augury for the future.

The next commanding event in the story of Jewish emancipation was the appearance in 1781 of the article "On the Civil Amelioration of the Conditions of the Jews", by Christian William Dohm,^a scholarly official of Frederick the Great and an intimate friend and admirer of Mendelssohn. Dohm refutes on historical and humanitarian grounds the charges brought against the Jews, and predicts that by emancipating the Jews, the evils of which they are accused (imaginary or real)

would disappear. He asks that the Jew be given full rights of citizenship, and that all restrictions, economic, social and political, be immediately removed. His great work, the product of Mendelssohn's influence, was widely read, and made a powerful impression on contemporary opinion. It was written at the request of the suffering Alsatian Jews, whose persecutions were such that they appealed to Mendelssohn to draw up a memorial for them to be sent to Louis XVI. Mendelssohn referred the matter to Dohm, who eagerly seized the opportunity of righting what he felt was an enduring wrong, and his great liberal work was the result.

A few months after the appearance of Dohm's work, the ~~Emperor~~ Emperor Joseph II of Austria, issued his famous Toleration Edict of 1782, which granted the Jews many unheard of privileges. Trades, arts and sciences were opened for the Jews. Even agriculture might be engaged in under certain restrictions. The emperor made provisions for the establishment of Jewish schools, but insisted that Jews learn German, and that all documents, to be legal, must be executed in German. On November 20th of the same year, the emperor decreed that all Jews were to be considered "fellow-men" and hence any excesses against them were to be avoided. He also abolished the Leibzoll (body-tax) and other taxes, which had designated the Jew as a race apart, to be singled out for punishment. Other regulations, trifling to us now, but important then because they indicated that the Jew was no longer considered an outlaw, were instituted by Joseph. Among these was the privilege extended to Jewish notables to wear swords.

The decree of Joseph II met more opposition in Jewish circles than it did among the reactionary clerics. The Jews had never been granted any favors by their monarchs, and could not believe that the

ruler's intentions were prompted by altruistic desires. They suspected that the emperor's kindness was but a subterfuge to win them over to Christianity. "They suspected the Greeks even when they were bearing gifts."^(?) The Rabbis were particularly vociferous in denouncing the edict, and in urging the Jews not to be misled by the siren-chantings of the enemy. They regarded secular culture as profane, and saw in it a menace to legalistic Judaism, as well as to Jewish separateness. They felt correctly that secular culture would make inroads in Talmudic learning and would create a disrespect towards Jewish religious observance. They were zealous about preserving traditional Judaism, and thought that the introduction of any extraneous culture would tend to decrease the loyalty and interest of the Jews in their own culture. These observations, time has certainly proved to be well taken.

There was but one voice to raise itself in Austria in favor of the liberal decree of the emperor, and that was that of Hartwig Wessely. He wrote a circular letter to the Rabbis of Austria, urging acquiescence in the plans of the emperor, and championing secular culture. He stated that the Talmud had ever advocated secular culture. Wessely was an excellent Hebrew stylist, and had written his letter in Hebrew. He was banished from Austria by the Jewish communities. His letter was bitterly attacked by the Rabbis, who had previously admired him for his profound and thorough mastery of Hebrews, and for his faithful adherence to the traditional ritual and observance. In some cities, copies of his letter were burned, and he was subjected to the same treatment which bigots ever heap upon men who do not conform. Wessely went thereafter to Berlin, became an intimate of Mendelssohn, was a member of his famous Jewish Circle, one of the founders of the Sammler, and rubbed shoulders with all those young

spirits who were to become the leaders in the Jewish Renaissance. David Friedländer translated Wessely's Hebrew letter to the Austrian Jews into German.

Through the lack of foresight of the Rabbinic leaders, Jews did not take advantage of the freedom Joseph II, a benevolent despot, offered them. Reaction set in in Austria. The tragic fate of the Bourbons in France caused every European Monarch to regard with fear and distrust any liberal tendencies among his subjects. The Jews suffered in the reaction. Their privileges were again restricted. The Congress of Vienna and the administration of Metternich did not tend towards the progress of liberal ideas. Metternich himself was committed to fight for Jewish rights at the congress, egged on undoubtedly by the financial power of the Rothschilds and other Jewish bankers. In his own country he took no steps to ameliorate conditions of the Jews. The July revolution of 1830 made for a more liberal spirit, and the revolution of 1848 brought about a decisive change in the conditions of the Jews in Austria. The Jews were given full rights. Five Jews sat in the first Austrian Parliament. The reactionary wave, which followed, curtailed Jewish rights once more. In 1867 the Austrian constitution was established, and the Jews were given unrestricted equality.

The emancipation of the Jews in France was undoubtedly brought about largely by the teachings of Rousseau. Rousseau believed in the innate goodness of man. He also maintained that intrinsically all men are equal, regardless of race, creed or nationality. "Civilized Society" was responsible for the social inequalities. On primitive communistic societies, there was no problem of equality. The institution of property had made for inequality, with the result now that we have rich and poor,

cultured and uncultured. Rousseau demanded equal rights and deliverance from social bondage for all classes of society. He advocated genuine democracy, direct government by the people, recommending methods akin to our initiative and referendum. His ideas were formulated in the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1784 and 1793, and hence his influence tended to hasten the emancipation of the Jews in France, and thru France, made for more liberal treatment of the Jews throughout Europe.

Abbe Grégoire⁽¹⁾ and Mirabeau were directly responsible for the enfranchisement of the Jews in France. The ^{former} latter had won a prize for the best essay on the improvement of conditions of the Jews in France. He advanced the bold view, bold for a catholic prelate, that neither the religion of the Jews nor their mode of worship, would deter them from assuming the full duties of citizens. He insisted that the Jewish code of morality when given free and unrestricted play, would tend to produce useful and happy men. He pleaded for the removal of all restrictions and desired to see the Jew placed on a plane of equality with his gentile neighbor.

Mirabeau in 1787 wrote his valuable work on Mendelssohn and the Reform of the Jews. He extolled the virtues of the Jews and ascribed their vices to the stifling effect of a crushing environment. Liberate the Jew, and he will demonstrate that he is gratified to be put on a plane of equality with other men. Due to the influence of these two men, on August 23, 1789, the assembly passed a law that no one shall be molested because of religious beliefs, insofar as religious ceremonies do not tend to disturb the public order. This was decreed to prevent recurrence of the riots in Alsace and Lorraine. Grégoire[✓] was not satisfied with this measure, and when the assembly ~~reconvened~~ reconvened, he made a plea for the emancipation of the Jews. His plea impressed the delegates, and on September 28, 1789, the

21 assembly declared that the Jews were included in the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

Holland had for many years been a paradise for Jews. A Protestant country, itself subjected for many years to Catholic persecutions, Holland had learned the lesson of religious tolerance. Many Marannos from Spain and Portugal had found a haven of refuge there. When the French revolution broke out, the Dutch Jews, tho they enjoyed many privileges, did not yet have complete equality. They were not allowed to hold office, and were taxed for the support of the Protestant schools. In 1795, Holland became the Batavian Republic when taken from the Hapsburgs by the French. The Jews were ganted full rights. As in the case of the Toleration Edict of 1781 in Austria, the freedom of the Jews was not desired by the Rabbis. The ultra-orthodox party feared that emancipation would lead to assimilation. A liberal party was created, which welcomed the new freedom. These liberals began to establish secular schools, and accepted in toto the educational principles of Mendelssohn and Friedländer.¹⁰ In 1797 two of these liberals of Amsterdam were elected to the Batavian Parliament. In 1798 a Jew, Isaak da Costa Atlas, was elected president of the National Assembly of the republic. When Louis, the brother of Napoleon, became king of Holland, the condition of the Jews continued to improve. Louis was a friend of the Jews and wanted to see them progress. He changed the market days in large cities from Sabbath to Monday to accommodate the Jewish traders. He organized two Jewish army battalions of 820 soldiers and 60 officers, all volunteers. He wanted to prove that Jews did not abhor military duty. For his Jewish battalion he provided Kosher meals. Every Sabbath, there was a parade to the synagogue. During the ensuing wars many Jews were decorated. He also

10. "Moses Mendelssohn" - I Heineman.

took an interest in the communal activity of the Jews, trying to unite the Sephardim and Ashkenazim. The French Revolution, certainly, was a godsend to the Jews in Holland who gained complete civil and political equality.

Italy which had also become a French vassal state, gave Jews complete freedom. There, the Jews took advantage of their new liberties and the Jewish community flourished. A Jew, Banafael became a major in the national guard, and another, Mapugo, became a senator. Culturally the Jews also made progress. As in France, a consistory was held at the instigation of Napoleon. The result was a united Jewish community. Its greatest achievement was the establishment of Hebrew printing presses, which supplied Europe and Africa. This was the first time in two hundred fifty years that a Hebrew book was published in Rome. It was a most hopeful sign too that Hebrew literature should be created almost in the shadow of the Vatican buildings.

In Denmark, the Jews must have been treated liberally for its ruler was among those who subscribed to Mendelssohn's Phaedon.

Strange to say, Russia in the eighteenth century was embarked on a liberal Jewish policy. Catherine II was greatly influenced by the French Encyclopedists and was favorably disposed towards the Jews. She permitted them to join guilds, and to become aldermen and magistrates. Her successor, Paul (1746-1801), continued her policies. He allowed Jews to attend secular schools, and protected them from the rapacity of the district governors. Alexander I (1801-1825) was also liberally inclined. He too saved Jews from the robbing officials. He organized a commission for improvement of the conditions of the Jews, and placed Derschawin, minister of Justice at its head. On December 9, 1804, he passed a rule that the Jews in South and West Russia be allowed to purchase and rent

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land, to attend the schools and universities and get degrees, and he also permitted them to trade all over Russia provided they spoke Russian, and dressed like Russians. They could have their own communal organization, and could have their own representatives in the city council. They were even promised full equality if they showed progress. Alexander too wanted to bring secular culture to his Jewish subjects and even at state expense. The rabbis as in Austria and Holland, feared that the educational tid-bits offered the Jews were mere baits to lure them to Christianity, and consequently fought most bitterly against having their coreligionists take advantage of the liberalism of Alexander. Under Russia's liberal rulers who sympathized with French political ideas, the Jewish communities prospered.

Modern Germany was at that time composed of free states, petty principalities and larger kingdoms, all of whom were banded together in a loose confederation, known as the Holy Roman Empire. As Voltaire well put it, it was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an empire. The union meant nothing. Each petty ruler was free and independent. Each principality made its own laws. Such being the case, the status of the Jew in what is now modern Germany, varied. In places where the rulers were liberal and in tune with the cultural movements of their day, the lot of the Jew was a good one. Where the ruler was a reactionary bigot, the Jews staggered under the load of the medieval disabilities. In states where Christian merchants were jealous and powerful, the Jew was handicapped and hindered. In others where the Jew was rich and controlled the commercial enterprises, he was enabled to purchase privileges with gold. On the whole, however, the German states were reactionary and the fight for emancipation was particularly long and arduous. The victories of the French improved the status of

24 the Jew in the German states. Whatever units came directly under French rule, were forced to grant the Jews full civil and political rights. The kingdom of Westphalia, which was ruled by the liberal and generous Jerome, had a constitution which declared that all subjects are equal before the law, and all religions may observe their rituals unrestrictedly. On January 27, 1808, Jerome issued a special decree that Jews have the same rights as other subjects. Like Napoleon in France, and Louis in Holland, Jerome ordered a consistory of Jews, which was held in 1808. Israel Jacobson was made its president. The consistory discussed Jewish conditions, and methods of improving them. To aid the consistory in its work, Jacobson summoned David Friedländer from Berlin to advise and suggest. As a result of its session, an aestheticized service and a secularized school were established. Jews were also honored at Westphalian Universities, Göttingen and Wurburg. They were compelled to assume German family names and to conduct their transactions in German. Thus, it is evident, that the French conquest came as a godsend to the Jews of Westphalia.

In Frankfurt a.m. the conditions of the Jews were bad. The Prince, Dalberg, was a liberal but the jealous merchant guilds fought him. The Jews were considered as aliens and had to live in special sections of the city. They were also barred from many trades and had to pay 22,000 gulden schutzgeld yearly. They were limited to 500 families, and weddings were only permitted on the death of an individual. In 1810, due to French influences, the Jews were given complete freedom and the community prospered.

In Würtemberg, there was not much improvement resulting from French rule. In Baden, the archduke, Karl Friedrich, was liberal and decreed that "every man, irrespective of his religious affiliations can become a citizen." In Bavaria, conditions were the worst of all south Germany. Under Napoleon, there were some

25 improvements, such as admission to the schools (1804), permission to carry weapons (1805) and in 1808 the repeal of the Leibzoll. In 1809 a decree was issued stating that religious beliefs should not disqualify man from citizenship privileges. This decree was not carried out. In June 1813, an edict was issued which gave Jews political rights. Saxony was a narrow Protestant state, a sort of Protestant Spain. The Jews were expelled from the entire kingdom but Dresden. There, they were severely oppressed. In Anhalt, whose capital was Dessau, Mendelsohn's birthplace, conditions were better. In 1799, a Jewish school was organized there. This school lasted for fifty years, and was supported by the state. David Fränkel was its director. A printing press was also established there and the Shulamith, the first Jewish monthly, was published there by Frankel and Wolff (1806-1808). The administration was paternalistic to Jews and cared for their welfare, but legally they were still Schmutzjuden. Strangers had to get special permission to remain in Dessau. In 1804 the Leibzoll was rescinded. It was only the liberalism of princes which made the lot of the Jews tolerable there.

In Anhalt Bernburg and Anhalt Köthen, better conditions prevailed. In 1810 and 1811 Jews were given full equality, and some even held office.

Hesse D'Armstadt was like Dessau. The Archduke Ludwig was a liberal but was too lazy to institute any changes. Due to French influences, the Leibzoll was abolished, but Jews still remained aliens and Schutzjuden.

In Sachsen-Weimar, Jews received all citizenship privileges.

The duchess of Sachsen-Meiningenⁿ instilled tolerance for the Jews in her subjects. They were permitted to go in trades and even to manufacture if they got Jewish help. All schools were open

to them.

Vor-Pommern which was under Swedish rule, was like Sachsen Meirungen.

Waldeck-Pyrmont ~~was~~ granted Jews full rights. In Mecklenburg, the administration did not hinder Jewish development. The local magistrates were not as liberal as the rulers, but the Jews were nevertheless in good circumstances. They exported wool and carried on trade, and were permitted to secure M.D. degrees at Rosstock University. In 1812, Frederick Frank gave Jews civil as well as private rights, but did not allow them to hold office.

In the three cities of Hamburg, Lübeck and Bremen, the merchants and citizens were jealous of the Jews and tried to prevent their development. In Hamburg, as well as Frankfort, the Jews had to live in a ghetto and were barred from trades and certain commercial fields. The children were not permitted to attend the schools, nor were adults privileged to patronize places of amusement. In 1811 when Hamburg became part of France, the Jews were given full rights, and some were even elected to office. Lübeck had expelled Jews in 1699 and they had removed to a nearby Danish village whence they ^{could} come to the city daily. When French rule prevailed there, they were given full rights. Bremen had expelled the Jews as early as 1324. The few families living in the vicinity were driven out in 1803 at the behest of the merchant guild. In 1811 French ideas prevailed and 30 Jewish families moved into Bremen. Thus we have seen that in the non-Prussianic German states, the conditions of the Jews improved; where the French ruled they were usually given full rights, and where French rule failed to penetrate, nevertheless French ideals could not be resisted and rulers had to make liberal concessions to all their subjects. Thus the Jew's lot improved.

