

The DISCORSO CIRCA IL STATO DEGLI HEBREI (1638)

of the

Italian Rabbi Simeone (Simha ben Isaac) Luzzatto

with an

introduction on the life and works of the author

by

Lester Walter Roubey

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the title of Rabbi and
the degree of Master of Hebrew Letters

April, 1947

Referee: Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus

The DISCORSO CIRCA IL STATO DEGLI HEBREI (1638) of the Italian Rabbi Simeone (Simha ben Isaac) Luzzatto with an introduction on the life and works of the author.

This thesis contains an introduction to, and a translation of, the famous political-economic polemic tractate of Luzzatto. The author discusses the political and economic situation of the Venetian Jew and attempts to prove the value of the Jew to the Venetian state.

The first nine considerazioni (so the chapters are called) offer a defense of the Hebrews - the word "Jew" is not used - from the economic point of view. The last nine chapters offer an apologetic essay based on moral, historical, and rational grounds.

The first considerazione discusses the advantages accruing to a nation from commerce and trade. The Venetians have willingly renounced their own participation in trade once their fortunes are made. They no longer wish to risk their lives and possessions on the high seas but seek more stable forms of wealth. Since this is the situation, the argument is not whether the Venetians should let commerce fall entirely into the hands of foreigners, but rather whether the Jews or other foreigners in place of the Jews should direct it.

In the sixth considerazione Luzzatto shows that the Jews, forbidden to engage in the professions, trades, and agriculture, further the division of labor by their being restricted to commerce. This division of labor is beneficial to the state, for it tends toward the perfection of individual skills and reduces the possibilities of differences among the citizens. In the seventh considerazione it is pointed out that it is not good for wealth to be concentrated in a few hands. And trade and commerce are the best possible means to bring about a more or less equitable distribution of wealth.

The following chapter lists the various taxes paid annually by the Hebrews. The ninth discusses the banchi di pegno maintained by the Hebrews. The eleventh chapter gives a keenly drawn sketch of the Hebrew character. Usury is the subject of the twelfth considerazione.

In the fourteenth chapter the aversion of the Hebrews to proselytism is accentuated. This aversion acts as a deterrent to religious wars, for the Hebrew is directed by his religious laws to love his non-Jewish neighbor and to diffuse the knowledge of God, but not to insist upon the conversion of others to the Hebrew faith.

In the fifteenth chapter the author seeks to refute the accusations levied by Tacitus against the Hebrews. The sixteenth chapter provides a brief résumé of Jewish literary history. The detrimental force of dispersion upon a people's creativity and literary output is emphasized.

Chapter seventeen is a survey of the position of the Hebrews in the various countries of the Diaspora.

In the closing considerazione the author offers statistics, though not very reliable, on the distribution of the Hebrews in the various countries of the world.

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TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY BELOVED FATHER

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INTRODUCTION

Before the publication of Cecil Roth's detailed history of the Jews of Venice¹ there was very little authoritative information available with regard to the Jewish community of that city. Histories of Venice make only scattered mention of the Jewish settlement there. Cappelletti in his Storia della repubblica di Venezia gives an entire chapter (bk.33, ch.37) to the subject, but his manifest antisemitic bias makes us approach the work with caution.

Though no doubt Jews may have passed through the realm at an earlier date, the first document which identifies the Jews with Venice is dated 945. It is a decree issued by the Venetian Senate, which forbade any Venetian vessel to take aboard any Jewish or non-Jewish merchant that might be encountered in voyages to the Orient. However Venice was the crossroad of European trade, and it was inevitable that the Jews would pass through the city from time to time on their journeys to and from the East. Gradually a Jewish community arose, which in 1152 numbered about thirteen hundred. These Jews were kept out of Venice proper and were forced to conduct their affairs on the island of Spinalunga, opposite San Marco. This bit of swampy wasteland received the name Giudecca, a word appearing in a document in 1252. (The word has been offered as a possible etymon for giudeo, "Jew.") In 1290 it was decreed that the Jews pay an export tax and import tax of five per cent on all their merchandise that passed through the dominion. No

restrictive regulations appear to have been promulgated against the Jews during the first two hundred years of their settlement. In fact from 1317 on Jewish doctors are found among the crews of Venetian boats.

However, the end of the fourteenth century ushered in the beginning of discriminatory legislation affecting the Jews, and in 1374 we find the Jews' being granted a five-year period of residence in the city. In return they were to make certain monetary contributions and to open five banchi di pegno (pawnshops). Their residence was later extended to 1387. The previous year the Jewish community had acquired a burial ground in the Lido district.

As was to be expected, Christian merchants soon began to complain of Jewish rivalry, and the Senate set a date for expulsion: 1396. The Jews were granted the right, however, to live in Mestre, on the outskirts of the city. But in order to transact commercial affairs they were granted the right to visit the city for fifteen-day periods. The Jews circumvented this decree by coming to Venice for the permitted period, returning to Mestre for one day, and then journeying back to the city. Then, in 1409, the Senate ruled that an interval of four months had to elapse between visits. No doubt Judaeo-Christian relationships were on the increase, for, in 1424, severe penalties were announced for any Jews who had relations with Christian women.

An unsuccessful attempt was made early in the fifteenth century to open a synagogue, and the year 1443 marked the first appearance of the Jewish badge in Venice. The wearing

of a red cap succeeded the yellow badge.

The Jews must have entered the cultural life of the city, for, in 1443, they were forbidden to open for the convenience of Christians any school of singing, dancing, etc. The Jews seem to have also directed schools which taught certain doctrinae, the nature of which is unknown.

April 10, 1516 marks a memorable and sad date in Jewish history, for on that day, the day immediately following the feast of Pentecost, the Jews had to move to a restricted place of residence; the first ghetto². (The idea of Jewish segregation was not a new one, for already in 1179 the Third Lateran Council prohibited Jews and Christians to live together, a prohibition which was not strictly enforced.) In 1480 a mass of false testimony caused the condemnation to death of eight Jews.

An order for a mass expulsion was announced in 1511 but was never carried out, and, in 1515, Jews were permitted to open new shops on the Rialto for the purpose of selling silk cloths.

The banishment from Spain brought a great increase in the Jewish population, as was to be expected, but the enlarged number only incited still further the jealousy of the non-Jews who were business competitors of the Jews. It was not long before the Jews were ordered herded into one quarter of the city, near San Geremia, in the Ghetto Nuovo, a swampy, unhealthy district, situated at a distance from San Marco. Again, in 1527, another mass expulsion was planned but never

executed. In 1541, the influx of Levantine Jews brought about an augmentation in the area of the ghetto.

The relatively new art of printing had its Jewish devotees, but here, too, the Jews must have provided competition for the Christians; for, in 1566, the right to engage in that calling was taken away.

The great naval victory at Lepanto, in which the Holy League (including Pope Pius V, Venice, Spain, Genoa, Savoy, and other Italian ~~states~~) almost completely destroyed the Turkish fleet under Ali Pasha, was almost an indirect cause for a projected expulsion of the Jews. The Senate believed the banishing of the Jewish population would be a fitting tribute to God for the ~~v~~ⁱctory just gained. Further, the Venetians thought that the Jews had abetted the Turks through their relations with the Jewish favorite of the Turkish court, Joseph Nasi. The Jews began to prepare for a huge migration from a city ~~in~~ which they had, despite certain setbacks, come to consider a significant and permanent seat of both Jewish learning and trade. But political considerations turned the matter in favor of the Jews, and, suddenly, on July 7, 1573, the Senate revoked its decree of expulsion. Francesco Barbaro, returning from the Turkish court with a treaty of peace, pointed out to the Senate that an expulsion of Jews would strengthen the Turks by the new immigration into their lands (as had the previous banishment from Spain), and anger the Jewish party, which was in great favor at the Turkish court, despite the loss of

influence by Joseph Nasi. But no doubt money bribes also entered into the story.

After this last threat the Jewish community appears to have entered upon a period of comparative calm in the seventeenth century. Favorable external conditions naturally gave an impetus to Jewish studies even within the close quarters of the ghetto. This was the period when two outstanding Jewish luminaries made their appearance on the Venetian scene: Simeone Luzzatto and Leone da Modena.

Freed from physical strain, the wealth of the Jewish community increased, and with wealth came a desire for luxurious living. The rabbis of the time fulminated against the youth of the city who preferred staying outside the synagogue doors, to ogle the women who came to pray. Many young men became devotees of the theater established within the ghetto by Leone da Modena. And from Leone himself, ^{in his Riti ebraici,} we learn that his co-religionists in Venice had slipped somewhat from the orthodox norm of the other Jews of Europe. The fascinating career of Leone reveals to us the change that had come into the life of the Venetian Jew. Leone was a gambler, a patron of the drama and music. An Italian rabbi, a popular preacher, and a scholar, he was also the leading spirit in the Musical Academy which flourished in the ghetto. Here then was the milieu in which Simeone Luzzatto worked and wrote.

* * *

Simeone (Simḥah ben Isaac ³) Luzzatto was born circa 1580. While still a young man he acquired for himself a reputation as a capable public speaker. In 1606, he wrote the Mishan Mayim⁴, a responsum concerning the mikveh of Rovigo. Other responsa by Luzzatto appeared in the Nachalat Ya'akob, the Pahad Yitzhak, and the Debar Sh'muel.

Lampronti, the compiler of the Pahad Yitzhak, tells of a responsum by Luzzatto in which the Venetian rabbi stated that it was permissible to ride in a gondola on the Sabbath. This ruling was suppressed by the Rabbinical Academy of Venice not because its author's ruling was not acceptable or based on deductions derived correctly from the Talmud, but from the fear that the Jewish community, receiving this permission, might go ahead and take further liberties on the Sabbath on the basis of analogies derived from this liberal responsum.

Luzzatto together with Leone da Modena occupied the rabbinate of Venice. They are said to have written a joint work in which they refuted the claims of the Karaites⁵. However, the work is not extant.

Luzzatto's learning was not limited to the rabbinic field, for his Italian works, the Socrate (Venice, 1651) and the Discorso reveal a broad acquaintance with secular learning, particularly classical literature.

The Socrate discloses a keen, liberal mind, ready to examine and test fairly all ideas and views. In this work Luzzatto seeks to conciliate faith and reason, to prove the weakness of human reason when not buttressed by divine

revelation. In form the book is a parable with the author voicing his own thoughts through Socrates. Reason has long been held a prisoner by Orthodox Authority and appeals to the Academy of Delphi to set her free. This the Academy does, despite the counterarguments offered by Aristotle and Pythagoras against permitting unbridled Reason to roam the earth. Then when unrestrained Reason performs as predicted by Aristotle and Pythagoras, Socrates advises that Reason be joined with Revelation.

⁶
In the Discorso Luzzatto refers to another work, a Trattato dell'opinioni e dogmi degli Hebrei dall'universal non dissonanti e de riti loro più principali." This volume, like that on the Karaites, is not extant. It has been held by some that though Luzzatto intended to write this treatise, the plan never came to fruition.

* * *

The Discorso falls naturally into two divisions. The first nine considerazioni (so the chapters are called) offer a defense of the Hebrews - the word "Jew" is not used - from the economic point of view. The last nine chapters offer an apologetic essay based on moral, historical, and rational grounds. In the first part Luzzatto is the true economic historian, and it is this section which forms the kernel of the book and offers the material most interesting to the student of Jewish history.

The first considerazione discusses the advantages accruing to a nation from commerce and trade. Trade increases the tax income; the importing of foreign goods leads to the

embellishment of life; raw products provide work; and commercial relations with foreign countries lessen the possibility of war. Much of the volume of trade is in the hands of the Hebrews, a fact which is criticized by many. However, the Venetians have willingly renounced their own participation in trade once they have made their fortunes. They now prefer the calm life and invest their money in more stable forms of wealth. They no longer wish to risk their lives and possessions on the high seas. Since this is the situation, the argument is not whether the Venetians should let commerce fall entirely into the hands of foreigners, but rather whether the Jews or other foreigners in place of the Jews should direct it.

Foreigners other than Jews, once they have made their fortunes, usually gather up their wealth and return to, or send their money to, their native lands. On the other hand, the country-less Jews do not withdraw their money from the Venetian economy. Non-Jewish foreigners often involve the state in litigation with their own governments. The Jews cannot do this.

In the sixth considerazione Luzzatto shows that the Jews, forbidden to engage in the professions, trades, and agriculture, further the division of labor by being restricted to commerce. This division of labor is beneficial to the state, for it tends toward the perfection of individual skills and reduces the possibilities of differences among the citizens. In addition, when men are engaged in callings which are opposed each to the other, there is less chance that they may ally themselves in an uprising

against the government.

In the seventh considerazione it is pointed out that it is not good for wealth to be concentrated in a few hands. And trade and commerce are the best possible means to bring about a more or less equitable distribution of wealth.

The following chapter lists the various taxes paid annually by the Hebrews. The ninth discusses the banchi di pegno maintained by the Hebrews. The eleventh chapter gives a keenly drawn sketch of the Hebrew character.

Usury is the subject of the twelfth considerazione. The author maintains that usury is morally hateful but economically necessary. Further, the Hebrews were driven to the practice through oppressive laws and not drawn to it through voluntary action.

