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A HISTORY OF THE RUSSO-JEWISH LITERATURE FROM  
ITS BEGINNING TO THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER II.  
(1803-1881).

by  
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[1971]

*mic. 12/79*

Dedicated to the memory of  
my dear parents, Leah and  
Gad Rosenblum,

Zichron ~~de~~ Livrochob.

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## Preface

In presenting this work the writer feels that he has to apologize for certain omissions in the Chronological sequence of the work and for its incompleteness. Many of the early Russo-Jewish writings appeared in the Russian daily and periodical press, and these were unobtainable in the Public Library of New York where the material for this work was gathered. Again, the short time within which the material was to be gathered (the summer months) did not permit an exhaustive study of all the works of the period covered, and thus even the literary productions of such writers as L. Levanda and Bogrov had to be omitted.

The object pursued by the writer was to refrain as much as possible from presenting his own inferences and conclusions and to give a full account of the contents of the works and of the lives of the authors and let the reader formulate his own conclusions.

A word must also be said in regard to the dates and the spelling of Russian names and words. As to the first, they are all given in the old style, the Russian Calendar. As to the latter, the writer sought so to spell the Russian names and words<sup>as</sup> to secure as near a correct sounding as possible. Thus he spelled Rabinovitch, not Rabinowitz, etc.

February 1st, 1917.

## INTRODUCTION.

A Brief Outline of the History of the Jews in Present Day Russia from the Earliest Times to the Appearance of the First Russo-Jewish Writing (1803), with Particular Emphasis on the Latter Part of the Period.

### CHAPTER I.

From the Earliest Settlement in the Present Crimea to 1772, the First Partition of Poland.

The Russian Jew of to-day is the result of an amalgamation, in unequal proportions perhaps, of two kinds of Jews: the Eastern or Oriental Jew who as early as the first century B.C. followed the trail of the Greek merchants and, emigrating from Alexandria, Asia Minor and other Asiatic provinces had established colonies or trading stations in what is known to-day, the Russian Province of Crimea, and the Western Jew who fled from the bloody trail of the Crusades and found shelter in the Old Kingdom of Poland. The numbers of the first were later on augmented by great masses of Khazars that were converted into Judaism in 740, and together with the latter they spread throughout the Ukraina, penetrated into Kiev and began to establish settlements in Lithuania and Poland. It is maintained by Isaac Baer Levinson and Markavy that the vernacular

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of these Jews had been Russian and that in some provinces this language had been spoken as late as the middle of the 17th Century. Whether this be true or not, it has no bearing on our work since it is conceded by all that by the time the Russian Jews came under the dominion of Russia, the Russian language had been entirely forgotten by them, and the vernacular used was a corrupt form of that German which was brought into Poland by the great masses of Western Jews that fled to Poland from the bloody massacres perpetrated by the Crusaders, and from the severe Jewish persecutions in Germany.

The two bodies of Jews met around the end of the 11th Century when great masses of Western Jews began to pour in into Poland. The Polish kings who had been interested in the commercial and industrial development of their country and who found the Jews an important factor in the promotion of their aim, had accorded them fair treatment. Charters were granted to the Jews guaranteeing them inviolability of person and property, free movement throughout the country, the application of the Magdeburg law, judicial autonomy, etc. In this fair treatment of the Jews the kings were supported by the Shlachta, or the Polish nobility, who found in the Jew an indispensable factor for the management of their large estates and for the carrying on of their export and import trade. Under these conditions the Polish Jews soon became a big economic and social factor with which the state was bound to reckon. Along with his material strength and wealth grew also his mental and spiritual strength and wealth. Poland soon became the center of Jewish learning and culture. Schools for the instruction of the young had been provided. The rabbis possessed not only a thorough Rabbinic education, but devoted themselves also to the study of secular sciences, philosophy, Kabbalah, etc. The Kahals were well organized and discharged their duties in the most

### III.

admirable fashion. In a word the Jew had grown into gianthood, both physically and mentally. With the opening of the 16th Century, however, the Jew begins to suffer from hostility on the part of the Catholic clergy and the middle classes, the traders and handicraftsmen. The former, in their desire for world dominion and with their characteristic intolerance to other religions, could not remain passive onlookers, while the infidel, the Christ killer was growing in strength. They, therefore, urged restrictive measures against the Jews, plotted and designed against them, manufactured all sorts of accusations against them, such as host desecration, ritual murder, etc., and incited the mob against them. In the same time the middle classes who hated the Jew for economic reasons, as a dangerous competitor in trade, joined hands with the clergy and under the same mask of religion instigated the masses against the Jews. However, as long as the kings maintained control over the affairs of the state, the Jews were protected and their interests suffered comparatively little, but as soon as the clergy would gain control over the government, the Jews were subjected to persecution and severe suffering. The position of the Jews during the 16th Century and the beginning of the 17th Century was thus conditioned by the shifting of the control over the government from the one to the other of the two above mentioned factors. But as the time advances and as the social and political life of Poland sinks more and more into dissolution, the condition of the Jew continues to grow worse and worse. The oppression and inhuman treatment of the Cossacks and Greek Catholic serfs of the Ukraina by the great Polish landholders and nobility and the weak, corrupt and demoralized government causes the famous Cossack uprisings of 1648, during which the Jews suffer both as "Anti-Christi" and as the agents of the accursed landholders. Thousands of Jews

#### IV.

are killed; whole communities are wiped out. They fall victims from the sword of both, the rebels and the treacherous leaders of the government forces. Their property, their possessions accumulated through ages of hardships and deprivation are plundered and laid waste. Their books, synagogues and schools of learning are given to the flames. Only the Jews of Northern Lithuania and White Russia escape the terrors of the Cossack rebellion, but they in their turn are soon made to feel the yoke of the oppressor. On being defeated in 1861, Chmelnitzky placed himself under the protectorate of tsar Aleksey Michailovitch who declares war against Poland, and the united armies of the Cossacks and Russians invade Lithuania and White Russia. The great Jewish centers of these provinces suffer the fate of those of their brethren in the Ukraina. In Poland proper the antagonism to the Jews grows more and more intense. Frequent anti-Jewish riots occur; their freedom of movement and of trading is being curtailed, and even the nobility who in former years pursued a policy favorable to the Jews, has now turned against them, and offers them protection only when their assistance is needed. As a result of these conditions Polish Jewry was reduced to extreme poverty, both spiritual and material. This was further augmented by the strife between Chassidism and Rabbinism, and when the first partition of Poland takes place it finds the Jews in a state of complete spiritual decline and social decay.

#### CHAPTER 2.

From the First Partition of Poland to the Appearance of the First Russo-Jewish Writing (1772-1803).

With the acquisition of her share of Poland, Russia suddenly finds herself face to face with a new problem. Up till now she had maintained

a policy of "Holy Russia shall not be desecrated by the presence of the enemies of Christ." Jews, therefore, were under no circumstances admitted into Russia, except perhaps in exceptional cases for temporary trading. Few Jews managed indeed to penetrate into Russia and even into the capital, and settle there, but their residence was illegal and was subject to the good will of the authorities. But now with the annexation<sup>of the</sup> new territory with its great Jewish population Russia was confronted with the problem of breaking away from her old tradition and at the same time keep the Jews outside of the old borders of Russia. Catherine the Great solved this problem in a unique manner. In her manifesto to the people of the annexed territory she granted them the privileges of "native" subjects of Russia, but the Jews were only granted religious freedom and right of ownership. The political status of the Jew was thus peculiar. He was recognized as a part of the body politic, yet was placed in a separate category with his special rights and privileges, such as autonomy in the management of his inner affairs, but at the same time excluded from enjoying the rights and privileges of the other members of the body politic such as the right of free movement throughout the Empire and the privilege of holding public office. Somewhat later Catherine enlarged the rights of the Jews by declaring them equal in all respects with the non-Jewish inhabitants of the conquered territory, granting them the right to be enrolled in the merchant guild, in the burgher class (meshchanye), to participate in the self-government of the municipalities and to be elected to office; the Kahal was shorn of its old powers and was limited to the supervision of religious matters only, and to guarantee the Jews justice in the courts they are given proportionate representation in both civil and criminal courts. With the further partitions of Poland and



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the acquisition of more territory inhabited by multitudes of Jews, the latter are placed in the same status as the Jews of the first partition, namely, they are recognized in the matter of political and civil rights as citizens or natives of the conquered territories, but not of Russia. They are thus restricted in their rights and activities to the area of the annexed territories, but are excluded from Russia proper and are denied admittance there. This in other words establishes what is known now as the Pale of Settlement which has ever since then been the main cause of the unhappy lot of the Russian Jew. But even in the Pale of Settlement the emancipation of the Jew remained only in theory, for in practice the antagonistic Christian population barred the Jews from enjoying the privileges granted to them.

Catherine's successor, Paul I (1796-1801), had introduced a new phase in the attempts to regulate the status of the Jews. He embarked on a wide scheme of official investigations of the conditions of the Jews and the other inhabitants of the Pale of Settlement, and hoped to introduce legislation on the basis of these investigations. The merit of this scheme cannot be questioned, nor can we doubt the good intentions of the Emperor, for on more than one occasion he proved to be kindly disposed to the Jews, but he committed one grave error; he failed to instruct his investigators to get testimony from the Jews in regard to their condition and needs. Instead, the investigators heard the testimony and opinions of the nobility and the Christian merchants, both of whom were hostile and antagonistic to the Jews, with the result that the reports submitted contained data which spoke against the Jews and recommended further restrictions of their rights. One such report was that submitted by Derzhavin in which he blames the Jews for the misfortunes which overtook the peasants of White Russia as a result of the Famine, and recommends the expulsion of the

## VII.

Jews from the villages, and other repressive measures. But Paul soon died and whatever legislation concerning the Jews he might have planned, his plans passed away with him. His reign had thus been poor in the field of concrete legislation concerning the Jews, but was rich in preliminary endeavors leading up to it. His method of framing legislation on the basis of official investigation was adopted by his successor, Alexander I (1801-1825) who in 1802 called into being the Committee for the Amelioration of the Jews.

This closes the period of history leading up to the appearance of the first Russo-Jewish writing. The further march of events we shall treat in the following pages, in connection with our study of the Russo-Jewish literature.

## BOOK I.

### The Birth and Infancy of Russo-Jewish Literature (1803-1855).

#### CHAPTER I.

##### The First Russo-Jewish Writing and What Prompted It.

Nevachovitch and "The Wailing of the Daughter of Judah."

The origin of Russo-Jewish literature presents an unnatural phenomenon. Unlike every other literature it is not the spontaneous natural expression of a people that spoke the language, mediated in it or sang its songs of joy and sorrow in it; nor does it begin with the epic and ballad as other literatures do, but rather with a deliberate, prosaic although passionate appeal for rights, for justice. Another difficulty with which ~~wag~~ are immediately *we* confronted is the question, for whom was this literature intended and what aims did it hope to achieve? These difficulties must be satisfactorily explained before we proceed with our task, or we shall not be able to comprehend nor fully appreciate the literature of this period. The key to the solution of these problems we find in the history of the time, a glance at which will shed enough light to scatter the clouds of perplexity and elucidate the obscure points.

The year 1803, the year in which the first work written by a Jew in the Russian language and on a Jewish subject appeared, finds the Jews of Russia in a deplorable condition. The thirty odd years

of life under Russian rule did not improve their lot, on the contrary made it more bitter. Their legal status remained still undefined. On the one hand they were regarded as subjects of their new rulers, on the other hand they were considered as having no civil and political rights of a subject or citizen, unless such rights as were specially granted to them. Such grants were occasionally made by the rulers, but they were narrow and local in character, and even these were either recalled or never carried into practice, due to the hostility and antagonism on the part of the local Christian population.

The political situation of the Jews reflected on their economic and social conditions. Driven out of many sources of livelihood, such as innkeeping, breweries, toll-houses, etc., the partial expulsion from the villages, the rivalry of their politically more powerful Christian competitors, the double taxation imposed on them, the restriction to the Pale of Settlement, and various other disabilities and special regulations, reduced the Jews to a state of poverty and destitution. Socially the Jew fared still worse, for here he was subjected to the most acute suffering of all, namely mental suffering. Placed outside the law, rejected by his neighbors, humiliated and held in contempt, the Jew falls into despair and sinks into a state of lethargy and stupor. He withdraws from the world, places his trust in God and in the study of the holy books, huddles together more closely with his fellow-Jews and remains politically and socially inactive and dormant and oblivious to the surrounding world. The life, the language, the culture of his neighbors, indeed anything which is outside the narrow walls of the artificially imposed on him ghetto life, all these have no interest to him, are of no value.

He keeps himself aloof from the life and habits of his neighbors and lives a life of his own, a life of seclusion, a life of stagnation, a life in which the past, tradition are the leading and controlling forces. Even his language, the language of the Galuth (exile), assumes a certain sanctity and to converse with his fellow-Jew in a language other than his Jargon is to trespass one of the laws of God.

Such was the condition of the great, broad masses of the Russian Jews. Yet there were few individuals, scattered throughout the country, mostly in the large cities, who in spite of the heavy chains and the narrow walls of the ghetto life had managed to get out from the strangled confines of the Jewish life and reach out into the big world around them. These few were the pioneers of the Mendelsonian teachings in Russia. Their lot was far from enviable. Regarded as renegades by their brethren, deprived of political rights by the government and rejected socially by the Christian public, they found themselves dejected, powerless and in want of some firm ground upon which to rest their feet. The ascent to the throne of Alexander I with his heralded liberalism, and especially his convening of the Committee for the Amelioration of the Jews, to which deputies from the Jews were invited, these two events brought new life and new hope into the hearts of this handful of advanced Jews. They believed that the great millennium has come, that the salvation of the Jews is at hand, and they set out to meet the new dawn in the proper fashion. One of these, Nevachovitch, found this opportune time to appeal to the Russian public on behalf of the Jews, in a work entitled "The Wailing of the Daughter of Judah." This

was the first Russo-Jewish writing. It was prompted as we have seen from the historical background, and as we shall see later from our study of the life of the author and the work itself, by the events of the time and was intended for the Russian public.

Judah Leib Nevachovitch was born June 26th, 1776, in Letitchev, Podolia. At the age of about sixteen or seventeen he went to Shklov which was at that time one of the main centers of Jewish culture and enlightenment. There he came in touch with the teachings of Mendelsohn and soon became a devoted admirer of this great German Jewish reformer and thinker. His early education had thus been in the spirit of German culture and German ideals, and it is not known what pushed him on the road of Russian culture, although it is believed that while at Shklov he came in contact with the known writer, Naftali Herz Schulman, who had a thorough knowledge of the Russian language. At the end of the reign of Katherine II, Nevachovitch came to St. Petersburg in the company of his friend and former pupil, Abraham Peretz, who together with Nota Notkin, Leon Elkan and Mendel Levin formed the St. Petersburg group of Mendelsohnian Jews. It is believed that here Nevachovitch occupied the position of official translator for the government, thus we find certain documents which were translated from Hebrew into Russian in connection with the trial of the Chasidic leader Zalman Schneerson (in the struggle between Chasidism and Rabbinism) the official remark: "Translated from the Hebrew by the 'Translator' Nevachovitch." We also find the words "Secretary of the Senate" attached to his name, but there is no further material to shed light upon the significance of this position. At any rate, it is

known that Nevachovitch had official connections in Petersburg and this he and his coworkers Peretz and Notkin used to great advantage in their efforts to secure political rights for the Jews.

In private life Nevachovitch was a man of philosophic tendencies and literary inclinations; but the philosopher and literateur was not merely the thinker and dreamer; his responsive and palpitating heart kept him awake to the questions of the day and stirred him to practical activity, which often was as passionate as that of the leader. While he possessed a knowledge of several languages he wrote exclusively in Russian, "in the language," as he says, "most known and most used in my fatherland." But his use of the Russian language to the exclusion of any other is explained also by the strong Russian sentiments, great love to everything Russian and intense patriotism which he seems to have cultivated. His literary and educational activities brought him into close contact and friendly relations with many leading Russians and this developed in him a strong devotion to everything Russian. He becomes a Russian of the Moses persuasion. "Whoever understands and feels to whom he is obliged for his happiness and freedom cannot but burn with love to his king and fatherland," he writes. And indeed, not only the present and future of Russia are dear to him, but even its past, so that when in a certain foreign periodical appeared a remark offensive to the past history of Russia he writes in his *Primechanya* (Remarks), admonishing his compatriots, the Russians, for having permitted foreigners to think of the Russians in a perverse and prejudiced manner. Herein he differs from the other Maskilim of his age, the latter were not acquainted with the Rus-

-sian culture and were cosmopolitans in their views and thoughts, while Nevachovitch regarded himself a Russian in everything but his religion. His passion for Russianization becomes so intense that he soon forgets his brethren and their fate. But the events of the time scatter the heavy shadows of the chimera which obstructed his view and the stern reality appears in bold relief before his eyes. The sessions of the Committee for the Amelioration of the Jews, the gathering in Petersburg of the Jewish deputies, the feverish activities of his close friends Peretz and Motkin, the discussion of the Jewish question in official circles and the public press, and apparently signs of intolerance and prejudice against the Jews displayed by the non-Jews, all this had opened his eyes and revived his connections with his people. He now finds out to his bitter disappointment that the Jew is neither politically nor socially regarded a Russian subject or citizen; that politically he is deprived of all rights, and socially he is rejected and ostracized by the Russian public. His Jewish heart is stirred up and in a passionate appeal, "The Wailing of the Daughter of Judah" he pleads with the Russian public, not so much for political rights, as for social recognition. His appeal is directed to the humane feelings of his Russian neighbors, hoping thereby to influence them favorably to the Jew and through them to secure favorable action in the Committee which was then working out fundamental rules for the legal and civil status of the Jews in the Empire. He dedicated this pamphlet to Count Kotchubey, Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Jewish Committee. It is said that this pamphlet had its desired effect, in that it was instrumental in bringing about the few reforms which were laid down in the famous En-



actment of the Legislation Concerning the Jews (1804). Nevachovitch's hope, however, of gaining social and patrial recognition for the Jews did not materialize, since the Enactment of 1804 leaves the Jews in practically the same legal and social status. Unable to conquer, Nevachovitch foresees his camp and turns to baptism for the realization of his cherished dream, social recognition. He adopted Christianity around 1809 in the Lutheran Church and assumed the name of Lev Alexandrovitch Nevachovitch. From now on we hear nothing of him in connection with Jewish activities. He devotes himself entirely to Russian journalism and becomes quite a prominent Russian journalist and playwright. He wrote "Man in Nature", "Remarks on the Review of a Book on Russian History by Elagin"; he translated Herder's "Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte," etc. Of his plays the most known are "The Silhouette or Spartans of the 18th Century" and "The Sword of Justice". Both were successfully staged in St. Petersburg.