The fall of Napoleon, and the disfavor of liberal ideas among European monarchs, ushered in an era of reaction, during which the Jews particularly in the German states, lost many of their hard-earned rights. The Congress of Vienna, due to the influence of Jewish Bankers was disposed favorably to Jews. Metternich was inclined to alleviate Jewish conditions, as he had been influenced by the Jewish solons in Vienna, particularly that of Baroness Fanny von Arustein (an Itzig sister-in-law of Friedländer). Hardenberg, the Prussian representative, was a liberal who also wished to promote the welfare of the Jews. Due to their combined efforts, paragraph 16 of the Treaty of Vienna ~~made~~, reads: "The Congress of the allies will consider how it is possible to give Jews full civil rights in Germany, and how to enable them to enjoy all citizenship privileges, if they also assume its duties. Nevertheless, all rights granted by states are not to be revoked." This clause would have guaranteed freedom of Jews in territories, which had been ruled and occupied by the French. Originally the last sentence read: "all rights granted in states are not to be revoked." This was changed to by by anti-Jewish influences. The changed wording made it possible to deny Jews rights in former French territories, on a technicality. Those hostile to the Jews now interpreted this clause to mean rights given by the states. States had given Jews no rights. France had given Jews rights. Thus, by the worst sort of pilpul, these petty governments were enabled to revoke legally Jewish privileges.

No sooner had the French armies left Frankfort, then all Jewish rights were revoked and as far as Jews were concerned, Frankfort went back to the medieval status which had prevailed prior to 1810. "Lubeck followed suit and expelled the 55 Jewish families who had settled there, in spite of Hardenberg's genuine protest.

3 Bremen joined the crowd and also drove the Jews out. Hamburg not to be outdone by her sister cities, and in spite of the fact that the Hamburg senate lauded the Jews, reinstituted the Ghetto walls and all the restrictions that accompany them. In these cities the jealousy of the artisans and merchants was largely responsible for reversion to reactionary days.

The anti-Jewish feeling became general throughout Germany. The poet Goethe even was filled with it. Ruhs, a historian, maintained that the Jews with their separatistic ways and separate communal organizations are an imperium in imperio, a state within a state. The Christian reactionary nationalists said they (the Jews) are neither Christians nor Germans. Fries raised alarm that unless Jews are restrained, they are destined to dominate Germany and to wrest the control of their native land from the Germans. Such inflammatory writings had their effect, and the Jews in most principalities lost their hard-won rights. Thus the cup of freedom was rudely dashed from their lips of the Jews when they had just begun to sip and taste its sweep waters.

CHAPTER IV
POLITICAL
THE STRUGGLE FOR EMANCIPATION IN PRUSSIA,
AND FRIEDLANDER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THAT
STRUGGLE.

We have thus far attempted to sketch very briefly the struggle of the Jews for political emancipation in Russia, France, England, Holland and some of the German states. We shall now focus our attention on the same struggle in Prussia and endeavor to indicate what part Friedlander played in liberating his fellow Jews from the social, economic and political disabilities which had handicapped their free development for many centuries. For the key to the story we are about to reveal, we must refer to the second chapter, where we have presented the intellectual and political forces which raged in the latter part of the 18th and early part of the 19th century, and in whose Maelstrom Friedlander was caught.

The accession to the throne of Frederick the Great in 1740 had filled the Jewish population with hope. The liberal prince patron of the French intellectuals, would surely, they supposed, end this medieval oppression of men because of religious non-conformity. Their hopes came to naught. Frederick William I had been, alas, too effective a teacher. His son followed in his father's footsteps and sought to strengthen the military efficiency of Prussia. His tolerance extended only to the field of religion, because he himself was an atheist, but the Jewish reform did not occur. In 1750 Frederick the Great issued his Jewish regulations. These bore few traces of his supposed liberalism. The number of Jews was limited. They were barred from the guilds, and from dealing in spices and agriculture. They could not sell wine and brandy, and engage in 'Kleinbandel' (small trade). They were also permitted to become pawn brokers. They

50 had to pay special protection moneys (Schutzgeld). The whole community was to be held responsible for the thefts and crimes of any one of its members. Every concession had to be heavily paid for. Every Jew who wanted to get married had to buy a certain amount of porcelain from the Royal factories, and export it. This porcelain flooded foreign markets and was contemptuously known as Jew porcelain. Besides these limitations, there were the usual restrictions about marriage, etc. In 1769, the Berlin community, which was organized and ruled by elders, protested to the king against the communal responsibility for theft, crime and bankruptcies. The ministry admitted the justice of the protest, but the liberal king said that the law must stand. Due to such harsh treatment, the number of Jews in Prussia in 1787 was small--about 31,700, a proportion of 1-175 of the general population.

Of course, there were a few rich Jews, whose wealth enabled them to purchase special privileges from the king. Among them, we have already seen in a previous chapter, was the Friedländer family in Königsberg. The Itzigs also enjoyed all the privileges of Christian merchants. David Friedländer, had he not been moved by a deep love for his cor~~re~~ligionists and Judaism, could have remained content, for as a son-in-law of Itzig, he enjoyed all privileges, and need not have agitated for political emancipation in Prussia. "But this man, who for himself had attained so much, was not satisfied with that. He did not rest in his endeavors, until the poorest of his cor~~re~~ligionists had attained the same comfort and security."¹¹

Frederick the Great died in 1786, and Frederick Wilhelm II, his successor, wanted to be just to the Jews. He put a bust of Mendels~~so~~hn in his room and gave a general privilege to Mendels~~so~~hn's

1 heirs. His confidante and chief minister Wöllner, in spite of his reactionary pietistic tendencies, encouraged amelioration of Jewish conditions, because of hatred for Frederick the Great. Frederick's refusal to alleviate Jewish conditions was probably due to economic reasons. He wanted to conserve the finances of Prussia. The Jewish restrictions and taxes were a fine source of income. Their abolition would harm the Prussian treasury. Hence, he continued them. His successor, however, did not share his thrifty qualities and began to squander the moneys, Frederick the Great had accumulated, and thus the economic barrier to Jewish emancipation was removed.

Wöllner, the pietist, already referred to because of his intense hatred for Frederick the Great, was favorably disposed to the amelioration of Jewish conditions. He suggested to Frederick Wilhelm II that the Jews should receive better treatment, and should be prepared for good and useful citizenship, and should also be declared eligible for military service.¹² The king was impressed by the opinions of his minister, but was perhaps, even more greatly influenced by the views of Mirabeau¹³ who had written an essay urging drastic reform in the Prussian political administration. Part of his program called for the complete emancipation of the Jews. As a result of this pressure, on September 28, 1786, the king sent the following word to the ministry: "This oppressed nation (the Jews) should be relieved as much as possible, and should not be drained so horribly by oppressive and unjust taxation"¹⁴ He was

12. ~~Myxpage~~ Martin Phillipson "Neueste Geschichte der Juden" page 47.

13. Ritter - "Geschichte der jüdischen Reformation" Vol II P. 76

14. Martin Phillipson "Neueste Geschichte der Juden" p. 47

well meaning and sympathetic towards the Jews. **Perceiving** this favorable disposition on the part of the Government, the Jews immediately saw their opportunity and began to petition and agitate. They were able to do so rather effectively due to the raised status of the Jew, at least in intellectual and liberal centers. Moses Mendelssohn had demonstrated to the world that the Jews are as able and as worthy as Christians, and there had risen among the enlightened minds among both religions a desire for equalization. Mendelssohn, by virtue of his preeminence, had become the acknowledged ambassador of the Jews to the gentiles. Whenever the Jew was unjustly attacked, or whenever the Jews needed a representative spokesman, Mendelssohn would step out as the defender and protagonist of his people. When the Alsatian Jews needed someone to draw up a protest for them to Louis XVI, they turned to Mendelssohn, who, as we have already indicated, referred the matter to Dohm. Mendelssohn, however, was not aggressive. He was mild, gentle and even apologetic. He was not a fighter, but rather a philosopher. He could inspire men, but he could not lead them in the fray. He shrank from ^{the} publicity which any aggressive demand for Jewish emancipation would entail. His pupil and disciple, David Friedländer was made of sterner stuff. It was he who began to agitate for Jewish emancipation, and to demand the inherent right of the Jew as well as of any other human being, for the freedom of complete self-expression, a condition, which was unattainable for the Jew as long as he was burdened with limitations and restrictions. On Mendelssohn's death in 1786 the cloak of Jewish leadership fell on the shoulders of David Friedländer, a leadership he maintained for more than thirty years. Immediately after the accession of the new king, and taking advantage of the favorable tendencies of the ruler and his counsellors to the Jews, Fried-

lander representing Berlin Jewry, went to Frederick William II and requested the abolition of discriminatory taxation, and asked that the Jews be permitted to enjoy the same rights accorded to other subjects of the king.¹⁵ The king received Friedländer graciously and referred his petition to the ministry for immediate action. In 1793 Friedlander published a pamphlet which gives a clear account of his dealings with the government to bring about a change in the condition of the Jews of Prussia. It is known as "Documents concerning the Reform of the Jewish colonies in the Prussian States" A committee of Berlin Jews headed by Friedlander had approached the king the latter part of 1787, and asked him to give the Jews complete rights. The king was agreeable, and at the suggestion of Friedländer, consented to permit the Jews of all the Prussian states to select a commission, which was to study the Jewish problem and recommend remedies. The king likewise, was to appoint a committee which was to investigate Jewish conditions, and hand in its report. Both reports were then to be presented to the ministry for acceptance or rejection. This plan was immediately carried into operation. Before the king heard from the ministry however, he rescinded, on his own accord, the hateful body tax. (Dec. 31, 1787) and a little later the porcelain tax. Thus the ice had been broken and the guns ~~of David~~ fired by David Friedländer had captured the first important objective in the long campaign for emancipation.

The Jewish commission immediately began its work. It was headed by Friedländer and his brother-in-law Daniel Itzig, and it handed in a complete report. It might not be amiss here to insert a few words on the communal organizations of Jews in Prussia, which made it possible to elect a representative commission. Prussian Jewry was efficiently organized. This was not due to any exceptional

ability along lines of organization, but was the direct result of Prussian repressive laws. The Jews were collectively held responsible for Jewish bankruptcies, thefts and crimes. The entire Jewish colony had to make good for any debts incurred and not paid by any individual Jew. This rendered it imperative that some form of organization be established which would equitably apportion the distribution of deficits and which would aim to prevent Jewish crime and financial delinquency. Hence, Prussian Jewry learned the secrets of organization, the result of which learning has been used to excellent advantage by German Jews who later settled in America and brought with them the organizing ability which has found expression in American Jewish institutions of our own day.

A commission of general deputies was selected from all the Jewish communities of Prussia, and these drew up a list of Jewish grievances and a request for complete political and civil emancipation. David Friedländer was the leading figure in the Commission, and author of the report. The demand for all rights is stated in vigorous and unequivocal language, and is not asked as a favor, but rather, demanded as a right. On May 17, 1787, the Jewish commission sent its report to the royal commission for action. The report contains a vivid picture of the Jewish situation in Prussia. It mentions as the chief burden under which the Prussian Jew staggers, the numerous specifically Jewish taxes, the communal responsibility for theft and financial errors and the restriction placed on the Jews in commercial fields. Among the discriminatory taxes which Friedländer mentions in "Documents" are, for example: (1) at the triennial election of the elders of the community special taxes were levied. (Berlin Jewry had to pay 130 Thalers) (2) the excessive taxes for the diploma fee at the university. (3) the body tax (4) the forcible purchase of royal

4 a porcelain. In eight years, for the privilege of marriage, Jews had bought 223,000 thaler of porcelain, representing a loss of 100,000, ^{thalers} in actual money. Regarding the business restrictions, the Jews were excluded from agriculture, from brewing beer, from all trades, from dealing in foods, particularly butter, fish, bread and meat, etc. The greatest grievance, however, is the communal responsibility, which made the Jews of all Prussia responsible collectively ^{all} for the Jewish theft, crime and bankruptcies. This caused the Jews to deal very harshly with their own criminals. Any Jew found guilty of theft was deprived of his citizenship and both he and his family were driven out of the country. Friedländer answered charges that Jews hid their criminals, by stating that inasmuch as ^{the} entire community is branded and punished for the act of any individual, it is but natural and human for Jews to attempt to conceal the crimes of their ~~cor~~religionists. Jews also lead lives of fear and suspicion because of this communal responsibility, and hence cannot develop their spiritual natures. The report closed with a request that the state immediately relieve Jews of all these disabilities.

The deputies of the king worked on the report for two years and on January 4, 1790 presented it to the king who immediately approved it. The report is a remarkable piece of evidence about the struggle between enlightenment and reaction, which occurred in the ranks of the government officials. The result of this was a compromise, which satisfied neither the Jews nor their enemies. For a few privileges in trade the Jews should permit the officials to regulate their private lives, and were to be prohibited from observing certain religious ceremonials. Friedländer drew up the reply which was signed by all the Jewish deputies.

This answer was made public on February 28, 1790. It was written in a courageous tone and firmly rejected the proposal of the minister. Friedländer states in the answer¹⁶ "We do not ask that the chains which bind us be hung further, but that they be loosened. These chains consist of the solidarity with which we are considered politically and religiously. The political restrictions keep us from engaging in civic work, and makes us useless subjects, and the religious restrictions disturb our home life and impede the development of our moral nature. Destroy, we ask of your highness, these irons, for we feel that under the present circumstances we cannot exist without becoming a nuisance to the state and an unbearable burden to ourselves." The reply closed with the request that if the king could not change the report of the royal commission, the Jews would prefer to retain the status quo without any changes. Friedländer was courageously and manfully battling for the inherent rights of the Jews.

The ministry was well pleased with the rejection of their proposal by Friedländer. They felt that they had done their duty. They had offered to aid the Jew, but their offer had been scornfully cast aside. Their conscience was salved and they hoped a knotty problem had been effectively pigeonholed. Not so, however; Friedländer's petition to the king had stimulated thinking people to observing the injustice done to the Jew, and in intellectual circles, where Friedländer was one of the leading spirits, a marked change of sentiment to the Jews began to manifest itself. The famous literary salons of Henrietta Herz and Rachel Levin also wielded great influence and contributed, tho indirectly, to the fight Friedländer and the elders of the Jewish community were making.

16. ibid p. 85

This intellectual ferment could not escape the king and in January, 1702, ^{✓q} he bethought himself of the Jews and sent a strong order to the general Directory to reopen the matter of Jewish rights and reprimanded them for their neglect in the matter in the past.

The ministry made a new offer, more acceptable than its predecessor,¹⁷ The Jews were not to become citizens nor were they to be eligible for public office. All other disabilities, however, were to be abolished. The ministers hoped that this new decree would ~~tend~~ to disintegrate the Jewish community. They believed that the measure would **have** tended to bring the Jews and Christians together, and that the differences between the two religions could be limited to a few harmless theological concepts. This time for the destruction of Jewish culture and separate existence, full emancipation was to be given. The new regulations were submitted to the king for signature, but **war intervened**. France was fighting against the first coalition. King William had to protect his royal prerogatives against the encroachments of the French revolutionists. He had to ally himself with the reactionary monarchical forces, and thus Jewish emancipation was deferred. The interruption caused by the war gave the reactionaries a chance to discard this new regulation. On June 5, 1792, however, the king abolished the Jewish communal responsibility for taxation, and the Jews began to harvest the first fruits of their efforts for full rights, expended by Friedländer and his followers. The fear of revolution and an excess of Christian pietism kept Frederick William II from carrying out any more fundamental reforms. His glorious promises had wilted.

17. M. Phillipson ~~ibid~~ p. 49

7 Frederick William III succeeded his father in 1797. He was thoroly cowed by the advance of liberal ideas as much as by the advance of French armies. He feared change of any sort, and the cause of Jewish freedom appeared to be hopeless. Friedländer and his associates however, did not cease their efforts nor their agitations. They repeatedly petitioned the king for release from the unjust burdens which they bore, because they were Jews. Their persistent efforts produced some good result. In 1798, the king informed Friedländer that the collective responsibility of Jewish communities for theft, crime and bankruptcy was abolished. Another formidable redoubt had been captured by Friedländer and his co-workers. They, however, had as their objective the complete emancipation of the Jew, and their frequent rebuffs began to have a depressing effect on the Jews. Many began to lose heart of ever acquiring their freedom, and they found in baptism relief from their burdens.