In chapter fourteen Luzzatto^{presents} an unusual argument - one which he believes should bring about a receptive attitude toward the Hebrews: their aversion to proselytism. This aversion acts as a deterrent to religious wars, for the Hebrew is directed by his religious laws to love his non-Jewish neighbor and to diffuse the knowledge of God, but not to insist upon the conversion of others to the Hebrew faith.

In the fifteenth chapter the author seeks to refute the accusations levied by Tacitus against the Hebrews. Though many of these attacks may be based only upon legends, yet, says Luzzatto, even a legend may have some grain of truth hidden within it. Therefore it is necessary to refute it. The sixteenth chapter pro-

vides a brief resume of Jewish literary history. The detrimental force of dispersion upon a people's creativity and literary output is emphasized.

Chapter seventeen is a survey of the position of the Hebrews in the various countries of the Disapora. Luzzatto seems most modern when he explains how economic causes lead a ruler to expel the Hebrews from one city in a given country and allow them to remain in another.

In the closing considerazione the author offers statistics, though not very reliable, on the distribution of the Hebrews in the various countries of the world.

* * *

In conclusion, a significant point must be indicated. Luzzatto does not attempt to defend the Jews on theological grounds. Not one rabbinic authority or reference is cited.⁸ The author prefers to rely upon historical and economic arguments alone. This method of handling the problem of Jewish apologetics is most modern and adds inestimably to the value of the work. It is not surprising then that Roth in his History of the Jews of Italy terms the Discorso "one of the most memorable contributions to Jewish apologetic literature" and adds that it "anticipated or inspired most subsequent publications of the sort."⁷

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NOTES

1. Venice, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1930.
2. For origin of the word ghetto, v. Roth, op.cit., p.53n.
3. The Hebrew name is found in many haskamas, but in Italian he called himself Simeone or Simone.
4. מ'א י'א, Fulcrum aquae Resp. seu dissertatio de balneo, adjecta expositione loci Mishnae, in lib. מ'א י'א (Steinschneider, Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana...Berlin, Friedlander, 1852-60; column 2597, entry no. 7191.)
5. Wolf, J.C., Bibliotheca Hebraea, Hamburg, Liebezeit, 1715-33, 4vo.; II, 1150.
6. V. title page, also pp. 5a, 91a.
7. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1946; p.397.
8. But there are rare references to rabbinic comment on Biblical verses. * * *
V. pp.53b, 54b.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

In the translation of the Discorso, the word "Nation" always refers to the "Hebrew Nation"; the word "City", to Venice. Considerazioni XV and XVI, omitted here, will be translated shortly as an addition to this thesis.

* * *

DISCOURSE
ON THE STATE OF THE JEWS

and in particular, those
living in the famous city
of VENICE -

by SIMEONE LUZZATTO,
Hebrew Rabbi

And there is an appendix to the Treatise concerning the opinions and dogmas of the Jews which do not differ from the universal, and concerning their more principal rites.

IN VENICE, MDCXXXVIII

-0-

At Gioanne Calleoni's
with the license of
the Superiors.

TO THE LOVERS OF TRUTH

I have not thought it proper that a sketched portrait ought to obtain a greater patronage than that which its original has ever, for any length of time, been able to win. Deprived of any special protector, the Hebrew Nation's wandering and scattered; and in like fashion, without any particular support to which it may be recommended, the present Discourse has ventured into the light of the World. I dare, neglected and unarmed with ornate phrasing, to invite it to your noble presence, being conscious of how agreeable simplicity is to the cultivators of unconquerable truth to which even nudity itself brings greatest delight and pleasure. I do not demand from you undue favor and extorted applause, knowing how unworthy and deserved it is, but rather a very candid and straight judgment for that which it argues. And if one be permitted to compare small and obscure things with great and illustrious ones, I conceive for it hope of some prosperous result. For if the little baby Moses, who later became a celebrated legislator, having been exposed by his mother to the currents of the River Nile, chanced to meet with the daughter of the enemy and tyrant king, Pharaoh, who had compassion on the weeping little boy and saved him from imminent submersion and freely had him educated in the Royal House, then who knows whether a not quite dissimilar success is about to happen to this recent newborn baby and abandoned offspring when one considers that it was born under the most benign and mild Venetian sky? On meeting with some of those

most noble heroes with which the famous City so greatly abounds, princes not only through birth, but much more through the ornament of royal virtues, it may be benignly gathered in and sheltered, and perhaps with favorable protection from the rigorous censures of more severe and austere judges, if not championed, at least it may be excused.

PREFACE TO THE ENTIRE WORK

(5) The Hebrew nation, which in past centuries was so greatly celebrated and illustrious through human prosperity and divine favors, is now thus known, on the contrary, through calamities, as well as by the continued and constant tolerance of them, among which not the least is the lack of those doctrines and learning which it would have needed in order to expose and manifest itself to the sincere judgment of the most prudent, by the cutting down and breaking off of those infamous and lying slurs that the conditions of the times and the derision of the most vulgar have woven about it. For which purpose, with that minimum of talent that Divine Majesty has ^{granted} ~~grated~~ me, I have proposed to form a compendious, but true account of its principles, rites and most common opinions, which do not disagree with or differ from common usage. In this task, I have tried with all my power (although I am of that nation) to abstain from any feelings or desires which could make me deviate from the truth. Thus I hope to find a just reader, who, free of all fixed and premeditated judgment, will not follow the common custom of approving and thinking well only (5b) of fortunate and happy people, and always damning the beaten and afflicted, but he will, with correct judgment, consider carefully what my imperfection has dictated to me in such a plan. I will leave off considering at length the antiquity of the race, the unmixed blood preserved for so long a time, the tenacity of rites and beliefs, the inflexibility in oppressions. I will add only to my above-mentioned plan the exposition of some profits that the Hebrew nation living in the famous City

of Venice brings to it, not having in this any intention to show to others an ambitious display of useful things or emoluments, but solely to show that the above-mentioned nation is not a quite useless part of the common people of the above-mentioned city. Thus those least informed about the affairs of the world will be partly informed as to what may be the true motives and impulses which dispose the most prudent and just Republic to grant and assign to the nation a safe domicile and residence in such a noble emporium and illustrious City and, with paternal protection, defend it from the insults of others.

With such information I hope the above-mentioned persons will become toward the Nation not only less contumacious, but, in addition, somewhat placid and friendly. If in conformity with the condition of human fragility there happen to be found in the nation some criminals and scoundrels, not for that reason ought (6) the pure affection that the general population of the Hebrews holds toward its most clement Prince be obscured and defamed; neither ought one to fear and suspect that public indignation will be stirred up. Even well cultivated earth, together with the harvest, produces useless and pernicious weeds, and not for such a cause does the prudent farmer abandon the immoderate and luxuriant soil. He tears out the ill-born plants; he continues his difficult labor in caring for the good and saving the useful.

Whoever is skilled in human events is sufficiently informed that the quality of evil is much more easily felt than that of good, for evil is a deviation and irregularity, away

from the customary order and norm, and it is noticed by everyone, but the good is a continuous progress in conformity with the continuity of things formerly constituted. Thus it is hardly observed even by wise men. Infirmary caused by intemperance and change suddenly assailing us disturbs us, whereas the value of health can be understood by reasoning alone and by comparison with its opposites. Those who navigate with the current, and therefore travel with great speed, do not notice their swift movement, but should some pause or slight impediment come about, they suddenly feel the agitation and violent shakings. Thus by some, the crimes of a few of this nation (6b) are exaggerated into intolerable misfortunes and unbearable calamities. But the ordinary commodities and profits which are derived from them, as insensible things and unknown, are passed over and neglected. For which reason the prudent reader will not be aggrieved if I expand somewhat on this subject, since it is the least frequented and observed. If some fragment of ancient statuary, because it was by Phidias or Lysippus, would have been elaborated upon in the presence of a curious antiquarian, the comment would be of some value. Therefore, the remnant of the ancient Hebrew people ought not to be entirely loathed, even though it be deformed by travails and disfigured by long captivity, since, by common accord of men, a long time ago that People took its form of Government and way of life from the Greatest Workman.

(7) INTRODUCTION TO THIS TREATISE

The Hebrews bring considerable emolument to the famous City of Venice. That, in like manner, they can be numbered among the integrating portions of its common people, I should not think a rash and unharmonious proposition that could offend the delicate feelings of even the most scrupulous minds. While one finds that the Stoics, among the famous ancient philosophers, eagerly desired to affirm that the sun, moon and other stars fed and nurtured themselves from the vapor of this, our low terrestrial Globe, so Democritus and Leucippus dared to say that the world, so great and ornate, did not have indivisible and insensible elements which compose it. If this opinion was damned, that censure came more through the casual coupling of those small bodies affirmed by those philosophers than through the absurdity of that construction. In like manner, it may be licit and permitted to the Hebrew nation to compare itself to the atoms of Democritus in presuming itself a particle of such a numerous population and a tenuous and terrestrial exhalation which combine to lend tribute and nourishment to the sublimity of the public treasury. Kingdoms are like the (7b) heavenly Milky Way which appears to our eyes as a concourse of most minute stars. Each one is invisible to us by itself, but united form a great sweep of light and splendor. Thus great Empires result from the minutiae of diverse populations, and cannot likewise deny that the abundance of tolls contributed to the public treasury would alleviate in great part the subjects and those weighed down with taxes and burdens. The sea, when it is swollen with water,

receives into itself the rivers which flow into it, but both remain equally increased. But when the sea is in a diminished condition, the larger rivers disgoring into it have its own waters diminished, and the smaller rivers are entirely dried up. So our stomach acts when it suffers a poverty of food, with the accompanying pain and travail of the other members. It nourishes itself with humors appropriate to it. On the contrary, with an abundance of nourishment, not only is the depredation lessened, but it diffuses to the other members its own abundance. In the same manner, the multiplicity of tolls and carriage fees not only liberates the people from the vexation of taxes and contributions which, in order to supply his urgencies and needs the Prince would be obliged to collect, but it would draw up for him the abundance of public money - which is not a little useful.

Civil experience teaches that the Cities which flourish with abundant commerce find their people in great part relieved of extraordinary (6) burdens and exorbitant tributes. The Romans, though politicians and moderates, even imposed a tax on human excrement, extended even to that of ugly animals, called the tax of "Grisagiro". Even disgraceful and obscene operations contributed to enriching their treasury. The prostitutes and other infamous people contributed to the public funds a portion of their ignominious gain. There was also the capital tax on the lowest class of the populace imposed by the same Romans. These are all manners of extractions and extortions abhorred by Venetian magnanimity and grandeur which

has the custom of taxing only the industry of men and not their lives, to punish vices and not to profit from them. All this has come to pass principally through its moderate government but is, in part, helped by the abundance of emoluments that mercantile business and maritime traffic bring with them.

Consideration I.

Concerning the benefit of Commerce.

Human comfort is nothing but a coupling of our reciprocal needs or pleasures, and an alternate contraction of abundance and wants. What the moralist (8b) calls superfluities, luxuries and vain objects of our avidity, the politicians affirm to be the foundations and elements of commerce, the assailants of avarice, equalizers of the human state, the tenacious knot and glue which joins the ends of the world; the precious metal and jewels are superfluous, the aromas and spices not necessary to the cynical and solitary life (and not even now for civil and political life). But these are not only necessary for the above-mentioned emoluments, but even with the transportation of traveling wares, convey customs, arts, doctrines, and humanity itself. Greece, mistress of learning, had as teachers of the alphabet, the Tyrian merchants. Previously ignorance and barbarity darkened everything.

But to come to the particular treatise that I have proposed, I say that among the advantages and benefits that the Hebrew Nation brings to the City of Venice, the principal one is the profit that results from mercantile pursuits, a profession almost its own. From this pursuit, five important

benefits accrue to the City. First, the increase of public entrance and exit tolls. Second, the transportation of various wares from remote countries, wares not only for human necessities, but for the ornamentation of civil life. three, furnishing (9) materials in great abundance to workers and artisans, such as wool, silk, cottons, and the like, around which the industry of workmen is supported without any tumultuary commotion because of lack of food. Fourth, the rapid sale of so many fabricated and elaborate articles in the City, articles by which so many thousands of persons support themselves. Fifth, commerce and reciprocal trade, which is the foundation of peace and quiet among contiguous peoples, for Princes are moved to make war more often by the inclination of the people than the people are persuaded to take up arms by the Princes. Egypt and Syria never armed themselves against Italy, but certainly the Barbary coast was always in open war with Italy, or it was an infamous nest of pirates armed to the hurt of Italy because there had never been any commerce or important business between these peoples, wherefore Virgil said of the same peoples Nullus amor populis, nec fuedera sunt. This condition obtained in every century. To this traffic, the Hebrews contribute by the industry of their persons and the use of their fortunes, wherefore in the present time with great floridness and frequency part of the commercial life resides with the Hebrew nation. But because there has never been any evidence so certain that human industry does not find an opportunity to oppose it, there

are some who rise up (9b) to say that the Hebrews were not the introducers and carriers of merchandise and commerce but rather were the usurpers of these, and that formerly while the city flourished in business, affairs were managed by its own citizens, and the Hebrews in the course of time made themselves, in great part, the arbiters and masters of this traffic with a great loss to the citizens and the City itself. They add that it was not those Hebrews who brought in the wares, but the marvelous location of the City, the commodiousness of the seaport, the proximity of navigable rivers, the nearness to Germany, that the freedom of living, the security of wealth, the abundance and perfection of the arts were the true attractions, and without the industrious vigilance of the Hebrews, all would have come necessarily into the hands of its own citizens. One cannot endure, by any reason at all, that the Hebrews, as perpetual outsiders, should have equalized their position in mercantile pursuits (among all the honorable and profitable professions) with that of the citizens who joined themselves to the City through the possession of stable wealth and other particular prerogatives. There is this or that specious reason which may be stirred up by less vulgar persons against the Nation. Their fallacy will be made manifest when, from the highest principle, one will betake oneself to consider the course of human affairs (10) and how the change of assiduity and employment of citizens depends on the changed and varied state and condition of the City.