Nevachovitch died August 1st, 1831, and was buried in the Lutheran cemetery. He left two sons, Alexander, an able dramatist, and Michael, a famous cartoonist and the publisher of the first Russian humorous paper. Nevachovitch's daughter was the mother of the famous scientist Metchinkov, who died recently in Paris.

#### "The Wailing of the Daughter of Judah" - a Critical Review.

In reality this work consists of three separate books: "The Wailing of the Daughter of Judah," "A Discourse Between Intolerance, Truth, and Tolerance and Peace," and "The Sentiments of a Loyal Subject on the Occasion of Establishing by an Imperial Decree of the Committee for the Amelioration of the Jews." The three

books, however, are so closely interwoven by unity of purpose that they may be regarded as one. Appearing as they did in 1803, they had one aim, to appeal to the humane feelings of the Russian people, to remind them that the Jews are deprived of political and civil rights, and mainly to impress them with the idea that the Jew be regarded as a compatriot.

The book begins in the following words: "What ails thee, oh, daughter of Jacob? What is denied thee? Proclaim! Dost thou not perceive the same sun as other peoples? Dost thou not tread the same golden earth as others? Dost thou not enjoy the same air, the same life, the same communal life as other inhabitants of the hemisphere of the earth? Announce! "Alas, no! Not this troubles me," weeps the daughter of Jacob. "Wee is me! I am fallen in spirit, I am downtrodden, I am deprived of those ~~ties~~ <sup>joys</sup> which are enjoyed by the other inhabitants; I know not myself!" In this strain the author goes on bewailing particularly the social ostracism of the Jew. At times he pleads, at times he reasons and at times he even admonishes. "What is," asks the author, "the cause of hatred among the children of one God, living together under the protection of one tear? Surely it is not the difference in their faith, for little children, no matter of what different faiths their fathers are, play together until they're separated later on by their parents and put in hostile camps. And again, everybody loves the truth, even the scoundrel is enraged by wrong done to him. Yet we keep away from truth. Why?! Because of our prejudices, wrong sentiments and false views which we form about things before we judge them with out mind. The prejudices eclipse our reason, and our path to truth is obstructed. When it is a matter of accusing somebody, the truth demands a full and thorough investigation by reason,

especially if the fate of a whole nation is in the balance. You cannot form your judgment upon what so and so said or wrote; you must investigate with your own mind.

The Jews are hated and persecuted, the very name Jew brings forth contempt. Why? Because you have heard and read about the wrongs of this people. But hasten not with your judgment. You cannot trust the histories of the nations, for they do not always tell the truth. Did they not teach of false gods and wrong cults, and why do they contradict each other in their accusations of the Jews, thus some accuse them of witchcraft, others of infidelity, still others of ritual murder, etc." Here the author relates the horrible suffering of the Jews in Poland, before they were "fortunate" (the quotation marks are my own) to come under the protection of Russia. He then pleads that the Christians should regard the Jew in the right light, that instead of looking for the Jew in the man, they should look for the man in the Jew and they will be sure to find many a good man among the Jews. Of course, says the author, there are also bad Jews, but then there are also bad Christians, and furthermore are not the Christians themselves through their persecution and oppression of the Jew responsible for many of his shortcomings? It is true that each people has its peculiar characteristics, its peculiar morals and moral tendencies, but these, the author contends, are not born with men, but are rather due to physical environment, training, etc. Hence, even if we should concede that the Jews have their own peculiarities, it cannot be denied that these were obtained through the circumstances of the ages and can be changed. Nor is the Jewish religion dangerous to the welfare of the state, as is proven by the fact that its

practice is not forbidden in all powerful and prosperous countries. In this connection he points out the main essentials of Judaism: that every man can and should attain perfection; that the Jews are to pray for the wellbeing of the ~~tear~~ <sup>land</sup>; that the law of the land must be obeyed, etc.

The pamphlet is concluded with a passionate appeal in which the suffering of being ostracized and held in contempt is strongly portrayed. The author points to the tendency of the time which is to draw the peoples nearer to one another, yet the Jewish people is despised and held in contempt.

This in brief is the content of "The Wailing of the Daughter of Judah." It is written in splendid language, good style and makes a powerful appeal. It is worth noticing that in this pamphlet Nevachovitch expresses himself against baptism as a means to achieve equality with the non-Jewish population. Thus we read: "Oh, Christians, ye who pride yourselves as kind and merciful, have pity on us, turn to us your noble hearts! If we should abandon our faith in order to get equal rights, would that make us worthy of them? " But Nevachovitch had apparently been unable to withstand the strain of the struggle <sup>and</sup> chose the course of the weakling.

In 1804, Nevachovitch himself translated this pamphlet into Hebrew, entitling it "Kol Shawath Bath Yehudah." He dedicated it to his friends and coworkers in the interests of the Jews, Peretz and Notkin, but on all the copies which have been preserved the dedication to Peretz does not appear and it is thought that the page in which the reference to Peretz is made had been destroyed after the latter had been converted into Christianity. Of the Russian original there is only one copy in existence to-day, it is

found in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg.

## CHAPTER 2.

### Other Prominent Writers of the Period and Their Works.

Strange to say that the example of Nevachovitch to write in Russian found no followers during his life time (died Aug. 1, 1831), and in fact for almost a decade of years after his death. It is hard to find an explanation for this blank page in the history of the Russo-Jewish literature. Surely there were the same causes which prompted Nevachovitch to write; there were also men with a knowledge of Russian and literary abilities, as Naftali Herz Schulman, I. B. Levinson, Ryndzinsky and others. It is possible that the disappointment of Nevachovitch who had hoped with his writing to turn the heart of the Russian to the Jew, had served as a discouraging example to others, or perhaps the approaching Napoleonic invasion of Russia and the consequent reactionary change of Alexander made the discussion of the Jewish problem out of question. All this can be conjectured at, the absolute truth remains a puzzle to us. It is possible that a search through the Russian press of the time would reveal to us some Russo-Jewish writings, but this is out of the question in our present work. We shall, however, mention a reference or two to a couple of writings, which have come to our attention in the course of our reading. One of these references is to a Russian work supposed to have been written by Naftali Herz Schulman and of which mention is made in S.I. Finn's

history of the Vilna congregation. Naftali Herz Schulman was born in Stary Bykhov and died around 1830 in Amsterdam, to which city he fled because of political unreliability. He lived for many years in Schklov and is known to have possessed a thorough knowledge of the Russian language. In the preface to his book, Schulman makes mention of a Hebrew-Russian dictionary which he was preparing for the press. In 1806 he wrote a Hebrew poem with a Russian and German translations, in honor of the birth of the Princess Elizabeth Alexandrovna. The other two references we have are not to Russian writings, but to Russian grammars in the Hebrew language and are important to us only in so far as to show that the Russian language was not unknown to some individual Jews. One such Russian grammar in the Hebrew language, "Yesodey Leshon Russia" was written by I. R. Levinson in 1820, but was not published. Another such work "Talmud Leshon Russia", Vilna, 1825 was written by R. Ryndzunsky. These few and vague references comprise, as far as we know, all attempts at Russian writings up to the forties, except for the work of the convert Asher Temkin, which appeared in 1835 and which is typical of the new policy towards the Jews inaugurated by Alexander I in the latter years of his reign and pursued by his follower Nicholas I. This was the policy of saving the Jews, and naturally the Russian people, by bringing the former into the folds of the Christian Church. Temkin was not only one of the "saved" souls, but also a "saver" of souls, and with this end in view he wrote his work against Judaism and the Jews.

Temkin was born in Mahilev on the Dnieper where he did some small trading. He adopted Christianity in 1832 and seems to have set out on his mission to "open the eyes" of his former corelig-

ionists to the truth of his new faith. He wrote his book in both Russian and Hebrew, entitling it "A Clear Road to the Knowledge of the True Faith" ("Pute Ochishchenny K Posnaniou Eastinnoy Very"), and in Hebrew דרך בלולה לידעת אמיתיות האמונה, הוכררה בספרי הקודש וספרו של המלסודיים וספרי הקבלה על ידי אחד מילדי העברים ושמו אשר זעקמן להיפטר לבנה בני אדם בשנה הקצה

Temkin submitted his work to the government which called upon the famous Russian theologian and hebraist Pavsky, a member of the Committee on Censorship in the St. Petersburg Theological Seminary to revise it. The latter who was not favorably inclined to the Jews approved this work and after it had been published by the Academy of Science, had copies of the work sent to every church and had them spread among the people.

The book, on the whole, produces an effect of sincerity. There is that sort of pious enthusiasm and shortness of vision which are characteristic of a convinced recent convert. The author's object is to prove the truth of Christianity and he proceeds in a polemical manner, quoting the Bible, Talmud and Kabbalah, arguing his case and refuting the arguments of others. The book contains an introduction, five Chapters, a letter to the Jews, an appendix, and a prayer that God open the eyes of the people that he once chose that they may see the truth and thus come to recognize the true Messiah.

In his introduction the author speaks of his perplexities of mind in the search for the true religion and how he set out to study the old writings, had traveled and met many great rabbis with whom he discussed points in the Talmud and Kabbalah. The extensive knowledge gained and his wide experience bring him to the conclusion that both Jew and Christian base their religion on the

prophetic writings and disagree only in the interpretation of the same, the Jew maintaining that the Messiah has not yet come. But this, the author says, offers no ground for antagonism between the two. As long as both love God, there can be no hostility between Jew and Christian. The truth is that his hatred was and is stirred up by people that fear not God. These people, out of personal gain, wrote many books, such as the Talmud, which pervert the true meaning of the Scripture. To prove this point the author promises to cite a few examples, but only a few, for the book must be brief and, besides, it is intended for educated people. This concludes the introduction, and now comes the body of the book with its five Chapters.

#### Chapter I: A Discussion on Man in His Rank of Creation.

The author takes Genesis 1,2,3, and explains why, about all animals it says "let the earth produce them," while about man it says "and God created him out of dust and breathed the breath of life into him." He refutes the explanation of the rabbis that "Let us create man in our image" were the words of Moses and not of God, for, says he, what will you do with Gen. 9:6 "Whoever sheds blood...for man is created in the image of God." He thus carries on his discussion, concluding that man supersedes other animals in that in addition to all the elements and organs which man possesses in common with all other creatures, he has the power of thinking, of word, and action, and it is in reference to these that God said, "Let us create...after our image."

Chapter II: Man's falling away from God and his Worshiping of Stars and Planets.



Adam and the first tribes knew the effect of the stars and planets on the earth, and therefore, when they began to spread, each of them found out for himself how to appease that star which dominated his territory. They did not forsake God, but served the planets, so that through their medium the blessings and goodness of God be poured out on them. Hence they made images of them and appointed priests. But in course of time God was forgotten and the earth became corrupt. This is followed by the flood from which only Noah was saved. Two thousand years later, Abraham came and taught the knowledge of God, but that his descendants do not become corrupt they serve in Egypt, and when they turned to God for help, He sent them a saviour, Moses. But the Jews go wrong again and worship idols and every time they do so a prophet appears and points out to them their evil way. Finally God said to Isaiah that His spirit will come down on a Messiah that will be born of His holy spirit and he will correct the people's hearts. But the Jews say that this is reference to a Messiah to come, and the author is going to prove from the very Talmud that the Messiah has come. Temkin then goes on to show in the next Chapter that the law and language were forgotten, but the Talmudists invented their own interpretation of the Torah, giving it new meanings; this was augmented by the fact that they wanted to show each other their subtlety and wisdom. Cites Megilah 15a to prove that the Talmudic writers did not know Hebrew. He also accuses the rabbis of having tampered with the writings of the prophets, for originally there was no printing, and the rabbis as the scribes changed the text. In his next Chapter, Temkin makes direct attacks on the Talmud. Thus he points to a statement in the Talmud

wherein it says that the world was created for the Jews only and that the Jews alone will be rewarded for doing God's word and punished for disobeying it, yet the Talmud says that the descendant of Noah is to be killed, even if he steals less than a Sheleg. Temkin also takes up Talmudic arguments against the belief in Jesus and refutes them. Thus Dt.13:2f. he interprets to mean a prophet who wants to divert the people from God to idolatry, but Jesus brought idolators to God. He concludes this Chapter with an appeal to the Christians that they should not hate the Jews who are blinded by their Talmudists, for as the prophet had said: "May be they will see with their eyes and will turn and be cured." In his last Chapter, Temkin points out that God gave man reason so that he should choose for himself and that therefore a man should not say that if his parents who were wiser lived in the same religion, why should he change it. He also discusses the abrogations by Christianity of such fundamental laws as circumcision and the Sabbath and argues that the purpose of circumcision was the cleansing of the body, but this object is attained now through baptism. He supports his arguments in regard to baptism by Ez.36:25, "And I will sprinkle upon you clean water, and ye shall be clean..." He concludes this Chapter with saying that God who knows the secrets of man's heart knows that everything that was said by him and the opinions he collected, are not the result of hatred and malice to the children of his former belief, but solely because he wishes them good and loves them.

In his letter to the Jews, Temkin emphasizes the importance of reason and says that if you use reason you will surely discard the Talmud which is against reason. He thereby points to several Talmudic forms of argument to show how ridiculous they are. Thus he points to San. 105a which proves that Laban is the same as Reu-

(Nu. 22:5) and the same as Kushan Rishathaim (Ju. 3:8).

In the appendix, Temkin claims to have proved the falsehood of the Talmud and proceeds to quote the prophets, in order to show that all their prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.

A copy of Temkin's book fell into the hands of I.R. Levinson who criticises him severely in his book "Yemin Zidki". He disproves Temkin's arguments and accuses him of wilful misquoting or incomplete quotations and of quoting from books that are not authoritative or written by men of no consequence. Shows that Temkin knew neither Hebrew nor Russian and that he regarded every Kabalistic book such as the Zohar, of the same authority as the Talmud or Mishnah; nor could he distinguish between Halachah and Agada in the Talmud, etc.

Temkin's attack on the Talmud seems to have greatly influenced the government, especially in connection with its Christianising plans. It appealed especially strong to Oubarov, the then Minister of Education, who zealously set out to eliminate the use and study of the Talmud among the Jews and to weaken its firm and authoritative hold on the Jews. With this end in view, he embarked upon the preparation of a plan for crown schools for Jewish children, from which the Talmud be banished and displaced by the study of Hebrew, Russian, and other secular studies. The schools were opened in 1843 under the supervision of Christian principals and Christian teachers. They were a flat failure, since the Jews suspected their baptising mission and kept their children out of them. In the course of time, However, the original object of Oubarov was forgotten and the schools under Jewish principals and with the Jewish teachers became of great benefit to the Jews.

Beginning with the forties, Russo-Jewish literature becomes an established institution. It begins to appear more frequently and from the pen of a number of writers. The most of these writings appeared in the Russian daily press and periodicals, and hence some of them remained unaccessible to us; however, the works included in this treatise will suffice to convey to the reader an idea of the character and object of the Russo-Jewish literature of this period. Of the writers treated, Mandelstam and Rabinovitch belong to this period and to the period treated in the next book. I shall, therefore, confine myself in this place to their early writings, leaving the study of their lives and general literary activity to the next book.

While a student in the University of Moscow, in 1840, Mandelstam published a collection of poems in the Russian language; the most of these were based on some Biblical subject and were originally written in Hebrew. They are poor in style and present nothing of literary value. Between 1846 and the early fifties he published a number of textbooks. "Extracts from Maimonides," a Hebrew alphabet with grammatical exercises, a German translation of the Bible, etc. which were to be used in the Crown Schools for Jews. In 1854 he wrote: "A History of Hebrew Legislation" which appeared in the Report of the Ministry of Public Education for the year 1854. An extract of the first part of this work, entitled "The Hebrew Kingdom" appears in Yevreiskaya Biblioteka, v.1. This is a dissertation after Biblical sources of the government institutions of the old Hebrew world in the form in which they existed during the Biblical period.