This wholesale desertion of the Jews was a source of great worry to Friedländer, who at that time, stood at the head of the Prussian Jewish community, and consequently felt personally responsible for preserving his people and his religion. The Berlin Jew of that time felt his political and economic disabilities most keenly. Berlin society was very friendly to Jews. Cosmopolitan ideals flourished there, and consequently Jews were treated better by inhabitants than by reactionary statesmen. Socially, the rich Jews mingled freely with their gentile contemporaries. Intellectually, the Jews, following the lead of Mendelssohn, had made their mark. The salons of Mendelssohn and Friedländer, of Henrietta Herz and Rahel Levin, became the centers for the cultured élite of Berlin. Friedländer even supported writers of promise. To men who thus ranked high in social and intellectual circles, this political

inferiority, and particularly the philosophy which was behind it, was most galling. Many of the Jews followed the line of least resistance and swore false loyalty to Christianity. This condition of affairs, David Friedländer hoped to improve, when in 1799 he sent his much-maligned **Sendschreiben** to Teller. Friedländer hoped to save the 'spiritual gold of Judaism from the dross of ceremonialism. He proposed to Bishop Teller that he would be willing to subscribe to an emasculated Christianity, a Christianity which would preserve the spiritual beauties of Judaism. Teller, of course, rejected the proposal. Friedländer ~~remained~~ remained a Jew, and continued to see with pain the apostasy of many of his correligionists. He had hoped to avoid this by his letter to Teller, which we shall discuss in detail in a later chapter. He had failed, and consequently was spurred on to strive for political freedom of his people with greater zeal and renewed enthusiasm. The failure of his **Sendschreiben** and the bitter attacks of the Jews on him, did not weaken his efforts for his people. On the contrary, he was stimulated to greater activity, as he realized that the only hope for the salvation of Jewish spiritual values lay in political as well as religious emancipation.

For a number of years thereafter, the attention of all Prussia was turned to the problem of French militarism, which was casting its shadow over all Europe. Prussia with its medieval legislation and imperfect organization could not withstand Napoleon, and went down to defeat after defeat. The repeated request for reform, from his subjects, was ignored by Frederick William III until the battle of Jena, and the stinging defeat he received there made it evident to him that Prussia must reform and must gain a new lease on life. In 1807, the change of ministries in Prussia

pre-paved the way for more liberal legislation. Feudalism was abolished in Prussia in 1807. This new spirit in Prussia once more encouraged the Jews to struggle for their emancipation.

In 1808 the Berlin Jews had given the elders who were presided over by Friedländer, full power to act for the community. Whenever exigencies arose, Friedländer could protest to the king. These protests soon began to bear fruit. On November 19, 1808, they were repaid for their efforts. A city ruling allowed the Jews to discard the title Schutzjude, and gave them the rights of citizenship with all its duties and privileges. Shortly thereafter, David Friedländer became an alderman (Stadtrat) serving without pay.¹⁸

The next few years saw a continued agitation on the part of the Jews to have the rights accorded them in Berlin extended to all of Prussia. In 1810 when Hardenberg became the minister of Prussia, Jewish hopes ran high. Hardenberg was a liberal and an idealist and saw the injustice of the Jewish disabilities. Thru his influence on March 11, 1812, the famous edict of emancipation became law. Discussing the event, Ludwig Geiger said: "But we owe this law not to the noble character of this man (Hardenberg) alone, but also the persistent driving power of David Friedländer and his associates of the Berlin elders, who once more, as they did twenty years ago, made many approaches for Jewish emancipation."¹⁹ The following are the principal clauses of the edict:

1. Jews living in Prussia engaged in business or trade became citizens.
2. All Jews must take family names and learn German.
3. All special Jewish taxes are immediately abolished
4. Jews are to assume all civic duties and obligations.

18. ibid page 58

19. Ludwig Geiger "Geschichte der Juden in Berlin -p. 143

5. The separate Jewish courts are to be abolished.
6. The rabbis are to lose their legal jurisdiction.
7. Foreign Jews are to be permitted to travel at will.
8. Jews could not hold public or judiciary offices

When this edict was proclaimed, a committee of Berlin Jews headed by Friedländer sent a letter of thanks to the king. The efforts of Friedländer had at last gained their objective. He had attained victory. Prussian Jewry was freed from the numerous restrictions and disabilities which had for such a long time clogged Jewish development. The Jews had been emancipated and Friedländer was their leading emancipator. Speaking of his efforts, the New Review, a British periodical says that the rights enjoyed by Prussian Jews were acquired largely thru the efforts of David Friedländer.²⁰ The new liberties thus acquired by Prussian Jewry, soon found disfavor in Christian circles in Prussia. The defeat of France by the allies in which Prussia had played a very important role, and the Congress of Vienna, mark the beginning of a reactionary period and to a large extent a repudiation of French political ideas. In Prussia, the reaction assumed the form of an intense nationalistic feeling, and an evangelic Christian crusading zeal. Both tendencies were detrimental to the Jews. The Jews in spite of their raised civil status, were considered neither Germans nor Christians.^(?) They were consequently targets for the attack of the nationalist and Christian parties. The castigation of the Jews was led by the scientific writings of university professors who raised the usual Jewish scarecrows. The Jews constituted an *imperium in imperio*. They were a menace to the state, and if permitted to function freely would drive Christians out of Germany. Essays and pamphlets began to appear, which clamored for the reinstitution of the ghetto. To these attacks, no Jews replied. David Friedländer too remained

20. The Hebrew Review and Magazine of Rabbinical Literature.
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11 silent. The Jews began to discover subtler methods of reply when Jewish satirists began to shoot their destructive darts. Ridicule became the weapons of these men. Ludwig **Börne** and Heinrich Heine became the leading exponents of that form of defense, and their incisive wit demolished somewhat the false prejudices of anti-Jewish writers.

The result of this hostile feeling manifested itself in the limitation as far as possible of the decree of 1812. It was interpreted to apply only to those territories which were part of Prussia at the time of its enactment. The newly acquired Prussian lands were not to be governed by the edict of 1812. Consequently Jewish disabilities were once more put into effect in parts of Prussia. In many other ways, petty persecutions were resorted to. Jewish wounded soldiers were not given state aid. Jewish physicians could not secure commissions in the army. In the decree, Jews were to be barred from public offices. Druggists and auctioneers were considered public officials and Jews were declared unqualified to fill them. The administration hoped in this way to coerce Jews into acceptance of Christianity. Jews were forbidden to take Christian surnames and Zunz showed that most Christian surnames are Jewish in origin. In 1819 **Christian** children were forbidden to attend ^{Jewish} public schools. In 1825, Jewish synagogues were denied the privilege of building and acquiring land without the king's consent. To this ruling Friedlander protested. In 1823, every "Sektiererei", **change** in form of worship, was prohibited. This was done to aid the work of the society for the conversion of Jews which had been formed in 1822. This organization offered a reward of ten ducats to all Jews who would accept Christianity. In 1833, a proposal was made by Councillor Steckfuss to divide Jews into two classes, a proposal which was clearly in contradiction to the spirit of the edict. The eighty three years old, at the time, Friedlander again protested, and insisted that the

decree of 1812 be adhered to.

Reaction was regnant in Prussia. The liberal spirit fostered by the French revolution and advanced by the earlier intellectuals was squelched midst the din of noisy nationalists and frenzied priests, whose ideal of a Christian German nationality began to dominate Prussian thought. The result of this reaction on the Jews was a curtailment of their privileges. The victory won by Friedländer and his associates was endangered. The Jewish leaders were helpless to ^{stem} ~~storm~~ the tide of reaction. Friedlander and the Berlin elders could but protest at the change in attitude on the part of the administration. Their protests were in vain, like voices crying out in the night. A victorious government forgot its promises. Intoxicated with victory, Prussia reeled on in her mad freedom - ~~throttling~~ dance. But her days were numbered. Absolute monarchy in Europe was doomed and the Jews were bound to share in the restoration of liberties. To David Friedländer, whose untiring efforts for the political emancipation of his brethren made possible the decree of 1812, world Jewry will ever be indebted. He will ever retain his place among that glorious army of men who free themselves, fought ~~unselfishly~~ unselfishly that others might be freed. Prussian Jewry in particular must ever honor him who was their ardent champion and emancipator.

CHAPTER V

FRIEDLANDER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE CAUSE OF REFORM IN PRUSSIA.

In the days of Friedländer, the Prussian Jewish community was confronted by a dual problem; that of political and religious emancipation. Friedländer, as the leader of his correligionists, consequently was called upon to solve this dual problem. In the previous chapter, we have endeavored to indicate how largely, thru Friedländer's tireless efforts, the Prussian Jews attained political emancipation. In this chapter, we shall endeavor to discuss what contributions Friedländer made to the religious reform or emancipation of his correligionists.

There were four great periods in Jewish History, when Jews came in contact with foreign cultures and were profoundly affected by them, the Canaanitish, the Hellenic, the Arabic and the European.²¹ Friedländer lived when the Jew first began to come in contact with European culture. Previous to this, the Jew had lived in the prison confines of the ghetto. There, he was shut off from intercourse with the rest of the world. He devoted himself entirely to his own literature and to a glorification of his past. He felt his culture was self-sufficient. His stay in Europe was but a transitory stage. He passionately longed and prayed for the coming of the Messiah when a return to Palestine and a reinstitution of the temple and ritual would be effected and the old theocracy of Judea would be reestablished. He regarded himself a member of a holy people. Contact with the outside world was contaminating. He limited it only to business relations, which were essential for his upkeep. The Jew in a certain sense, was satisfied with ghetto conditions. It kept him separated from the unholy influences of the world about him. It permitted him

21. Marcus Brann - Geschichte der Juden und Ihrer Literatur -
p.

to devote himself entirely to his own lore and literature. It made possible for him the observation of the minutely prescribed ritual. The Sabbath could be observed in the ghetto. The dietary laws could be adhered to effectively. Jewish life could be realized. Rabbinic courts were established, and dispensed justice according to Talmudic legislation.

Intellectually, however, there was stagnation. European countries had emerged from their medievalism, but the Jewish ghetto still maintained its medieval aspects. The Renaissance, the spirit of Revolt against authority, which had produced the Protestant Reformation in Germany, and which had ended the dark ages of Europe, did not penetrate the ghetto enclosures. The Jew was isolated physically and spiritually from world movements. In the ghetto there was no pronounced revolt against authority. The mandates of the Rabbis remained supreme. None dared nor desired to challenge their sovereignty. They interpreted the laws and the community had to and did obey them. The spirit of opposition did occasionally manifest itself, but was easily and ruthlessly suppressed. Uriel d'Acosta and Baruch Spinoza are, perhaps, the classic examples of the intolerance of the Rabbinical sovereigns, whose repressive measures assumed the forms, which men in authority have ever used against those who challenged them.

Even as the papacy lost its strangle-hold on intellectual development by the coming of the Renaissance, so the Rabbis lost their commanding position by the advent of Jewish renaissance. Its herald and pioneer was Moses Mendelssohn. His translation of the Pentateuch into German in 1750 marked the beginning of a new epoch for European Jewry. The ghetto isolation was broken. The communication of ideas and ideals with the outside world was made possible. Like butterflies who had been encased in their cocoons for

the winter, spread their wings and ~~fly~~ fly away exulting in their newly acquired liberty, so the Jewish intellectuals broke through their mental prisons and began to revel in the new freedom which became accessible to them. Mendelssohn became an ardent advocate of secular culture among the Jews, and the great intellectual currents which were agitating the world at the time began to seep through the ghetto walls. Of course, Rabbinism condemned Mendelssohn's translation, and fought the introduction of secular culture. But in vain. David Friedländer was an enthusiastic disciple of Mendelssohn, and sought to carry out the policies of his teacher and friend. Mendelssohn had realized that the immediate establishment of educational institutions was essential to carry on the work of secularizing Jewry. He accordingly conceived the idea of a Jewish secular school, where both Hebrew and general culture was to be taught. Hartwig Wessely, then in Germany, took Mendelssohn's idea and worked out a complete plan. This plan was executed by David Friedländer when in 1778 he, with the assistance of his brother-in-law, Daniel Itzig, established the Jewish Free School of Berlin. The two directors of the school encountered much difficulty in spite of the concurrence of government officials. The money was raised and the building was bought in 1778. The actual opening had to be deferred till 1781. The Minister, von Münchhausen, aided the project. He wanted to help Itzig and Friedländer by getting the general directory to remit the taxes. On January 24, 1784, the minister praised the venture and declared it tax exempt. The school instructed six hundred children in ten years. Many of these became teachers and aided in the establishment of schools elsewhere in Germany. Others went to Austria and Poland and disseminated the Mendelssohnian doctrine of secular culture for the Jews. The school was open to Christian

and Jewish children. In 1786, it had eighty pupils, half of whom were part Christian and part Jewish. The curriculum included writing, arithmetic, bookkeeping, drawing, mathematics, geography, French, German and Hebrew. The finances of the school were small, dependent entirely on tuition and donations, ~~it~~ receiving no state support. Friedländer was its superintendent till 1800. Then Itzig became its head till 1806, when Lazarus Ben David²² took over the management of the school. Ben David remained its principal until 1825 when the school was closed and the Jewish Public school opened. In 1823, Friedländer was ~~a~~^{the} entrusted with a plan to reorganize school, but was too old and declined. Zunz took his place. The school had no creed, and admitted Jews and gentiles until 1819 when ^{the} government forbade Jewish and Christian children to attend the same schools. Friedländer had hoped that by educating Jewish and Christian children together, a spirit of harmony and cooperation would arise between Christians and Jews.

The school started by Friedländer in 1778 served as a model for similar schools in other German states, Austria and Holland.²³ Herz Homberg²⁴ went to Austria after ^{the} Tolerationⁿ Edict of Joseph II and became superintendent of schools. He followed the plan of Mendelssohn and Friedländer and taught both secular and religious subjects. Schools in other cities followed the establishment of the Berlin school in rapid succession. In 1786 there was one instituted in Dessau in 1789 in Hamburg, in 1795 in Halberstadt, in 1801 Jacobsonschule in Seesen and the Samsonschule in Wolfenbüttel. At the latter school Leopold Zunz²⁵ and Marcus Just²⁶ received their early education and

22. Lazarus Ben David had been a tutor in the house of a noble at Vienna. He had become an exponent of Kant and an excellent mathematician. He wrote many books. He backed Friedländer in his "Sendschreiben" and believed that ceremonial law impeded Jewish development.

23. "Moses Mendelssohn" - I. Heinemann

24. Herz Homberg had been one of Mendelssohn's aides in the Pentateuch translation

training. All these schools spread the idea of secular culture among the Jewish communities and paved the way for reform. The various changes in instruction were largely due to Friedländer. He insisted that the school should be a cultural environment where youths should be trained for better citizenship and loftier manhood. He realized that education was the development of the physical, mental and spiritual ~~pro~~ faculties to the highest degree. By the establishment of the schools, he had realized one of his ideals, and had done his share towards systematizing education among his fellow Jews. To facilitate the work of the schools in connection with which a printing press had been established, Friedländer published a text book. It is now unknown, but at that time it was important, as it satisfied a very vital want. It is known as the "Lesebuch für Jüdische Kinder," and appeared in 1780. It contains German, Latin and Hebrew letters, the fundamentals of Judaism, according to Maimonides, moral stories from the Talmud, Talmudic proverbs, etc. It was favorably commented on by the Berlin Library, and was Friedländer's initial literary undertaking.

Having instituted a new educational system among the Jews, and thus provided for the proper training of the young, Friedländer began to direct his energies to the cultural development of the adult Jewish population. He realized that political and religious reform must be concomitant. He consequently began to introduce the Enlightenment movement to his correligionists. He affiliated with every organization whose goal was spiritual & or cultural elevation of its people. In 1782, when Euchel organized in Königsberg "Gesellschaft Hebraischer Literaturfreunde," חבורת רבנים ללימוד חכמה, Friedländer volunteered to establish a branch in Berlin. Due to

25. Leopold Zunz was the founder of Jewish science

26. Marcus Jost at the instigation of Friedländer wrote a voluminous History of the Jews.

Friedländer's influence, the name of the society was changed to "Gesellschaft zur Beförderung des Guten und Edlen". All interested in the culture of the Jews were eligible for membership. The change in the name was due to a desire on Friedländer's part to make the organization more universal in its appeal. Many of the Jewish intellectuals affiliated with the Gesellschaft. Among them were Joel Löwe^{ls} philologist, Wolfsohn, professor in the Wilhelmschule, Mendel Bress^{ss}lau, Isaac Santnow, grammarian, and Baruch Lindau, a poet. In 1783, the society began to publish the "Sammler", 70X0. The stimulus for this undertaking was received by Echel from the culture-loving Friedländers in Königsberg, - David Friedlander's brothers. David sponsored the magazines in Berlin. The contributors to the publication were known as Meassfim מ'ש'פ'י'ם. They constituted the disciples of Mendelsohn, and were filled with the cultural and intellectual ideals of the age. Their work marks the advent of ^{the} Jewish Renaissance. Throughout Europe youthful Jewish intellectuals began to yearn for an efflorescence of Hebrew culture. The beauties of the holy language began to be extolled. Hebrew poetry once more began to express the soul and longings of the Jew. Wessely, Mendelsohn, Friedländer and the whole host of that brilliant galaxy of Jewish minds contributed to the Meassef. It became the mouthpiece of the newest forces in Judaism.