CONSIDERATION II

That a great part of the traffic is in the hands of foreigners.

As much as the mercantile pursuit is commendable in itself, useful through that which it controls, and profitable to the City wherein it is carried on, it is always burdensome and very dangerous and entails the risking of persons and means to the precipitations of long journeys, laborious voyages, and dubious trusts. Wherefore every merchant has as the aim and goal of his traffic the cessation of business and rest. Then after having amassed suitable riches, he is able to enjoy his acquisitions in quiet and tranquillity. He invests them in stable wealth and local incomes, which are far from the insults of fate. This he seeks not only for himself, but much more for his children and successors, in the belief that since they are unpractical and inexperienced, they may loose what has already been acquired by him with instinct and work. For that further reason he burdens his own wealth with various impediments such as deeds of trust, primogenitures, and similar conditions, and in this way, he leads away his own descendants (105) from the work of trade. Because of that action it happens that cities become great and powerful through the traffic of their own citizens, because of the investments of stable property, manufactories of sumptuous buildings, purchases of valuable household goods and urban occupations, - with the result that trade falls into the hands of Foreigners and strangers, who have been thrust into

the City because of the straits of life in their native lands, or who have been attracted by the greed of gain.

Many examples of this could be adduced, but sufficient for our purpose is the single City of Venice, which has become the most celebrated emporium of the entire world because of the traffic of its citizens. Their voyaging to the Levant extended not only to the farthest recess the Palus Maeotis (Sea of Azor) but scoured the whole western Mediterranean. Going beyond the narrows of the southern part, they found the black Ethiopians, and they penetrated toward the north to the distant ports of Moscow and Tartary in such a way that they would have been commended by the first soldiers of fortune who left an opportunity to their descendants through the discovery of new regions and countries, as in the voyages and navigations of Nosto, Quirini, Barbaro, and Marco Polo, patricians of this City. But afterwards, when the Most Serene Republic with happy fortune extended its territorial dominion, there arose in the mind of (11) those industrious and indefatigable plowers of the Sea the very prudent thought to free themselves from the troubles and annoyances of distant commerce and from the dangers of travel. Then they themselves employed their cares in the possession of stable wealth, cultivation of lands, and other occupations of city life, not wishing any longer to expose themselves to the vagaries of fortune, as Cicero wrote in discussing trade: "atque etiam si satiata questu, &c contenta potius, ut saepe ex alto in portu, ex ipso portu in agros possessionesque contulerit, videtur iure optime posse

laudari." He added that "omnium rerum ex quibus aliquid acquiritur nihil est agricultura melius, &c homine libero dignius".

Wherefore ceasing commerce for such a cause, foreigners and outsiders of various places and countries succeeded them and intruded themselves into it. In the course of time almost all the traffic of the West and navigation itself came into the hands of the Genoans, French, English, Flemings, and others, all of which was previously in the hands of the Venetians. And that this fact is true (besides the evidence of the fact which approves it) one is now convinced because the right to traffic in the West has been conceded to some or other outsider. But not so is the Levant traffic, which is permitted to citizens and other privileged persons only. Thus if we wish to consider (11b) the traffic which is carried on from the part of the Levant in that strip of land which extends from the Dalmatian shores to Constantinople, all the commerce has fallen into the hands of the Turks or Greeks, to their subjects.

That this has happened through voluntary renunciation and arbitrary alienation of these citizens, and that it was not seized by others can be shown by two good reasons, which with great clearness prove it. The first is that because the City of Venice (may God preserve it) has never been subject to invasion and sacking or any other calamity which might have brought annihilation or a considerable diminution of the property and wealth of the citizens. And with the

Venetians being most tenacious with regard to their early customs and institutions, it could not be that the cessation of commerce among these people could be derived and result from any other reason than from their spontaneous deliberation, they having found other more profitable and safe employment in which they might exercise themselves. The second reason is that there has been provided by public prudence an increase in custom duties for the Foreigner who traffics in the west, a three per cent entrance duty and an exit duty of like amount, over and above what the Venetian contributes. Therefore it is not to be doubted that if the citizen should be inclined to commerce, he would in a short time weary the foreigner and exclude him from trading, for the Venetian has (12) the advantage of six per cent over him in the selling of his merchandise. But because this citizen has already procured for himself other profits more secure and easier gains, he does not consent to let himself be wheedled by some or other advantage of deliberation to involve himself again in the cares and suspenses of commerce. In such a manner the traffic in the West and in Italy itself has fallen entirely into the hands of foreigners. Therefore in such a state of affairs one ought not to question or debate whether it be more profitable to the City and to the public to have the trading in the West and in the land of Turkey directed by the Hebrews or by its own Citizens; but indeed one ought to discuss and ponder whether the results would be better with the traffic in the hands of outsiders or in the hands of the Hebrews,

comparing only these together. I believe that if we arrange the controversy in such a way, one will easily for many reasons and consequences be able to conclude in favor of the Hebrews.

Consideration III

One discusses why cities cease becoming rich : and making provisions for such a purpose.

To great cities and populations happens that very same thing which happens to our bodies, that from a small beginning and almost insensible moving origin they come by means of continual nutrition to a considerable grandeur. But after having arrived at a certain limit prescribed for them by nature, they cease to increase further and to augment themselves and remain for a certain length of time in an equal state. Thus cities, after having reached a limited point in population and wealth, set a goal for their progress and remain in the same state in which they are or decline from it. According to my belief, the reason for that, in so far as wealth is concerned, is that after the citizens and inhabitants have become opulent through the means of commerce, they lay aside, as we have said, their first ways. They procure a greater increase, but their aim is to strengthen and conserve their holdings. Then in their time come the foreigners in whose mind now rises the desire for quiet and rest. After they have attained them from their gains, they take their gains back to their own countries. In like fashion (13) other foreigners with the same talent follow these in such a manner so that

there is always a continuous transportation away from the city of the amassed money, without any increase in wealth in the city. But quickly there follows an evident detriment from this action, just as in the case of the sea into which all the rivers come together with such a great tribute of waters. Yet the sea always contains the same quantity of water without any increase, for it diffuses insensibly the received waters back to the very beginnings and origins of the rivers. Thus the influx of outsiders from divers regions does not alter and enrich cities because with the continuous backward flow the money acquired is transmitted to the places whence the foreigners came.

As foresight against such an inconvenience there are two ways to act. The first is to hinder the traffic of the foreigners directly or obliquely, by loading their wares with greater custom duties than the citizens have to meet and by prohibiting some of their merchandise and manufactures, and in other ways to disturb their commerce.

The second way is to incorporate and join to the city the above mentioned foreigners so that in the manner of other citizens they may establish themselves in the city. But in either case there is need for exact circumspection and accurate care.

(13b) The first way was observed and directed by the two queens of England, Mary and Elizabeth; the one tried it, and the other with ease put it into practice. Long before our time many cities had joined together and agreed, cities

in the north which possessed a seaport or vicinity of navigable rivers, to work in common the navigation of those waters in such a way that it was all directed by them. They then acquired among the northern cities the broadest privileges and prerogatives and an almost total exemption from duties. This was the Hanseatic League, most celebrated through all Europe.

It occurred to Queen Mary to increase the burden of duties from one per cent, which had to be paid on arrival, to twenty per cent, with a change in privileges. Navigation in such a way was rendered difficult. Queen Elizabeth, who succeeded her, continued to do the same thing but with a greater tenacity of mind and firm resolution. In the beginning this attempt was condemned by many as something which in appearance impeded and dispersed navigation from the Kingdom of England, with all of it being in the hands of the above mentioned League. But experience which followed the fact taught that whatever might have been the judgment and virile prudence of the above mentioned Queens, they observed (14) that all the gain which was most important and which was being extracted from the transportation of merchandise in their kingdoms, devolved and went to the above mentioned League, to a foreign and outside kingdom, and their islanders although most disposed to maritime practices were putrefying in idleness, ignorant and inexperienced in navigation. For that reason they tried to disturb Hanseatic navigation, and they made it necessary for their own vassals to employ themselves in nav-

igation. The result is that in the present, one discerns an inestimable benefit, for the English have reached the ultimate limit in reputation in the maritime profession. But even though for these queens their attempt prospered, it is fitting for others in following such an example to be very cautious and careful when one considers the position of the British Island placed by nature over the dominion of the western and northern seas. The absolute mastery and sway that the above mentioned queens exercised in every port facilitated, nay opened, the path to such a fortunate outcome. The same would not happen so easily here in Italy, its ports being possessed by various princes and potentates. Thus if one of them hindered and excluded the concourse of outsiders, the latter would be immediately received by the others with the most ample privileges and exemptions. There is also the fact that the people of not even one (14b) maritime city is disposed to make up for the lack of foreign navigation. Therefore there would result to that city an almost total annihilation of commerce. This did not happen in England because of the multiplicity of the cities and populations disposed to such a pursuit, which makes that whole Island almost a single and continuous maritime city.

The second way to avoid the predicted disorder can be carried out by amassing and uniting the foreigners with the citizens and establishing them in some manner in the City. Great difficulties in order to put this plan into practice also are not lacking.

Firstly, natural instinct opposes itself, and the indelible affection that every one has for his native land, and the desire to terminate one's life there where it had its beginnings. One may add that many trafficking foreigners in their own cities are participants in the government, e.g., the Genoans, Flemings, the Germans of the Free Cities, and in some part the Florentines. For that reason, they would not exchange the domicile of their city for another habitation. In addition the fact that they have acquired simple citizenship in the place where they traffic would make it necessary for them to renounce something or other that they might have enjoyed in another place. And experience shows us that when there are in a city many very rich outsiders who through the length of their having lived there, ~~they~~ might have been able (15) to gain citizenship with its privileges, by reason of the above mentioned cause they do not obtain it nor attempt to do so.

The second reason which prevents joining the outsiders to the city is the penury of lands, which would prevent new acquisitions, all of it being already occupied by its own citizens multiplied to such a great number. This scarcity is increased because of the city's circuit for a long time having been occupied by very broad lagoons and swampy lands unfit for cultivation. And the difficulty still increases, for almost all the land is possessed by the citizenry and is moreover burdened with conditions and various

impediments so that new purchasers grow suspicious of buying disputes instead of land.

Thirdly, merchants have a custom after having assembled wealth not to be content with its possession alone. They are assailed by thoughts of gain, prerogatives, and extraordinary dignities, and together with lands to obtain titles, dominion, and jurisdictions to render more illustrious their condition rather than have it remain unknown. But not in every place can such an attempt succeed, and others are not pleased with making acquisitions except in popular places, in conformity with their position and quality, for they do not like to be confined with their elders.

For these reasons and like ones it is difficult to make foreigners take root and to hold them in the (15^b) City, together with their fortunes and wealth. But the traffic directed by the Hebrews marvelously relieves and remedies the above mentioned inconveniences, for they do not have their own country to which they may aspire to transport their wealth that they have amassed in the city, nor even in any place do they have the riches and ability to acquire stable property. And if they had it, it would not fulfill their interests to do so because they would not pawn and burden their possessions while their persons are subject to so many changes. For they live in every place with safe conducts, and licenses from princes. They aspire very little to dignities, titles, and dominion because where once they

are received with kindness, they make a firm resolution not to leave. Besides, the fact that the Hebrew inhabitant in Venice, not having any skill of his own, other than commerce, finds it difficult to leave, for he has no hope of supporting himself with any profession and skill exercisable in every city. But commerce and trade in every place are variable, and in order to introduce them and start them a long observation and concourse of friends is necessary.

And again there is no doubt that of all the states and places of the world the Hebrew Nations likes best the most pleasant government of the Most Serene Republic, because of the form of stable rule which does not change through the mutability of the thoughts of a (10) single prince and through the instigation of counselors; and because the Republic through its special instinct is a lover of peace with its neighbors. And the Hebrew Nation knows well that in time of war it is the first one exposed to the extortion of friendly soldiers, the prey of enemies, and taxes and burdens of princes. The frequency of commerce, the sea port, the abundance of all things pertaining to sustenance extremely fulfills the Nation's desires. A small people being friendly to it - and practicable - pleases it extremely. But above all the exemplary justice administered in their defense against any order of persons who might offend them whether with regard to life or theft and the punctual observing of that which is promised to them with regard to their conduct and privileges - these hold them firmly joined

to the City and its state. Whence one can boldly conclude that with the commerce of the west given up by the citizens of the City, that which is profitable to the interests of the prince and of the citizens themselves is (supposing even that the Hebrew should not augment the mercantile trade) the traffic's being rather in the hands of the Hebrew nation whose persons are established in the City and whose riches remain in the City, than in the hands of foreigners who are always with regard to the City (for the aforementioned causes), outsiders and aliens. In addition to the fact that the Hebrews do not move away from the city since they do not have any special residence, there is no (10b) further danger that they will take elsewhere the most noble and profitable professions in order to adorn their native lands.