The work is divided into thirteen chapters. The first Chapter treats of the freedom of the land and person. The land belongs to God, hence cannot be sold. Slavery is not permitted, for God is the only ruler, hence one cannot sell even his own freedom. The author then points to the superiority of the political philosophy of Moses. The latter refutes the idea that the well being of a country depends on conquests. Does not believe in a central administration; the Bible demands unity of the law, but allows each tribe to execute it in its own way. Similarly, the Jews had no standing armies, although they had military training. Moses taught that there be a reciprocal obligation on the part of the governing and governed, not the despotic rule of a monarch.

The second Chapter treats of primitive society- and advances the thought that the idea of unity of people appeared simultaneously with the division into tribes, clans, etc.

The third Chapter treats of the rights of the tribes, which are the rights of defense and vengeance.

The next two Chapters speak of the rights of the members of the tribe to be judged by their elders, and of the right to bring sacrifices in any place, even after the temple at Jerusalem had been built.

Chapter six treats of the right to select military commanders and kings and to act as council to the king.

The seventh Chapter treats of man's inherent right to the soil, and here Mandelstam makes an interesting point. He says that the reason why the Jews turned away from tilling the soil is not that the tilling in itself was loathsome to the Jew, but because the tilling of the soil ordinarily goes hand in hand with feudalism and slavery.

The next five Chapters treat of the rights of women, young men, aliens, slaves, and the Levites and the priests. Women, he says, had all the rights of man, except the right of defense, in which case she was protected by the husband, or father. Young men (Negarim) were those below twenty; they had no rights and were under the protection of their parents. Aliens had all the essential rights of natives and in addition were to be given special protection, the same as the widow and orphan. As to slaves, they were not to be regarded as chattels, but as owned human beings, hence the master had no right to injure or kill them. When freed a slave could be admitted into the community.

In the last Chapter, the author speaks of the communal organization of the Jews. Each community selected ten elders who comprised an assembly of jurymen and met in the market place to conduct their official business.

#### Bernard Bertelson.

Born 1815 in Nikolayev (Cherson), died 1871, in Odessa. He received his early education in the Jewish school of Odessa. Studied medicine at the University of Charkov, but dropped his studies and devoted himself to literary and educational activities. He served as a member of the city magistrat of Odessa for 28 years. He contributed to the Odessky Vestnik, to the Razevet, Zion, and Dem. In 1842 he translated into Russian L. Phillips's "Maranós."

#### Abraham Solomonov.

Solomonov was born in Minsk, November 18, 1778. While a boy he studied secretly the Russian and Polish languages. At the age

of 22 he was already court interpreter from Hebrew into Russian and Polish. From 1814 to 1820 he served as bürgermeister of Minsk, to which office he was elected. Later on he served as secretary and interpreter to the Jewish deputies in Petersburg, and in this capacity he had the opportunity to convince himself that the government program for secular education for the Jewish youth found no response among the Jews. He, therefore, published in 1844 in Vilna his "Thoughts of an Israelite" (*Mysli Izrail'tyanina*) in which he tries to convince his brethren that the Talmud and all other rabbinical writings urge and encourage the study of languages and secular sciences. The book is dedicated to Israel Gordon, rabbi of Vilna. It contains a Hebrew preface and two parts. In the preface the author explains his reasons for writing the book in Russian: (1) "that the nations should be able to appreciate the value of the Talmud, and (2) that the Jews may know what caused the government to deal with them harshly. He then goes on in the first part of the book tracing the historical appearance of the Jews in Europe, their wandering from land to land, their status in the different lands, until he gets to Russia, and here he takes up a discussion of the Enactment of 1804, defending it and saying that if the Jews had confidence in the government and had availed themselves of the opportunities offered by the Enactment, such as education and agriculture, their condition would have been much improved. He then goes on to show from the Scriptures, Talmud and the sayings of the sages that labor as well as secular education are to be encouraged. He then urges the Jews to discard their traditional garments, which he says were not Jewish originally and furthermore shows from the Talmud that the Jew should follow the

customs of the land in which they live. He also urges the cutting of the earlocks, the uncovering of the head, etc. In the second part, the author traces the beginnings of Christianity and shows the indebtedness of Judaism to it, since it helped to exterminate idolatry. He expounds Christianity in detail, and says that his object in doing it is to wipe out the prejudices which exist as a result of ignorance. He urges that the Jews fraternize with the people among whom they live and shows from the holy writings that this is the purpose of God. In general, he blames the Jews for the various disabilities; advocates assimilation, and advises not to discuss religion with non-Jews and to abstain from proselytising. Tells the Jews that the government wants to see them a part of the nation, not a separate group.

Emanuel (Menachim Mendel) Levin.

Wrote a grammar of the Russian language in Hebrew. Published in Vilna, 1846. (See Book 2, Ch. 3, also Book 3, Ch. 2.)

Osip Rabinovitch.

His first work, a Russian translation of Eichenbaum's Hebrew poem Hakrav, appeared in 1847. The same year he wrote in the Odesky Vestnik, "The New Jewish Synagogue in Odessa," in which article he urges religious reforms and ridicules the superstitious life of the Jews. This aroused the fanatics against him. In 1848 he wrote again in the Odesky Vestnik, "On the Occasion of a Good Word" in which he commented upon the friendly article: "The Past and Present Conditions of the Jews in Europe," which appeared in the Illustratsia



and was written by its editor Rashutsky. Rabinovitch hailed this as a new epoch in Russian journalism, when the educated and well meaning writers begin to speak of the Jew in an unbiased manner. This article gives Rabinovitch great popularity among the Jews, for it shows his intense Jewish heart and his attachment to them. The same year and in the same paper appeared his, "Of this and that and Other Things," in which Rabinovitch again appeared as the advocate of his people. The following year (1849) the Russian magazine Literatournye Vetchera (Literary Evenings) began to appear in Odessa, and Rabinovitch placed there his story: "The History of the Mercantile House of Firlitch and Company." In the year following (1850) and in the second volume of this magazine, appeared Rabinovitch's second story: "Moritz Safordi". Neither of these stories have anything distinctly Jewish about them, except perhaps for the Jewish names of the main characters. In fact the life which is pictured in these stories and their characters could have hardly been true of the Russian Jew of that remote time. But the reader will judge for himself from the account of the two stories.

Firlitch had been for many years an agent (makler) for grain brokers. He finally opens a commission house of his own in partnership with a Frenchman who acted as bookkeeper. Being a man of means he married a young and beautiful woman whose love he bought with his wealth. His wife also works in the office of his Commission house and pretty soon a romance begins between her and the Frenchman. Firlitch becomes suspicious, and to convince himself he manages to slip a note in his wife's cash box in which she is supposed to be asked by the Frenchman to meet him in front of the theater. Firlitch himself goes to the broker's exchange, which is across the

street from the theater and from there watches for developments. In the meantime news comes from abroad that a certain bill was not passed in the English Parliament, and as a result the grain dealers that bought large shipments of grain, among them Firlitch, lose their money. At this very moment, Firlitch looks out of the window and sees his wife waiting in front of the theater. He gets a shock and falls to the ground, but the people<sup>think</sup> that the bad news about his financial losses caused the shock. Firlitch goes insane. His business is put in the hands of a receiver. His wife advertises for a position as governess, while the Frenchman goes to Bucharest where he opens a rich hotel.

In "Moritz Sefardi", the author pictures the character of a young man, Moritz Sefardi, a German Jew living in Odessa, who has one ambition and that is to get rich. By stealing the business secrets of his employer he makes much money, and now that he is wealthy he forgets the old tailor Henach at whose house he lived and also Henach's girl whom he once loved. Pretty soon, however, he finds out that there is no happiness in wealth. He wants to forget the present and at least once experience the quiet joy of the tailor Henach, or of the merry coachmen Andrey Shegol, that used to drive him around. A voice, however, tells him that while he was a wise and clever businessman, he never thought of being a man. He loved noone and sought noone's love; what right then has he to wish for happiness.

Fadey Berezkin.

He wrote in Russian for Russian papers. In 1852 his article "The Maraites in the Crimea" appeared in the Severnaya Pchala. In

1854 he published his "Jewish Colonies" in the journal of the Ministry of the Royal Possessions. In 1863 he translated Levinson's "Taar Hasofer".

#### Isaac Chatskin.

In 1852 he wrote in Rusky Vestnik: "Illustratsia and the Question of Increasing the Civil Rights of the Jews." This article was intended against the antisemitic article of Zotov, the editor of the Illustratsia.

This concludes our first book. A word or two may be said about the general characteristics of the writings of this period, and in this respect reference should be made to Solomonov's "Thoughts of an Israelite", which states in plain language the ideas of the author, the object sought and the method pursued. The writers of this period, like their brethern in Western Europe, see Israel's hope in assimilation. Their prime object then is to preach assimilation, but here they meet with an impregnable wall, a compact segregated mass of their people, who because of their political disabilities and the hostility of their neighbors, find it unsafe to remove the wall of separation. Furthermore, the Russian language is entirely strange to these people, and an appeal in this language must necessarily fall on deaf ears. What was the idea then of the Russo-Jewish writers of this period to write in Russian? The answer to this can be found in Solomonov's booklet, namely, that the nations should be able to appreciate, as he said, the value of the Talmud, and secondly, but this needs an interpretation in the light of the historical events, not "that our brethern may know what caused the govern-

ment to judge the Jews harshly" as explained by Solomonov, for he knows well enough that his book will not be read by his brethren who know not the language, but rather that the government may know what an "enlightened" Jew and his ideas are like, that he yearns to become a part of the people, to throw off everything which separates him out as a separate group, etc.; hence the government should do its utmost to spread "enlightenment" among the Jews and to imbue them with the spirit of the Russian culture. This seems to have been the purpose of the writers of this period, to try to influence the government and the Russian Public, but not the Jews, in whose vineyards they did not work. In a word, the Russo-Jewish writers of this period did not write for the Jews. A further characteristic of this literature is that it does not contain any comprehensive works and consists in the main of articles in the Russian daily press and periodicals, and of some pamphlets and booklets. Nor are the writings scientific in nature, but rather of expository and polemical form.

## Book II.

## The Maturing Years of Russo-Jewish Literature (1855-1881).

## Chapter I.

## The Period of Transition, 1855-1860.

The last years of Nicholas I's reign were not conducive to writing on Jewish questions. The autocratic manner of Nicholas I in trying to reform the inner life of the Jews, at the time when politically they were left in the same hopeless state as before, or even worse because of new restrictions; the establishment of the institution of "Catchers" (the power given to the agents of the Kahale to catch Jewish young men and even tender boys and force them into the army, thus providing the quota of recruits required from the Jews); the Crimean war, and finally the strong hand of the censor, all these causes made the treatment of Jewish problems at this time out of the question. Had these conditions remained longer, Russo-Jewish literature would have been so paralyzed that a big gap would have been formed with no hope of ever bridging it, except by a new beginning. Fortunately the reign of Nicholas

came to an end and the throne was ascended by the liberal minded Alexander II. This brought new life into the country at large and to the Jews particularly. The heralded liberalism of Alexander and the hoped for reforms and improvements in the condition of the Jews brought forth to the front the Jewish leaders and spokesmen, who resume their suspended work with new vigour and force. Similarly they begin to preceive new ideas and to pursue new methods. The old idea of writing for the government and the Russian people does not satisfy them any longer. They feel that they have a greater duty to perform, to serve those large numbers of their brethren who have acquired a knowledge of the Russian language in the Crown Schools for Jews, in the Rabbinical Seminaries, and in the secular schools of the Empire. These were eager to read and express themselves in Russian. Furthermore, it was felt that these forces should be organized, so as to reach through them the large masses of the people and at the same time present a solid front to their slanderers and the government, in the efforts to secure political equality for the Jews. These new ideas dominated ~~in~~ the minds of Osip Rabinovitch, Mandelstam, Tarnopol, Levanda and others; the seeds for a new epoch are being planted by them. In addition, a new situation had arisen; the Jewish question became the question of the day in the Russian press. The Jewish writers were called upon to write on various phases of Judaism and the Jews, or to reply to articles on kindred subjects written by non-Jews. But a polemic conducted from the pages of strangers, and sometimes unsympathetic strangers, is not only unpleasant but unsuccessful and of no consequence. A need is immediately felt for a special Jewish publication in the Russian language, an idea conceived simultaneously by two important writers of the time, Rabinovitch and Levanda, but brought into

realization by the former. The Razsvet now appears and a new era begins in the history of the Russo-Jewish literature. Thus the years from 1855 to 1860 were important for their preparative work, for sowing the seeds of the rich period which was to follow. We shall now proceed to the study of the literature of this period, leaving the treatment of the different periodicals for a special Chapter in Book III.

## Chapter II.

Russo-Jewish Literature from the Appearance of the Razsvet (1860) to 1881.

The literature of this period may be characterised as a literature that has reached maturity, one that has come to stay. It serves a certain end, meets a crying demand, and is no longer unnatural. As said above, there is now a goodly number of Jews who possess a knowledge of Russian, and as time goes on and the Jews, owing to the "winking" policy of the government of Alexander II, penetrate more and more into the interior of Russia, this number of Russian speaking Jews keeps on increasing and Russo-Jewish literature becomes a necessity, not merely a luxury, at least to a certain number of Jews. The character of the literature also changes; it no longer consists of mere articles scattered thorough the Russian daily press, or of small pamphlets and booklets, but assumes the appearance and nature of a full grown literature, embodying literary works of all branches, such as scientific, belletristic, expository, etc. Many of these

works are published in big volumes and find a good market. In a word, from a literature of a mere handful of Russianized Jews it gradually grows into a literature of a whole people, or at least of the representative classes of a whole people. The purpose of this literature is twofold in character; on the one hand it takes upon itself to defend the Jews from outside attacks and slander, and in doing so it no more appeals to the emotions and sentiments of the adversary, but presents scientific and learned elucidations on everything pertaining to the Jews and Judaism. On the other hand, this literature seeks to deal with the Jewish problem from within; it tries to educate, reform and modernise the life of the Jew and thus make him eligible for civil rights. In this latter motive, however, not all writers are in agreement. The majority and the most prolific of them maintain that the Jew is entitled to political and civil rights irrespective of his educational and cultural standard; in fact they condition his education and modernisation upon his political equality. The minority, however, those who believe that a people can be born in one day, agreed with the government that the Jew cannot enjoy all privileges of a citizen until he has made himself fit for it. Their motive then in educating and reforming the Jew was to make him eligible for political equality. This characterizes the Russo-Jewish writers and their works of this period.

### CHapter III.

The Most Important Writers of this Period, Their Lives and Works.

Among the more important writers of this period a place of prom-



inence most be given to Osip Rabinovitch, the pioneer writer, the most proficient and prolific; the poet, the critic and the novelist; the man of a rich and adventurous literary career.

Osip Rabinovitch was born January 26, 1817 in a small town of Koveliki, Poltava. His father Aaron was a farmer of liquor taxes, a profitable occupation at that time. His business brought Aaron Rabinovitch in touch with government officials, with educated nobility, with Russian merchants and other classes of the Christian population. Naturally his views on life were broader than those of his brethren who lived in seclusion and without a ray of light. He was more cosmopolitan and hence more liberal. He saw in the ignorance and fanaticism of his brethren the root of their misfortune and was determined to give his son a liberal education. Being financially independent, Aaron Rabinovitch could well afford to disregard the derision of his fanatical coreligionists and gave his son a good private training in languages and sciences, with Mayer Emden as his Hebrew tutor. From his very early youth Osip Rabinovitch displayed a passionate love for reading and had a particular fancy for law books. Contrary to the liberal views of his father and his own modern ideas, he married rather early, at the age of eighteen. At the age of twenty-three he left his home and entered the University of Charkov. In spite of his passionate love for law he entered the medical department, since the practice of law offered no career to a Jew at that time, while the financial losses suffered by his father demanded that he choose a profitable career. But Rabinovitch was not destined to become a physician, for conditions at home required his presence and assistance. He, therefore, left the University, returned home and engaged in the business of his father. In

1845 he moved to Odessa where he entered the office of a prominent law firm, and at the end of one year was qualified as special pleader at the Court of Commerce. He opened his own office and soon had a large clientele. In 1848 he was granted the license of a notary public (a rather important office in Russia) and from then on began to prosper as a prominent and high paid lawyer. But in spite of his big practice, Rabinovitch embarked on his literary activities. His first work appeared in 1847; this was a Russian translation, in verse form, of Eichenbaum's Hakrav. He made his debut, however, as a Russo-Jewish writer with an article "The New Jewish Synagogue in Odessa" which appeared the same year in the Odesky Vestnik, in which he denounced the superstitious customs of his brethren in unmeasured terms. This aroused against him the fanatics. The following year he wrote again in the Odesky Vestnik "On the Occasion of a Good Word" and "Of This and That and Other Things," in both of which he steps out as an advocate of his people. In 1849 appeared in the newly established magazine "Literaturnye Vetchera" his first story: "The History of the Mercantile House of Firlitch and Company", which was followed the next year by another story; "Moritz Sefardi" (see p23-4). From 1850 to 1858 only a few articles, of no consequence, appeared in the Odesky Vestnik. This was no time to touch upon the Jewish question in literature (see p27.). In October 1856 Rabinovitch begins his untiring efforts to secure a permit for a Russo-Jewish publication, which is crowned with success four years later (for full account see Book III, P.81-4). In 1858 Rabinovitch resumes his literary activities with an article in the Odesky Vestnik, entitled "About Moshkes and Yoshkes", in which he in a pleasant sarcasm denounces his fellow-Jews for distorting and perverting their

names by adding to them the diminutive endings. He pleads with them to retain their original names, Moshe instead of Moshke, etc. Evidently the author thought that the corrupt form of the Jewish name made it a matter of mockery, not the very fact that the name was Jewish. The author denounces also the Jewish garment and says that it was formerly the dress of the Spaniards, then of the Poles from whom the Jews copied it, hence there is no sanctity about it. The method and form pursued by this article give impetus to the treatment of the Jewish question in Russian journalism in a new spirit, the spirit of humanism and truth. This fair and honest treatment of the Jew arouses the opposition and an antisemitic article appears in the Severnaya Pchela, in which the writer reviews the play "Menachim ben Israel" which was worked over from Spindler's "The Jew", and says that it is not realistic, for the play shows only one side of the question - the persecution of the Jew, but does not show the greediness of the Jew and the fact that the Jew, true to his motto "tooth for tooth", is a bitter enemy of the Christian. Rabinovitch replies to this attack in the Russky Invalid in an article entitled "Antiquated Views in Broad Daylight". This is a very strong defense and comes from a wounded heart. It immediately gave the author recognition among the Jews as their foremost defender. Rabinovitch shows in this article that the Jews had as many philosophers, poets, writers and scholars as those interested in the accumulation of wealth. He also says that "tooth for tooth and eye for eye" is not taken literally by the rabbis; that Judaism does not teach hatred to Christians, and <sup>that</sup> the hatred of Jews for Christians during the Middle Ages was due to the persecutions of the Jews.