Friedländer translated two of Gessner's idylls into ^{Hebrew} German. He wanted to introduce German literature to the Jews. Many of them could not read German and Friedländer's translations which appeared in the Sammler made accessible to many ghetto Jews some of the secular literary treasures. The idylls he selected were "Menalkas and Alexis" and "Amnytas". The former of these Friedlander entitled

אין שמחה לנפש כשחיה עשות טוב

"The greatest spiritual joy in the practice of kindness". The latter

he named **מִי שֶׁיִּתְפַּל לְהוֹשִׁיעַ** for the idyll indicates that he who prays for his neighbor will find that God will give him what he needs.

These translations had also an ethical and spiritual value, and helped disseminate a lofty spirit of idealism among the Jews of Friedlander's day.

In 1782 Hartwig Wessely wrote his **דברי שלום ואמת** which was addressed to the Austrian Jews, and in which Wessely urged them to take advantage of the cultural opportunities the emperor offered them. This book was written in reply to the Austrian Jews who feared that participation in secular culture would result in a weakened Judaism. Wessely attempts to prove that the highest interests of Judaism demand that the Jews share in the culture of their country and age. David Friedlander translated this work in German, as he wanted to show the intellectual world that Jews were in sympathy with the great thought currents of their time, and were convinced of the necessity of giving up their spiritual isolation and exchanging ideals and ideas with their non-Jewish contemporaries.

The aim of Friedlander's life was to carry on the work of Mendelssohn. In accordance with this purpose, Friedlander began the work of translating some of the books of the bible. Mendelssohn had not worked on. Mendelssohn completed the translation of the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the Song of Songs. At the suggestion of Friedlander the editors of the Sammler planned to do similar work for the rest of the bible. Friedlander himself translated Job, Isaiah, Ecclesiastes and the sixth and seventh chapters of Micah. Isaiah and Job he published in the Sammler under the title "For lovers of Oriental Poetry." These translations rank with those of Mendelssohn's.²⁷ Friedlander very beautifully dramatizes the sixth

and seventh chapters of Micah. His translation of Ecclesiastes, "Der Prediger", he published in 1788. It contains a rather large preface, wherein the author explains that his work was inspired by Mendelssohn. He used Mendelssohn's commentaries and embodies them in his translations. At the beginning of each chapter, there is a little synopsis or outline of its content and meaning. The preface is interesting for it indicates the scientific method Friedländer employed and shows how thorough a student he was. We shall append a translation of it in a following chapter.

In accord with his ideal of raising the status of the Jew to a higher cultural level, Friedländer in 1786, published a translation of the prayerbook. As is true in our own day of orthodox congregations, the majority of the people did not understand the Hebrew prayers and repeated them mechanically. The women in particular were ignorant of the meaning and content of their religion. Friedländer wrote that the second half of the race (women) gets neither religious nor secular education.²⁸ They have nothing to train them except the practices of their elders, which they followed blindly. The observance of ceremonial had become for them religion. Women knew no other teachings nor duties. Friedländer decried the inferior status of woman and determined to elevate them to complete religious equality. His prayerbook translation was largely ~~done~~ done to aid the women. The Hebrew letters were used in it so that it could be read by those who had had exclusively Hebrew training. The book was dedicated to his mother and mother-in-law. Besides a translation of the regular prayers, it contains Friedländer's translation of "The Ethics of the Fathers" with his own commentary. It also contains translations of prayers to be used on special occasions. In the preface of the book, Friedländer gives his conception of prayer &

28. Ibid p. 57

and also a history of Hebrew prayers, which he took from Maimonides. The preface is interesting, and shows how advanced Friedländer was in his religious and theological views. The book was published by the press of the Berlin free school. A translation of the preface will appear in a later chapter.

The publication of the translation of the prayer book aroused a storm of fury among the rabbis of Austria, Poland and Germany. The appearance of the book was the result of the Aufklärung in Jewish circles. It was the ~~first~~ fruit of the spirit of revolt. The rabbis themselves not educated in secular fields, saw in the translation a challenge to their own authority, as well as a threat at the authority of tradition. Even as they had fought against the acceptance of Mendelssohn's Pentateuch translation, and even as they had banished Wessely for advocating secular culture in Austria, so now they trained their heavy artillery on Friedländer for his translation of the prayer book. Eleazar Fleckeles, Chief Rabbi of Prague, was the first to fire his broadside at Friedländer. He published a book " **נאם נאמן** " wherein he bitterly denounced the translator. He said it was a crime and a horrible sin to translate the Hebrew prayers into a profane language. He quotes the following biblical verse, "And it came to pass, that when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo, a dread, even a great darkness fell upon him," (Gen XV₁₂) and interprets that as meaning that Abraham had foreboding of coming translations. Then too the Zohar was called in to attack Friedländer, as well as all the pilpulistic devices, the Talmud contained. Ezekiel Landau, also a Rabbi of Prague, commended very heartily the sentiments of his colleague, and it was in reply to Landau that Friedländer in 1788 wrote "Das Schreiben an meine Mitbrüder in Deutschland." Friedländer points out the illogic of the position of the rabbis. He says that inasmuch as they

do accept the Targum, which is even less understood than the original, it is an indication that they are not interested in the holiness of the teachings nor the necessity of morals of the elevation of the spirit thru the scriptures, but rather that they value the dead letters in themselves.²⁹ He adds that they feared translations because the result of their widespread use would bring about enlightenment of the Jews. The Rabbis feared enlightenment because it would reveal the incongruity of their office. This was the first of many clashes Friedländer had with the Rabbis. They embittered his life, and he in turn despised them thoroly. He, it was who later told the government that the rabbis were "Kauscherwächter" guardians of the dietary laws, devoid of the qualities of real religious leadership.

Friedländer, in spite of this severe opposition, undauntedly persevered in his work to elevate spiritually and culturally the condition of his cor^{re}ligionists. He began a series of essays in the Berliner Monatschrift, which was the organ of ~~the~~ intellectual Berlin, edited by ~~M. L.~~ and Bieder. All his essays were written to stimulate an interest in Jewish literature. In one, "Something about the Mendelssohn's translation of the Psalms," he points out ^{the} that/purpose of Mendelssohn in translating them was to correct the false conceptions and interpretations of psalms, which were universal. All of the Scriptures have been maltreated, but the psalms have suffered most. The commentators, imitators and translators have completely altered the Psalms. In the process, these Psalms received incurable wounds as if from the swords of the barbarians. The ancient milieu was obliterated, and each individual interpreted the psalms in the light of his own age and his own environment. Pedants and

29. Ibid

theologians translated them to suit their own ideas. Mendelssohn considered the Psalms in themselves as holy, and would tolerate no changes in them. Like a genuine artist, he endeavored to make his translation as near the original as possible in all its pristine beauty and glory. This essay of Friedländer's is replete with observations on the contents and characteristics of Hebrew poetry. He flayed the dogmatic opinions about Hebrew poetry, which prevailed, showing that in many instances they were erroneous. Later critics are now aware how dependent they are on Friedländer and Mendelssohn³⁰. Friedländer and Mendelssohn created an aesthetic point of view. They also had the scientific spirit, and made use of the researches of Christian scholars.

In 1790, an essay appeared in the Berliner Monatschrift suggesting that the Purim festival be abolished. As long as Jews worked on their own culture, they would continue to be oppressed, was the thesis of the author. Hatred of Persians would be interpreted as meaning hatred of Germans. Delight in vengeance and victory commemorated by Purim are unworthy ideals. Since the festival is not Mosaic, abolish it. Friedländer answered this essay by saying that it is a false assumption to suppose that hatred against Persians would mean hatred against the Germans. The festival has besides a few superstitions nothing evil in it, and furthermore, it is a stimulant to idealism. The lust for vengeance ascribed to Esther and Mordecai is found in all Greek states - even the idealistic ones. As long as Jews are considered as strangers, and the word Jew was used as a curse, so prejudices and ignoble thoughts could not cease among them. To say that Jews as Jews cannot better themselves is a profanation of God.

30. Ibid

When in 1791 the Strassburg Commons defeated a motion to equalize the Jews, Friedländer takes up his pen and writes an article in the Monatschrift, showing that the Jews are worthy of equalization.

The introduction of secular education among Jews paved the way to reform. Mendelssohn advocated and championed secular education. His disciple, Friedländer carried out his master's policy, but even went one step further and began to urge religious reforms. Thus far, we have enumerated some of Friedländer's activities to advance the cause of secular education among Jews. We shall now endeavor to see what his reform platform was, and what contribution he made to the reform movement in Judaism.

When in 1808 Israel Jacobson was elected president of the consistory called by Jerome Bonaparte in Westphalia, he summoned Friedländer to advise him as to what to do. Friedländer suggested certain very radical changes, which Jacobson could not accept. Jacobson was ready to aestheticize the service, but he had no philosophy of reform which would have called for a complete reorganization of customs and forms of worship. Jacobson introduced the vernacular in his temple, used an organ, ^{and} instituted the confirmation service. These changes were changes in form only. To Friedländer they were insufficient. Disgruntled, Friedländer returned to Berlin.

Immediately after the edict of March 11, 1812, Friedländer published a pamphlet "Über die durch die neue Organization der Judenschaften in den Preussischen Staaten northwendig gewordene Umbildung," wherein he advocated the necessity of religious reform. Friedländer felt that since Jews had attained civil rights, they ~~was~~ should immediately discard atavistic customs, which impeded citizenship duties. In his petition to the King, Friedländer had always

55 insisted that the Jews are entitled to civil rights regardless of their religious practices. To his own people, however, he pointed out the incongruity of Jewish medieval customs in a modern progressive environment. He urged the necessity of reforms in the service of the synagogue, in their educational institutions and in the methods of education. Political freedom called for a change in prayers. The Jew now owes allegiance to rulers, and should have prayers for them. The Jews now are Prussians, and therefore should no longer express desire to return to Jerusalem, and pray for a restoration of the temple and its service.³¹ He also made a plea for prayerbook^s in the vernacular. Some maintained that this would separate Jews in different countries. To this Friedländer answered that these linguistic differences exist among Jews already, that to the Ashkenazic Jews Ladino was not comprehensible. Friedländer also urged the religious education of women. He also wanted to see a systematic presentation of Judaism published. He also wanted many antiquated customs changed. The rabbis, of course, scoffed at Friedländer. He found little encouragement among his coreligionists, whereupon he sent a letter to Frederick William III, and asked him to advocate religious reform among the Jews. The king, who had become a thorough reactionary, wanted to reject Friedländer's proposal with a severe rebuke. Hardenberg, however, interfered and sent a very mild refusal to Friedländer. Hardenberg, a liberal himself, was in favor of Jewish reform. At that time a bad policy was embarked upon, when Jews would go to civil authorities to settle their religious quarrels.

In 1814, Jacobson came to Berlin. He took up Friedländer's fight. He gained followers, where Friedländer did not, for he was less radical. Jacobson did not care to change ceremonies or prayers. He wanted to beautify ^{the} service. He opened a private synagogue, introduced the organ, and had German preachers and German prayers.

31. Ibid p. 141

6 Friedländer wrote some sermons, which were delivered in Jacobson's temple, but not by him. Of those sermons, more anon. Jacob Herz Beer also established a temple in his home according to the stipulations of Friedländer in his pamphlet³² In 1817, the reactionary government at the instigation of the rabbis ordered all private temples closed. The Berlin elders³³ who wanted to continue the new forms, voted to make Beer's temple the community temple, as the public synagogue was decrepit. This angered the conservative party, who again~~ne~~ appealed to the king. In 1822, Hardenberg died, and the reformers lost their last champion at the court. Immediately thereafter, a royal order forbade any reform in the service, and prohibited the use of German as a language of worship. The fire~~s~~ of reform, had, however been lit. The Hamburg Temple, whose leader Edward Kley³⁴ became, carried out the ideas and dreams of Friedländer.

In 1816, Friedländer received a letter from Malizewski, Bishop of Cujavien and Pomerellen, requesting him to make suggestions for the improvement of the Israelites in Poland. Friedländer's reply was made public in 1819 when he issued a pamphlet "Über die Verbesserung der Israeliten in ^{""}Königreich Polen" In the preface to his, he gives the fundamentals of Judaism:

1. The Scriptures are truly the foundation of Judaism. They are the word of God insofar as they made known great religious truths, ~~teaching~~^{inspiring} spiritual and inspired men of God, lawgivers, prophets and poets. A gradual advance is very evident in scriptures. For example, Psalms are so much purer teachings of God than the laws of Moses. The vital difference between customs and ceremonies and deep religious truths was obscured in the darkness of middle ages.

2. Ceremonies and customs must be done away with as soon as the welfare of society indicates that such a step is opportune.

- 3. All religious affairs must be subordinate to reason, and hence every blind belief is untenable.

4. The demand to accept truth from some authority is a flagrant violation of a fundamental human right.

³² . Ludwig Geiger: "Geschichte der Juden in Berlin" p. 167

³³ Friedländer was no longer a member of the elders as he had retired in 1814.

³⁴ . On Friedländer's death, Edward Kley preached a glorious eulogy

Here we have the formulation of a religious creed which is in full accord with the best thought of modern times. It contains above all things a philosophy of reform and entitles Friedländer to a keystone position in the history of the reform movement in Judaism.

Friedländer proceeds in this booklet to request that the Jews in Poland be given the same rights ~~thair~~ correligionists enjoy in Prussia. When the Jews were given political rights in Prussia, they instituted reforms, gave better service to their country, developed their own talents and made contributions to culture. Polish Jews can similarly improve themselves if given the opportunity. Friedländer then seizes the opportunity to assail his old enemies, the Rabbis. He draws a vivid picture of the power and despotism of rabbis, whose sway was supreme over Polish Jewry. Polish rabbis still lived in the spirit and customs of the Talmud and took no part in the cultural work being done by the oriental, German and Dutch leaders of Jewry. They lead their congregations along narrow paths. They have civil and religious authority and can prevent any reforms. Any informed Israelite could do the work of these Rabbis. The religious service is no concern to the Rabbi. Its forms have existed for centuries. The Rabbis deliver sermons twice a year, and then only about some intricate Talmudic difficulty. His real work lay in his interpretation of the Talmudic laws. He was a "Kauscherwächter," guardian of Kashruth, no more. 'Tis true that the rabbis were moralists - and stoics and urged the virtues of sympathy and manhood. They, however cannot sympathize nor strive for enlightenment.

The Polish government should adopt the following policy towards the Jews:

1. They should be freed of all unjust religious discriminations and receive full privileges as citizens.

about him, at Hamburg Temple. The eulogy was published and circulated extensively. The Shulamith (Vol I No. 1. P. 109) urges every Jew to read it.

2. The state should encourage culture among Jews by the following methods:

- a) The use of the vernacular in their daily associations should be insisted on.
- b) Changes in ritual should be instituted.
- c) The rabbi should lose his judiciary powers
- d) The Jews should become integral part of Diaspora countries.
- e) Cultured men and preachers should lead people

Thus Friedländer contributed to Polish emancipation as well as to the Prussian. ?