Moreover, it is still worthy of reflection that when the navigation to the West is in the hands of foreigners, a disadvantage of great consequence results to the City from it, for Italy is situated in such a manner that vessels arriving in their turn from the west first go up to Genoa, which for several years so enlarged itself from maritime traffic. Afterwards they land successively at Livorno, Civitavecchia, Naples, Messina, Raguggi, Ancona, and finally at Venice - if they need to do any rapid selling of the left-overs and residue of their wares - as the last part of Christendom. Nor has the relief from the new tax

at all avoided or remedied such prejudice. And merchandise arriving particularly at Livorno and Genoa is distributed throughout Lombardy, Piedmont, and the Alpine Regions which border upon it, and likewise through Romagna and the March of Ancona. And particularly when it abounds in the mentioned ports, it is wanting in Venice. But the trade destined for the Hebrews of Italy by their companies and friends, from Livorno on, cannot help but arrive at the City of Venice, for the Hebrews have not yet tried to obtain in the mentioned places any space or domicile. Livorno itself, after some excessive losses which occurred (17) in years past in the wheat trade, was in great part abandoned by the Hebrews, for many of them who are in other countries hand over a great part of their possessions into the hands of the inhabitants of the City, when they themselves are not able to transfer it there personally for various reasons, and they are satisfied at having placed their riches in a safe place and this is said with regard to the trade of the West. And that is not to say that without the traffic of the Hebrews in any event there would arrive at Venice the same merchandise and in the same quantity - this because of the necessary rapid sale in the neighboring provinces, for with regard to Italy it has already been shown that that is not necessary. But moreover I can say that it is indubitable that the abundance of merchandise causes its consumption, especially of those things which serve as delights and which

are not necessary for food. Most true is the saying of Solomon in Ecclesiastes (5.10): "When goods increase, they are increased that eat them", and if bread and wine in time of scarcity are consumed with reserved parsimony, so much the less are the superfluous things which serve only man's luxury. Sugar, such a great seasoner of foods and so pleasing to the taste, in times of penury, is not used half as much as normally, which fact can be proven from the time when sugar came in great abundance from Spain and now comes to the City only from Alexandria in Egypt, (17b) and one will observe there a considerable difference. And thus with spices and other human delicacies, which are the main part of the wares which come from distant parts. And the penury of some goods causes their desuetude. The scarcity of zarbelotti a few years ago introduced into the city the use of Flemish silks in the abundance which is now seen. Wherefore the abundance of merchandise brought by the Hebrews still causes a rapid sale and consumption whence come to the prince the exoluments of duties. Then with regard to the Levant trade around the wharf of Spalato, where come together all the merchandise not only of Europe but of Asia through overland passage, there is no doubt that not falling into the hands of the Hebrews, the trade would have been managed by the Turks and (nevertheless it is in great part practised by them) wherefore one cannot find any arguments against its being more suitable for the traffic to be in the hands of the Hebrews rather than the Turks. Among

other reasons, there is in particular this: the disadvantages that subjects have in trading with the Turks.

All the silk trade of Morea (in Greece) would be in the hands of the Greeks, subject to the Turk. For since they have there very extensive possessions, the same thing would happen as we have already clearly shown in the case of the foreigners in the west. The Smyrna traffic is being kept however, in great part, in the hands of citizens of Venice. Commerce (18) with Syria is not very opportune for the Hebrews because of a heavy tax on their merchandise instituted by the Turks. The wharf of Alexandria, because of extraordinary taxes and expenses, is not too frequented by the Hebrews except by those who personally move there. And it is a venturesome and not a safe traffic to maintain because of the domestic expenses, so that not even the citizens of Venice who traffic in the Levant receive, because of the trade of the Hebrews, any loss of considerable moment.

Consideration IV

That the Hebrews are exceedingly apt for commerce.

The majority of men complain that nature has burdened and vexed them with needs and necessities in greater abundance than it has the other animals who are deprived of reason. But one is complaining against duty because indigence and need are the true stimuli and impulses to the inventions and discoveries of the most worthy and excellent arts that so much ennoble the human race. Experience shows that Southerners because of the clemency of their skies and

the fertility of the land are almost deprived of all industry, but Northerners, because of the rigor of the climate and the sterility of the soil, are spurred on to navigation (18b) and the practice of the arts and have become celebrated and famous. When I consider the superstition of the Romans in regard to the erecting of altars and of deifying the inventors of useful professions to the point that even Fortune, esteemed by them as blind and rash, found in Rome a particular worship and admission to many sumptuous Temples (for in time of need Fortune is the prime stimulant and spur to worthy undertakings and profitable inventions) - sometimes I marvel that a cult was never set up to Fortune by the Romans or that some religious rite was not observed with regard to it.

In the school of discomfort under the rigorous discipline of need, the Hebrews more than any other nation are erudite and instructed; for they have been deprived of stable wealth, are without the practice of the mechanical arts, are far from the profits of the forum and of other urban undertakings. They are burdened with families (even through their rites celibacy being forbidden to them). Wherefore it is necessary for them with industry, diligence, and accurate vigilance to open for themselves the way to their own support and maintenance. For which reason it can be noted that where the Hebrews have resided, there traffic and business flourished as Livorno can attest to it. And

the City of Venice will never forget the memory of the first deviser of the wharf of Apalato, who was a Hebrew by nation, who with his records transported a great part of the commerce (19) of the Levant to the City. The wharf of which is now considered the firmest and most solid foundation for traffic that Venice ever had; and it makes available to others such means, for the land is much more stable and less exposed to the injuries of fortune than the sea. But what is notable concerning the capital of the other Hebrews who have taken refuge under foreign dominions is that to a great extent they put it into the hands of the Hebrews of the City. The masters of this capital are satisfied with any slight utility and emolument they may draw from it, seeing that they do not send their capital to Venice for the advantages which they may better hope for in this market rather than in another, but only to avoid those dangers that could easily come upon them if they held their capital in their own hands. But those who have other businesses than trade withdraw from trade at the slightest diminution in the traffic and engage in other occupations of greater profit.

But coming now in such a subject to the particular there is a thing widely known among merchants, and that is that in three ways traffic is attracted to the City, and particularly maritime traffic.

One, because of the nature of navigation those who are

the possessors of vessels are likewise the arbiters of trade (19b) as is observed among the Flemings. Second, by personally moving to various markets in such a manner one forms friendships and relations. Third, by the sending of one's own capital into various places, others are invited and attracted to hand over and to send back to the City their own riches. As for the navigation of their own vessels, the Hebrews are almost entirely deprived of this privilege although in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Hamburg there are some sharers of vessels.

Concerning traveling and forming new practices, the Hebrews do not cede to any other people, for they do not have the occasion to stay in their own country to cultivate lands or to indulge in other urban practices which might hinder them. One may add the fact of large families (celibacy not being permitted), whence assigning some to the domestic cares, the others employ themselves easily in pilgrimages of long voyages through which they introduce new trade from foreign and remote countries into the City where they in the beginning set up their domicile. In the sending then of their capital throughout the world, the Hebrew more than any other person can do that not only by reason of the urgent need which stimulates him to try fortune's favor by every means, but because his riches are not invested in stable wealth but are in the form of cash and wares. For that reason his wealth is prepared and arranged (20) to be passed and sent where it is more agreeable and pleas-

sing. And it is worthwhile to note the usefulness of this latter practice in that whole stretch of terra firma which lies between Dalmatia and Constantinople and the other places of the Turkish dominion where no Venetian Consul resides as he does in the other Levantine wharves as a public representative who might for the Venetians take care of sending their capital into Turkish hands or to the Greek subjects of these Turks, or even into the hands of their own correspondents through the dangers and risks that in such places could easily befall it. For they do not have there any protector who might defend them from the insults of those people. But the Hebrews either spurred on by the necessity of living or by having other Hebrews do it for them, besides the fact that the greater portion of their nation is subject to the Turk, eagerly arrive in the Levant and hand over there their riches and possessions; and there is no doubt that the traffic is the attraction to peregrinations and the transferring of persons.

And although one cannot deny that the mildness of the air and the location of the countries are a great disposition toward commerce and trade, however, the voluntary concourse and charm of the men is the most efficacious reason. The first man, from whom all the posterity of his race drew its origin, was formed in such a temperate eastern region (20b) and in the delights of Paradise. Nevertheless his progeny left that site, as Scripture attests (Gn 11.2):

"And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there". They drew afar from that region, for in it they had received first the expulsion from Paradise and then the Deluge which annihilated almost entirely all living persons - so much more are men mindful of offenses than of the memories of benefits.

And it is certain, as said that orator who lived later than Thucydides, that men produce fortunes, and not fortunes, men. I mean, with regard to our discussion, that men guide commerce where it pleases them and are entirely its arbiters, in whatever manner commerce and the transportation of spices fluctuates and wavers - now in Alexandria in Egypt, now in Damietta (in Egypt), now in Damascus, and formerly in Aleppo (formerly Turkish vilayet, now largely in North Syria mandate). Then they arrive at the Caspian Sea, and from there up to Moscow, and formerly to Tanais (now Azov), and by divers routes they then arrive at Venice whence they leave again for the western regions of Europe. At the present time such traffic has been brought into the hands of the Portuguese, Flemings, and English. Thus the commerce of the wealth of Europe sometimes arrived at Besançon in Franche-Comté, at Lyon in France, and from there to Antwerp. And today Amsterdam, through the concourse of merchants in those northern regions, has become the most celebrated emporium of (21) Europe. In our time Spanish

wool arrived first at Venice, rather than at Genoa and Livorno, even though they are closer to Spain. Today from those places they come to the City. Yesterday, one can say that they made the tour of the wealth of Italy, and in addition one went to Piacenza (a great portion of whose business has now gone to Verona). Only a short time ago Tripoli was the principal wharf of Syria, and now hardly a small fishing vessel arrives there in the course of the year, and all has been transferred to Aleppo and Alexandretta. Ragusa (Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia) and the Neretva River (in Yugoslavia) were wharves of the Turkish caravans which went through Italy, but now their traffic has gone to Spalato (Yugoslavia). Livorno was a small and ignoble town, but because of the industry of the grand dukes, it became a famous market of Italy although it was unsuitable for the transfer of wares, for in the vicinity there is no navigable river nor sufficient flat land over which merchandise might be carried and sent. It is situated among the Alpine chains of mountains; its territory is surrounded, and it is close to safer and more opportune ports. Nevertheless those most prudent princes facilitated the difficulties and razed the impediments. And it is certain that the greatest attraction of commerce is the freedom of living and the security of possession of one's own wealth, as (21b) the Venetian dominion exactly and punctually bestows and observes with regard to its inhabitants and merchants. And this is a true

stimulus for the Hebrew Nation to come there because of its debility which breeds distrust.

From the things alluded to in this Consideration, it can be concluded that it is proper for the Hebrews to have some commerce and traffic annexed and joined to their persons and for others to have a necessary dependence upon the Hebrews because of their industry, inventions, affinities, and practices. For without their assistance in the City, that trade would be lost or go ~~else~~ elsewhere.

Consideration V

Concerning the deference and the promptness of the Hebrew in obeying.

The tyrannical government desires eagerly the oppression of its own subjects and the aristocratic government desires swift obedience. But with regard to foreigners, the latter are willing to offer a peaceful deference so that the government may be well inclined and changeable (in their favor) as well as for the purpose of having someone who will protect and defend them from the insults of others. But the Hebrews under every condition of government and rule are always yielding, obedient, and subdued. And experience shows that when difficulties often occur with traders because of new taxes, prohibitions of navigation and transportation of some goods, and other similar emergencies, (22) other foreign nations, subject to other princes, have recourse to their ministers and representatives. It hap-

pens very often that mere mercantile matters are by them recognized as public and state affairs. But the Hebrew Nation, dispersed and scattered through the world, deprived of any source of protection, with swift flexibility disposes itself in conformity with public commands. Wherefore it happens very often that when particular burdens are imposed upon the Nation, not even a simple complaint is breathed forth or expressed by them.

Consideration VI

That the mercantile profession ought to be distinct from other professions.

The mass of men, if they would not have been clearly arranged by the diligence of legislators and formers of civil governments into various orders and different classes, would resemble a greater diffornity than that ancient chaos sung of in the imagination of poets would have represented. Socrates and Plato, in their planned republics, set up such a distribution as a principal element of their policy, and the modern observer of Utopia observed the same thing. And even all practitioners sketched the same plan. Aristotle who did likewise in the first part of his Politics employed his entire intelligence (72b) in rearranging and correcting the divisions made by those two great masters of humanity.