His greatest popularity as a man of letters Rabinovitch gained

through the publication of his famous narrative "Shtrafnoy", which appeared in 1859 in the Russky Vestnik. It was well received by both, Jews and non-Jews alike. Although not in Hebrew and hence trefposul, it was read in every Jewish home and even in the synagogue and Yeshiboth. As to its influence upon the non-Jews, some go as far as to ascribe to it the royal decree which freed from military service the punished officers (Shtrafnoys) of the Jewish Kahals. The story made a great impression even abroad and Yost translated it into German and English. There is also a Hebrew translation "בן קנין או חנה קורח ימים עברו" by M. Kovel'sky, Odessa, 1865. It is a poor translation though. The work was also of great literary accomplishment and Levanda (Den 1869) relates of a high Russian official, thought to have been Aksakov, who was surprised when told that the work was not a translation from German, but the original work of a Russian Jew. In his enthusiasm the official exclaimed that since a Jew could become russianized to such an extent, he no longer objects to the emancipation of the Russian Jews.

In this narrative the author gives a vivid description of the life of the Jews under the regime of Nicholas I and the institution of "cantionists" and "catchers". He presents the character of a somewhat enlightened Jew in a certain town, a Jew of means and good reputation. This Jew is elected an elder in the Kahal administration and is forced to perform the unpleasant and heartrending duties of the Kahal, namely to collect the taxes for the government and to furnish the required quota of young men for the army. The pressure of the government upon the Kahal and the heartless procedure of the latter are vividly described. Here the author enters into an apologetic explanation and says that the Jews must and would serve in the

army, but that the condition of the Jewish soldier is unbearable.

Unable to collect the required amount of taxes and to furnish the quota of recruits, the Kahal falls into arrears, until in the end the agents of the government, supported by a troop of soldiers, befall the town, carry off many Jewish males and among them the elders of the Kahal, shave their heads and put them in soldiers' uniforms. The wife of this man dies from the shock, his oldest daughter goes insane and soon dies, while the youngest one is left in the care of old relatives and on reaching womanhood is deceived by a public official, for whose sake she adopted Christianity, but is deserted by him and becomes a prostitute. The news shocks the old father who is still a soldier; he falls sick, during which time he is cared by a couple Jewish soldiers, victims of the "Catchers", but does not recover and dies. On the whole this story is a bitter protest against conditions which actually existed.

Beginning with 1860, the year of the appearance of the Razsvet, Rabinovitch becomes more aggressive. He is unsparing in his criticism of the faults of the Jews, for which he incurs the anger of the Hamagid. He was not, however, revolutionary in his method; on the contrary he was patient with his people, and while denouncing their shortcomings he was the last to agree to forced reform. Thus he strenuously opposed the idea that rabbis (graduates from the Rabbinical Seminaries) be appointed by the government against the will of the congregations. On the other hand he attacks the Russian government and the people for their prejudices against the Jews. In his editorials he is vigorous, persistent and unswerving. But outside of editorials, Rabinovitch published several stories in the Razsvet. Of these "The Inherited Candlestick" is of most importance, for in

it as in Shtrafnoy, the author protests against the unfair treatment of the Jews, in this case against the Pale of Settlement. The author gives a picture of a Jewish sailor, who has served all his life in the royal navy and has even raised a son for the navy. Because of him his wife too is permitted to live in Petersburg, but as soon as he and his son die in the service of the country, his wife and the young wife of his son are expelled from Petersburg and are made to go to the crowded Pale. There is a Hebrew translation of this story called "הסנדרה או ירושה יקרה", by M. Kovelesky, Odessa 1868.

Of his other stories, only "The Story of how Chaim Sholem Traveled from Kishinev to Odessa and What Happened to Him", is Jewish in content, while his "Kaleidoscope" has nothing Jewish about it, except for the Jewish names of two characters, Peretz the organ grinder and the little orphan girl whom he adopted and who wanders with him from place to place performing some gymnastic tricks while he plays the organ. The other characters are Russians whom they meet on their trips. They finally land in Odessa and while there they discover the girl's father, who deserted the little girl's mother many years ago, went to England where he grew rich, but since he was not heard from he was thought to be dead. He now wants his daughter to marry a certain man, but she marries the poor organ grinder.

"The Story of How Chaim Sholem Traveled From Kishinev to Odessa and What Happened to Him" is of a type well familiar to those who have read the Sholem Aleichem stories. The author pictures to us a poor watch-maker, who is as poor as a church mouse, and both he and his wife dream of getting rich. Finally he wins money on his Warsaw lottery ticket. The scene how he is informed by the agent could not

be excelled even by Shal<sup>o</sup>lm Aleichem. He immediately secures money and sets out for Odessa. The description of the coach, the horses, or the lions, as they are called by the coachman; the other passengers; the events on the way - the burning of an axle, the county police and the passport question, all this adds plenty of good humor and depicts beautifully the life of the Jew. Finally Chaim Sholem reaches Odessa where he is met by a representative from the lottery people. This representative gives him a royal reception, traps him to play cards with him and thus takes all his money away. Chaim Sholem fears to go back home and face his wife, he therefore ties a handkerchief around his nose and when he enters the house he tells his wife that he was held up by robbers and lost his nose in his fight for the money. His wife scolds him why he did not give away the money rather than to lose the nose; he then pulls off the handkerchief and says that that is exactly what he did. The author takes occasion to ridicule the Zadik who gave Chaim Sholem his blessing for a lucky journey to Odessa and received in return a watch. The same Zadik received money from Chaim Sholem's wife sometime later and assured her that her husband from whom she had not heard since he left for Odessa, will come home soon with his treasure.

Rabinovitch wrote also a few scientific articles such as "Criminal Courts Among Ancient Hebrews During the Roman Period", which is a treatise on the Sanhedrin, the great and small in Jerusalem, and the Sanhedrin of 23 in every Judean city of not less than 120 inhabitants. He also speaks of the function and constitution of each, of the qualification of its members and the court procedure.

In the Novorossisky Literaturny Sbornik of 1859, Rabinovitch

has an article entitled "Proper Names of the Jews". This is a dissertation of Jewish names in different times and epochs. It is really a genesis of Jewish names beginning with Biblical times to the present day. The author used as a guide Zunz's "Namen der Juden", Leipzig 1839.

The Razsvet lasted one year, and with its end came the end of Rabinovitch's Russo-Jewish literary activities. He continued to write, but those were articles on general political and economic questions. Besides being active as a literary man, Rabinovitch was also active as a public man. Thus he was a member of the Committee which was to work out a new Charter for the City of Odessa. He also served as councilman for a number of years. Rabinovitch died Oct. 28th, 1869, in Meran (Tyrol) where he went to be cured. His body was not brought to Russia. At a memorial held later on in the Odessa City Hall, a portrait of Rabinovitch was hung on the walls of the council room. In 1880 the Odessa society "Trud" published the complete works of Rabinovitch in three volumes.

#### Joachim Tarnopol.

Joachim Tarnopol was born in Odessa in 1810; he died in the city of his birth at the age of ninety, January 7th, 1900. He was co-editor of the Razsvet; in fact it is said that it was mainly through his efforts that the permit for the publication of the periodical was granted. His connection with the Razsvet, however, was but brief, only to #20. The periodical Budushchnost of 1900, v.2 says that Tarnopol was co-editor of Razsvet up to #23. It is not known what strained the relations between him and Rabinovitch, although it



is claimed that they disagreed in regard to the policy which the Razevet was to pursue, namely, that Rabinovitch believed in urging education upon the Jews as the only means of solving the Jewish question, while Tarnopol maintained that the policy of the Razevet should be to demand from the government political equality for the Jews. This claim is only a guess and a wrong one at that, for it is well known that Rabinovitch was the most aggressive fighter for the rights of the Jews, and it was largely due to this very fact that the government began to look unfavorably upon the Razevet. At any rate, it is known for certain that the two did not part as friends. In a letter written to a certain Mr. Rosenthal in St. Petersburg, Rabinovitch refers to Tarnopol as an ignoramus and scoundrel. 26X,483

Tarnopol began his literary career in 1855 with a pamphlet in French, entitled "Notices Historiques et Caractéristiques sur les Israélites d'Odesse, Précédées d'Un Aperçu Général sur l'Etat du Peuple Israelite en Russie". In 1858 he wrote "O Bednom Soelovii Russkich Yevreyev" (The Poor Classes Among the Russian Jews). This work is not found in the New York Library and no account of it can be given. The same year Tarnopol wrote his big work "Opit Sovremennoi Osmotritelnoi Reformy v Oblasti Yudaizma v Rossii" (Experiment of Modern Reform of Judaism in Russia). This book, because of difficulties with the censor was not published till 1868. This is a very comprehensive work and in it the author lays down a detailed program for the reformation of the life of the Russian Jew in all its phases, beginning with the spiritual and educational fields and ending with their occupational and domestic life. The author has also a chapter in the defense of the Talmud and in the defense

of the Jews against the slanderous attacks and unjustified accusations. The book is full of interest and we shall give a brief summary of its contents.

In his preface Tarnopol states that his purpose is first to present the Russian Jews as they are, with their faults and virtues, and secondly to draw a parallel between them and their brethren in Western Europe and point out how they could catch up with the latter. As to religious reform, he says that he would not encroach upon the tradition of old but would try to eliminate the non-Jewish practices which are the result of the ages of persecution. The author then begins in Chapter one his program for reform in matters spiritual. He advocates that the rabbis should possess not only a Hebrew and Rabbinical education, but also a good general education. His duty should be to instruct in the real essence of religion, such as morals, love for the neighbor, etc., and not merely in the ritual. He should be able to preach and preferably in the Russian language; should teach the duties of citizenship as expressed in the Bible, Talmud, etc. He then recommends a better form of worship; the noise and gestures must be abolished, and the traditional chanting should be substituted by a more harmonious singing. The author then discusses the educational question of the Jews; he recommends that the principals and teachers in the Crown Schools for Jews be Jews; that the religious instructions of the Jews should consist of a study of the principles of Judaism, and of the Jew's duty to his God, to his king and to his country. In his next discussion of public or communal matters he touches upon the need of a Russo-Jewish periodical ( it must be remembered that this was written in 1858) and it

is interesting to note what he says about it. The journal, he says, is to assist the correction of the Jews and to show that this is possible only then when it will go hand in hand with the improvement of their civic condition. Such a paper would serve as a center for all elements of Russian Jewry and would assist to bring about a closer relationship with the non-Jewish population. He then speaks of the causes of poverty among the Jews and ascribes it to early marriages, to absence of agricultural occupation, etc. In speaking of the education of women, Tarnopol says that its neglect among the Jews is due to the influence of the peoples among whom they lived, but he also ascribes it to other causes. He denounces the dowry custom and advises that the Jewish girls be rather brought up to be a helpmate to the husband and have qualities which should replace the dowry. The author then takes up the accusations against the Talmud and against the Jews and shows that they have no foundation. He concludes his book with a very interesting chapter in which he explains the purpose of his work, which he says is to bring the Jews and the Russians closer together. "We must", he says, "emancipate ourselves innerly; we must throw off the old and outgrown and strive to become worthy of external, civil emancipation. There must be a conciliation between the Jews and the Russians which would call forth in both the same social views and aspirations, would work so that each in the sphere of inner religious life should remain true to himself and his convictions, and outside of this sphere as members of one great family they would reveal the same civil feelings, would pursue the same mental, moral and social aims, would show the same spirit and zeal in matters of culture, science and

industry. The author then makes a passionate appeal to the Russians, especially the journalists and leaders, that they take up the cause of the Jews, for the welfare of the Jews means also the public welfare. He then assures them that the Jews cannot and do not want to be an independent nation, and their dream of Messiah is not the dream to go back to Palestine, but the dream of the universal brotherhood of men. On the other hand, the author appeals to the Jews that they should follow the example of their Western brethren who are good Jews even though they threw off the shackles of the ages of darkness, and took to education and modern civilization.

In 1871 the author published a French translation of this work in an abridged form, entitling it "Réflexions sur l'état religieux, politique et social des israélites russes." The same year appeared in the Vestnik Russkikh Yevreyev Tarnopol's article "Spinoza and Spinozism", the title of which explains the contents.

Lev (Leo) Mandelstam.

Lev Mandelstam was born in 1819, in the town of Novye Zhagory, Kovno. His father had German influences due to his frequent travels to Germany on business, and although a Talmudist and a strictly observant Jew, he gave his son a liberal education. His library, which contained such books as Mendelssohn's translation of the Bible, works in the newly revived Hebrew literature and even German books, offered the young Mandelstam a splendid fountain from which to draw the living waters of enlightened Judaism. But in spite of this liberal spirit of the old Mandelstam, he married his son at the early age of seventeen. By the terms of the marriage contract young Mandelstam was to live, according to the custom of the time, in the house

of his father in law, in Keidany, and at the expense of the latter. But his father in law proved to be a fanatic and a bitter opponent of everything modern. He, therefore, persecuted his apostate son in law for studying anything but the Talmud and made life miserable for him. Mandelstam finally managed to escape from this spiritual dungeon and returned to his parents. His wife, however, preferred to remain with her father, and Mandelstam shortly afterwards divorced her. Free from the troubles of matrimonial life, Mandelstam devotes himself to his studies and begins to prepare for the entrance examinations into the University of Vilna, but this latter is soon ordered closed by the government and Mandelstam enters the University of Moscow in 1840. During the first year of his life as a student, Mandelstam published a collection of poems in Russian (see p. 18 ). He soon transferred to the University of Petersburg from which he graduated with the degree of Candidate of Letters. (He was the first Jew to graduate from a Russian University). He then went abroad to continue his philological studies, and on his return to Russia translated into the Russian language the Pentateuch and the book of Psalms, but was not permitted to publish them until some time later. He also was prepared to publish a Hebrew monthly, Hayoreach, for which he had permission and even had a complete program worked out, but for some unknown reason did not bring it into realization. Upon Lillienthal's sudden departure for America, April 27, 1846, Mandelstam was appointed "Learned Jew" at the Ministry of Education, in which office he was to bring to life the plan worked out by Count Uvarov and Lillienthal for the organization of the Jewish Crown Schools. He stayed in this office for twelve years, during which time he published some text-books for the use in the Jewish schools, such as "Extracts

from Maimonides", a Hebrew Alphabet with Grammatical Exercises, a German Translation of the Bible, etc. All these books were published by the government from the money collected from the Jews in the form of a special tax, known as 'candle tax' (tax collected from the candles used by Jews on Sabbath eve). It was claimed by the enemies of Mandelstam that this tax was introduced by the government at Mandelstam's suggestion and that he received for his labors of composing the text book, the neat sum of 100,000 roubles. This is denied by his friends who prove that the candle-tax was established long before Mandelstam had been appointed to the office of "Learned Jew". Upon reading Mandelstam's memoirs which breathe ~~with~~ a strong love to his people and a great desire to help them, one can hardly believe the mercenary motives ascribed to this Jewish educator..