In 1819 when Zunz, Moser and Ganz ~~founded the society for the culture and science of Judaism~~ founded the society for the culture and science of Judaism, Friedländer the almost seventy years old, affiliated with the new organization. Its purpose was to stem the tide of conversion, which had swept the Berlin Jews from their ancestral faith. More than one half of the community had accepted Christianity. All of its members were pledged to remain faithful Jews. The society proceeded to publish a magazine to which Friedländer contributed in spite of his years. This indicates how greatly ~~how great~~ in error have been those men who indicated that Friedländer was indifferent to Judaism and desired to slide gracefully into the ocean of Christianity.

Friedländer was unquestionably one of the pioneers, if not the pioneer of the reform movement. He was responsible for the establishment of the first secular Jewish school in Berlin, a school which stimulated similar institutions throughout Europe. He advocated ~~x~~ changes in the form of worship and urged that the service be aestheticized. He insisted on the use of the vernacular in prayer and to that end translated the prayerbook. He wanted to see the woman's religious status raised. He urged the omission of the Palestine restoration prayer from the service. He, furthermore, had a critical and yet spiritual conception of biblical literature. He ~~fixed~~ ^{had} a philosophy of reform and saw in all the rites and ceremonies, but the tools and instruments

whereby men appeal to God. Ritual and form are the language whereby men speak to God. He realized that forms were necessary, perhaps, but not essential. These views Friedländer held, and advocated publicly--the first in his day--^ain fearless, tireless, radical. The reform movement in Judaism owes much to his daring and vision.

FRIEDLÄNDER'S LITERARY ACTIVITY

A Christian contributor to the Sulamith³⁵ mentions "a few Jews, who can be placed in the ranks of our good writers, and keen thinkers. Among them is the publisher of the Aktenstücke, David Friedländer.³⁶ We have already referred to many of his writings in previous chapters, such as his translations of the prayer-book, of Isaiah, Job and Ecclesiastes, his text book, his translations of German literature to Hebrew, his essays urging reform and civil emancipation among Jews. In this chapter, we hope to give excerpts of his writings. Commenting on them is unnecessary. They reveal a liberal spirit, a soul attuned to higher values, a humble mortal struggling for light and guidance; Friedländer the philosopher, the thinker, the humanist, speaks in these essays. Historians may condemn and denounce. Posterity may rage and fume. Fanatics may jeer and sneer. But as eloquent witnesses to Friedländer's integrity, spirituality and lofty idealism, we summon his words and thoughts.

"Speeches dedicated to the development of Cultured Israelites"

37

I. "On the Use of Time"

Prayer =

May we know the transiency of our years and the importance of our destiny. Strengthen in us, O God, the faith in immortality."

Time passes like a shadow. Like a powerful stream, life passes away into the sea of eternity. Life is short. It may also be worthless, sorrowful and unhappy. Lord, make me to know mine end.

35. Sulamith is Eine Zeitschrift zur Beförderung, der Kultur und Humanität unter der Jüdischen Nation.

36. Sulamith - Vol. 1 No. 2. P. 159

37. These were written by Friedländer but preached by men in Jacobson's temple. They were published in 1815.

And the measure of my days, what it is. Let me know how short lived I am. Behold, Thou hast made my days as hand-breaths. And mine age is as nothing before Thee. Surely, every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Surely, man walketh as a mere semblance. Surely for vanity they are in turmoil. He heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them. (Psalm 35-5-8) For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath. We bring our years to an end as a tale that is told. The days of our years are three score and ten, or even by reason of strength, four score years. Yet is their pride but travail and vanity. For it is speedily gone and we fly away/ (Psalm 90-9-10)

Man was created for happiness. Man can attain highest joy. Man should be happy before God. Man is happy when he is at peace with his fellow men, when he controls his appetites and when he is occupied in a useful trade or profession. When man beholds beauties of nature, is he not happy? All can attain joy. Why are not all men happy? We seek happiness, where it is not. We overrate the false, and are blind to the true. We waste our time, not aware of its value. We must know the value of time. We must create our own joy. Men, by wasting time, destroy the soul and the body. Happiness cannot be found in sin. The enjoyment of sin is fleeting. Satiety, remorse and disgust follow in its wake. The first step in the development of the spirit is an appreciation of the value of time and the selection of holy works in leisure hours. The pleasure-loving man hates loneliness. He bears his conscience. He does not care for wisdom, for it requires energy. There are days when feelings of emptiness sweep over him. Then he is unhappy. Life becomes a burden. Time moves too slowly. Anything which will dispel this gloom is welcomed and he is not satisfied long. The gay colorings of these lusts fade with usage. After tasting pleasures, loneliness returns more so than before. They destroy the body and bring man to the sick bed and death.

Time well used brings joy, which is the root of life. Enrich the spirit with knowledge. At moments of prayer and communion with God, we attain greatest happiness. The life of the pleasure-seeker becomes a long winter night, with no star of usefulness to brighten it. ~~THEXX~~

The sermon closes with a prayer for the king and the Fatherland.

II "Concerning Commerce and Wealth"

Prayer attains its loftiest goal when it impels men to higher living. God is honored best when man ennobles himself most. God is served best when man serves his fellow-men best. This can only be attained by fixing our vision on the heights and constantly remaining aware of our divine origin, by suppressing every animal and sinful desire, by never wearying of repeating that we are true Israelites

only when every act brings us nearer to God, when every plan has as its goal, our liberation from the base and the ignoble. All service, worship and prayer are utterly valueless if we forget this higher goal. God is not honored when man descends to low degree of living.

Thou, O God, hast given us the earth for our residence. Thou hast filled it with unending good, enriched it with countless organic and inorganic forces, so that man may utilize them. Thou hast endowed us with power to increase and develop its products with industry and work. Thus we shall satisfy our needs and enjoy the products of our toil. Thou hast put in us the inclination to create groups, and through industry and commerce, to knit men together more closely. But this alone is not our destiny, else we would be like the beasts of the field. The work and business of man serve a higher purpose. The worries and cares help us to develop the powers of our souls, and by cultivating them, we qualify for life in another world, and become worthy of loftier work and higher interests.

O, God! May we through today's meditation learn these rules, which should prevail in our earthly pursuits. Sustain ^{as} us, we endeavor to find these measures which will aid us in realizing the highest goal. The heaven is the heaven of the eternal. ^AThe earth, he gave to the sons of men.

Primitive man lived on the produce of the earth, and the products of their flocks, but had neither industry nor commerce. Many nations, even after having abandoned fishing and hunting ~~xxx~~ for agriculture, barely had enough for food and shelter. Each family supplied all its wants. As peoples multiplied and became more closely affiliated, certain luxuries became necessities, which

a farmer could not acquire thru his own efforts. He must barter or buy. He who has no land, must secure something to sell or barter. If he possesses nothing else, he has at least time and physical power. These constitute his means of livelihood, for labor always has market-value. The farmer acquires a surplus, which he can sell or barter for new needs, which have been developed. Thus commerce arose. It enabled men to secure sustenance. Of course, there are disgraceful trades, such as the slave-trade and the traffic in prostitutes.

The merchant must be very careful to be moral. He is constantly on the battlefield, engaged in continuous warfare, truly a bloodless war, but not free of wounds, which may pierce the soul. Avarice and greed rend body and soul asunder. A merchant has opportunities for crooked work. Conscience must be his guide. Religion lights up the dark paths of life. By reverence for God, and love for religion, business will be purified.

- Wealth is the fruit of industrious application in trade. Wealth becomes of value when it is used in God's work. To secure it, character is developed - perseverance, insight, etc - It aids men to develop the powers of their souls, and that is their ultimate goal. Even though wealth is lost, the character, acquired in its acquisition, remains. Wealth also creates leisure for culture. Its possessor can raise his children properly. He is independent. He can freely speak his mind about justice and injustice. He is not dependant on the opinion or favor of others. He need not bow before great people. He can be free to fight iniquity. He can also disperse charity, and bring cheer to unfortunate ones. Happiness can be gotten from doing good deeds unnoticeably. Wealth is of value to the community. It stimulates industry and makes possible progress.

We are now inserting Friedländer's introduction to his German translation to Ecclesiastes. (Der Prediger) to which we have already referred in the previous chapter. The introduction is important for it gives Friedländer's critical conception of the Bible.

DER PREDIGER - AUS DEM HEBRAISCHEN von

David Friedländer - Berlin 1788

Preface:

According to tradition, Ecclesiastes is ascribed to King Solomon, although he is not mentioned by name in the book. Tradition is less divided whether this book belongs among the holy books, i.e. whether the author was divinely inspired, when he wrote it, or not. There was a time when some Talmudists thought the latter was true (Mishna Eduyoth Cap. 5 + M. Jodaim Cap 3.) There was even a time when this book was excluded from the holy canon and they tried to conceal it. The reasons therefore are stated (1) because there were contradictory statements in it (Tractat Shabbath Fol 30). (2) Because there are opinions expressed which may lead to hearsay (Tractat Vajikpa Rabbz 28Abtheil Fol. 161)

We can leave all these historical investigations and doubts untouched. This much is certain; that it is one of the early documents which we have rescued from the treasures of the Orient, that its contents are meaningful, that it contains the experiences of a great man, and that from all a useful application to the practical life can be made.

The essence of the whole work is the reflections over the vain striving after happiness and over righteousness of human circumstances. A tune of unity pervades the entire book from beginning to end, which proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that the related

experiences and reflections were experienced by the author himself, and that they are not strange observations, which he has gathered and compiled. The proverbs which abound in the work, and which are the oldest products of the human intellect, also prove the authorship of the man. The observations are made with practical and intellectual knowledge and taken from average life. They are usually tinged with melancholy, which at times is quite dominant. This makes them most interesting; we hear that a powerful prince of the other world, in possession of the greatest earthly happiness, philosophizes over the purpose of life and directs us to fear of God, morality and good customs. A powerful cause to trust his experiences, and to heed his all. The author did not lay down an exact plan. He traverses the whole pathway of human life and makes numerous observations about it. He thinks, teaches, explains, comforts, gives advice, contradicts and improves himself. Although the whole thing relates but associated ideas, still the main thread is always evident and never lost.

From this viewpoint, the contradictions are easily explained. The author is no dogmatic, cold teacher, but a fiery, vital searcher after truth. It is natural, since he is a real student, to mention **contradictory** view points. Without mercy for his own system, he mentions all tendencies and is not afraid of the consequence. He gives the story of his own life and shows the two personalities struggling within him. He exposes ~~his~~ his inner life. He is not afraid to think aloud. What we should heed, is the end, which is the result of his thoughts. "The result of all reflection is "Fear God, obey His commandments - this is thy destiny."

The best commentaries are agreed that the preacher must thus be justified; and no observant reader will deny this.

It becomes evident from the preceding that the content and plan of this differs from that of other scriptural writings.

The diction itself also varies from other biblical, even contemporary biblical books. Certain words, expressions, phrases, as well as ~~reflections~~ repetitions and favorite sayings are the particular property of this book and appear in no other. The book has, therefore, no kinship in regard to style and diction, purpose and content with the rest of the bible. The translation of the book was made according to the commentary of my immortal teacher, Moses Mendelssohn. He brought the Hebrew text to Berlin in 1770 without the name of its author and hence was unknown. With four exceptions I have heeded his explanations. What I could not insert in the text I have tried to put in the synopsis which precedes each chapter. This synopsis should be the thread in the hand of the reader in order to follow the mental processes of the author, which at times appear labyrinthine. I know that because I added much of the explanation of the commentary, the translation lost much of the peculiarity of style of the original. For the ~~xxx~~ sake of clearness I have sacrificed the author's form. The reader will find in the explanation of our world wise man, his noble manner, which consists of sowing everywhere seeds of truth and morality, wherever there is room.

Mendelssohn explains that he wrote the commentary for the sake of his people. ~~My~~ I also have this purpose. My translation is meant only for my correlative religionists and if it attracts the attention of my people to the truths it contains, and makes them reflect upon them, my goal is attained. I hope that my translation will clarify the meaning and content of the book. All the merit of this book I attribute to Mendelssohn. He used all the Jewish as well as non-Jewish sources and has taken the best and finest for his stream. As he says in his introduction, "Since our sages order us to accept truth from every man, therefore have I examined the commentaries of

non-Israelites and when I found truth in them, I have accepted it and before God it is holy for us." Mendelssohn also indicated in his introduction how the text should be divided. In my translation I have divided the text and indicated the divisions.

Whether in its present form, Ecclesiastes can become in the hands of sensible teachers an instructive book, I ~~have~~ leave to the judgment of competent critics. Of course, it needs no saying that this book is not meant for young, untutored minds, nor to be read in the synagogue before the masses on ~~holy~~ days.
(June 1788)

* * * * *

We are adding a translation of Friedländer's introduction to his German prayerbook. Friedländer expresses his conception of prayer. ~~Next~~ liberal religious thinkers to this day, can subscribe to Friedländer's views and doctrines.

INTRODUCTION TO TRANSLATION OF PRAYERBOOK³⁸

Every virtuous man, who ceaselessly toils to improve himself will at times feel impelled to raise his soul to God and to force his heart out to him. There is only one way to raise one's soul to God, and that is by contemplating how indebted we and our fellow men are to God for the various happenings of life. The man who does this will find it very easy to retrospect over his past life, to note his errors and avoid them in the future. This self-examination, which is surely most difficult, will cause him to ponder over all the truths which influence his life, and to learn to know them. And also from this self-examination it will follow that he will with true reverence, heed the commandments, which religion and reason prescribe for his real happiness.

Prayer is a natural need of every well-disposed heart, and its realization makes man happy.

38. Gebete der Juden auf das ganze Jahr von David Friedländer.
Amsterdam 1807

Since it is true that at moments of our good fortune, we share the joy with our friends and at moments of our sorrow we find comfort and solace in their sympathy, it surely must be true that by confiding our joys and sorrows to God, we shall find a still greater happiness and a still greater sympathy.

Since the well disposed man experiences joy in acknowledging gratitude for having been the recipient of kind acts, and since the son cannot better manifest his gratitude to his father, or the friend to his friend, than when he strives to be worthy of this joy by good conduct and decent deportment, therefore man must enjoy this bliss to its highest degree when moved by the goodness and omniscience of his Creator, he peals out in songs of Thanksgiving and praises for the eternal Being, and attempts to gain his mercy by a life of noble deeds.

The goodness and wisdom of God are so evident in all creation that it is only the brutal and insensitive man who fails to be moved in contemplating God's work. It is not necessary to prove God's goodness thru rational logic, or to discover it thru ceaseless toil, but as the Psalmist sing: "The heavens declare the glory of God, etc."

Is it possible that in contemplating these majestic beauties of creation, man can remain carefree and indifferent? Is it not rather that man thru this grandeur, is moved to a higher life, is turned to a sense of his duties and tasks?

At that moment, when all the surrounding objects demonstrate to us the wisdom, the power and the goodness of the Eternal Being, then we marvel that He called all these things into being. His fatherly devotion makes a deep impression on us. We gather our thoughts. Truly, divine feelings master our hearts. At that

moment, we exalt ourselves with pious thoughts and we feel ourselves drawn nearer to God. Our mind purifies itself from every evil desire. Our heart is moved. Our soul raises itself up. We pray. The true prayer, reason and will must work in harmony. Reason will give us the correct conception of the greatness of the being to whom we pray. The will will cause us to eliminate from our ~~men~~ minds the petty and profane so that we will be able to concentrate completely on the work of the occasion, communion with God. When reason and will achieve this glorious union of heart and mind, then our prayer is exalted and inspiring.

Only then can we be assured that our prayer will be favorable to God, because only (then can prayer have definite and beneficent results for men)--then can prayer be efficacious.

Such prayer will lead us to the unlimited attributes of God and broaden our conceptions over them

Prayer will lead us to the contemplation of this question. What is our destiny? For what purpose has God created us? We will be able to perceive what this means--to execute God's will--to walk before Him, to walk in His ways, and to lead one's life so that it will be pleasing to God.

We learn, to become wise, to be virtuous, to have consideration, to deal fairly, to forgive the errors of our neighbor, to make the best use of our powers and as far as it is possible, for human beings, to imitate God.

Through such an earnest and devoted prayer, every virtue, every noble person, every effort to practice goodness, brings new power and added vigor.

The sinner will be awakened from his lethargy. With the tears of remorse which his eyes will pour forth, the resolve to lead an ethical life and not yield to temptation will fortify itself.