Diodorus relates of the Indians that their policy succeeded above all others because they were divided into cer-

tain divers classes of citizens. The Romans were vigilant with regard to such a distinction and had it as a foundation for their political government. But the Venetian republic, the best ordered government of any the memory of which is still extant, with every punctiliousness always obtained and observed by an appearance and firm maintenance of exact distinction of orders not only in the triple order concerning the public government of common people, citizenry, and nobility, but even with indescribable industry divided and separated all the arts of the City (even those less than mediocre) and did not permit that any of them should be confused with another - from which distinction very considerable advantages result.

First, by such an arrangement the arts are maintained in their perfections and are always being improved with greater progress. For everyone is attentive and occupied with his own art - seeing that the ultimate apex of whatever art it may be is inaccessible. For that reason the ancient Egyptians decreed that the young sons should succeed their fathers in the practice of the same profession and would not concede to their crossing over into another.

(23) The second advantage is that through this prohibition a certain harmony among the people is maintained, for one does not occupy the trade of another. As a consequence jealousy and hatred are avoided, for they could easily occur among them. But they do not occur with everyone liv-

ing by his own art and profession.

Third, when the people is divided into smaller parts, it is much more readily obedient to its superiors in receiving their commands and is less skillful in tumultuary conspiracies. And as it will be said in another place, from these three advantages it is understood how useful is a certain distinction in the populations, all of which redounds to perfection, union, and obedience.

Concerning the Hebrews, one can say that with their practice of traffic and commerce it turns out very suitable that their profession is distinct from all others. It is important and of great consequence that they are separated from the artisans since they are prohibited by the public decree from occupying themselves in any working skill. They are distinct from the citizens since they are prohibited from being able to possess stable wealth and to convert their capital into it. When necessary in order to support themselves with their families, they have to employ themselves and their possessions in traffic and (23b) commerce however little or great may be the gain that might result from commerce. Whence there derives from it to the public the greatest emolument in duties, which in seven voyages (which are made in less than five years) amounts to a sum equal to the capital itself, and sometimes much more if we wish to include the accessory and oblique duties which are mentioned in Consideration VII.

And we also can calculate the gains which the same capital brings in interest during the course of the above mentioned period, for if they would convert without limit their own possessions into stable wealth, not the least gain would accrue to the public. But perhaps some one will say that the furnishing or building of a palace, even though it be a stable form of wealth, provides a slight gain for the prince. However, the money with which one trades and manufactures such stable wealth is not scattered but arrives into the hands of others and remains again ready for commerce, and besides, the prince raises the annual tax placed on stable wealth. To which one answers that with regard to factories and coffee-houses, ten thousand ducats spent in their building would not yield for their possessor in the course of ten years more than four thousand ducats by reason of the four percent annual interest rate, and the prince would receive four hundred ducats of the money expended. It is true that the wealth is not really lost. However, it would be cut up and ground into such small parts and diffused among persons most distant (24) from the maritime trade that in the course of many years it could not be joined together so as to be any longer a participant in trade. This is like a river which though abounding in water loses its navigable quality when it is divided into many branches and dries up. In addition the materials used in buildings are handled for the most part by

persons living solely on terra firma, who are not engaged in trade and maritime traffic, and a good part of these persons, like the workmen, are outsiders and foreigners. With regards then to investments in lands, if the lands are uncultivated, there is the same difficulty as in the case of buildings; but if the lands are fruitful and cultivated, those who sell them never do that because of an interest in trade or devotion to traffic but rather through urgent necessities - besides, to a great extent Mediterranean people are not interested in commerce. And if in the case of the building of coffee shops, palaces, and the cultivation of lands, the amassed money is diffused to the benefit of some, even through the means of traffic, it is employed to the profit of a greater number of people with greater distribution. The use of any finished factory building removes for a great time the gain for the artisans and builders; but the emoluments which result for others in traffic continue to such an extent that the capital is maintained, bringing support and gain for every type of artisan, agent, writer, notary, counsellor, owner (24b) of provision shop - and what is more important it maintains vessels and the skill of navigators and mariners. This is a matter of so much distinction and use in times of peace and so necessary in time of war, from which it may be concluded that the maintenance of a distinct mercantile profession is not less useful to the prince than it is to the private

person, and it is hurtful and damaging to no one. And I believe that in the civil body the Hebrew resembles that part of the foot which tramples upon the earth. It is lower than all the other members yet is not a burden to any of them and it even supports them. And I say that because with the Hebrew's being forbidden any profession whatsoever with the exception of the mercantile, no harm is done to any type of person, neither to the artisans nor to the foreigners, nor is there much of a burden involved for the merchants and citizens themselves that the Hebrews trade in the Levant (as I have shown in Consideration III). Rather their trading supports a great number of artists and professors who can help relieve the needs of the Hebrews as much through the service of their own persons as in the assisting the Hebrews in traffic and trade, for any such practice (that of artist and professor) is forbidden to the same Hebrews.

(75)

Consideration VII

That wealth must be limited and revolving.

It is incumbent upon the best and cautious politician to arrange that the wealth and riches of the City be divided in a just geometrical proportion in conformity with the rules of justice and be divided among its citizens in a manner that with some of the members of the City attracting to themselves the greater part of the profits, the others do not remain exhausted and poor. This state of

affairs is a monstrous thing no less deformed in the civil state than it would be an animal's body. Wherefore Aristotle in Book V of the Politics: "maxime vero lege, ita providere conandum est, ut nemini sit excessive potentia, neque amicorum, neque pecuniarum". In addition, the exorbitant opulence of the one and disparate poverty and indigence of the others would threaten tumults and breathe seditions. Nay, with these two extremes happening and being coupled together often, they cause the disturbance of the civil state. Wherefore Solomon in Proverbs, chapter 22:2: "The rich and the poor meet together - The Lord is the maker of them all". This is as if he wanted to say that the rich and opulent man and the poor and indigent man meet many times and join in such a manner as the dry unites with the humid and stimulates it, and is agglutinated to it -- (25b) all of which results from Divine Providence, which wishes to alter the state of men. Nor in any other more practical manner can such an incongruity and disproportion happen (i.e. the meeting of rich and poor) than by means of traffic and trade. For when trade is handled with vigilance and prudence and helped by good fortune, it is easy to grow exceedingly rich through it and to raise greatly the condition of whoever undertakes it. And with more than one example one could represent the truth of such an event. But the wishing to reduce wealth forcibly within the limit of moderate proportion was an undertaking hitherto desired but never practised - and chiefly the equality of movable wealth

and cash and if it was sometimes tried with regard to stable wealth, the result was an unhappy one. The Laws of Phaleas about the division of wealth live only in the attacks of Aristotle in the second book of the Politics and is otherwise buried in oblivion. The equal division of the Holy Land among the ancient Hebrews was carried out without tumult, but this was because it happened at the time of their first entrance into the land; and suddenly through the inequality of sons with few progeny the division was rendered vain. Their kings were forbidden to multiply and augment their riches, but no limit and special terminus was placed on it as the law in Deuteronomy reads. [quote]

The agrarian laws were rather sowers (26) of tumults among the Romans than correctors of disorders. The reason is that one could not otherwise stop the fortunate course of adventurers than by ways insensible and unobservable to them, for otherwise every provision appeared to them as a violent extortion and invidious malice. Besides, in such a manner the industry of men is pushed back, and they are turned aside from progress already begun; for they are forced from a fervent desire to extend infinitely their fortunes, human avidity never becoming saturated. It is indeed true that the Republic in some particular professions has provided for similar inequalities in its limiting the number of bread bakers and woolworkers and the quantity of looms and silkworkers. But with reference to the mercantile trade

in general nothing has ever been contemplated, for it would be an undertaking in itself impossible and impracticable.

As for the Hebrews, without anyone's providing for it, it happens that though some of them prosper in traffic, it is never possible for them to reach the mark of wealth, which may be extraordinary and prejudicial to some. But to the influx of their fortunate progress there suddenly succeeds almost simultaneously the reflex of their decline, and the result is that they are not able to possess stable wealth which is the tenacious bond which (26b) arrests and impedes the fickleness of human fortunes. Furthermore every Hebrew takes a wife unto himself and then rears a family, all of which entails heavy expenses and a minute division of personal wealth. (Besides the accustomed lack of industry among the sons of the wealthy stops the stimulus of need, and they are also subject to the vexation of luxury, a usual satellite of convenience.) Another contributory cause for the Hebrew's not ~~amassing~~ great wealth is the ordinary and extraordinary taxes imposed upon the Nation, from which perhaps it follows that in the shortest time, like a bolt of lightning, their wealth disappears in such a manner that their holdings and wealth are always mobile and circular, never fixed and permanent. And experience shows that through the course of a hundred years there never departed from the City any Hebrews who are opulent and rich. They left only after the total loss of their fortunes and riches, and the

City was like the sea which is accustomed to cast back upon the shores light things and to hold back the solid and heavy. The City has done likewise through its custom of dismissing from itself the depressed and defeated and of embracing the wealthy and opulent. And it has been observed that almost never has any mediocre wealth of the Hebrews gone beyond the second generation of posterity.

Consideration VIII.

Concerning the profits and gains that the Hebrew Nation brings, and calculating them distinctly.

Dominions and kingdoms, so like our own being, are constituted of three principal parts. The mind and soul which rule them are the princes and counselors of state who watch public affairs closely. The organs and members which exercise the impulses and movements which are ordered by the ruling parts are the royal ministers, the subordinate magistrates and the soldiery who execute the commands of their superiors in conformity with the gradations of their offices and functions. Then there is the blood and the other humors (though in conformity with popular opinion these are inanimate) which, running through the entire body, feed it and nurture it. This part of our body resembles in the political state the merchants, artisans, and any other persons other than those connected with the political government and public functions who live in the City - those who, with the benefit of money which has its source in their traffic

and industry maintain (27b) and nurture the régime and government, no less in time of peace than in time of war.

In the Hebrew language the word dammin means both bleed and money. In every place in the world the Hebrews are only a portion of that bleed or money which feeds the political body. They do not have the authority to command as superiors nor the least impulse of subordinated power as organs and ministers. They do not have any connection with the public, but only as a simple people do they exercise a usefulness for the prince at all times and at every opportunity. And when there are in the city a considerable number of them one cannot define the advantage which they might bring in extraordinary fashion to the prince. For the people are like a great quantity of unshapen marble which can serve as statuary to satisfy the many needs that may occur to the prince in conformity with any demand that may eventuate. And in great quantity he has them hear him and waiting.

Besides, there is the dignity which comes to the prince when he has a great number of subjects, as the Sage says in Proverbs, chapter 14.28: "In the multitude of people is the king's glory; But in the want of people is the ruin of the prince." Thus one reads according to the Hebrew, and the most learned Rabbi Levi thus explains the verse with the reason that it is through the multiplicity of the people that grandeur and royal majesty follows, and with the lack of people (28) there is the fear of penury and scarcity.

The concourse of people does not bring with it any lack or defect of food. The vulgar believe that the numerousness of the people causes scarcity and penury. But rather with the augmenting of trade through the concourse of the people, gains increase and costs in proportion, and these then attract others to the transportation of victuals, and foods, and other aids to human needs.

But because errors and fallacies are ordinarily the satellites of general treatments, and the truth is always the companion and follower of minute details and differences, therefore to seems fitting to me to descend to an individual treatment and to approach some calculation so that with some probability one can estimate how much usefulness the public ordinarily and annually receives from the Nation which has taken refuge in the City (without including what remains in the rest of the State). I believe that the Hebrew number about six thousand; and one can judge that like the common people, the duty which is raised from their food, such as bread, wine, oil, meat, clothing, and other similar things pertaining to their affairs, amounts to the sum of forty-eight thousand ducats (computing eight ducats a year per head). There is no point in saying that the above computation is useless on the basis that if the Hebrews would not have lived in the City just as great a number of Christian inhabitants would arrive there with greater profit to the prince than the Hebrews (28b) are. And as

it happened in the year after the plague that in the shortest time the City was filled again and returned to its pristine state, it is not worthwhile to repeat such an instance; for the Hebrews are forbidden the practice of all skills and forbidden to possess stable goods and prevented from suing the forum, and they live by use of that extraordinary industry mentioned above, and they do not occupy anyone else's place. And even if they should leave, there would not arrive in the city in their place any others who would support themselves with such an instinct for life and with the abovementioned prohibitions. Matter, according to the opinion of physicists, seeks to occupy a vacuum and do away with it, but only where there has been before a matter congeneric to it. Matter does not aspire to that vacuum that was never before occupied by a real being as if outside the convexity of the Heaven one might admit the existence of a space deprived of any body.

One ought still to note that besides the number of abovementioned Hebrews who are not able to practice any mechanical or worker's skill and hardly have any income to pay for their food, there remain in the City because of these a great quantity of people who support themselves from the profit which they get from selling the others whatever they need for their food - just as do the artisans who work not only to supply their own needs but to meet the needs of the commerce in wares manufactured by these artisans and disposed

of by the Hebrews in various (29) parts of the world. And because I do not have a certain knowledge of the number of these Hebrew persons, I shall suppose that they number four thousand. And even if all these Hebrews were not there, it could be that some part of them might remain. However, with the lack of any income, they would be reduced to such a strictness of living that the public would not even receive from them the ordinary emoluments, which, in conformity with the abovementioned computation, at a rate of eight ducats per person, would amount to thirty-two thousand ducats. The duties which directly and effectively are paid by the Hebrews as entrance and exit taxes I judge to be about seventy thousand a year. And if the Hebrews were not there in the City, these taxes would be lost; for they trade with their own capital or with that of very close relatives of the same Nation, who prefer to send their wealth and business to their kin in Venice rather than to any other place.