In 1858 Mandelstam resigned his office and went to Berlin, where he published "Biblische Studien", "Talmudische Studien", "Einleitung zum Pentateuch", and "Die Genesis und das Hohelied, neu übersetzt und erklärt". The same year he wrote in the St. Petersburgskie Vedomosti his famous "V Zashtchitu Yevreyev" (In Defense of the Jews). This was in answer to a review which appeared in the same paper, and in which the author criticised Pirogov, who in his article in Odessky Vestnik, entitled "Odesskaya Talmud Torah" speaks of the aspiration shown by the young generation of Jews for progress. The reviewer says that the history of the Jews shows that they are inapt for progress and for assimilation with the Russian people. He says that the Jews are too much devoted to their antiquity and cannot possibly appreciate the spirit of the time. He then goes on pouring out the same old, but not yet forgotten accusations against the Jews, such as the peculiarity of the Jewish blood and gall,

their Asiatic form of life, that the Jews conducted wars of extermination, that they have a tendency to use onions and garlic, etc. Mandelstam answers these in the order in which they come, but his most interesting answer is to the attack that the Jews love their antiquity too much, to which he replies that the reviewer confuses the love of a people for its history, literature, religion, etc., with the love for incidental habits, customs, prejudices, etc. As to the first kind of attachment the Jews feel proud, for it constitutes the strength of every nation, and surely the Jewish antiquity is superior to all others. Here Mandelstam becomes ecstatic and says that the legislation of the Jews is greater and better worked out than the Justinian and even modern European, nay even more, that the Justinian code is a conscious imitation of the Rabbinic legislation, and that the Jewish literature is rich with ingenious productions in all branches of science. For this Mandelstam is called to account by a writer in the *Sovremennik* and a new and lengthy reply follows.

In 1859 Mandelstam published a Jewish Russian and Russian Jewish dictionary. In 1864 he tried his pen again at verse and wrote a dramatic novel in verse form, entitled "Yevreiskaya Semya" (the Jewish Family), but it was not passed by the Russian censor. In 1880 he published poems in German (*Stimmen in der Wüste* <sup>"Anawahl"</sup> *Jüdischer Lieder*). But he was a poor poet. He also worked on the preparation of a dictionary showing the Hebrew roots in modern European languages, including the Russian language.

This summarizes Mandelstam's works; but before we conclude a word or two must be said about his Pentateuch translation. In the preface to this translation Mandelstam gives his reason for transla-

ing the Five Books into Russian and says, that since the Jews do not speak in Hebrew nor in a pure European language, but in a mixture of Oriental and Occidental, Germanic and Slavic languages, it is necessary that they select a new language which shall be unified and clear and leave it as an inheritance to the future generations. It is natural that the Russian Jews should select the Russian language. Furthermore, our teachers to-day interpret the Bible to their pupils in a mixed German Slavic language, an unholy language, then why not interpret it in Russian?

The translation is on the whole very good. As a rule the author strictly abides by the original, but is not mechanical and at times takes liberties at scientific translations. He shows an acquaintance with many commentators. He seems to have been troubled with the most conspicuous difficulties in the Pentateuch and to have sought to solve them. In a word the translation is more or less critical, which is not true of a later translation of the Pentateuch, published by The Society to Promote a Culture Among the Jews of Russia, Vilna 1875. This is not true, however, of his translation of the Psalms. Here he is far-fetched; has no scientific basis for his interpretations. Even his Russian is poor at times.

Mandelstam died in Petersburg September 11, 1889 while crossing the Neva in a steamer. As no identification was found on him, his body was taken to the morgue where it was kept for three days and finally buried in the Uspensky Cemetery (Christian). A few days later the janitor of the house where Mandelstam lived reported of his disappearance and when taken to police headquarters he recognized Mandelstam's clothes and the key to his apartment. The Jews then



obtained a permit to exhume his body and buried it in the Jewish Cemetery.

Attention must be called to the discrepancies in the following publications: the Nedelnaya Chronika Voschoda gives Vitebsk as Mandelstam's birthplace; the Hamelitz says erroneously that Mandelstam graduated from the University of Moscow, and finally the Jüdische Presse says that he was born in 1811 and graduated from the university in 1836, which is untrue.

#### Illya Orshansky.

In spite of his short life (died at the age of 29), Orshansky wrote a number of monumental works, both on works pertaining to the Jews only and on general legal subjects. Orshansky was born in Ecaterinoslav in 1846, of wealthy parents, who came originally from Orsha (Moghilev). At the age of four Orshansky was sent to cheder, and at ten he already distinguished himself as having read most of Hebrew literature, especially philosophical works. He also acquired a good knowledge of the Talmud and learned to read Russian without the assistance of a teacher. Soon, however, his parents hired a tutor to teach the young boy Russian, German, arithmetic and history. Two years later his parents suffered reverses in their business and moved to a little village, young Orshansky remaining with his uncle who had a great influence on him. Orshansky showed much ability and knowledge and was being prepared for the rabbinate by the local rabbi. But the sixties came and with them the rapid spread of the movement for enlightenment among the southern Russian Jew. Orshansky was carried away by this current and this was the end to his future rabbinical career. He became acquainted with students of the local

gymnasium, who furnished him with text books and other necessities and he began to prepare himself for the University entrance examinations. In 1863 his father took him to Charkov, where he registered as a special student in the department of law, but in the spring of the next year he passed all his entrance examinations and became a regular student. During his first year at the University, Orshansky only a boy of 18, wrote his first articles entitled: "The Talmudical Sayings About Alexander the Macedonian", and "A Story Related to me by a Friend", both of which he sent to The Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia. When summer vacation came Orshansky returned home, and here he received an offer to go to Odessa and tutor at the home of S. Trachtman, which was known as the center of the elite of Odessa. Orshansky accepted the offer and transferred to the University of Odessa. Here he wrote "About the Secluseness of the Jews", and "Folk Songs of the Russian Jews". He graduated from the University of Odessa in 1868 with the degree of Candidate of Laws. He was made an offer by the university authorities to change his religion and take post-graduate work at the university, preparatory to a regular professorship. But Orshansky flatly rejected this offer. He felt that he had to give his strength and labor to his people, to bring them out of the condition of ignorance and oppression.

Orshansky was not cut out for the practice of law, he was too shy and modest and could not be conciliated with the red tape and submission to the letter of the law; his efforts, therefore, at the bar were unsuccessful and he soon dropped the practice of law. In 1868 the Russo-Jewish publication Den began to appear and Orshansky

became its chief contributor. He wrote a series of articles on the economic social and legal sides of the condition of the Jews in Russia, and these formed later two volumes devoted to the Jewish question: one touching upon the main economic and social element of the life of the Russian Jews and entitled "Yevreyi v Rossii," (the Jews in Russia), and the other devoted to the clearing up of the legal side of the Jewish question in Russia, trying in the main to analyze the motives underlying the existing Russian legislation which limits the rights of the Jews. This volume is entitled "Russkoye Zakonodatelstvo o Yevreyach" (Russian Legislation concerning the Jews). The two are monumental works and the best ever written on the subject. In 1871 the Dn discontinued on account of the pogroms in Odessa, and its editor, who together with Oustrabov acquired the Novoye Vremya, invited Orshansky to work for them. Orshansky accepted the offer and went to Petersburg, and while there he wrote nothing on Jewish subjects. His stay in Petersburg did not last long; the severe climate effected his poor health (he was tubercular) and in March of 1872 he went abroad to live in a more favorable climate. During this period he wrote his great works on law (common, marriage, family, etc.), also his investigations of Russian law, both of which are recognized as standard works. In 1875 he felt much better and returned to Russia to get some material which he needed for the work he was preparing, "The Philosophy of Law". He first visited his parents in Ecaterinoslav and was planning to go to Odessa for the winter, but in the middle of August he became seriously ill and died shortly afterwards, the 5th of September. In 1890, a monument made by Antokolsky was erected over his grave. The monument represents an altar made from piles of books. An open book on the altar con-

tains the inscription "If I forget thee O Jerusalem"....

Orshansky's most important works, as already said above, are those contained in the two volumes entitled "The Jews in Russia," and "The Russian Legislation concerning the Jews". The first work deals with the economic and social condition of the Jews in Russia. He shows the close relationship and dependence between the life of the Jews and the life of the country in general; he points out that the fortunes of the two are common and closely related and that the welfare of the one depends upon the welfare of the other. He then explains why the condition of the Jews, in spite of the new privileges granted them, is worse than before; he says that the general reforms in the land are the cause of this situation; that the Jews are in a state of transition. He points to the Western Jews and says that they went through the same process, and while they suffered at first as a result of the general reforms in the lands where they lived, since the reforms abolished many of the old means of a livelihood without immediately substituting new sources in their place, yet they improved their condition in the end and became useful to the economic interests of the land as producers of real value. Besides, says Orshansky, it must not be forgotten that the Russian Jew has not yet become a part of the body politic of the land, since he does not enjoy equal rights with the other inhabitants of the land. This last argument that the Jew is not emancipated forms the main contention of Orshansky in all his writings and is made the basic condition for the improvement of the economic condition of the Jews and for affecting their assimilation. Thus, in speaking of the social status of the Jew Orshansky says that the only way to bring them into closer ties with the Russians is to grant them equal rights. The Jews, he

says, are easily assimilated, but restrictions and persecutions are the greatest barrier to assimilation. Furthermore, it is these disabilities and restrictive measures that force the Jews into seclusion and into a system of Kahalism.

This volume contains his article "The Folks Songs of the Russian Jews", by which the author proves how deplorable the condition of the Jews is. He says that the folks songs reflect the soul of a people; the folks songs of the Russian Jews are fraught with sadness, melancholy, have no cheerful note, deplore poverty, etc., and yet people maintain that the Jews are wealthy and happy.

In the second volume two main points are brought out. In the first place the author shows the uniqueness of the legal status of the Jews in Russia. It is a rule, he says, that in regard to citizens anything not expressly forbidden by the law is understood to be permitted; thus, there is no necessity for legislation that a Russian or a Greek be permitted to own property, to do business, or to attend school, while with regard to the Jews everything is forbidden unless specially granted. The other point, which the author brings out is that the restrictions against the Jews are due to religious intolerance. He proves this historically. He, furthermore, shows the inconsistency and unsteadiness of the government in legislating about the Jews.

This book of Orshansky received much prominence as soon as it appeared and not only in Russia but also abroad. Thus the great French scholar Anatole LeFoy-Beaulieu quotes Orshansky frequently in his articles.

Orshansky's works are rich with facts, are scientific, present a clear case and are convincing. He does not appeal, beg or enter

into polemical discussions when he presents the case of the Jews. He shows himself a free and fully emancipated Jew; he demands his rights and makes the emancipation of the Jews a condition for their reform and assimilation. In regard to the latter he believed in political assimilation, but not in spiritual assimilation. The name of Orshaneky will live long in the memory of his brethren, and his works will for many years to come remain the standard works on the subjects treated therein.

#### Daniel Chvolson.

Daniel Chvolson, the man who in spite of his conversion into Christianity is the most known and most beloved among the Jews of Russia, was born of poor parents in the City of Vilna, in 1819. Like all Jewish boys of that time, Daniel Chvolson received his early training in the Cheder and in the Yeshiboth, where he studied under Israel Ginsburg. But Chvolson also studied, without the aid of a teacher and in hiding, German, French and Russian. In 1841 he went on foot to Germany. While there he met Geiger and assisted by the latter, Chvolson prepared himself for the examination in the studies of the entire course of gymnasium and entered the University of Breslau. In 1850 he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Leipzig, his thesis having been "Die Seabier und der Seabismus". He then returned to Russia, and five years later was appointed a member of the Commission which was to investigate the Saratov ritual murder case. The same year he accepted the Greek Catholic religion and was appointed professor of Hebrew, Syriac and Chaldaic in the University of St. Petersburg. Although an apostate from Judaism, Chvolson gave his life to the Jews. From 1858 to 1883 he also taught Hebrew and Biblical archeology in the St. Petersburg

Roman Catholic Academy. In 1910 Chvolson was elected a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, and the following year he departed this life at the old age of ninety-two.

As a writer Chvolson is chiefly known for his works on the ritual murder accusations. These works are the most comprehensive and the most scientific that were ever written on the subject. Chvolson was stimulated to this undertaking as a result of his participation in the investigation of the Saratov accusation. His first work entitled "Do the Jews Use Christian Blood?" was rather brief and in the form of a pamphlet. However, it contained all the facts and details upon which the author later based his large work entitled: "Some Middle Age Accusations Against the Jews". This is a study of all legal and historical documents, and especially of the literature of the Jews, their religion, history and even their domestic and social life; from all these sources the author draws his undoubted proofs of the falsehood and absurdity of the ritual murder accusations. He points to the fact that during the first twelve centuries no such accusations were advanced against the Jews; that the first accusation was made by a Spanish bishop in the middle of the 13th century (?) and that Alphonse X called him insane. Then brings documentary evidence to show that in the most of the cases investigations proved the accusations to be false and framed by the Christians so as to have an occasion to kill the Jews, appropriate their wealth or dispose of their creditors. He also cites a number of popes, such as Gregory IX, Innocent IV, etc., also kings and emperors, religious reformers and writers, as Luther, Grotius, etc. who all found these accusations groundless. He then takes up the Jewish legislation and shows that the Mosaic and Rabbinical laws forbid kidnapping and the use of

blood. He also proves that there is no sect among the Jews which uses Christian blood, for if there were such a sect the Jews because of their life in the ghetto would have known about it, and it would have been to their benefit to expose them.

In 1880 a second edition of this work appeared, in which the author replies to Lutostansky, a Roman Catholic who claimed to have been a rabbi at one time and who published a work in which he tried to show from Talmudic and other rabbinical sources that the Jews use blood for ritual purposes. Chvolson shows that Lutostansky knows nothing of rabbinics and that he took his material from Eisenmenger,<sup>1</sup> whose work is known as a piece of ignorant slander. In this connection it is interesting to note two items which appeared in the *Otchetstvennyye Zapiski*, a Russian monthly of 1880. In one the writer criticises a review of Chvolson's book which appeared in the *Razsvet*, and says that the reviewer seeks to give the impression that the Jews have a special mission on earth; that they are the best people, and that the other nations are always plotting to rob the Jews. These three 'absurd' claims, says the critic, are the causes for the hatred of the Jews. The other item is a review of Chvolson's book. The reviewer expresses doubt as to how much good the book will bring. He thinks that the book because of the mass of unnecessary material is accessible to only a few readers, and even these will grow tired of it. What, he thinks, Chvolson should have given is only one chapter denying the existence of a certain sect which practices ritual murder, for it is this thing only about which the educated people are not convinced; as to the rest they all agree that the Jews as such do not practice ritual murder.



In 1901 Chvolson published a German translation of his work entitled "Die Blutanklage und sonstige mittelalterliche Beschuldigungen der Juden", Frankfurt A.M. 1901.

Chvolson was also interested in Jewish archaeology. He made a thorough study of the many Jewish inscriptions discovered by Firkovitch in a cemetery in the Crimea and proves their authenticity in an article entitled "Eighteen Hebrew Tombstone Inscriptions from the Crimea". Also in German "Achtzehn Hebräische Grabchriften aus der Krim". At a later date Chvolson published "A Collection of Hebrew Inscriptions, Containing Tombstone Inscriptions from Crimea and Other Places in the Square Hebrew Type". This work was published after Chvolson had investigated the cemetery from which the inscriptions were taken, and he now admits that many of Firkovitch's discoveries are fraudulent, but insists that there are many authentic ones among them.

In 1880 Chvolson wrote in the Razsvet, in a series of four articles on "The Would-be Separateness of the Jews". Here he shows historically that the Jews had always shown a remarkable power to assimilate with the nations among whom they lived. Thus, the prophets admonish them for following in the footsteps of the nations. Later in the Babylonian exile they forgot their Hebrew and spoke Aramaic; the same is true about the Greek language which they began to speak after fifty years of contact with the Greeks. This the author traces throughout the different ages and different lands up to the present day, showing that the Jews have always acquired the language of the country of their adoption and have participated in the spiritual activities of those peoples. These facts show that the Jews more than any other people are given to assimilation, but in the

same time, being a people full of life and energy, they do not allow to be swallowed up, and never did not will retract from their inner national life. But this the government does not demand.

Chvolson wrote also some German and Hebrew works such as "Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Judenthums", Leipzig 1910, dedicated to A. Geiger; "Das letzte Passamahl Christi und der Tag seines Todes", Leipzig 1908; He also wrote "The Semitic Nations", which was translated by E. Epstein, Bloch & Company, Cincinnati, O. 1874.

In 1896 he wrote "The First Printed Jewish Books" from 1475 to 1500. This appeared in a volume issued for the benefit of the Jewish Crown School by the Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia. The following year he published in Hebrew a list of the Jewish books found in his library.

In 1899 the scholarly world celebrated Chvolson's 80th anniversary, and a special volume was published entitled "Recueil des travaux rédigés en mémoire du Jubilé Scientifique de M. Daniel Chvolson", Berlin 1899; and in Hebrew, "Lechem Chamudoth Ledaniel Iah Chamudoth". It contains the following articles: Zur Geschichte des Temple Cultus in Jerusalem, by A. Röhler; Biblische Textkritik bei den Rabbinen, by A. Epstein; Le premier livre imprimé en hébreu, by Baron D. Ginsburg; Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachvergleichung bei Moses Kaimuni, von W. Bacher; On the Relationship of the so-called Codex Babylonicus of A.D. 916 to the Eastern Recension of the Hebrew Text, by S. Ginsburg; Zwei koptische Fragmente aus den Festbriefen des heiligen Athanasius, by O. v. Lemm; Psalm 9 u. 10 und andere Maccabäische, by A. Merx; the Geography of Ibn Said by V. Barthold, in Russian; Ephiopekye Orations falesae u exorcismi, by B. Turaev.