Prayer will teach the happy and rich not only to enjoy their good fortune gratefully but also to put it to good use.

Prayer will soothe the storm in the mind of the unfortunate. He will pour out his heart to God and feel comforted. The realization that his suffering comes from a loving and just God will comfort him. His explicit faith in the providence of God and his own reflections will teach him that even his sufferings will ~~not~~ turn out for the best and that in this suffering lies the hope of his future perfection, since all men are destined for immortality and eternal happiness.

Thus, prayer will make men happy, full of confidence and courage in times of trouble, and full of humility and modesty in time of success. So he will learn to regard his end without fear, confident that God is watching over him.

With this remark about the efficacy of earnest prayer and its wholesome results on the disposition of man, I give to the public my German translation of the prayers of the Jews for the entire year.

* * * * *

A LETTER TO LADY VON DER RECHE³⁹

Friedländer writes a letter to an old friend of his, the Lady von der Reche, in which he attacks three publications which have slandered the Jews. He refers to a translation of Byron's poems. In the introduction the translator villifies the Jews. In regard to the poems, Friedländer says that Byron may be a good poet, but as an imitator of oriental poetry he is a failure. In regard to the one who translated the poems, Friedländer cannot conceive how he, who maligns Jews can be an apostle of the religion of love. He states that in 1280 such sentiments might have been in order, but in 1820 they serve as a boomerang and reflect dis-

39. Ein Sendschreiben an die Frau Kammerherrin von der Reche geb Gruben v. Medern.

credit only on the author. His answer to the translator is a passage from the new testament "One curses us, so we bless them, One persecutes us so we tolerate it, One oppresses us, so we pray."⁴⁰ How different the sentiment of these clerics from those of Jerusalem, Spalding and Teller. Many others consistently preach hatred against the Jews. No opportunity of insulting the Jews is missed. God be praised that it does not influence our noble fellow citizens. In the "Life of A.V. Kotzebue" Jews are attacked. Jews however, by living uprightly need not fear demagogues. Voigt in his "Life of Professor Kraus" also slings mud at the Jews. Kraus was a friend of Friedländer. Voigt ridicules Friedländer. Voigt says he doubts that Kraus could tolerate Jews, for he said that Jews could ~~tolerate Jews~~ not become good citizens, and that he could not even tolerate Friedländer. He also claimed that Kant thought Jews had no genius. This is impossible for Kant always admired Spinoza. Kant also was a friend of Marcus Herz⁴¹ and admired Mendelschn. Herz dedicated a book to Kant. Kant also taught Euchel. Therefore, he could not have said Jews had no genius.

Friedländer who had known Kraus well says Voigt misrepresents Kraus, Kraus had no hatred for Jews. He was not the member of any church, and had always maintained that his religion was "worship and good conduct." Thus Friedländer strove to turn aside the slanderous arrows aimed at his people.

40. I Corinthians Chap 4

41. Marcus Herz was the husband of Henrietta Herz and was one of the cultural leaders of Berlin in Friedländer's time. He was an exponent of Kant, and also an intimate friend of Mendelsohn.

An die Verehrer-, Freunde und Schüler Jerusalem's, Spalding's ,
Teller's Heßler's und Löffler's.

This pamphlet appeared in 1823, and was meant to reply to the efforts of a society which had been organized to advance Christianity among the Jews. The introduction to it was written by the Philosopher, Krug, of Leipzig, in which he pointed out that proselytism was contradictory to real Christianity. Friedlander acknowledges the good intentions of the organization but hopes that its influence⁷ to make Jews more interested in their own faith and in reforming their service. He asks them to judge the history of the Jews impartially, and hopes that the scorn and ridicule aimed at his people will soon cease. God, providence and immortality-- these three principles are the basis of all religions. These and their concomitant beliefs were taught by Reimarus of Wolfenbuttel fame, by Spalding, Jerusalem, Teller, etc., as well as by old Jewish teachers. When man has attained the highest moral stage, and all his deeds are influenced by these beliefs, then he has acquired true religiosity. Jews and Christians agreed on verities, but church fathers and Talmudists were of the belief that human reason is too weak to have a voice in the religious affairs. Reason was eliminated, and then faith was pitted against faith, and authority against authority, and war was on. The weaker party was overpowered, but not convinced, and attained no higher spiritual values. Peace in the quarrel came in the last half of the eighteenth century, not because of triumph, but because of change in Christian church. There arose two parties in the church, the party of supra-naturalism and the party of rationalism. The Jews are in agreement with the latter. The former believes that the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in the new and that faith leads to knowledge of God. The Jews are in agreement with

the Christian rationalists. The Jews thus came closer to Gentiles, and acquired secular culture. The moral teachings of Herder and Jerusalem inspired the Jewish youth. The difference between the rationalistic Christians and the Jews is about the means to establish the fundamental teachings. But because of this difference of opinion regarding the solution, there should be no strife. "True religion is agreed that men should pray to the creator of the world spiritually and truthfully. If you analyze this glorious saying, it means that the worship of God consists of good and noble thoughts, purity of conduct, love for all men of whatever creed or religion they may be and a striving to attain the full perfection of our spiritual natures. Why then should we embitter our lives in quarreling over ceremonies and forms?"⁴²

Like other religions, Judaism had epochs of growth and decay, and the recent trend in Judaism is to tear away the old superstitions, and to dissipate the clouds of darkness. To attain this all the abuses which "like rust hide the gold of the eternal verities", must be banished from the synagogue. Hebrew must be supplanted by German in elementary instruction and also in prayers. We must teach fundamentals of Judaism in schools, and express them beautifully in Synagogues. "Your destiny on earth, O man, is a perpetual striving and struggling against desires, inclinations and passions. Practice the use of freedom, and aim to master all these. Do you want to spread happiness and cheer over your whole life? Then be trustful, honest and just, and learn to forego some things and to sacrifice yourself for your fellow men. The more your practice virtue, the sooner will you begin to taste of that bliss which awaits you in eternity"⁴³ This is the essence of the Jewish religion, and accounts

42. Ritter's Geschichte etc. p. 161

43. Ibid p. 162.

for it having been and still being a source of comfort to its devotees. Every positive religion must subscribe to these truths, and in the degree to which it approaches or moves away from these truths, does it become better or worse. All religions legislated for contemporaries and for conditions prevailing in their own times. The ceremonies are due to temporary needs. The truth may become hidden because of meaningless ceremonies. Therefore, religion must now be freed of antiquated customs. Jewish fathers "who wish to bring about reason and conscience, true religion and virtue, desire this change not only to develop their spiritual powers thru temple service and worship, but also through this transformation to be able to serve their country more effectively, to create new love for their fellow citizens, and to show themselves worthy of all society, of which they are an integral part."⁴⁴

Besides these essays, Friedländer contributed much to the *Berliner Monatschrift*, the organ of the intellectuals of Berlin. He also wrote a series of letters to the *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft der Judenthums*, which was published by the Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden. Zunz was its editor.

These letters depict the beauties of the scriptures. They serve as a preface to a translation of the sixth and seventh chapters of Micah, which Friedländer dramatizes very effectively. Friedländer claims that Micah was the greatest contemporary of Isaiah and the finest ^{orators} among the prophets. In the art of poetic description, in the power to rouse the heart to pious exaltation, Micah almost attains the heights of Isaiah. Friedländer then proceeds to express his religious ideas and his belief that not only is reform in Judaism imperative, but that it is also inevitable. No matter

5 what he is discussing, he always reverts to the master passion of his life, the reconstruction of Jewish ceremonial. Even in his personal correspondence, do we find evidences of his ideas on reform. Ludwig Geiger has preserved for us a series of six letters of Friedländer to a friend Meyer Eger of Glogau. These letters are camphor balls of Friedländer's ideas. In every one, do we find references either to the need of a revised school curriculum or the want of decorum in the synagogue or the absence of a rational faith among the Jews. Friedländer was a prolific writer. He wrote nothing that is immortal, but his writings helped propagate these ideas which made liberal Judaism possible. His pen was incessantly occupied in the cause he loved so dearly, the political and religious emancipation of the Jews of Prussia. Warriors break shackles with the sword, but Friedländer rent them asunder with the pen, and is not the pen mightier than the sword?

CHAPTER VII

THE SENDSCHREIBEN TO TELLER

The most spectacular and most misunderstood act of Friedländer's life was the "Sendschreiben an Seine Hochwürden Herrn Oberconsistorialrath und Probst Teller zu Berlin von einigen Hausvätern jüdischer Religion," which appeared in Berlin in about 1799. It was written anonymously, but its author was well known to all, David Friedländer. The housefathers, who presumably associated with him, were few, and probably comprised his immediate family circle, the Itzigs, Bendixes and perhaps also, Lazarus Ben David. The letter was sent to Teller, a free-thinking ecclesiastic, who during the reign of Frederick the Great, held high the standard of rationalism, and even in the pietistic wave which followed, remained firm to his notions. It contained a proposal for the merging of Judaism and Christianity. The Jewish ceremonial law was detrimental to spiritual progress, and the Christian superstitious dogmas hindered religious progress. If the Jews were to abolish ceremonial law, and the Christians were to abolish archaic pagan dogmas, both religions could meet. For Jews such a step would be particularly advantageous as it would liberate them politically, socially and economically, and they would be able to develop their powers to the highest possible degree. A translation of the most important parts of the Sendschreiben follows:

TEXT: 120 Epistle to Corinthians Chap 13 - V 10-11

Sendschreiben an Seine Hochwürden Herrn Oberconsistorialrath und Probst Teller zu Berlin von einigen Hausvätern jüdischer Religion - Berlin 1799--

Synopsis of Sendschreiben

It opens with a request for advice about Teller's religion.

7 We are born of Jewish parentage and were raised in the Jewish faith. Our education was like that of the rest of our comrades. We learned Talmud and the Bible. Our religion was full of mysticism. The contrast between the world of our books and
4 the world as it is was so great as to make us skeptics. The ceremonial laws were carefully observed in the houses of our parents. These customs estranged us from normal life. They accomplished nothing except to make us timid when practicing them before strangers.

We, who have studied secular and scientific knowledge, maintain mystical religion has a detrimental effect on the spirit
5 of the youth. It stultifies intellectual development. Youth should be taught in dear language only those fundamentals known to all. This attitude is generally correct. However the soul of youth needs an incentive. It is true that mystical tales, superstitious
6 ceremonials and mysterious dogmas will tend to lame the soul and make out of the spiritual man a slave or machine. But a ~~universe~~ reversed educational process will not have the glorious and desirable result. Men brought up without this mystical and religious element have not forged ahead and been manifestly superior. A happy medium must be found between the two extremes so that men imbued with moral fire will be produced.

In Judaism there is less mysticism than in other religions. Its doctrines are more comprehensible. The Jewish youth is hemmed in by laws which regulate his whole life. There are positive and negative duties. Positive duties rob him of his time and negative duties restrict him from indulging in a normal citizen's life. Some times under such handicapped circumstances, a genius develops - Mendelssohn.

According to Mendelssohn the state should regard every human being as a son of God, created in His image. So favored, the number of enlightened youth would increase. If Jewish youth brought up in mysticism of their faith, were to enjoy full equality, a great spiritual advance would occur in them. Their whole mode of ught- would undergo transformation. They will rise from the slavery of the spirit to complete freedom. In a state like Prussia such freedom would result in great spiritual activity. This sudden change may have bad results. Youth may discard kernel and shell; his disgust for old ceremonies may lead to skepticism and cynicism. The truth which was garbed in mysticism, he may discard because of its garb.

A happier fate befell us. When we came in contact with modern ideas, we associated with noble, high-minded men and were not driven to irreligiosity. Our youthful enthusiasm for our 15 religion has not been dampened. We have retained it, but only for the essentials of our religion, to which we will cling to the end of our days.

We have pondered over our religious concepts, and we have arrived at our conclusion. These comprise the basis of our religious life; they are fundamental and for us indestructible, unless there is a revolution in our thinking method.

We have no qualms in announcing that in our examination of religious systems and especially the fundamentals of Mosaism, we were motivated by one other interest. The political condition of the Jews in Europe was a contributing factor in our reflection. The terrible burdens they bear, their exclusion from all branches of art and civic endeavor; their exclusion from land ownership and agriculture; and above all the contempt and scorn with which

- Jews are regarded, truly hurt and embittered us. All this suffering is due not only to the religious hatred of Christians, but must also be ascribed to our ceremonial law. Some of the ceremonial laws are repulsive and reactionary. Separatism, made imperative the intolerance, which has made a change in conditions almost impossible.
- Therefore we were led to examine the pure essentials of the Mosaic religion.
- The pillars of morality and happiness are:

1. A true acknowledgement of God and his eternal attributes,
- and 2. an admission of our immortality and life in another world.
3. a consciousness of our duties to our fellowmen - these principles have not been the property of any particular people, but in all times and in all lands, the wise men by exercise of their reason, have come to these conclusions. These truths have become the basis of all religious systems. Every creed and sect must build with these principles as their foundation stones.

The fundamentals of all religions can thus be summed up:

- I There is a God who is eternal and one, the creator and Judge of the world.
- II The soul of man is incorporeal and can develop to great great spiritual beauty.
- III The destiny of man in this world is to strive after greater self-realization and thus acquire happiness. This happiness cannot be attained without lofty purposes and good deeds.
- IV The soul of man is immortal
- V God created man to make him happy

These great religious truths furnished to us by reason, are substantiated by the Old Testament teachings. Moses taught pure religion without idolatry or superstition. Among no other nation do we find these teachings so pure and untainted. Moses found Israel in oppression and misery in the depths of slavery,

80 not responsive to any religious truth. He freed them and tried to weld them into a self-sufficient nation and fired them anew with religious fervor. The history of that people is unique among nations. Its influence on civilization has been the greatest.

26 Moses not only wanted to free his people and restore to them the pure religion of their desert ancestors, but he also desired to make from these slaves a people of God. His nation should treasure religion in all its purity, teach it unceasingly and preach it throughout its life. Could he do it? His teachings were profound and spiritual, understandable by the most sensitive and spiritual natures. The people, he had freed were not yet ready to understand these fine religious truths. Moses almost saw his whole plan shipwrecked at the start when his people began to make idols and worship them. Moses then resolves to try a new method to realize his plan. Therefore, Moses instituted the ceremonial law. The ceremonies were to be symbols of the great religious truths and thru them the fine spirit and teachings could be brought home to the people. If the ceremonies fail to spread these teachings, they must be abolished. They were only a means to the end. If the end is no longer to be attained, the means becomes no means and hence are valueless. And according to this policy, Moses made God in his system, not creator and possessor of all, but the guardian and ally of the nation, its emancipator, leader and founder. State and religion were not separated, but one, not allied, but indivisible. Thus every civil duty became God's service. The ceremonies were the shell wherein were hidden the kernel of the true religious teachings. The wisdom of Moses is very evident in the laws he instituted in God's name, each one of which served a purpose in his time. The written laws were few, the oral laws were taught by tradition and handed down. The laws,

81 therefore, were constantly changed and modified so no one could contradict the teacher. There was nothing to prove that he was wrong as there were no written documents.

"If one school affirms a law about ceremonies which another denies, so both pronouncements are the words of the living God" is a statement found in Talmud which indicates the fluidity and flexibility of these ritual laws. The lawmakers could legislate to meet
31 conditions of the time in which they lived and were not bound by iron-clad, rigid statutes. Even post-biblical writers made allowances for changes, for the laws were constantly being altered to meet new conditions.