But besides there is to be noted the duties which obliquely, because of the traffic of the Hebrews, fall into the hands of the public. The Hebrew takes some woollen cloth out of the City and pays his duty, but in addition that rapid sale is the reason for bringing in some wool and oil which is consumed in the production of the mentioned cloth. Then there is the woad (a plant which furnishes a blue color), indigo, cochineal (for scarlet and carmen dyes), and Kermes (crimson dye from ^{the} kermes insect) which are used

for dyeing. Thus, too, in taking out soap (from the City) (29b) not only ought one to note the simple exit duty, but also the entrance tax on the oil and other ingredients which are needed in its composition. Thus there are silk clothes and all the other merchandise which are taken from the City. And thus from the duty which is actually paid upon entrance one can judge that paid upon exit, which, because of the introduction of such merchandise, reaches the public. And I judge that it may be about two thirds of the former, i.e. another forty-seven thousand ducats. Besides this there are still the taxes on the provisions of the commercial houses or street vendors' counters and things depending on these and other ordinary expenses to the sum of about eight thousand ducats a year, which tax like the other extraordinary ones are set on an estimate of wealth with care taken not to burden the poor. Therefore with respect to the abovementioned inhabitants a great number of families do not contribute to such payments. So much is this so that some of them have been found to pay four hundred ducats a year in ordinary taxes, and with the addition of the extraordinary tax, up to six hundred ducats. The obligation for lodging-places for princes and ambassadors being borne by the public is likewise a considerable thing, for whenever the public paid for some function, one found that money was being disbursed at the rate of eight hundred ducats a month. And this is one of the most wearisome and tiresome

burdens that are imposed upon the Hebrews because of the difficulties in executing it with the frequent changing (30) of palaces and lodging-places. And one could still adduce certain minutiae, like the consumption of salt by the Hebrews which I believe is four times the amount used by the Christians. This is so because of the rite which the Hebrews observe in salting meat to extract from it the blood which is forbidden to them. But it is not necessary to give an account of this.

The sum of the abovementioned annual revenue is two hundred and five thousand ducats. I am eager to affirm the abovementioned compuration so that it will not be liable to censure or castigation. Political matters are full of alterations and contingencies, and in this Discourse I have planned to follow as a new academician the probable and likely and not as a Mathematician, the absolutely demonstrable and unanswerable.

To the above taxes is added the extraordinary tax passed in the year 1636 which brought in eleven thousand ducats. If it appeared mediocre, since it was a universal tax, however when it was applied in particular, it turned out to be the most burdensome to the Hebrews in comparison with its effect on the other inhabitants of the City. There is still the tax on a fourth of the rents, which had a powerful effect on the Jews, for with houses being estimated according to the narrowness of their buildings, confined

in the narrow enclosure of the Ghetto - without any exaggeration one can judge such an estimate to have been three times what it would have been if the above mentioned houses would have been situated outside the Ghetto and inhabited by Christians. And this tax brought in (30b) six thousand ducats. And when one adds these two taxes to the aforementioned sum, the total is two hundred plus the twenty-two thousand (together a considerable amount of money), which monies come from the provinces (i.e. the duchy) but do not reach such a limit of revenue. Besides, also in the time of the fleet the Hebrew compete with the other artisans in supplying to the people their needs, from which in the past they have paid one thousand and five hundred ducats. But in addition it is notable that the quantity of artisans and teachers who stay in the City because of the Hebrews (as I have many times said) in the time of the fleet compete with their persons or with money in hiring men who will serve in the fleet in conformity with the decrees of the prince - even this is a profit resulting from the Hebrews. Beyond this one can consider the money of the above mentioned Hebrews which in considerable amount circulates in the public bank exposed to the service of the many and to trade in particular. But besides when it was ordered to deposit one's money, with the usual interest, the Hebrews as the others were taxed. But this fact merits some reflexion. For much wealth and riches of friends and relatives of the Nation who were subjects

of foreign princes, were handed over to the Hebrews (as I have said on occasion) to be deposited. (31) A considerable amount of money came in from this practice as from the ordinary interest on the money of others which came into the Hebrews' hands. This arrangement would bring greater profit than if one carried on similar business with other foreigners. The latter would take their annual interest to their own countries and deprive the City of it, but this would not happen in the case of the Hebrews, for since they have no country of their own they take refuge easily wherever their capital is placed and they do not remove the interest.

But that which above all else is deserving of notice and observation is that in order to maintain the entrance toll the prince does not need to bother himself with the accustomed cares nor employ any expense or disbursement. The enclosure of the Ghetto has no need of a garrison to take care of it nor a citadel to defend it or restrain it. Nor does it need a fleet to coast alongside to prevent sudden attacks by corsairs. Nor is there any jealousy of princes which might surprise it. There is no fear of internal sedition to cause agitation. There is no danger of a sea inundation or of an impetuous river which might submerge it. It needs no continual restoration and convenience of walls nor any provision of military instruments. One does not have to bother (31b) about the failing of food. Nor is there any need of a regiment to govern it or a questioner or chamberlain to exact the entrance tolls. The Hebrew

Nation is by itself submissive, subject, and pliant to the will of its prince. Placed, one may say, in the center of the City, it is diligent and industrious on its own part in observing and responding rigorously to the rights and payments due the public and would like to be as skillful in the handling of arms with the spilling of its own blood as it is swift in the spending of money in the service of the Most Serene Republic that it would show itself ready in the former action as well as in the latter.

And here there comes to mind something, although of little moment and almost unworthy of reflection. But since from it one can conjecture the good talent the Nation has for public service, I do not wish to pass over telling it. It was a calamitous year for the whole state because of the grave scourge of the plague, wherefore the subjects had the occasion to test the public clemency, and the Prince, the opportunity to make a show of his singular munif^{ic}ence and sympathy. With indefatigable vigilance and very great expense of money he relieved and helped the urgent needs of his people. The Hebrews not only made a generous resolution not to importune their prince already occupied in sympathetic offices (32 toward the Christian subjects (who without doubt would have shared the effects of the public kindness with the Jews), but they also managed to preserve with expensive precautions perhaps the filthiest and most contaminated part of the City. Moreover they still offered

some hundreds of ducats to the Most Illustrious Magistrate of Sanitation for the support of poor Christians. And by the Most Excellent Senate it was still ordered that they should make a disbursement of ten thousand ducats for the help of the poor which would be repaid the Hebrews from future tolls which the Hebrews themselves would have to pay-- although at that time they continued to make the usual payments to the bankers in conformity with their agreements and conventions. That the Hebrews acted thus, esteeming the opportunity to divulge their good feelings in such wearisome times, shows their humility and excellent disposition in carrying out the public commands.

Consideration IX.

Concerning the establishment of three banks for poverty, done by the Hebrews.

Of no part or member of their City do the Princes take more accurate care and show more exact foresight than of both the poor and wretched people (32b), who continually demand and are never contented with their state. Wealth is timid and fearful; poverty is in a hurry, resolute, and rash. Whence Lucan in Book 3 of the Pharsalia says in reference to this: "Namque asserit urbes

Sola fames, emitur metus cum segne potentes

Vulgus alunt, nescit plebesieiuna timere".

That is, the princes repay abundantly the reverence and obedience of the people, but a hungry people is indeed indocile with regard to humility and does not know what

the fear for rulers should be. Wherefore August, distinguished ruler of the people, and conqueror of peoples, as Tacitus notes: "ubi militem donis, populum annona cunctos dulcedine oty pellexit," and Solomon in Proverbs expounds the condition and nature of wealth and poverty when he says, in chapter 10.15: "the rich man's wealth is his strong city; the ruin of the poor is their poverty." Thus he harmonizes with the Hebrew text and attributes to wealth only the defense and protection of those who possess it. As in chapter 18.11, he adds that wealth is like a very well fortified wall, and poverty is like the fear caused by an offender and invader of the rights of others, for the poor man has no fear of danger or of losing anything. For that reason, the latter has need of greater satisfaction or a more rigorous bridle. But the Most Serene Republic was not only persuaded to aid and (33) help its poor from human and state interest but was moved by the internal stimuli of its own charity. Among the other excellent provisions of kindness and exemplary sympathy shown toward the needy there was also instituted and imposed upon the Hebrews that with the opening of three banks they would have to help the needy and the urgencies of the poverty-stricken with an interest rate of only five per cent a year. This rate is almost imperceptible, for the expenses of leases on buildings, factors, agents, and other needs are far more than the total of such small interest. The sum of the above

mentioned loan is without limit although the bankers are not obliged to lend more than three ducats for a single pledge. This arrangement is peculiar to the City of Venice, for in other places in Italy loans are made from the Hebrews with the rate going to eighteen percent. And I believe that the reasonable impulses which have induced the Most Excellent Senate to impose such a burden upon the Hebrews in particular were these:

First, that when the Most Prudent Senate perceived the certain dissension and repugnance that comes with a disparity and difference in religion and the disadvantage that the Hebrews might have because of their being a weaker part of a very minute people, it (the Senate) decided that by means of supplying to them money in their needs there might be generated a certain friendship or at least tolerance toward the Hebrews. And as experience shows (33b), the common people here are more pleased and tractable toward the Hebrew Nation than in any other place in the world.

Secondly, the Hebrew is himself the weakest and least respected subject that the Prince has; and whenever he (the Hebrew) should fail in his duty toward the poor, the latter can, for the slightest crime or failure in duty and without any regard, demand indemnity from the Magistrates and bring it about that the Hebrew should receive for his crime the merited punishment.

Thirdly, since the word "usury" is so greatly abhorred

and detested by the public laws of Venice, the City therefore has not consented that even the small interest of five percent should be exacted by Christians.

Fourthly, although the most felicitious regime of the Republic is so well stabilized that it ought not consider any change; nevertheless as a way of good government and in order to offer a certain precept and example to^o them, it has never wanted to permit that the function of helping the poor with money should be performed except by a Nation quite weak and subject and absolutely removed from any seditious and ambitious thought whatsoever. ✓

And this same care Scripture alleged in the case of the famine which occurred in Egypt in the time of Jacob the patriarch, as one reads in Genesis, Chapter 41. When Pharaoh, the king (34) of Egypt learned through dreams that an extreme penury of food would come into his country, he promoted Joseph, who at the time was an imprisoned slave and a foreigner, to take charge of the distribution of food to help the people in such a grave calamity. In addition to Joseph's ability and prudence as reasons for his appointment, there comes to mind a secret of state, and it is this: One should not let the people be handled in such a time of necessity and indigence by a man already known and familiar to them on the suspicion that he might entice them in such a time of urgency and make himself their master and lord;

but if the task is done by a young man, formerly a slave, imprisoned, foreign, and different in religion, deprived of any adherents, he can keep himself free in such a way of all suspicion and jealousy by the State.

Consideration X.

That the protection practiced toward the Jews is an honorable action.

It is a concept of the sages that the wisdom and greatness of God reveals itself no less in the minute formation of a little insect than in the articulation and organization of a large elephant. (The magicians in Egypt were able to form frogs, but they were never able to produce gnats.) So the virtue of a sovereign prince in the administration of justice shines forth as much (34b) when exercised toward the humble people as toward the famous and conspicuous nobility. And the same God frequently takes pleasure in being called ^{in the} Sacred Scriptures ~~to~~ the Father of Orphans and the Judge of Widows as well as being entitled the oppressor of proud monarchs and the dominator of tyrants. And Malachi, the prophet, according to the Hebrew text (3.20) said: "But unto you ~~who~~ ^{who} fear My name shall the sun of righteousness ^{arise} ~~aride~~ with healing in its wings." Clemency is like the sun, the rays of which warm the region of the lower air near the earth more than the upper and nearer air. Thus the clemency of God is exercised in helping the depressed and low as well as those who are raised up and lofty. Where-

fore Isaiah (66.2) said in the name of God: "But on this man will I look, even on him that is poor and of a contrite spirit." And the Psalmist, discoursing with God, says to Him (17.15): "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness", that is the omnipotence, wisdom, and authority of God are related to the infinite and the immensity of which they are attributes, but the clemency and the mercy have relations and kinship with our weakness and fragility and the fact notwithstanding that though they are features corresponding to our capacity yet they are expressive in part of the Divinity. Thus to Moses who asked of God (Ex 33.18): "Show me, I pray Thee, Thy glory", nothing was shown to him other than His clemency and mercy, as we see in Exodus, 33.

But because princes are still the representatives of the Divinity it is proper that in actions of clemency they should concur, for the (35) features of that same Original that is within them all ought not be different. I recall, in connection with this subject, having heard from an experienced and wise politician, the minister of a great prince, an affirmation that when he arrived in a city where Hebrews live, he was able to find no clearer conjecture in order to investigate the true and inner sentiments of the prince and the essential and real conditions of the government than by the examining and careful observing of the manner in which the Hebrew subjects were treated. For if the

prince to his own and native people shows much affability and exercise of correct justice, that condition may derive perhaps rather from a weakness of spirit and fear; but if with foreigners he is humane, anyone will know that he does not act thus through a servile respect which the prince holds toward those who are vassals. The cause of the justice, clemency, protection and defense that he practices toward the Hebrews can be only a heroic virtue of a sincere spirit which is naturally disposed toward raising up those who are oppressed and in helping the weak. For the Hebrews are not only of a subdued and humble spirit and accustomed to burdens and oppressions, but they are accustomed not to breathe forth even a languid lament as they are still in the same time deprived entirely in any other region of the world of any particular prince who might be their protector and defender.