Michail (Wenasheh) Morgulis.

Michail Morgulis was born in Berditchev, in 1837. His mother

was of Chasidic descent; however, he was permitted to attend the Crown Schools for Jews after he had obtained a Hebrew knowledge in the cheder. At the age of sixteen he graduated from the elementary schools and against the will of his parents entered the Rabbinical seminary in Zhitomir. While a student of the seminary he dreamt of becoming a Russian Mendele<sup>s</sup>ohn and reform the religious and inner life of the Jews. But his efforts, as those of all the first graduates from the seminary, met with opposition, both on the part of the Jews and the Russians. Morgulis graduated <sup>as</sup> rabbi in 1861. Three years later he entered the University of Kiev, in the department of law. While there he formed a circle of the Jewish students for the publication of a book for the Jewish masses. He also translated into Yidish the best works of foreign literature, and compiled a collection of articles in the Russian language on the history and literature of the Jews. He also contributed in the various Kiev papers a number of articles on the educational, agricultural and legal status of the Jews in Russia, and at the request of the Odessa branch of The Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia, he prepared a manual for the study of Russian, but this was not passed by the censors. He graduated from the University in 1869 the subject of his thesis being "The Inheritance Rights in the Mosaic and Talmudic Legislation." Shortly afterwards he settled in Odessa and in 1871 edited the department of foreign review in the Russo-Jewish publication, the Den. In this capacity he advocated reform, pointing to the progress achieved by the Western Jews, and urging his brethren that they follow their example. In the eighties we find him in the foremost ranks of those that were fighting the sweep of

antisemitism. In the nineties he fights Zionism calling it non-Jewish and against the true needs of the masses. For this purpose he wrote "Historical Sketches about Hillel, Meir, Akiba and Yehuda", in whom the best of Judaism and the principles of universalism were united. He also assisted in the organization of lectures on Jewish subjects, such as history, literature, etc.

In his literary works, Morgulis touched upon the general as well as the particular questions of the Jewish life, trying to point out methods for improvement of the material and moral life of the Jews. Like his contemporary Orshansky he showed that the fate of the Jews is closely interwoven with that of the Russians and that the persecutions of the Jews, are not only against the interests of the Jews but also against those of the Russians. He demanded full emancipation of the Jews as the only way of solving the Jewish question, and like his friend Orshansky, did not go about it in an apologetic manner, but demanded it on the ground of facts and clear logic. Nor did Morgulis advocate an assimilation of self-renunciation. In his article "Self-liberation and Self-renunciation" he says "Not self-renunciation do we want, but self-conscience. We must be permeated with the idea of our past, of our national distinction and with the belief in the future of all mankind, of which we are a part". However, Morgulis was the target of attack as a deserter and "assimilator" on the part of the Zionists and so-called "Nationalists."

The most of Morgulis's articles were published in two separate collections; one named, "A Collection of Articles by Morgulis from Various Periodicals" and published in Kremenchug, in 1869. The other is named, "The Jewish Life and Its Problems", published in St. Petersburg 1889, and dedicated to his son Emanuel. The first book contains

a collection of nine articles and a supplement. These treat of various questions pertaining to the life of the Jews. Thus in his very first article he explains the cause of the existing antagonism between the Lithuanian Jews and the Volynian, and says that at the bottom of it is the moral and spiritual superiority of the Lithuanian Jew. In another article he denounces the government for not granting the graduates from the Jewish Crown Schools and Seminaries the same privileges as are granted to the graduates of the other schools of the same rank. In another article he treats the evil of Zadikism and urges that radical steps be taken to eradicate this evil. He suggests that all the Zadikim and their retinues be removed to one city, preferably Vilna because of its misnagidic strength, and let them destroy each other in their mutual fights.

A very interesting article is that on "The Old and New Kabbalah", in which he traces Kabbalah from its origin to the present day. He follows Yest in this investigation.

His second collection contains more lengthy articles and of a more scientific character. In the introduction to this book, Morgulis says that he was guided by the desire to point out on the one hand, the methods for the improvement of the material and moral conditions of the Jews, through their own initiative, and on the other hand, to show that the oppression of the Jews, is not only injurious to them, but to the interests of the native population as well. His first article, entitled "A History of the Education of the Russian Jews", gives a most accurate historical review of the education of the Russian Jew. He begins with the year 1804 when the Jews were first allowed to attend the secular schools of the empire and gives the different events in the growth of the attempt to give the Russian Jew, a Russian education. He speaks of the private schools established

in Odessa, Kishinev and Riga long before the Crown Schools were opened; of the law of 1835 which admitted Jewish physicians into public service; of the opening of the Crown Schools and the Rabbinical seminaries and the policy of Uvarov to eliminate the study of the Talmud. The opposition to secular education on the part of the Jews; their hostility to the Rabbinical seminaries and their graduates, and finally the inconsistent policy of the government, which on the one hand urged the Jews to enter its schools and become modernised and russianized, and on the other hand withheld from them the privileges of a citizen.

In another article Morgulis discusses the different schools existing among the Jews for the education of the young. He divides them into three systems, the Chedorim, the Talmud-Torahs, and the Yeshiboth, and shows the need which each fills; thus the Chedorim take care of real young children and keep them there the whole day; as to the Talmud-torahs, they are for very poor children and orphans who are almost entirely supported by the schools, while the Yeshiboth train Jewish young men for the rabbinate.

In one of his articles, Morgulis replies to Brafman's (see P.63) "Book of the Kahal". Morgulis does not seek to deny the authenticity of the documents produced by Brafman, on the contrary he uses the same documents, but gives them a different interpretation, and thus presents them in an entirely different light. He also traces a Kahal institution historically and shows that it was brought into existence by the persecutions of the Jews.

In an article entitled "What Shall We Do With the Russian Jews" Morgulis advocates the establishment of agricultural and trade schools in which the Jews be trained as agriculturists and artisans,

and that the initiative in the establishment of such schools be taken by the Jews themselves, and supported out of their own means. He also advises that artisans be induced to move into the inner provinces where settlement to them is permitted.

It may be interesting to know that in an article, entitled, "Is it Possible and Should the Jews be Given the Right of Self-government in Communal Affairs", Morgulis advocates autonomy in the management of Jewish affairs, saying that this is necessary because of the social conditions and the prejudices on the part of the Christian population.

There has also been a number of recent articles by Morgulis, but these are not within the scope of our present work since they do not fall within our period. It is not known whether Morgulis is still among the living. <sup>June 14</sup> A recent report has reached this country <sup>1912</sup> that he died, but owing to the war conditions this report could not be verified.

#### Yakov (Jacob) Brafman.

Yakov Brafman, a convert who created the most noise and probably the greatest injury to the cause of the Jews in Russia with the publication of his book "The Book of the Kahal". Brafman was born in Kletsk (Minsk), around 1817. He lost his parents very early, and with no one to defend him, he seems to have suffered from the iron hand of the Kahal, which was a natural thing in those days of Kahal tyranny. This undoubtedly gave expression in later years to his bitter attacks on the Kahal.

Fearing that the Kahal would recruit him into the army, Brafman left his town and went wandering from place to place. At the age of 34 he accepted Christianity. It is thought that he first adopted

the Lutheran faith, but shortly afterwards joined the Greek Catholic Church. He settled in Minsk where he tried many occupations, among them photography. In 1858 he submitted a note to Alexander II when the latter passed through Minsk, in which he spoke of a big movement among the Jews of Russia to adopt Christianity en masse. The following year he was called to Petersburg about this matter. In 1860 he was appointed instructor in Hebrew in the Minsk seminary and was commissioned to find out and remove the obstacles which prevented the Jews from accepting Christianity. In 1866 he went to Vilna for the summer vacation and while there published in the antisemitic Vilensky Vestnik "The Views of a Jew, who Adopted the Greek Catholic Faith, on the Reform of the Life of the Jewish People in Russia". In this article he laid down his principal idea which is woven through all his later works, that the Jews form a state within a state and that the general laws of the country cannot eradicate that harmful to the country power which dwells in the Jewish self-government. Three years later he published in the Vilensky Sbornik, "A Few Words about the Jewish Synagogues and Houses of Worship in Russia and the Reasons of Their Multiplication". Somewhat later he published "The Brotherhoods (fraternities), Local and Universal", in which he attacks the Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia, the Alliance Israélite, etc. (The latter two articles are not obtainable in the New York Library). Shortly afterwards followed his 'famous' book "The Book of the Kahal".

Brafman seems to have been well acquainted among the leading Jews of his day. Thus he numbered among his intimate friends such a man as L. Levanda. The latter in his letters to U. S. Zalkind of Minsk never fails to ask to give his most cordial regards to Brafman.



In one letter he even asks Zalkind to call on Brafman and reproach him for not writing to him and says "is it that he does not care for me any more or is he too busy with his photographic work?" However, after Brafman's first article appeared, Levanda turns his back on him, and in a letter dated August 28th, 1866, Levanda calls Brafman a swindler who came to Vilna and wants to devour his former coreligionists. In another letter he speaks of Brafman as an ignorant, who discusses Renan, Buckle, Mendels<sup>son</sup>ohn, Levinson, Yost, etc., at the time when he has not read them, nor even seen them.

Brafman seems to have also had a large acquaintance among the students of the Rabbinical Seminary, for it was with their help that he prepared his work "The Book of the Kahal". Brafman himself, as it appears, did not know Russian grammar or rhetoric, and when he obtained the means from the commissioner of education of the Vilna Arrondissement to publish his documents in Russian, he invited the assistance of Gurvitch, then professor of Russian in the Rabbinical Seminary (later adopted Greek Catholic faith and assumed name of Gureyev). But Brafman soon found out that Gurvitch meant to do the work conscientiously and that he figured to be a co-worker of Brafman, not merely a translator in his pay. Brafman then engaged the services of two seminary students, Tiger and Levin. Neither of the two boys, who were very young, not over 18 years, knew the real object of Brafman. Out of respect for Brafman's age and experience they could not offer any objections when the latter would pervert the text in order to make it fit to his desired interpretation. Another seminary student that worked for him was Bratin who was greatly impressed by Brafman's supposed desire to help the Jews by exposing the terrible deeds of the despotic Kahals. Then again, Bratin was

young and inexperienced and needed money to enter the university. At any rate the book, "The Book of the Kahal" appeared and created much discussion. The antisemitic press used it as a strong weapon in their attacks on the Jews, and the Russo-Jewish writers came back with strong replies, some denying the authenticity of the documents, others showing the wrong interpretation given by Brafman to the facts.

"The Book of the Kahal" consists of two parts: one is a foreword by Brafman throwing light on the material and containing seventeen explanatory inferences which the author drew from the documents at hand; the other is a collection of 285 enactments passed by the Minak Kahal at the end of the 18th Century. On the title page there is a line from Schiller "Die Juden bilden einen Staat im Staate".

Brafman starts out in his foreword with an attack on the Talmud showing that the Talmud is the constitution which rules the Kahal organization. His main points of attack are the Chazakah, Maruphia and Chezkath Yishuv of the Talmudic code, which he shows work to the injury of the non-Jewish population. He then describes how completely the Kahal controls the life of the Jew, thus it can order what meals should be served and who should be invited to a family celebration, such as a wedding, a Berith Milah, etc. He thereby gives a wonderfully vivid and sympathetic picture of such celebrations among the Jews. He also takes occasion to attack the sharp caste distinctions among the Jews. He then speaks of Yom Kipur and brings to the front the old accusation that Kol-Nidrei releases the Jews from their obligations. <sup>a</sup> Ridicules the Kapp<sup>a</sup>roth as a heathen custom, etc. In all these he points to the Kahal as the root of all evil and says that all attempts of the government to reform the Jews will be of no avail as long as the Kahal exists; nor will the hope of the Jews

to get equal rights be realized. He forgets, however, that at the time when he writes, the Kahal <sup>was</sup> is not existent, at least not in that form against which he directs his attacks. One can notice, however, throughout these lines, a sympathetic note for the poor and oppressed Jews for whom he seems to feel and have compassion. His bitterness seems to be directed mainly against the Kahal and the upper classes of the Jews.

A few translations of the documents compiled by Brafman may be of interest. Document three reads: Monday י"א 5555, 1794. The representatives of the Kahal ruled, - to commission the representative R. Yehuda Leib, the son of R. Jacob, for a period of six weeks, beginning with to-day, to visit the police quarters and look after the interests of the Jews, whether they be communal or individual; with the condition that in the case of communal affairs he has no right to promise presents to any one without the consent of the Parnes Chodesh. For this he is to receive from the Kahal treasury two roubles per week. 2

Document 16 reads: The rules set up by the Kahal governing the invitation by any one to a feast: - to a berith Milah the following may be invited: relatives on both sides up to the second generation on ...; two neighbors on each <sup>side</sup> of the house in which the celebrator lives, and three from across the street....; a business partner, provided they have been in business for one year; the barber, the tailor....; The same holds good in the case of a wedding, only that ten male and female chums may be invited in addition. These rules do not apply to feasts given by poor and on money obtained through a collection.

Whoever celebrates a wedding outside of our city is forbidden

to invite anyone, and the inhabitants of the city are not allowed to send gifts. The Shameess is forbidden under Cherem to invite for such feasts, after a list given to him by the celebrator, unless it be indorsed by one of the officers of the Kahal... Violators will be subject to heavy fines, not sparing thereby their own honor, nor the honor of their families; no excuses will be honored...

A French translation by I.P. of Brafman's book was published in Odessa in 1873. It bears the title "Livre du Kahal", Matériaux pour étudier le Judaïsme en Russie et son influence sur les populations parmi lesquelles il existe.

Brafman's book was immediately taken up by the Russo-Jewish press and the leading Russo-Jewish writers. The most complete and most convincing article of the falsehood of the documents collected by Brafman and of his ignorance of Talmudic law is that written by Illya Shershevsky, which follows.

Illya Israel Shershevsky was born in Vilna and died there in 1890. He wrote on the <sup>u</sup>unauthenticity of <sup>Brafman's</sup> ~~xxx~~ documents in the Novoye Vremya, in 1870. In 1872 he wrote his book entitled: "On the Book of the Kahal". In the introduction to this book the author first of all points out that the "Book of the Kahal" contains not 290 documents as claimed by Brafman in his foreword, but only 285. He then cites a few arguments from his article in the Novoye Vremya to show the fraudulency of the documents and the inconsistency and ignorance of the author. Thus document 165 is dated Tuesday, Shewat 16, and document 166 is dated Thursday, Shewat 19. Again in document 134 he translates Chaver as commoner, while in his remarks he translates it as a title of honor. Again, Brafman says in one place that

the rabbis were entirely subject to the Kahal, yet in another place he quotes the Talmud to show that "rabbis are kings". The most interesting example of Brafman's ignorance is the following; in quoting Graetz's reference Tosefta Demai C. 3 and 4 Brafman takes the latin C which stands for Caput or chapter for the Russian C (e), the first letter of the word stranitsa (page) and hence his reference is Tosefta Demai p. 3 and 4. The author then takes up Brafman's main points of attack, Chazakah, Maaruphia and Chezkath Yishuv and shows that the author misinterpreted them and wilfully presented them in a different light. His arguments, however, are poor and mostly apologetic, trying to show that those rules applied to certain cases only and not to others, or that those regulations were justified by the events of the time, etc. In the appendix to the book, the author disproves again the authenticity of the documents (apparently he felt that his other arguments were pilpulistic and not strong enough). He says that Brafman argues the authenticity of the documents from the fact that they are all written in the same handwriting and by the same secretary, but Shershevsky shows that document 50 is signed by one man, while document 51 by a different man, and 92 by a different man still. He also shows that most of the documents bear dates showing that they were written on Saturday, which is impossible (a weak argument; they might have been done Saturday night which is very likely). Document 109 is dated Saturday, the eve of Passover 5561 (1801), which is impossible. Then again Shershevsky takes document 67 which bears the date, Wednesday, the fourth day of Passover 5559 (1801), and document 71 which reads Thursday, the sixth day of Passover. He also takes document 238 which reads Tuesday, the 23rd of

Irr 5562, and 239 which reads Thursday the 23rd of Irr 5562. Then again Shershevsky shows that there is no chronological order in the arrangement of the documents, although Brafman said that he presented the documents in the same order in which they appeared in the original. Thus Shershevsky shows that document 20 has the year 1796, while 21 is dated 1795; #88 has the year 1801, while 89 - 1792; #144 1805, while 146 - 1801, etc. Again the documents 285, 149 and 150 bear the same date, Tuesday, the 10th of Taweth 5562. Shershevsky points also to the fact that only 15 documents have signatures, while the rest have none.