33 After the destruction of the Temple, the laws were set in writing. This act they called a destruction of the laws. "There is a time when for the sake of God, the laws must be destroyed" (Psalms] The laws became fixed and lost their usefulness. The
34 customs are the body, whose soul is pure religion. If the soul has fled, of what use is the carcass? The butterfly has gone and the empty cocoon is left. This holds good, we believe, of all cere-
34 monies. The prophets denounced the ceremonial law. Their work was in vain. Isaiah admitted "The heart of the people is deadened, deaf the ear, blind the eye, so that it neither sees nor hears, retro-
35 spect, repents, nor returns." In later times conditions became ~~bezz~~ worse. The people scattered throughout the world, without a permanent abode, without civil rulers, without spiritual leaders finally lost all sense of cultural values and all awareness for higher values, which were the origin of the earlier religion. In
37 their place, the ceremonial laws were scrupulously observed. The beautiful structure of their religion was destroyed and the only things which had been saved from the wreckage were the ritual laws. If their spirits had not been so crushed and their soul lamed,

they would have learned to give their rites in other lands. To
 38 this clinging to observances there was added the idea of a Messiah,
 which added to their cultural bankruptcy. This idea arose early
 from misinterpretations of the prophets. People assumed that the
 prophetic idea of the millenium meant a return to Jerusalem,
 39 restoration of the temple and ritualistic service. Therefore, the
 observance of laws was important for two reasons. First by
 adhering to them Jews were to gain as a reward a return to Jerusalem,
 and second on returning to Jerusalem they would be able to restore
 all the old customs. All Jewish thoughts became centered in
 hope of the Messiah. Their teachers made laws more severe and
 40 thus widened the chasm separating them from other peoples.

The more arduous the laws, the greater was the reward to be.
 This led to pilpulism and many intricate and minute observances,
 which tended to destroy the rationality of the people.

This desire for Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah
 41 found expression in the prayers. Originally the Jews had no
 prayers nor doxologies. Animal and other sacrifices were used in
 their stead. When the state was destroyed and when the Jews were
 scattered among other nations, a new form of worship had to be
 42 instituted. Prayers ^{were} ^{and} written, are in part taken from the scriptures
 and in part the original works of authors - all were suffused with
 the desire of a return to Jerusalem and a restored Temple service.
 All the prayers smacked of slavery of men pleading for freedom.
 These prayers were corrupted through the centuries, becoming more
 and more mystic and obscuring the pure essence of Judaism. The
 language used to express these prayers is insulting to the ear
 and defies all rules of grammar and logic. A large part of the
 people understands them not at all, and this is fortunate, inasmuch
 as the prayers exert neither a good nor a bad influence.

85 44 This has been a synopsis of the history of the external religion of our associates in the past centuries. In those days of barbarism the situation of the Christian church was no better. A deep darkness enveloped all; and the yoke of superstition hung heavily on the reason of men. One wanders thru centuries in quest of virtue, in vain. Barbarous customs and fantastic notions prevailed, and nowhere was a strand of humanitarianism evident. True ~~is~~ learning had disappeared. A grovelling scholasticism had replaced it. Text books, speeches, church prayers, all bear the evidences of crippled intellects. Generalizing the history of the period, 45 we can say that Christianity in those days had sunk to a lower level than Judaism. After a long night, the day finally broke, and love for beauty and truth was awakened. Since the Reformation, protestant Christendom has made gigantic forward steps, while our corre- 46 lligionists due to a thousand handicaps could not follow. The forward march of Christianity helped Jews. Since vicious physical persecutions have ceased some Jews have equaled Christians in mentality and spirituality. As governments became more charitable in their dealings with Jews the light which awoke the church, has also dissipated the mist in the synagogue. As enlightened Christians began to evaluate properly Catholic customs, so enlightened Jews began to evaluate properly Jewish ceremonial and ritual laws.

Whatever detracts from the value of the essentials of religion, befogs the mind, or harms true morality, is to the thinking men in all creeds and sects not only unnecessary but also most detrimental. On the one hand Christians have the advantage of the higher educational institutions and of the fact that their customs do not enter 47 into active business transactions as do the Jewish ceremonial laws; yet on the other hand the Jews have the advantage that the dogmas of their religion need not be submitted again to the refining crucible

84 as the doors have already been removed.

We openly admit that the minute ritual regulations have no meaning for us, but are unnecessary and harmful insofar as they tend to force interest away from the religious ideal. But outside of the fact that they are not suitable for this age, they produce no detrimental consequences in life. Much more dangerous is the adherence to superstitious doctrines which degrade the intellect and weaken ^{morality} ~~mentality~~. False concepts are more dangerous to society 48 than outworn ceremonials. The false doctrine of fatalism undermines the foundation of morality. False teachings poison the wells of conviction from which arise all moral practices. The Jews must purify their ritual and ceremonies, but the Christians must purify their dogmas and doctrines. If in spite of this tremendous spiritual advantage, the Jews have lagged behind the Christians, it is to be attributed to the political and economic disabilities, from which the Jew has suffered. Time has brought about an exchange of ideas among both religions. They, whom theologians and customs have separated for years, as oceans and hills separate men, are now approaching each other. The greatest victory for the Jews has been the banishment of the desire of a return to Palestine from their hearts, when reason dispelled the Messiah notion as chimerical. Among the majority of Jews in Germany, France and Holland this notion finds no support. The second great advantage for the Jews has been the ~~x~~ cultural education of their children. German is becoming our vernacular and Jewish youths are rapidly being taught completely from Jewish text books. The Jewish religious service has not yet been reformed, but the change there is most imperative.

50 Why should not our teachers make accessible to posterity the glorious truths of Jewish literature? You, my dear sir, know

85 well that the Pentateuch, the holy poets and prophets, many parts
of the Talmud, especially Maimonides (where system is built upon
50 the ethics of Aristotle) contain a wealth of material, out of which
great moral teachings can be taught. We admit that the Jews in
spite of our advances, are far behind the Christians in regard to
51 the development of spiritual powers and in regard to the knowledge
of science, (defects we hope to remedy) but not in regard to morality.
On the ladder of moral achievements the Jews have gone higher than
any other people. The Jews, according to the masses, are an immoral
52 group. It is time that that false concept be eradicated. Every
- religion thinks that its institution is most blessed and that the
best members of other faiths are inferior to the best in its fold.
Only history and experience will teach the fallacy of this view. When
men have some advantages they prosper. When inhabitants of a cer-
tain state forge ahead of other states, Jews of that state will also
distinguish themselves.

54 You hope to degrade us by the epithet Jew. We feel the con-
tempt and scorn which this bysyllabic ^[Jude] word engenders, but show us a pe
55 people which is more virtuous and moral than the Jew? Which people
is more charitable? Where is paternal and filial affection, matri-
monial faithfulness more deeply imbedded? Where are the sacrifices
for the welfare of others more frequent? Where is the more moral
nation among whom murder, robbery and assasination are less frequent?
Among what nations are corrupt sexual practices less frequent?
We demand an answer for these questions, if we are to be contradicted
in the view that the the Jew is more moral than other peoples.

56 You accuse the Jews of bribery, fraud and usury. Who gave you
the right to cast scornful glances upon the fraudulent Jews? Re-
member it is not the Jewish religion which commands these vices.

Your legislators who prevented the Jew from engaging in commerce, agriculture, who excluded him from the guilds and who foisted upon him unjust taxes, you are responsible for the prevalence of these corrupt practices among the Jews. Then, go also among the petty traders, examine their weights, witness their cheating and then being impartial, judge, condemn the Jew if truth permits.

We do not intend to defend the vulgar amongst the Jews, but we do demand that you differentiate between the vulgar among the Jews as you differentiate between the vulgar of the Christians. To return to our argument, altho our ritual laws may hinder us in self development, yet they would not hinder us from the performance of civil duties, were they expected of us. The acquisition of civil rights is in complete accord with the Mosaic system, and it furthermore highly essential that we be enabled as soon as possible to assume the duties and obligations of citizenship. The duty of self-preservation and sustaining one's family causes us to long for civil emancipation. We hope to enhance the opportunities of posterity, to give them all possible chance to develop their talents and abilities and to make themselves happy. This is not possible today because the Jew is hemmed in and obstructed by legal restrictions. Therefore it is imperative that we rid ourselves of the burdensome yoke of ceremonial and ritual laws, whose abolition Moses himself would advocate were he living today. Since the wisdom and duty demand the abolition of the ceremonial law, why do you hesitate to declare that these laws can no longer bind you, that you are ready give up the religion and of your fathers to become Christians?

That is exactly why, dear friend, that we approach you for counsel and advice.

We must admit that there is a difference between giving

7
up ^{but} ancestral religion, i.e., abolish ceremonial laws, and conversion
62 to Christianity.

Truly there have been many of our correlativeists who voluntarily gave up Judaism, or what they thought was Judaism, and went over to Christianity. We do not care to judge ^{them}. Feelings and sentiments would cause us, perhaps, to perfect justice. Some may have deserted Judaism and embraced Christianity sincerely. Others undoubtedly hypocritically were baptized for the sake of the advantages,
63 social and political, baptism made possible. We do not care to judge them, but their example we cannot emulate. We do not follow them not because of fear of our reputation, nor of fear from persecution of our fellow-Jews, from whom we would withdraw, for even if converted, we should still glory in our family ties and remain loyal to those relatives who did not follow us.

We have endeavored to find out the essentials of all religions, and have learned that these are found in the religion of Moses. These fundamentals which we subscribe to, we shall continue to subscribe ^{to} forever. Our conversion is condition ^{ed} on the acceptability of these fundamentals to the representations of
66 Christianity. There is still one other condition upon which we must insist. We must distinguish between rational (Vernunftwahrheiten) and historical (Geschichtswahrheiten) truths. Rational truths are established by evidence and historical truths by faith. Rational truths are permanent and everlasting. They should not be accepted
67 on authority. Education merely stimulates thought, which will on its own initiative come to recognize these permanent and eternal verities. Historical truths are substantiated only by tradition and not by reason. Proof and evidence to establish them cannot be attained. We must believe them. Many times they will contain in themselves contradictions, and they will also tend to refute part of the eternal verities. In the clash between historical

18 and rational truths, the latter must emerge the victors. Not all the apparent contradictions are real. They disappear on closer study and keener analysis. Especially, as language, the vehicle of that, can only be understood by careful examination. Primitive peoples had less vocabulary than we have and consequently had greater difficulty in expressing themselves. As we read their thoughts, we must try to realize the limitations of their expressions.

70 The primitive man knew nothing of the difference ^{between} the direct and indirect influence of God in nature. He consequently could not express that difference in language. This fundamental difference is the fruit of more mature minds, and is very familiar to us because it is expressed in transcendental terms, which portray no

71 fantastic picture. The Oriental may have perceived this difference in his soul but in his expression it is not evident. God does everything according to his notion. He plants trees, leads the animals to the first men to be named, etc. God has personally supervised every act and thought of ours. Everything which happens is caused directly by God - the winds of God, the hill of God, a fire of God. Every man who by close observation of the present can outline the future, every pious, noble altruistic man is a man of God, a son of God. The speeches of the prophets, seers

72 or poets, of all those who were spiritually inclined are even bolder and more vivid. Their writings are colored. Grammar, logic and clarity tend to disappear. All animate and inanimate creatures and things talk and move, hills, mountains and woods sing. God is described as a human being (Psalm 78, 65 and 66, God awakened as from a sleep, like a hero whose brags because of a fill of wine) And in other places the prophets' teachings are so pure and spiritual and warn us of all images, and idols. No matter how pure their conception, their powerful imaginations lead them to pictures and anthropomorphisms. They ^{use} ~~are~~ symbolic

9 language. The real student of the Bible must learn to pierce these
73 symbolisms to acquire the underlying truth. The religious teacher
who insists on the literal truth of the Bible and supports these
74 historic truths, will create a large abyss between himself and the
honest searchers for truth, who will shy away from his dogmas.
They maintain that God's book of laws cannot advance truths which
reason refutes.

75 In regards to the threat that he who denies these beliefs will
be damned, ~~There~~ that should have no place in the belief of a truly
religious person. Even if we do ~~not~~ trust too much in reason and
it leads us astray from the path of truth, will God punish error
so cruelly? The most tyrannical despot asks from his slaves no
work which demands more than human muscular power. Will God demand
of men that which He himself has made impossible--belief in doctrines
77 which his reason refutes? Impossible!

78 We cannot interpret the words son of God literally. We cannot
subscribe to the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus. That
dogma we can never accept. We must be honest and freed from all
hypocrisy if we are to take the step under contemplation. Duty and
conscience demand that we improve our civil condition by a puri-
fication of our religious life, but surely we do not intend to barter
our truth and virtue for the sake of our happiness.

79 What we are contemplating doing, our descendants will have
to do. The study of Talmud decreases daily among us. The reputation
of the rabbis has fallen and must spend itself entirely with the
neglect of the ceremonial law. The administration has taken the
judicial power and religious rule away from the rabbis, ~~farth~~ for
the civil laws of the Jews are out of date. As the religious bonds

90 of all peoples are become weaker, among the Jews levity will become more powerful, as they have as yet no proper educational forms nor conceptions of spirituality. This fact plus the fact that

80 Jews mingle with Christians who will welcome them to their churches will result in wholesale baptisms. The Jew can by uttering a few words be rid of all the disadvantages and enjoy all the privileges of average human beings. This proposition must be rejected by the intellectual.

81 We ask your advice in this matter. What confessions of creed will you and your associates demand of us? If you were in our place what would you do? The number of housefathers associates with me is very small, but many will follow me if I set the example.

A definite pronouncement from a man of your reputation and authority in the Christian church can be a godsend for a multitude of truth-loving men. You can by your verdict render happy thousands of unborn children, who will ever revere your name.

83 One might ask of us: Why are you not satisfied to disseminate virtue among your own people? Why don't you follow the slower road ^{until} ~~and wait~~ with all men shall be united under God's standard? Do you trust so little the government and the consistory? Will they not tolerate you and welcome you when you announce your new system?

We answer to these questions. Our circle is small, and no matter how pure our principles and how earnest our efforts, may be to propogate them in our family groups, we fear that in the next generation they will be lost if they are handed down only by word of mouth. We also admit that we hope thru this step to acquire complete civil rights and thus give our children a chance for full and free intellectual growth. If our proposal

is accepted we will be protected and accepted by the state. We will always be a connecting link between Jews and Christians, and exist as a separate sect.

We cannot accept certain ceremonies of the Protestants, and regard them as forms, which are necessary for membership in the group. It is to be understood that these ceremonies are to be signs which will attest that the member has accepted the eternal verities on his own authority and out of them has formulated his duties as a human being and citizen, but not as a sign that he accepts the dogmas of the church in their entirety. This demand we make with a clear conscience and with serenity of soul.

Through this we hope that the prophetic teaching of Zephaniah will be realized "I, God, will cause the languages of all people to speak, that they all acknowledge God and serve him unselfishly."

The Sendschreiben itself is a very interesting document. It is an acrid attack on Jewish ceremonialism and yet contains a severe indictment of Christian mythological and pagan concepts. It consequently was bitterly condemned by Jews and by Christians. What Friedländer is really proposing is a form of deism, a religion of reason, stripped of useless ceremonials, and divested of all superstitious garb. It is a religion which is the logical fruit of the philosophic concepts of the age. Religion like all other human institutions owes its ~~attainment~~ origin to human reason. Consequently, whatever irrational elements have intruded in the religious concepts and serve but to corrode the true religious ideal, must be eliminated. Submitting all religions to this process of pruning and testing, the obvious residue will be the great fundamentals of all religious teachings, the belief

92-^a in God and His attributes, the immortality of the soul and the duty of man to make himself happy by developing his spiritual nature. On these essentials all religions are united. Whatever else there is to organized religions serves but to obscure the ideal and to befog the vision. Ceremonies divert attention from the ~~eternal~~ eternal verities. The cosmopolitan tendencies of the age stirred in men's hearts a longing that the hedges which separate creeds and sects be demolished. "The religion of humanity was the religion of the eighteenth century, and Lessing was its greatest prophet." Between the enlightened Christian who had followed the teachings of Reimarus and Lessing, etc, and the enlightened Jews who had given up the ceremonial law, there existed no religious differences. Their free souls responded similarly to the call of the beautiful and aesthetic. Their hearts were thrilled alike by the awe and mystery of creation. The chasm separating enlightened Jews and Gentiles was merely one of formality, a chasm which Friedlander hoped to bridge by his proposal. It was a practical attempt to realize a religion of humanity. It was in harmony with the spirit of the Aufklärung, and does not stand isolated in that age. Many bold religious adventures were attempted in those days. "In the famous case of Schulz, the pastor of Gielsdorf, who openly denied Christianity and taught simply that morality was necessary, the High Consistory of Berlin held that he was nevertheless still fitted to hold his office as the Lutheran pastor of his village."⁴⁶ Friedlander's Sendschreiben in such an age is not to be wondered at.