And besides the above mentioned minister added that among the many evidences of Venetian justice, and (35b) not the final one practiced by its very good government, was its complete equity and not exorbitant impositions which were practiced toward the Hebrews. From which one can conclude that in no little way is the protection that the Venetian prince exercises over the Hebrew Nation honorable; for through there is a profit for him in the entrance tolls mentioned above which augment only his treasury, (the increase of wealth though being a thing which can happen to

private persons), this protection is all the more honorable since it brings to him glory, which is the private property of princes and great monarchs.

Consideration XI.

However difficult it may be to define the customs of the Hebrews in a universal sense, yet their delinquencies can be easily impeded.

Socrates that great master of civil life, who called back (as they say) to the company of men Philosophy, which was wandering about in the heavens, introduced it into the cities. After a curious investigation of his own in which he penetrated into all the most recondite recesses and abstruse nooks of his mind, he announced that he did not know whether he was a single animal or a multiplicity of diverse ones joined and enveloped within themselves, so confused did he find within himself virtues, vices, excesses, and moderations - which were the names given to the above-mentioned animals in conformity with the Stoic doctrine. (36) And if Anaxagoras (who denied the generation of natural things and for that reason introduced a certain mass, confused and composed of all things, and condemned the idea that anything could be added or joined to this mass, an opinion considered absurd) - if Anaxagoras had proposed such a thought concerning the mind of men perhaps he would have been received with more applause by the learned. For, if one should consider attentively the impulses of the mind, a universal

mixture of infinite things would be apparent.

The courage to risk one's life springs often from the fear which comes from vulgar whispers and murmurings. But Quintus Fabius Maximus, the Cunctator, acted in the contrary way. He was cowardly with regard to attacking Hannibal, but courageous in scorning the attacks of the people. The eager desire to prolong one's life and to enjoy one's pleasures by the placing of weak but durable wishes before vehement and short ones makes us become temperate and moderate. Whence Socrates (after Plato) in the Phaedo discovered this great secret of morality and said that moderate people "intemperantia quadam temperantes sint," and thus "timiditate forte sing"; and Solomon in Ecclesiastes (4.4) said: "Again, I considered all labour and all excelling in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his neighbor," according to the Hebrew. That is, the common virtues which hold men in relation to their neighbors are desire, contention and emulation, with virtues and vices becoming confused in such a manner.

(36b) Pleasure, the principal object and so great attraction for our mind, is always mingled with its opposite, pain, as Plato shows in the Philebus. Thirst and hunger are the greatest condiments to our taste. Tragic plays disturb us and produce in us indignation against tyrants. However, we feel a certain smarting from them and an irritation of pleasure which greatly attracts and charms us.

And the Hebrews pronounce pleasure with the word אִיִּיִּי which comes too from the verb אִיִּי which means grievous suffering, thus denoting the mixture abovementioned. Impetuous agitations of ire were commended by Homer as being full of joy and sweetness. Thus, in the fervor of love jealousy is born, and from there, hatred, just as Tacitus said of Mount Lebanon: "mirum dictu tantos inter ardores opacum fidumque nivibus." Alexander, celebrated no less for his victories than for his virtues of mind, so full of pity toward Darius III and his womenfolk, was then so inhuman toward Parmenion and Clitus, who delivered into his hands the rule of the world, and so cruel toward Callisthenes, his teacher. Julius Caesar, ferocious and inhuman in Pharsalia, but indulgent toward Brutus, his murderer. Nero, monster of humanity, sometimes grieved that he knew how to write death decrees for delinquents, but he did not abhor using this talent against his mother and (37) his teacher Seneca. He was the friend of virtue and learning, but he hated it in others. For that reason Lucan, the wittiest poet ever, lost his life. In the time of the cruel proscription ordered by the Triumvirate, when faith, charity, and gratitude took leave of the most eminent and well-composed minds of the Republic and were no longer found in fathers, sons and brothers, they took refuge among the abjections of slaves and obscenities of prostitutes. Among others one of the latter suffered extreme torments because she

would not reveal her most honest friends. And Socrates at the peak of his mental development found ignorance, and for that reason he was condemned by the wisest oracle.

Gentleness when slightly irritated changes into indomitable proudness, and this, handled with dexterity, changes into mild affability. The aspects around our mind are composed of a mosaic which in appearance forms a single idea, but when one approaches them it is seen that they are held together by base small stones; and on varying occasions every one of them takes on its own distinct appearance. Wherefore the describing of the nature and condition of a single man is a very arduous and difficult thing, and so much the more so is the desire to relate them to a single norm and idea. Whence it is that so many authors (37b) have written about the nature of dogs, horses, and falcons and with great exactness have separated their customs and conditions. But concerning man few have treated of him, and then only fleetingly. Better than all Theophrastus, in his Characters, the disciple of Aristotle, discoursed on him. He reserved such an undertaking for the last years of his life, when an octogenarian, and compiled a treatise in historical fashion, an observation on the characters of the human mind. Now we have only a fragment of the work, the remainder being destroyed by the injury of time.

And if it is a difficult thing to define the customs of a single man, what can one do if he wishes to determine those of an entire Nation - and especially of the Hebrews, scat-

tered in every part of the world? It is impossible to say a certain and definite thing about them, for the Hebrews are dispersed through the universe. They are like a river which runs through a long stretch of country; its waters receive an impression of the various terrains through which they pass. Thus the Hebrews who live in other countries acquire diverse customs, and for that reason the manners of the Venetian Hebrew differ from those of Constantinople, Damascus, Cagliari (in Sardinia), and all those of Germany and Poland are different. Nevertheless if someone still wishes to investigate their customs in a universal manner, one could say that they are a Nation with a discouraged and (38) weary spirit, incapable in their present state of all political government, occupied with their own particular interests, little or not at all cognizant of their universal nature, their parsimony approaching avarice, great admirers of antiquity, unobservant of the present course of things, many of them rough in their customs, unapplied to learning and the knowledge of languages. In the observing of their laws in some things they exceed the limit and approach scrupulousness, to which failings they counterpoise other qualities worthy of some observation - a firmness and unimaginable tenacity in the belief and observing of their religion, a uniformity of dogmas concerning their faith through the course of one thousand five hundred and fifty years. These people, who are scattered through the world,

are a constant marvel if not in meeting dangers at least in supporting calamities. They have a singular knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and their interpretation. They exercise humane charity and hospitality toward anyone of their Nation, even though he be an outsider and foreigner. The Persian Hebrew condoles and sympathizes with the travail of the Italian Hebrew. Distance of place causes no disunion among them, for they possess the uniformity of religion. Concerning carnal vices they practice great abstinence; they are prudent and exact about keeping their race unmixed and uncontaminated. They avoid in the process of amassing wealth, however difficult (38b) an affair it may be, any subjection or obsequiousness toward any practice which is at variance with their religion. Their errors and delinquencies almost always possess more of the cowardly and abject than of the atrocious and great.

Whenever it happens (as it often does among any Nation) that some one member commits a crime and transgresses against the edicts of the prince, the remedy and medication is very easy. The vices of the mind are similar to the infirmities of the body, which are divided into two classes. Some of them, although they may be most grave and pernicious, nevertheless the doctor alone with his ordinary purges and evacuations is sufficient for overcoming and conquering them. But others of them are of a more malignant quality,

and when they are contagious and communicative, it is necessary that the Prince himself see that the sequestrations and removals are employed and that the terror be accompanied even by extreme punishments. Thus is the case also in criminal actions. Some of the, though abominable, have as their object only the pleasure of individual and private gain. Besides these actions are restricted to a few guilty persons, and these do not consent that - nor does it fulfill their own interests and gains that - their outrageous actions be communicated to others. Wherefore when they are discovered, the ordinary magistrates, with the accustomed punishments and penalties of exile, prison, galleys, mutilations (39) of members, and death itself, are sufficient to correct and to expugn such crimes. And of such a quality have been the enormities committed in every time by some of the Nation, always spurred on by greed to robbery or similar abjections. But one finds some types of execrable action which are contagious and extend and penetrate into a whole Nation. Besides, it is not possible to reduce such criminal actions to a practical act except by means of a total conspiracy, like the felony of a people, a change of religion, an invasion of a city, an uprising against some order and civil state - which excesses are so much the more frightful and terrible since the punishments themselves, the penalties, are by the delinquents considered rewards and glorious recompenses for their actions. And thus they would

rather meet death festively than to flee it with horror as it often happens in the recovery of freedom and religious change.

In the instance of the worship of the calf although not all had really committed that wickedness (as was also the case in the revolt of Korah against Moses), still God wished to punish the entire people, and that occurred because of the intent, for to such excesses all were inclined and ready - which never happened in other sins where God always distinguishes (39b) the delinquencies and errors of each one of the people.

In those above-mentioned cases the ordinary remedies administered by subordinate magistrates are not sufficient, but it is rather necessary that the supreme Prince intervene with the eminence of his own majesty and supreme authority and that he bring about the extermination of the evil with total slaughter or at least with universal banishment. The wicked actions of the Hebrews were never of such pernicious nature, not only in the city of Venice but even in any other place through the course of about one thousand five hundred and fifty years.

It is true that in the memoirs of the ancient historians one reads of a certain commotion of the Hebrew Nation which occurred in the time of Trajan in Alexandria and a little later in Cyprus, but this was at the time when the Hebrews participated in the government of the City and near

the time of the captivity accomplished by Titus, wherefore they still preserved some ^aseeds of their native ferocity. Nor can one convince oneself that the king of Spain would decide in our days upon that rigorous and total expulsion of the Granadans, a people so numerous and full of farmers and other artisans, by reason of some act of larceny, assassination, or particular delinquency committed by fifteen or twenty of these people, and that for that reason he would arrive at a resolution so hurtful to his kingdoms and so marveled at by the world. But certainly the internal motives of so severe a decree were some (40) secret conspiracy discovered by him, which was winding about among the entire aforementioned Granadan nation, which perhaps deserved slaughter rather than banishment.

And one does not have any doubt that the condemning of all for the crime of one is against the natural norm and teaching of the Divine Law. There is nothing in this world of such excellent perfection that some evil is not often joined or added to it by wicked abuse. Iron, exceedingly necessary for living, is frequently the means of slayings and destruction. Speech which gives so much nobility to our species very often is the cause of misfortune and ruin. But because of that there has never been any legislator so scrupulous that he prohibited the excavation for, and the extraction of, iron from the mines and forbade to man the use of speech. With regard to the documents of the Holy

Scripture we find that when the crimes of the inhabitants of Pentapolis reached the highest point of wickedness and enormity, it pleased God that the innocence of five men should be able to make up for the scourgings that so great a number of people deserved - so remote is the possibility that a few delinquents of a nation should be sufficient to provoke public indignation against the entire number.

Consideration XII.

The opposition raised against the Hebrew by three types of persons, and its resolution.

The Hebrew Nation is molested and oppugned by three types of persons: by religious zealots, by politicians and statesmen, and by the common and vulgar people. The zealots claim that it is contemptuous of one's own religion to permit in a state those who do not give assent to the religion commonly approved. To those one can answer easily that on this point they ought to moderate the zeal of their pious mind when they see and observe that the supreme head of the Christian religion in the city of his own residence admitted the Hebrews who have been discovered there for more than eight hundred years. In the aforementioned city they have a firm space and stable domicile and are governed and ruled with the greatest justice and charity - for which reason no one ought in matters of religion claim to know more about it than the head of it.

The politicians say that it is not proper in the same

city to tolerate a diversity of religions as much because of the offense and bad example that can come from one group to the other, as because of the dissensions, disunity, hatreds that can arise among the inhabitants of this city.

With regard to the first instance one can answer that (41) no offense and bad example can occur, because the Hebrews and Christians communicate with one another so little and the Hebrews are so different in their rites and also in the diversity of their languages in which their books are composed. One may add the prohibition to both Christian and Jew alike against living together, and especially the observance of the Hebrews concerning the tasting of many food which are not permitted to them according to their rites. Also they are forbidden by their laws as well as by the edicts of the prince to engage in trading with these foods. And the transgressors are most severely punished. There is also the fact that the impotency and subjection of the Hebrews causes that when anyone whatsoever is found among them who is outside of his own religion, he is shunned and avoided and rarely is converted to their belief.

With regard to discord and dissension, one may say that the Hebrews and Christians are not so contrary to each other as black is to white, which, both being included under the same genus of color do not abide each other. But they are diverse after the manner of sweet and red, for they are entirely diverted and uncommunicative one with the other

save that under the most general type of condition they may tolerate one another and be in one another's presence as parts of the same object. In such a manner are the Hebrews separated and drawn away (41b) from the Christians. Rarely on matters of religion do they come into competition and contention with one another. So much the more so is this true since the Hebrew, because of the conditions of the times and the fact that his principal religious institutions are foreign to any thought of propagating and spreading his religion. He is occupied solely in surmounting his own wants and needs, and he does not aspire to better in any wise his own conditions on a general scale. And if he should venture to spread his religion it is certain, since the matter would be referred to the magistrates, that he would receive the utmost punishment.