In "Yevreyskaya Biblioteka" 1875, v.5, Shershevsky has an article to supplement what he left out in his book, namely a reply to Brafman's attack on Kol Nidrei, and says that Shavuoth here means <sup>Q</sup> not oaths but vows, and furthermore, in order that the meaning of the word be rightly understood the following additions to Kol Nidrei were made in the old days: "excluding civil regulations and court oaths".

Brafman never answered to any of these arguments, nor to any of those written by the other Russo-Jewish writers, and especially to the letters written by Levin and Bratin, the seminary students who translated almost two thirds of the documents (see p.63 ). It is understood, however, that Brafman made efforts to prevail over the government that it close one or another Jewish publication (Russky Yevrey 1881, 43).

#### Solomon (Zalkind) Minor.

Solomon Minor, the great orator and first preacher in the Russian language, was born in Romny (Poltava) in 1826. He entered the

Rabbinical Seminary of Vilna in 1848 and graduated with the first graduating class in 1853. Somewhat later he was instructor in Talmud in his Alma Mater. In 1859 he was elected rabbi of Minsk. While in this position he organized a Sabbath school for religious instruction, and evening classes which met four times a week for the education of Jewish workmen. The courses of instruction was in the Hebrew and Russian languages and penmanship, Bible and arithmetic. The funds for the upkeep of these classes were obtained from private donations, and it is interesting to know that many of these donors were Russian officials both military and civil. These classes had apparently met a certain demand for in the very first year there was an enrollment of about 200 Jews of all ages. Minor also established a library which contained books in four languages, Hebrew, Russian, Polish and German. In 1869 Minor was called to occupy the pulpit of the Moscow congregation. (In Hador of April 1901, p. 2 we read a statement by Mordecai Hillel Hakohen that the Minsk congregation dismissed Minor). Minor had been with the Moscow congregation for 22 years, till 1891, when the oppressive policy of the government against the Jews assumed immense proportions and the Moscow synagogue was ordered closed by the government. Minor strained all his efforts to have the synagogue reopened and in this connection petitioned the Moscow governor-general, prince Sergius Alexandrovitch. This was considered as an affront by the government and Minor was ordered removed from his office and sent out to the pale. He settled in Vilna where he remained to the end of his days, January 8, 1900. From other sources we gather somewhat different data about the life of Minor. Thus the Voschod of

1901, 2 gives Vilna as Minor's birth place. The periodical Rud-uahchuost of 1900, 3 gives the year of his election to the rabbinate in Minsk as 1860, and that of Moscow as 1870. We also learn from the Nedelnaya Chronika Voschoda 1900, 5 that Minor was a close friend of Leo Tolstoi and that at one time he guided the latter's studies in Hebrew and Bible.

As already mentioned above, Minor is especially known as a preacher. His sermons contain a wealth of Agadic material, are earnest in content and responsive to the demands and needs of life. They consist largely of an elucidation of the principles of Judaism, explanation of important events in the history of the Jews, and of homilies on the duties of the Jews as Russian citizens. Imbued with the ideas of his time and recognizing that the salvation of his people lies in their education and culture, Minor sought in his sermons to stir up in his hearers the ambition for self-accomplishment and self-reform. While a religious reformer, Minor was careful not to carry his reforms to extreme, and thus form a wide breach between the reform and orthodox Jews. In his sermons at the corner stone laying and at the dedication of the Moscow Synagogue he said that while rejoicing at this great event in his ministry, his emotions must not eclipse his conscience of the moral and religious ties with his coreligionists in the pale who are in less favorable circumstances. "We must not forget", says he, "that wishing to form the first rank of our people we must not withdraw from the religious views of our brethren. Only then is a detachment of troops the van-guard when it does not lose from sight the main army, otherwise it may easily become and does become a prey to the enemy." The style of his dedicatory address is beauti-



ful and makes it a classic in the sermonic literature of the Russian Jews.

In his installation address he says, "the aim for which we must work at the present moment is threefold: religious, communal and civil. Regarding the religious aim we must strive to conciliate religion with science and with the spirit of the time. Fanaticism will not do... Communally we must work in the religious sense only, so that our enemies may not say that we form a state in a state. As to our civil aim our task is to so conduct ourselves as to eradicate and destroy the prejudice in the mind of the Christian public. To this end we must be honest, must work for the general good of the public, help our non-Jewish brother when in need..."

A collection of 98 of Minor's sermons covering a period from 1870 to 1878 were published in three separate parts and at three different times, but are bound in one volume.

Besides being a sermonist, Minor wrote a number of articles, in Russo-Jewish and Hebrew periodicals and papers touching on all phases of Jewish life. Several of his articles, such as "O Zapadno-Russkikh Yevreyach" (about the Jews in Western Russia), published in the Russian supplement to the Hakarmel of 1866; the article "Bills and Resolutions Regarding the Jews in Kurland at the Time of Paul I", etc., treat of certain historical events in the life of the Jews of the Western provinces of Russia. In the Russky Yevrey of 1879 and in the Razsvet of 1880 Minor reviews Lutostansky's book "The Talmud and the Jews" in which he shows how ignorant Lutostansky was in everything Jewish. Thus in speaking of the Midrash, Lutostansky calls it Rabbi Midrash, also Rabbi Orech Chaim, etc. Of Maimonides he speaks as the teacher of Rashi. When speak-

ing of the Promised land, Eretz Yisrael, Lutostansky calls it Ertseas-Ruel, etc. Furthermore, Minor proves that Lutostansky never was a rabbi, that he was not even born a Jew; that he was a Roman Catholic priest who was later expelled from the priesthood on the charge of adultery and an attempt to violate a Jewish girl.

Minor also translated into Russian M. Elcan's "Manual to the Teaching of Jewish History from Ancient Times to the Present Day". In 1880 he writes in the Russky Yevrey appealing for funds for the establishment of agricultural and trades schools for Jews. This, the reader will remember, was the idea advanced by Morgulis. Apparently it appealed to Minor. Later on when the persecutions of the Jews began and with them the attacks in the Russian press, Minor becomes polemical and defends the Jews and their literature from slander and evil designs. He does not beg for mercy and sympathy, but like Morgulis, Orshanaky and the other leading Russo-Jewish writers of his time, he demands respect for the merits and the services of Judaism and claims the recognition of the rights of the Jews.

While Minor was the first to preach in Russian, he was not the only one, however. There have come down to us the sermons of two other men who preached in Russian, Abram Chaneles and Isidor Pesker. We also have a few Russian translations of the German sermons preached by Dr. Simeon Leon Schwabacher, rabbi of Odessa.

Abram Chaneles was a graduate of the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary and occupied the pulpit of the Jewish congregation of Minsk. His sermons were published in two small volumes; one volume published in Vilna in 1872 covers the period from 1865 to 1871 inclusive;

the other volume was published in Minsk in 1880 and contains his sermons preached on national holidays (ascension to throne, tsar's birthday, etc.) and covering a period of eight years, from 1872 to 1880. Of the sermons contained in the first volume some were preached in the Chapel of the seminary, the others in the synagogue of Novogrudok (Minsk). The trend of thought in the most of them is a plea for reform and assimilation. There are a few diversions, however. Thus in his sermon of October 16th, 1865, preached at the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary, Chaneles speaks of the relation between religion and science, showing that the two need and supplement each other. He then makes a transition to the struggle going on between the conservatives and ultra-reformers, and says that neither side is right; that a middle way is necessary, whereby to adapt the old religion to the new life, etc. In a sermon preached August 27th, 1866 he appeals to the students of the Rabbinical Seminary that they should prepare themselves to go forth to the different congregations and clear the road over which our people have to travel, etc. He also decries the apathy existing among many of the rabbis and instructors. Both volumes contain also a number of purely patriotic sermons.

Isidor Pecker was rabbi in Cherson. His sermons to the number of 25, covering a period of eight years, from 1872 to 1880, were published in Cherson in 1880. Twelve of these sermons were delivered on national holidays and are mostly patriotic in character. The other thirteen were delivered on Saturdays and Jewish holidays. In some of these he rebukes the religious difference of the people, in others he preaches on social justice, etc.

Neither Chaneles nor Pecker do in any way measure up to Minor as preachers. They do not possess the ideas of Minor, they do not present them as forcefully as Minor, nor is their style as rich as Minor's.

Leaving out L. Levanda and Rogrov, whose writings for reasons explained in the preface are not embodied in this work, the writers so far discussed are the most important ones of this period. We cannot close this book, however, without discussing the works of some of the writers of lesser importance, who were active during this period. We shall take them up in the same manner as those above, namely in the order of their importance, and chronologically if possible.

#### Arnold Dumashevsky.

Arnold Dumashevsky was born in Moghilev on the Dnieper in 1836 (Russian Jewish Encyclopedia gives the year 1837), and died in Petersburg in the year 1887. His parents were very poor and young Dumashevsky engaged in all sorts of work (driver, clerk in a book store, tailor apprentice, etc.) in order to earn a livelihood. At the age of 14 he entered the agricultural school of Gori-Goretsk, from which he graduated in 1855. He then went to Odessa and obtained work in the Bureau of Emigrant-Colonists. While engaged in this work he also contributed articles to the Odessky Vestnik. Somewhat later he taught Russian in the Odessa Talmud Torah. In 1859 he passed the university entrance examinations and was enrolled in the department of law in the Richelieu Lyceum. At the end of one year he went to Petersburg and entered the University there,

from which he graduated in 1862. He was then sent abroad by the government to accomplish himself in law, a professorship being promised to him on his return but his Jewish adherence prevented him from getting this position. He was then appointed at the ministry of education and the following year was commissioned to serve on the committee which was revising the laws for Poland. In 1868 he was appointed first secretary in the third department of the senate. In this office he served for three years, having resigned it in 1871. He then became editor of the Sudebny Vestnik (Court Messenger). Before his death he willed a scholarship fund to the Law Department of the University of Petersburg, under the name of "The Scholarship Fund of the Jew Dumashevsky."

Dumashevsky's first Russo-Jewish writing appeared in 1859 in the Russky Invalid. In this article he speaks of the need of a Russo-Jewish journal. Two years later he wrote in the Biblioteka dlia Chtenia: "Marriage According to the Biblical and Talmudic Laws." He modeled this article after Frankel's "Grundlinien des Mosaisch-Talmudischen Ehe Rechts." He opens his article with a word of admonition to the scientific world for its indifference to and ignorance of Jewish literature, especially of its moral teachings which are regarded by scholars as antiquated and Asiatic. He then takes up the question of marriage and shows that according to the Jewish law it is not a mere contract whereby one party can relinquish all its rights in favor of the other party, but is a contractual and moral union. The author discusses this at length and deduces from this that in Judaism the prime thing is the family, not society as in the old classical world. The author shows that monogomy was not practiced among the Jews, speaks of the rights of women, etc.

✓ The same year and in the same magazine appeared another article by Dumashevsky, entitled, "The Status of Woman Among the Ancient and Contemporary Hebrews". Here Dumashevsky shows that among the ancient Hebrews the woman had the same rights as man, she even participated in public affairs, as at Mt. Sinai; however, since she is differently endowed by nature, it was better that she follow up what is natural to her, just as one who is a talented musician should rather follow his inclination, although he has a right to engage in anything else... As to the status of the Jewish woman to-day, he says that he limits his discussion to the Jews that have not been touched by the modern civilization, for the status of the woman among civilized Jews is the same as that among other civilized peoples. As to the former, the wife is regarded as a companion, not as a housekeeper. As to love, they might not know it in the European sense, but they know and value conjugal, spousal love.

In 1883 Dumashevsky addresses a letter to Suvorin, editor of the Novoye Vremya, telling him to come out with the truth and confess that he is a Jewhater. If Suvorin hates the Jews, says Dumashevsky, and this is proven by the fact that in the eight years of the existence of his paper there never appeared anything in favor of the Jews, but always against them, and so if he does hate the Jews let him hate them as much as he pleases but why deny it.

Moisey (Moses) Berlin.

Moisey Berlin was born in 1821, in Shklov and died in 1888 in Petersburg. He received his early education privately, at home. Later on he attended lectures in philosophy and philology in Königsberg. In 1849 he was appointed teacher in the Jewish Crown

School of Moghilev. Four years later he was attached to the Bureau for Jewish affairs in the office of the governor general of White Russia, and three years later was appointed 'learned Jew' in the department for spiritual affairs in Petersburg, in which capacity he served for ten years. In 1859 Berlin translated into Russian the narrative of the son of rabbi David from Zamost, which is entitled "The Woes of the Time" and relates of the misfortunes of the Jews in 1848-49. In 1861 he published "An Outline of the Ethnography of the Jewish population of Russia". This was done at the request of the Imperial Geographical Society of Russia, of which he was elected an active member. He dedicated this work to Count Emanuel Sivers, director of the Spiritual Department. It is not a scientific work; contains no facts or statistics, but merely statements which, while true, are based on superficial observation. It is somewhat apologetic and of value only to those who know nothing of the life of the Jews. In 1862 Berlin published his little book "Rugulminsky Talmudist" (not in the library) in which he replies to Aksakov's attack on the Talmud. Berlin left an unpublished, but ready for print manuscript, entitled "A History of Medicine Among the Ancient Jews."

#### Emanuel Levin.

Emanuel Levin was one of the earliest zealots to spread education among the Jews. He was born December 15, 1820 in Minsk; died only recently, 1915. He was educated at the Moldetchensk School for the nobility. He taught in Klatchko's private school in Vilna, in the model Talmud Torah of Minsk, in the Jewish Crown School of Proskurov (Podolia) and subsequently in the Rabbinical seminary of Zhitomir. In 1846 he wrote a grammar of the Russian language for

Jews (see p.22 ). In 1870 he was elected a member of the Imperial Geographical Society of Russia. He also served as secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia. In 1866 he placed in the Volume of Articles on Jewish History and Literature, published by the Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia, a splendid Russian translation of the Pirkei Aboth, with explanatory notes and some commentaries. In 1875 he published in Petersburg "The Mosaic Marriage Laws" (not in the Library). In 1883, 1885 and 1902 he published compendiums of Jewish legislation in Russia. For this he was made a Potchotny Grazhdanin (honorable citizen).

Yona (Jonah) Chaim Gurland.

Gurland is of interest to us mainly because of a calendar or almanac which he published in Hebrew and Russian. In addition to its calendrical data it gives information concerning the Jews in Russia and abroad and also articles on Judaism. The first calendar appeared in Kiev in 1877 and was followed by one in Warsaw in 1878, and after that was published in St. Petersburg for four successive years, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882. Gurland also wrote a number of articles in Hebrew and Russian. Of the latter we have his article entitled "New Material for the History of the Jewish Literature of the 15th Century; M. Kumatiانو, his life, work and contemporaries." This work was written by the author in 1866. It was composed from the original manuscripts of the Firkovitch collection in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg. It was submitted by the author to the Faculty of Oriental languages in the University of St. Petersburg as a thesis for the degree of Magister of Hebrew Literature. The



work is a study of Kumatiano, a great Jewish teacher who lived in Turkey in the 15th Century, the time of the spiritual revival of the Jews in Turkey. Kumatiano maintained that the study of astronomy, mathematics, logic and philosophy are absolutely necessary for understanding of the Talmud. He wrote a number of articles (all in manuscript) on mathematics, astronomy, the construction of astronomical instruments, also a commentary to the Pentateuch, etc. Of Kumatiano's contemporaries the following rabbinites and Karaites are discussed: Chacham Rashi Moses Kapeali; Rabbi Elijah Mizrahi; Rabbi Shabthai C. Malkiel Hakohen, etc. This work constitutes also a part of the author's other work "A Brief Description of Hebrew Manuscripts in Mathematics, Astronomy and Astrology". This work was translated by the author into German: "Kurze Beschreibung der mathematischen, astronomischen und astrologischen Hebräischen Handschriften der Firkowitschen Sammlung in der Kaiserlichen Oeffentlichen Bibliothek zu St. Petersburg."

The author was born in Kletsk (Minsk) in 1843 and died at the age of 47 in Odessa. He graduated from the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary in 1860. He then went to the University of Petersburg and studied Semitics under professor Chvolson. His graduation thesis was "The Influence of the Philosophy of Mohammedanism on the Philosophy of Maimonides". In 1873 he was appointed inspector of the Zhitomir Teachers Institute. Ten years later he opened in Odessa a classical and 'real' gymnasium in which Jewish history and literature were taught. In 1888 Gurland was elected rabbi of Odessa.

The author's brother Yakov (Jacob) Gurland, also a graduate of the Vilna Rabbinical Seminary and rabbi of Poltava, wrote in 1885:

"A Sketch of the Life and the Works of the Jewish-German Philosopher of the 18th Century, Moses Mendelssohn". The work is divided into two parts, of which the first treats of the life of Mendelssohn (after Kaizerling), while the second part aims to acquaint the reader with the content of Mendelssohn's works, without entering into a detailed discussion of his teachings.

In 1870 Gurland wrote in Den: "Do Jewish Artisans Have the Right to Acquire Real Estate in their Places of Residence, Outside the Pale?" This was written when Gurland lived in Sumy (Charkov). He was then notary public, and a Jewish Artisan Altechuler, residing in Sumy came to him to have a deed signed on the purchase of some immovable property, which Gurland did and was indorsed in his action by the chief notary public. However, to make the purchase secure, the deed was taken to the circuit court which confirmed it. Sometime later Altechuler appeared before the court to have the final red tape attended to, but this time there were different judges in session and they found the deed void. Gurland takes this up in his article in the Den and proves that the law which permits Jewish artisans to live outside the pale permits them also to acquire real estate.