Since the differences between the enlightened minds of

46. Morse Stephens "Revolutionary Europe" p. 10/

93 Judaism and Christianity were minor, Friedländer felt that the Jewish oppression and discriminations were most unnecessary. He felt that he should give his children the opportunity to develop fully and freely to the full height of their potentialities. This was out of the question so long as the administration persisted in regarding the Jew as an inferior being. Friedländer frankly confesses that the chief motive for his proposal was to attain political emancipation for the Jew. If they could enter the Christian fold without altering their fundamental beliefs they would be ready to do so. Conversion would not entail a loss of spiritual fibre, and it would tend to alleviate their suffering. This proposal came at the time when all of Friedländer's efforts to secure civil rights for his people had failed.

Not only did Friedländer hope to pave a way for the elimination of Jewish disabilities by his *Gedtschreiben*, but he hoped to avert the wholesale conversions prevalent among the Jewish youth, and also to stem the tides of atheism and agnosticism. Many of the Jewish intellectuals saw in the baptismal font the avenue of escape from oppression and discrimination. Others could find no spiritual stimulus in the atavistic Judaism of their fathers. They loathed and despised the ceremonial laws. The Jewish rites had become meaningless for them. Their spiritual nature could not be stirred by the old fashioned methods of worship, so out of tune with their cultured tastes. Their defalcation from the Jewish ranks was a serious problem to Friedländer and by his *Gedtschreiben*, he hoped to save them from the withering despair of atheism.

The *Gedtschreiben* is not a disparagement of Judaism or the Jew. The *Gedtschreiben* attacks very bitterly the ceremonial law, but the Jew is highly praised. "On the ladder of moral achieve-

94 ment the Jew has climbed higher than any other people" says Friedlander. The Jew is at a disadvantage because of his intricate ritual, but the Christian is at a greater disadvantage because of his mythological doctrines. Furthermore, these vices of which the Jew is guilty, are the direct results of Christian persecutions and oppression. In spite of all that, ~~as~~ there is less crime among Jews than among other people. The home life of the Jew is unequalled. The loyalty and faithfulness of the Jewish husband has become proverbial. Moses was the great religious teacher of all history. To his teachings, Friedlander will ever remain faithful. Moses was compelled to introduce ceremonies for the people were too ignorant to apprehend the religious ideal in all its naked purity. Were Moses alive today he would abolish the ceremonial law. The prophets have ever fought against the power and influence of ceremonialism. Friedlander's proposal to abolish the ceremonial law, was in complete accord with the prophetic program.

Friedlander's universalistic tendencies were also in harmony with Jewish prophetic idealism. But his proposal to submit to baptism, even as a formality was a distinct ethical error. If ceremonial laws of Jews were useless, then Christian ceremonials too should be put in the same category. To agree to go thru formal ceremony for material advantage is not the act of an ethically free spirit. It is done in everyday life by the average man. Men submit to all forms of ceremonial which they loathe, for material reward. But viewed from a high ethical plane, such actions are reprehensible. The other error in Friedlander's proposal is due to his lack of historical perspective, his failure to see that the Jew is more than an ethical

monotheist, that the roots of his being are founded in a glorious history and a venerable culture which cannot and should not be suddenly tossed aside for the sake of any material advantage. This lack of historical perspective pervades the whole cosmopolitan philosophy of the age. It is untenable because it is built on fallacy.

The weakness of Friedländer's conception of the Jew and Judaism becomes at once evident, when we perceive that most of his followers and descendants are today lost to Judaism, and subscribe to those false Christian dogmas which he detested so heartily. Friedländer's ideal is the ^{property} ideal of all liberal minds today. His method to realize it was however fallacious. A pure ideal cannot exist on this earth without ceremonial, without concrete expression. A soul must find articulation in a body. The Jewish soul must find its expression in the Jewish people. The eternal verities of Judaism can thrive best in the soil of Jewish culture fed by the streams of Jewish thought of all the ages.

The Sendschreiben of Friedländer was a desperate attempt on the part of the author to save the eternal verities of Judaism, which appeared to be doomed. It is not to be condemned. It is the earnest attempt of a sincere Jew to save the glories of his religion from extinction, and at the same time to realize a broad universal ideal of a religion for all men.

Its publication by Teller elicited all sorts of replies and attacks. The Christians were bitter at Friedländer for his flaying of their pagan dogmas. The rabbis severely denounced

him for his rejection of the Jewish ritual. Teller published a reply to Friedländer, in which he rejected the proposal and stated that if Friedländer wanted to become a Christian, he could so do but he would have to accept the divinity of Jesus, and take communion. The Christianity Friedländer proposed was no Christianity. Teller urged Friedländer to continue his noble work of raising the Jews to higher cultural levels. Among Jews, the author of the *Gedtschreiben* was treated harshly, especially among the conservative generation that followed. Graetz calls him shallow, and a servile imitator of Mendelssohn. Stern refers to the *Gedtschreiben* as "Thoughtless and tactless" Philipson calls it a "fantastic step." Jost regards it as a bold adventure. Kalisch brands it as treason to Jewry. Ludwig Geiger and Ritter and Schreiber excuse it as the desperate act of a desperate man to save the essence of Judaism from what appeared to him was inevitable ~~extinction~~ extinction.

Friedländer edited several of Mendelssohn's books. In 1814 and in 1821 he published new editions of Mendelssohn's "Phaedon." He included in these editions an introduction, in which he indicated the close relationship between religion and morality. He also gave a history of "Phaedon" and made certain valuable comments. In 1787, Friedländer published the "J. J. J. J." It contains a synopsis of Mendelssohn's "Phaedon", and was intended to disseminate Mendelssohn's theories about the immortality of the soul among the Jews. Friedländer also wrote an article in the *Berliner Monatsschrift* about the Psalm translation of Mendelssohn.

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CHAPTER VIII

FRIEDLÄNDER'S RELATION TO MENDELSSOHN

When Friedländer was born in 1750 Moses Mendelssohn was already the recognized leader of the Jews in Prussia. In the cultured home of Friedländer's parents the name of Mendelssohn was greatly revered. Mendelssohn was the pride of all Jewry. To youthful Friedländer, Mendelssohn became the symbol of all that is good, true, beautiful and worth while. His idealistic nature thrilled in reading the noble thoughts of Mendelssohn. David Friedländer began to worship him and longed to be near him, and become part of those idealistic, universal and Jewish movements of which Mendelssohn was one of the generating dynamos. Attracted chiefly by Mendelssohn's personality, Friedländer left for Berlin. His family connections established him among the social and intellectual aristocracy of Berlin Jewry. He became a pupil and admirer of Mendelssohn. He accompanied him in his journeys,⁴⁷ and became an intimate in his family circle.

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47. Kayserling's *Moses Mendelssohn* p. 220-247

98 was a constant attendant at the latter's famous salons where the young Jewish intellectuals would gather and discuss the leading ethical and philosophic problems. Some of these discussions Friedländer attempted to set down in writing from memory, a precarious procedure at best, and consequently not very authentic. Friedländer also published a book in which he attempted to set down his relation to Mendelssohn. This book was inaccessible Mendelssohn used to confide in Friedländer. He acted to Friedländer as Lessing had acted towards him. He became his guide and adviser.

Mendelssohn was the philosopher and thinker; Friedländer, the man of action. Mendelssohn conceived the theories; Friedländer tried to execute them. Mendelssohn was the mild persuader; Friedländer the courageous battler. When Mendelssohn conceived the idea of a Hebrew School, Friedländer had to execute it. Mendelssohn was a strict and observant Jew, and hesitated to offend the Rabbinic hierarchy. Friedländer boldly championed the cause of reform and vehemently denounced the rabbis and their ceremonial laws. Mendelssohn was the mild liberal, while Friedländer the fiery radical. What the Encyclopedists were to the French revolution, Mendelssohn was to Friedländer. Friedländer insisted that Mendelssohn not only wanted to introduce secular culture among the Jews, but also wished to reform their observances. His gentle temperament and his aversion for disputes caused him to conform publicly, though he was a rebel in private. Friedländer was a fighter and fought openly for reform. Schooled in the ideas of Mendelssohn, he went out to realize his master's teachings. Mendelssohn was the strategist and Friedländer his general who executed his plans.

Of course, Friedländer's opponents disagreed with him when he pointed out that Mendelssohn would have favored a change in

Jewish customs. One of them, Reggio, published a book, *7. 7. 7. 7. 7.* in which he attempted to show that Mendelssohn was opposed to reform. Friedländer claimed that Reggio did not understand Mendelssohn.

Mendelssohn's activities for Judaism were theoretical. He conceived of Reform⁴⁸ but realized that change in religion cannot be made by one individual, but must become a wish of the group who could institute the reforms. Mendelssohn's circle were all agreed that a change in the externals of Judaism must take place. Friedländer articulated Mendelssohn's ideas and tried to realize them. Mendelssohn was the master and Friedländer the disciple.

On Mendelssohn's death, Friedländer succeeded him as the leader of the Jewish community in Prussia. In that position Friedländer endeavored to carry out the work of his master. Mendelssohn had not completed the translation of the entire bible, and Friedländer took up his teacher's work and contributed to the bible translation. Mendelssohn in his book "Jerusalem" had demanded civil, ^{and} political rights for the Jew. Friedländer took that as his life text and constantly fought for the political emancipation of his correlative. Mendelssohn championed secular education among the Jews, and Friedländer became father of the Jewish schools in Germany. Mendelssohn conceived of reform and Friedländer fought for it. Truly, Friedländer was a most worthy successor of Moses Mendelssohn.

48. I. Ritter - "Geschichte der jüdischen Reformation"

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY

In an age when frivolity reigned supreme, when men of wealth squandered their means in sensual joys and delights, when an epicurean philosophy was dominant, David Friedländer worked hard and faithfully to alleviate the sufferings and elevate the status of the Jews in Prussia. When the Jewish rich men were endeavoring to blur out their ancestral connections, when apostasy was the 'open sesame' to social and political honors, David Friedländer remained loyal and true to the faith of his fathers. Like some radiant jewel he stands out midst the men of his day. During the black night of wholesale conversion and treachery to Judaism, the star of David Friedländer shone radiant and resplendant, like a great sentinel guarding the treasures of the ages. It was an easy thing for a wealthy man to escape from the limitations involved with loyalty to Judaism. The baptismal font melted the ice of prejudice. Friedländer, however, was not swept from his ancestral moorings. The gods of the Canaanites could not lure him from his faith. But with increased vigor, and redoubled zeal, he devoted his life to the interests of the Jew.

Raised in a cultured home, possessed of all the advantages which wealth and refinement makes possible, Friedländer came to Berlin and allied himself with those men and forces who were cementing the structure of Judaism. An intimate and disciple of Mendelssohn, he actively participated in all the movements which sought to disseminate secular culture among the Jews. He established the Berlin Free School in 1778, which became the model for similar schools in Prussia, Austria and even Holland. He

was ~~xxxx~~ a contributor to the Sammler, and also was instrumental in its founding. He wrote a school text-book to aid Jewish school children in their work. He translated portions of the bible, Job, Isaiah and Ecclesiastes and parts of Micah. He translated some German literary gems to Hebrew, to acquaint his people with secular thought. He also translated the Hebrew prayerbook into German. In all respects he worked faithfully to put the Jew on an intellectual and cultural level with his Christian neighbor. Besides his educational activities, Friedlander worked with might and main to secure political freedom for the Jews in Prussia. Says Ludwig Geiger of him: "The name of David Friedlander stands out among those men who worked to realize political equality for the Jew. Whatever the Jew accomplished along these lines was Friedlander's work. That the Jew never lost courage in spite of repeated set-backs is due to the unflagging perseverance and buoyant ~~spirit~~ optimism of David Friedlander. And if the ultimate accomplishment can be credited to any one man, it must be to Friedlander."

From the death of Mendelssohn in 1786 to the emancipation decree of 1812, Friedlander never ceased from his efforts to free his people from the medieval restrictions which cramped their lives. Innumerable times he interviewed the rulers of Prussia to alleviate the lot of the Jew. He appeared before them not as a cringing fawning slave, supplicating for mercy and charity, but as a courageous battler asking them to give the Jews their rights. He was the head of the elders, who presided over the destinies of Berlin Jewry, and also was elected to be one of the two representatives who were to be free to take any steps they saw fit to secure political emancipation. In 1808 he was elected an

102 alderman of Berlin, and in 1812 he secured the emancipation decree from Frederick William III.

Not satisfied with having secured political equality for the Jew, Friedländer wanted to liberate them from the prison house of religion, in which rabbinism had chained them. Friedländer was the first to agitate openly for reform of Jewish worship and customs. He wanted to do more than aestheticize the service as Jacobson had done. He wanted to revolutionize the Jewish religious concepts. He had a philosophy of reform. Ceremonials are minor factors in the religious life. The spiritual essentials, the eternal verities of Judaism must be stressed and emphasized. Ceremonies were but a means to an end. His open opposition to ceremonialism brought him into conflict with the rabbis, whom he fought throughout his life. Friedlander also was the first in modern times to formulate a Jewish theology. In his *Sepdschreiben* he outlined the fundamentals of the Jewish faith. He is entitled to be known as one of the pioneers in the reform movement in Judaism. He wrote article after article urging the Jews to change their religious life and to clear away the debris of atavistic customs which hampered free spiritual expression.

Friedländer conceived of the Jews as a religious sect. He was an ardent German patriot. He wanted to eliminate the prayers for the restoration of Palestine and the Temple from the service. He regarded the nationalistic Messianic hope as one of the great handicaps to Jewish spiritual expression. Were he alive today, he would be undoubtedly a staunch anti-Zionist. He agreed with Herder that Prussia was the Palestine for the Jew and Berlin its Jerusalem. Like the rest of the Jews of his day, he lacked the historical perspective and he negated the importance of Jewish history to Jewish continuance. Besides his Jewish interests,

Friedländer was also a cultured man, and active in the intellectual movements of his time. He was a friend of Nicolai, the editor of the Monatschrift, the organ of enlightenment in Berlin. He was a frequent contributor to its pages. "When my knowledge of Jewish things was uncertain, I went to my friend David Friedländer, one of the noblest of this nation, who invariably helped me out", says Nicolai. Engel, Herder, and von Humboldt were intimates of Friedländer, with whom he corresponded frequently. His house was one of the famous salons of Berlin. He supported indigent writers and patronized the arts. His cultural activities were numerous.

Friedländer also was of a deep religious nature. He was a wealthy man and felt that his wealth was to be used in the interests and welfare of his fellow men. This doctrine he preached and practiced. He was very much devoted to the Bible and enjoyed particularly the portions of Psalms and prophets. Though ~~he~~ actively engaged in numerous commercial enterprises, he found time to read the gems of literature, which during that period began to appear in Germany. His fine spiritual conception, and his lofty idealism are very manifest in parts of his famous 'Sendschreiben'.

On his death, his survivors spoke very kindly of him. Notices of his death appeared in the New Review (England), the Sulamith, and the Monatschrift. All of them lauded Friedländer very highly. Edward Kley preached a glorious eulogy about him in the Hamburg Temple. Jewish historians were less kind to him. His outspoken attitude in Reform made him the target of attack from all those conservatives who came after him. His fierce attacks on rabbinism antagonized the rabbis. These two facts served to prejudice conservative historians and rabbis against him. Consequently he was misjudged. All of his

04 constructive endeavors were slighted and attention was paid to his one error, his proposal to Teller. All active men err in their lives and so also Friedländer. His Sendschreiben has been misunderstood, misinterpreted and slandered. Its extenuating circumstances have been ignored. A few just writers have raised themselves in behalf of Friedländer, but the overwhelming majority slight his constructive work for the Jewish cause.

Friedländer may truly be called an emancipator. He helped free his people from the chains of ignorance, by advancing the cause of secular education. He helped the Jews of Prussia liberate themselves from the oppression of centuries, by his efforts to secure political emancipation for them. He helped shatter the bonds of ceremonialism and superstition which had fettered the Jews throughout centuries, and had hampered their spiritual development. Along cultural, political and religious lines, he strove to emancipate his people and raise them to higher levels and loftier planes.