Vitalie Levanda.

Vitalie Levanda, a brother of Lev Levanda, was born in Minsk in 1840. He was a famous jurist and is known for his work "A Complete Chronological Collection of All Laws and Enactments Concerning the Jews, from the Enactment of Tsar Alexander Michailovitch to the Present Day, 1649-1873. An Extract from the Complete Code of Laws of the Russian Empire." He was commissioned to do this work

by Baron Ginzburg and published it in St. Petersburg in 1874. This is a monumental work; it is a compilation in one whole of all the laws and enactments concerning the Jews, which are scattered in the 88 volumes of the Complete Code of Laws of the Russian Empire. The author arranged the laws chronologically and had divided them into four divisions: (1) laws which concern the Jews indirectly; (2) laws which say that only Christians can enjoy the privileges granted by the law; (3) laws which concern non-Christians, and (4) laws which specify that they apply to all subject's, regardless of creed or faith. In addition the author includes decisions by the senate on cases which were brought before it, as for instance in regard to admission into schools which require a certificate of birth and baptism, etc. Each law is indicated with a number, in the order in which it comes, and at the end of the book this number shows the volume and section in which this law is found in the Complete Code of Laws of the Russian Empire.

Levanda also wrote an interesting article "On the Question of Agriculture Among the Jews of Russia." It was published in the Yevreyskaya Biblioteka, 1872. This article is a defense against those who ascribe the failure of the Jews in agriculture to the fact that they hate hard work, that they are an exploiting people and look for easy profits. Levanda shows that this is not true, for we find the Jews engaged in difficult occupations, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, expressmen, day laborers, etc. He also denies that Jews do not take to agriculture because they dream of returning to Palestine and do not regard themselves as permanent settlers. Levanda proves first of all that this is not true historically; that ori-

ginally the Jews engaged in agriculture in the lands of their dispersion, and it was because of the persecutions that they were forced out from this occupation; and secondly, it is a well <sup>known</sup> ~~none~~ fact that Jews build and buy houses and other real estate wherever the law permits and hence regard themselves as permanent settlers. Levanda then gives the real reasons of the failure of agriculture among the Jews, and concludes with a recommendation that agricultural schools for Jewish boys and girls be established.

This concludes our study of the Russo-Jewish literature and writers of the period from 1855 to 1881. We left out the study of the various periodicals, magazines and text-book of this and the preceding period, for which we devote our next book.

## Book III.

## Periodicals, Magazines and Text-Books.

## Chapter I.

## Periodicals and Magazines.

The periodicals played an important role in the Russo-Jewish literature and in the object which it sought to achieve. They served as a medium of expression for the leading Jewish circles and also as an organizing agency of all the forces of enlightenment which sought to reform the life of the Jews and fought for their emancipation. The idea of a Russo-Jewish periodical began to occupy the minds of the Russo-Jewish writers Rabinovitch, Tarnopol, Levanda, Dumashevsky, etc., in the second half of the fifties, in the 19th Century. The death of Nicholas I and the ascension to the throne of Alexander II in 1855 marked the beginning of a new life in Russia. Everybody hoped, everybody aspired and was enthusiastic about the future. The Russian literature became more liberal and more outspoken. Articles about the Jews began to appear, and for a time the Jewish question became the topic of the day. Naturally, these

articles were not all favorable to the Jews, and many of them called for replies in defense of the Jews. This burden fell upon the shoulders of the Russo-Jewish writers who soon found out that without an organ of their own they could not properly discharge their duties. Furthermore, it was felt that the time demanded a closer relationship between the Jews and the Russians and that this could be brought about through a better knowledge of each other, and hence a literary medium was necessary whereby the two could learn to know each other; especially so, since the Russians had their knowledge of the Jews from their literature which pictured the Jew as a devil, a smuggler, a forgerer, etc. (Gogol in *Taras Bulba*; Turgevieff in *Zhid*, etc.). It was not till 1860, however, that the first Russo-Jewish periodical, the *Razavet*, began to appear. The history of this great event is quite interesting and we shall give it in detail.

It is not definitely known with whom the initiative in this matter rests. According to one version Rabinovitch was the one to conceive the idea and he wrote to his friend and benefactor of the Jews, N. Pirogov, the commissioner of education of the Odessa arrondissement, to assist him in securing a permit from the government. But from a letter of Pirogov to the Minister of Education it appears that the idea, of a Russo-Jewish publication originated with him and that he suggested it to Rabinovitch and Tarnopol. Pirogov's idea was to use such a publication for the diffusion of knowledge among the Jews, to combat fanaticism and thus bring the Jews closer to the Russians. But the government was reluctant in religious questions and would thus become a missionary organ of the Jews. But Rabinovitch and Tarnopol addressed another note in which they made clear that no religious question will be touched by the paper. The govern-

ment then replied that it would be willing to grant a permit for a Jewish paper in Yidish but not in Russian. This forced Tarnopol and Rabinovitch to state their object more fully and clearly, namely that their purpose was not only to enlighten the Jews but also to acquaint the Russian public with the true life of the Jews. The matter dragged on for almost three years, from December 23, 1856 to October 22nd, 1859, when finally due to Tarnopol's connections in Petersburg the coveted permit was granted, but did not reach Odessa until January, 1860. Immediately Tarnopol and Rabinovitch set to work and the first number of their weekly publication, the Razsvet (Dawn), appeared May 27, 1860. The motto adopted by the Razsvet was the Hebrew phrase "Wayomer Elohim Yehi Or" (and God said, let there be light), which meant to throw light on everything that was heretofore covered with darkness. The program of the Razsvet was two-fold in character: (1) to act on the defense against attacks from without, in defending the rights and religious interests of the Jews; and (2) to take the offensive against the internal enemy to combat ignorance, fanaticism and superstition in the inner life of the Jews. The Razsvet did not make the education of the Jews a condition of their emancipation; this the Razsvet demanded as their natural right to which they are entitled as members of the human family.

The work of the Razsvet was divided among Rabinovitch, who was the actual owner and editor of the Razsvet and who took upon himself the task to carry out the 'defensive' part of the program; L. Levanda who was charged with the 'offensive' part of the program, and Gheorghievsky, professor in the Richelieu Lyceum, who took charge of the department for reviewing Jewish journalism from abroad. Tarnopol

seems to have been a figure head only. Very soon some serious differences, the character of which is unknown, had developed between Rabinovitch and Tarnopol, and the latter severed his connections with the Razsvet. Rabinovitch then remained the only owner and editor of the paper. He conducted it in the same spirit in which it was begun. He was aggressive and perseverant in carrying out the policy of his paper. Because of his unsparing denunciation of the faults of the Jews he was attacked by the Hamaqid, and because of his demands for equal rights for the Jews he got himself into trouble with the government. Rabinovitch was called to the office of the General Governor of Novorussia and the latter gave him to understand that he would have to abandon that part of his program in which the government was denounced for its unjust treatment of the Jews. But Rabinovitch felt that it would be unworthy of him and that he would be a traitor to his people if he were only to present their faults and not speak in the same time in their defense and show the cause of their shortcomings. Rabinovitch decided to retire as editor of the paper, and at the end of the year announced his resignation. From letters, however, written by Rabinovitch to a friend (Rosenthal) in Petersburg, and published recently we learn that the trouble with the government and with the censors was not the only cause of Rabinovitch's retirement from the Razsvet. Another cause was a financial consideration. Rabinovitch felt that he was neglecting his legal practice, since he had to give all his time to the paper, but the paper was not a profitable proposition. He, therefore, asked that wealthy Jews subsidize the paper. This, apparently, met with no response and Rabinovitch suspended the publication.

A contemporary of the Razsvet was the Russian Supplement to the



Hebrew periodical Hakarmel. Its first number appeared June 14th, 1860. An editorial by the editor, S. Finn<sup>ile</sup>, explains fully the purpose of this weekly supplement. The editorial reads: "This is a time of closer contact between men and groups of men. The religion of the Jews is not regarded any more as an obstacle to civic unity and cooperation... The greatest agent to bring about this spiritual cooperation is the press... The task is: to serve the progress of the Jews; to prepare them to understand their condition in society, and to furnish the unsympathetic Russian public with authentic information about the merits, faults, and needs of the Jews... Will also acquaint the Jews with the will of the government; with the measures it plans for the improvement of their conditions; with the progress of education among the Jews in different lands, etc." In other words this paper mapped out for itself a program similar to that of the Razsvet, but did not carry it out. It was managed by young students and graduates from the rabbinical seminary, and it was filled with naive and elated patriotism, poems and translations. They tried also to conciliate Jewish tradition with modern science. The paper came out irregularly and was edited at different times by G. Verbovsky, O. Wohl, I. Gerstein, L. Levanda, A. Pumpyansky, and others. It was discontinued at the end of two years. Nothing is known of the circumstances which accompanied its establishment and the securing of a permit for same.

Rabinovitch's paper the Razsvet was continued under a different name and under the editorship of E. Soloveytschik and L. Pineker, up to number 22 and then under that of Soloveytschik and N. Bernstein. It appeared weekly from May 19, 1861 to April 27, 1862. The reason for the change in the name, from Razsvet to Sion (Zion) was that after

the Bazavet had already appeared it was discovered that there was another paper by that name in St. Petersburg and which had an earlier right to this name. It was, therefore, ordered by the government, on the complaint of the owner of the St. Petersburg paper that Rabinovitch's paper maintain its name till the end of the year and then assume a different name. The Sion had the same object in view as its predecessor, but in order to avoid difficulty with the government followed a milder policy. It became less polemical and more scientific and had hoped in this manner to attain what the Razavet failed in, namely to educate the Jews and to influence the Russian public opinion in favor of the Jews. But the hand of the censor proved too heavy even on the mild method of the Sion, and when Aksakov ~~appeared~~ in his paper with his attacks on the Talmud, Sion found out that it was not permitted to reply to the unfounded and slanderous attacks on the Jews and their religion. The editors then announced in number 43 that the publication will hereafter cease to appear. From now on a period of seven years elapsed without a Russo-Jewish paper, and it was not before May 1869 that the Den began to appear.

The Den (Day) set itself the same program as its predecessors. However, it paid much less attention to the combating of the inner enemy (superstition, fanaticism, ignorance, etc.), and much more attention to the fight for emancipation, advocating at the same time a more extensive form of assimilation and Russianization.

The first number of the Den appeared in May 1869 under the editorship of S. S. Ornstein and his associates M. Morgulis and I. Orshansky. The former conducted the department of "Foreign Events", in which he wrote of the progress achieved by the Jews of Western

Europe and urged his brethren to follow in their footsteps. The latter published here the most of his articles on the economic, social and legal status of the Jews, which appeared later in two volumes.

Like its predecessors the Den did not last long. The Odessa massacres of March 1871 made the further publication of the Den impossible, and it soon closed up after an existence of almost two years. From now on Odessa ceases to be the center of publication of Russo-Jewish periodicals. The next periodical "Vestnik Russkich Yevreyev" (the messenger of the Russian Jews) begins to appear in St. Petersburg.

The Vestnik Russkich Yevreyev was the first Russo-Jewish weekly to be published in St. Petersburg. It began to appear January 3rd, 1871 and with many interruptions came out for nearly three years. Its editors were A. Zederbaum and Dr. A. Goldenblum with the assistance, at different times of E. Karnovitch, D. Girs (Hirsh), O. Kotovitch, and others. The paper had no definite policy, although it often showed strong assimilating tendencies, even to the extent of self-annihilation. These tendencies of the Vestnik made it the target of attack on the part of the editors of the Den who quote the Sin Otetchestva and the Golos, two Russian papers, which welcomed the Vestnik and the plans of Zederbaum as an agent to bring the light of Christianity to the Jews.

The year of the appearance of the Vestnik is also marked by the appearance of the first volume of the very valuable (for its contents) Yevreyskaya Biblioteka. This was a purely literary publication containing literary production of a high standard. It was edited by A. Landau and numbered among its contributors the leading

Russo-Jewish writers of the time, such as L. Levanda, Orshansky, Morgulis, Mandelstam, Rogrov, Harkavy, etc. The Yevreyskaya Biblioteka was published for nine successive years, from 1871 to 1880, during which time eight volumes appeared. It was discontinued because of the Voschoi which began to appear in 1881.

There were no weekly papers from the time of the suspension of the Vestnik Russkich Yevreyev 1873 till August 1879 when two weeklies began to appear in Petersburg; the Razsvet (II) and the Russky Yevrey (the Russian Jew). The first editors of the Razsvet were the former editors of the Vestnik Russkich Yevreyev, Zederbaum and Goldenblum; from 1880 its editors were Rogrov and Rosenfeld, and from 1882 under the editorship of the latter only. It suspended publication in January 1883.

The first number of the Russky Yevrey appeared August 17th, 1879. Its first editor was L. Berman, and from 1883 it came out under the editorship of L. Kantor. It was discontinued in December, 1874. Both papers marked a change in the direction of the policies of the Russo-Jewish journalism. They showed a tendency of a more nationalistic and less assimilative character.

In 1866 and 1867 there appeared two volumes entitled "Sbornik Statei po Yevreiskoi Istorii i Literaturie" (A Collection of Articles on Jewish History and Literature). It was published by the society for the promotion of culture among the Jews of Russia. Its object in publishing these volumes was in the first place to give the Jewish public something of interest, and secondly to acquaint the Russian public with the works of the Russian Jews on their history and literature, believing that an acquaintance with the history of the Jews, their religious beliefs and their literature will help to

establish among the Russians a better and more correct judgment about the virtues and faults of the Jews in general, and of the Russian Jews in particular.

The publication contains articles by Orshansky, Morquies, Chvolson, Levin and Harkavy, all of which were discussed in their places.

This summarizes the periodical publications and magazines of the Russo-Jewish literature of the period covered by us.

## Chapter 2.

### Text Books for the Study of the Russian Language, and Others.

The various text-books which are included in this Chapter have no bearing upon the subject treated in this work. The only reason for presenting them is that they might throw some additional light on the spreading and the efforts to spread of the Russian language among the Jews of Russia. The most of these text-books have already been mentioned in other places of this work, in connection with the discussion of their authors. We shall, however, list them here so that their Chronological sequence may stand out in a more glaring light.

Probably the first to write a text-book for the study of the Russian language was Naftali Herz Schulman (see p.12). We know nothing of this work. All we have is a reference in the preface of one of Schulman's works that he is preparing a Hebrew Russian dictionary. This must have been written around 1810, but it is not known whether it was ever published.

Two other early attempts to write text-books for the study of

Russian were two grammars of the Russian language (in Hebrew). One of these belongs to the pen of I. R. Levinson, (see p. 12), who wrote it in 1820 but did not publish it. The other one was written by Byndzuneky (see p.12) in 1825 and published in Vilna. Of this work we have a reference in Mandelstam's Memoirs (see p. 44). The ~~other~~ first grammar was entitled "Yesodey Leshon Russia", the other work bore a similar title "Talmud Leshon Russia".

Some twenty years later (1846) another grammar of the Russian language (in Hebrew) was published by Emanuel (M.) Levin. This work is entitled "Dikduk Sefath Russia". Emanuel Levin is also the author of a Russian translation of the Pirkei Aboth (see p. 78 ) which was published in 1866 in the volume of the Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia.

In the latter part of the forties Mandelstam translated into Russian the Pentateuch and the Book of Psalms (see p. 43). This, however, was not published until sometime later. In 1859-1860 the same author published a Jewish-Russian and Russian-Jewish dictionary. To the pen of the same author belongs a catechism of the Jewish faith, written in German and translated into Russian by Schneckner, Kiev 1870. The same year appeared a Russian translation of the Hebrew prayer book including the Pirkei Aboth by Rabbi O. Gurvitch of Grodno.

In 1876 two more grammars of the Russian language appeared. One was written in Russian and Yiddish by A. Blostein and published in Vilna; the other entitled "A Grammar for Jewish Melamedim" was published by the Ministry of Education. The same year appeared a Jewish Russian dictionary by O.M. Lifschitz. Another Russian Jewish and Jewish-Russian dictionary was published in 1878 and 1880 by O.N. Steinberg.

This comprises, as far as we were able to ascertain, all the text-books that were published or written during the period under discussion and concludes the second Chapter and the third book of our work.

### Conclusion.

The twenty-five years of the reign of Alexander II were propitious for the growth of the Russo-Jewish literature. From infancy it grew to full maturity, from dwarfishness to gainthood. It was now destined to live and develop greater strength, and no force was powerful enough to destroy it. And, indeed, even the reactionary and tyrannical rule of the new tsar, Alexander III, and his relentless persecutions of the Jews, were unable to exterminate or stem the growth of the Russo-Jewish literature. It is true that the new political conditions were instrumental in changing somewhat the tendency of this literature so that it turned from its assimilating tendencies and gradually assumed a more or less nationalistic character; the fact remains, however, that it grew richer and more voluminous, and at the present time (before the outbreak of the war) it has assumed such immense proportions that a treatment of it would constitute a large work in itself.