Another attack the politicians adduce against the Nation. It is the practice of usury, a crime not only damned by Divine laws but prohibited universally by the civil ones as an exterminator of wealth and destroyer of families. Whence the poet says: "Hinc Usura vorax avidumque in tempore fenus." To which one replies that the usury practiced by the Hebrews is rather tolerated by their laws than expressly admitted and permitted (as will be later explained). And besides one can affirm with great probability that those who support themselves with usury are most rare. The reason for that is that since the domestic expenses of the Hebrews are

very great, it is not persuasible that they can maintain themselves with a type of employment not conceded nor permitted by the laws of the prince. Besides that, it is likewise not in the power (42) of the Hebrew in any time to force the Christian to redeem his property; and once the Hebrew has used his capital he can no longer regain it at his will but must await the will and convenience of this Christian with regard to the latter's redeeming his pledge. And if the pawnshops, like those in Padua, Vicenza, and Verona, which have hundreds of thousands of ducats employed in the service of needy persons would not be able at the end of a year to sell the pledges, in a short time they would be exhausted of money, with their capital embroiled and entangled. Wherefore it is not persuasible that the Hebrews, who with respect to the pawnshops are of mediocre possessions and of tenuous wealth, would be able to last for a long time and to live in such a disadvantageous state. This is so much the more true since having the right to be able to trade legitimately, they would rather not expose their wealth to such subjection, and one may believe that this usury is rather a way of support for wards and widows.

But besides, I meet face to face with the above-mentioned men, experienced in the affairs of the world, and exhibit to them that celebrated saying of Tacitus about the banishment of the mathematician-astrologers from the city of Rome, "Quod in civitate nostra, &c vetabitur semper, &c retene-

bitur." Thus they ought to judge concerning usury, a sin continually damned, but practiced in every time and place. Concurring to bring it about are two very great stimuli which our fragility possesses; the need of the borrower (42b) who contributes the usury, and the insatiable greed of the lender who receives it. And even if such a transgression were not committed by the Hebrews, perhaps others would not be lacking to do so - others who, with greater extortion of the poor and needy, would practice such a base profession, and usurers would be reduced to a smaller number. And regarding this matter, in order to defame the Nation one called it the hold of ship and the sewer of every filthy business. With this reproach and calumny perhaps one signified the need and urgency of a hold to the ship and the very great need of a sewer for the sumptuous palace. And this I do not say already as a defense for such an action but only to show that such an enormity, like some others, is not an essential property of the Hebrews, as many presume to assert, but rather it is an accident consequent to the straitness of living and the conditions of the time.

The vulgar are easily incited and persuaded by any calumny and and¹ slander feigned and devised through a hatred of the Nation. If they were capable of some learning, they could be admonished to read the ancient sages and historians who treated of events occurring among the first Christ-

tians, like Tacitus (among the gentiles) and Tertullian (among the Christians) in the Apologeticus, who observed how false were the imputations attributed against (43) that innocent people. And one could conjecture that now the same thing can happen to the Hebrews on the part of men unfriendly to the Nation.

The first writer (Tacitus) tells that the cruel Nero having set Rome afire, being moved by ambitions to rebuild it in a better manner, in order to rid himself of the hatred formed against him by the people, calumniated the innocent Christians of that time and claimed that such a misdeed was probably committed by them. He sentenced them to be burned by being enveloped in pitch and sulphur and placed them at night in the public streets of the destroyed city in order that they might serve the Roman people as street-lights and lamps.

The second writer (Tertullian) sharply defends his people against the accusation of infanticide placed against Christians with so much mendacity. It was claimed that they used the blood of innocent children to celebrate their ceremonies - an imposture so incredible and so alien to probability. The same accusation also against the Hebrews more than once stirred up tragic events, and chiefly in the ^{countries} ultramontane, because of our rigorous abstinence from tasting the blood of brute animals - and how much the more so that of humans - and for religious use.

(43b) Believing in public rumors and vulgar noises in risking one's own faith in a crowd of rash and inaccurate testimonies. Truth, by defending itself from the insults of time and by acquiring body and strength prevails often over the appendices of vulgar fame - in the manner of those ladies who in order to appear more majestic make themselves taller by the use of large, additional "feet" (raised shoes). And some others, in order to season and make savory their conversations mingle lies with them as a spicy aroma.

Truth is by itself harsh and unpleasing; falsity, admired and delightful; the former is subject to the course of events; the latter, free and wandering. The former is produced by the action of the object which impressed it upon our mind; the latter, depends entirely upon human pleasure, and as for our offspring we have loving feeling for it. But what is thus said is composed of voluntary lies, and they are known as such by the ones who produce them. Other lies are of a more monstrous appearance so that when the mind is occupied with a turbid passion and dark ignorance and these join with the will, they produce a filthy progeny. And they are by Plato in the Hippias Minor damned with much greater rigor than the first type of evil-doing. Both types torment and infect the most noble faculties of our mind, and such lies and mendacity ought to be denied at least the applause of prudent men, who, listening to them with delight, (44) lend them the

nourishment necessary for a durable life.

There is no doubt that the Hebrew Nation, among other calamities, is subject to calumnies and lies more than any other through the impunity of the calumniators. And because very often the true is mingled with the false, invectives which are leveled against them succeed in a pernicious way. In order to separate the false from the real one has need of a more exact intellect. And if nature, lacking in some affection, rejects to the weakest parts of our body the corrupt humors, so much the more can one imagine that men agitated by perturbations and passions are led to load upon the weakest and most stupid, blame and lies. But moreover, one may say that while they charge the Hebrews with the most grave and intolerable crimes and affirm notorious things about them, they not only injure the Hebrews, but they also censure the accurate foresight of their prince; for by their actions they claim that with their owl-like eyes are superior to the lynx-like eyes of their prince, who never ceases to inquire about, investigate and meditate upon the most hidden and abstruse actions of his subjects. Thus how can one maintain that those who are not concerned with knowing the misdeeds of the Hebrews are however so well informed about them, and the public, whose business it is to know, is so poorly informed despite a great amount of connivance.

Particularly because the Hebrews live so close together

it would be impossible (44b) that any outrageous action not be discovered and observed by a neighbor, and consequently easily revealed to the magistrates, the neighbor being attracted by a reward or stimulated by hatred and emulation - passions which encumber the mind of the Hebrews as they do that of anyone else. Wherefore the calumniators ought to resign their curiosity to the important and proper oversight by the public government and ought to take as a certain maxim that ^{that} which is not noticed and punished by the prince after such loud appeals is without doubt a vain lie and rash falsehood.

The most ridiculous of all calumnies, to my belief, is to say that the Hebrews of Venice notify the Barbary pirates of the departure of ships from the City and then share with them the booty - which for many reasons one can be convinced is a vain machination. What commerce and faith could the Hebrews have with the corsairs? Princes and most powerful monarchs have never been able to establish with them any pact and agreement, and if even such pacts were contracted would they not be broken? In what manner could information come to these corsairs since there is no regular passage from Venice to Barbary?

The corsairs have four nests on the coast of Africa (or Barbary): Tripoli, Tunis, Bizerte, and Algiers. With Tripoli there is no direct communication (45) except via

Zante and Morea (in Greece), or by way of Malta, a voyage of almost a month. It would be necessary first to bring the information in the abovementioned two places, then by sea or land to Malta, and from there to transfer (it) to Tripoli. (How uncertain maritime traveling is everyone knows.) It is then necessary to prepare the pirate vessels and again to sail towards the mercantile vessels and to know where to find them. To send information to Tunis it is first necessary to arrive at Livorno or Malta, then by sea to Tunis, where one finds oneself in the same difficulty as in Tripoli. Bizerte fits out only galleys and makes only one expedition a year, in summertime. These pirates have a custom of plundering the land. They do not seize vessels except by accidental encounters, for they cannot support themselves on the sea to await them, as much because of the inconvenience of carrying such a great number of people, as by virtue of the fact that the light galleys are not prepared to combat the fury of the sea. With regard to Algiers, besides the abovementioned impediments of Tunis and Tripoli, there is still the distance from the Levant. For the pirates rarely go out into our seas, but take their course in the Straits of Gibraltar or outside of it above the Western Ocean. I do not know, in like manner, how the corsairs might be persuaded to share their booty with the Hebrews for they by themselves are sufficiently informed of

the traveling of vessels and of the time they leave Venice. Who is that ignorant mariner who is not informed by himself that the northwest winds customarily blowing in the summer lead vessels from Italy to the South and to the Levant? How many Christian slaves and renegades, skilled guides and skillful pilots do they have who inform them of all Venetian navigation and who lead them in whatever place or port they wish ~~wish~~ - without rewarding the Hebrews and sharing with them their gains and profits.

And also how incredible it is that with many vessels in great part laden with the possessions of Hebrews, the latter should expose the wealth of their friends and relatives to the hands of the Barbary pirates and to infidels in order to get it back again after having placed it in such manifest danger and having exposed it to most certain loss. Rather these same Hebrews would be the delators and accusers of the pirates in order to avoid personal loss. It is stupid to say that the Hebrews would be led to commit such a crime through a hope that they might have of selling their booty cheaply since it is publicly known that in the above-mentioned pirate towns Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Flemings come together very frequently, even with their consuls residing there and their own representatives who arrive there regularly with their vessels, laden with provisions (46) and wares. Further the Italians, Genoans, and Livornese trade there. Wherefore when some booty would arrive, the

Hebrew Nation might hope less than anyone else who might be there to find some good opportunity from an investment; for the Hebrews are the most insignificant and the least wealthy of all the others. From the improbability of this imputation the prudent reader will be able to conclude the weakness of many others attributed to, and imposed upon, this unhappy Nation.

Consideration XIII.

That the ancient Mosaic law decreed that one ought to practice charity toward the entire human race.

Those celebrated reformers of ancient heathenism who provided it with institutions and laws, like all men, and in like manner, had their thoughts and attempts bounded and limited. Solon was content with teaching the Athenians the laws; Lycurgus, Sparta; and Romulus was satisfied with instructing the sole enclosure of his narrow place of exile. Of the remainder of the human race they cared not, as if it were deprived almost of all humanity. They permitted their own citizens to take the property of other men; plundering being legal, ^{they} conceded that one might usurp the liberty of others. Finally they permitted that some foreigners might offer themselves on the altars of (46b) their false gods as victims. But the law of God promulgated by Moses provides and cares for all our species.

And as if a single nature were instituted by God in the world that all its parts should unite together in harmonious concert and should rule with reciprocal sympathy, he thus decreed that all the human race with unanimous friendship should be in harmony together, that any man whoseever should consider himself a citizen of a single republic. Moses decreed thus, joining such a love and charity in the human heart with the teaching and instructing of them to the point that if man was created by a single God and his species had its origin from Him, so was man propagated from a single father Adam, and divided again into branches by Noah.

Wherefore the prophet Malachie- "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (2.10) - uses two motives to make us conceive this tender affection of reciprocal love and to avoid reciprocal injuries. First, we are derived from a single father and therefore we are all blood-relatives, equally free, and equally participants and heirs of some portion of the goods of the world. Second, we are all the creatures and productions of a single God. And he does not say that we are united in a single cult and mode of worship, which would be a proper argument to induce good relations only among the Hebrews themselves, but he argues

with a (47) most efficacious and general reason for the conciliation of all men. And is it not believable that at the time of the Deluge usurpations, extortions, and frauds were prohibited indifferently to all, and that for that reason they were condemned to drowning - and should similar depraved acts and excesses be permitted to the Hebrew people seeing that they were starting on the way to greater perfection? And in the Decalogue in the same tenor and generality, homicide, adultery, and theft were prohibited - with no one passively excluded from such precepts. And there is no doubt that homicide, adultery were universal precepts. And from the specification that Scripture used with regard to usury, which forbade and prohibited its practice with the Hebrew but tolerated it with regard to the foreigner provided the loan was contracted for with the will and assent of the contractor and lender - from this, one is indubitably convinced that frauds and violences practiced toward the outsider without his knowledge and will are condemned and prohibited by the law, for in this declaration there was no distinction as in usury. Scripture in Leviticus said: (25.17) "And ye shall not wrong one another; but thou shalt fear thy God; for I am the Lord your God." The Hebrew meaning is not to cheat your contractor, according to the expression of Scripture, which used the word hamito חָמַט which, according to the Heb-

brew grammarians means "that which is (47b) against us". This word is derived from the word humat חֻמָּה. That is, any contractor or stipulator (and in Exodus, 22.24ff. it is expressly said) is forbidden to cheat the outsider. And besides, when the Hebrews were led into the Holy Land the boundaries of their dominion were also limited on all sides. This practice was not observed by some peoples and nations, who extended their dominion to wherever their good fortune led them and to wherever their own strength and violence gave them entry, in accordance with the saying of Caesar: "non si violandum est ius regnandi gratia, violandum est,". And the Spartans said that the confines of their dominion extended as far as the point of their sword could reach. The Romans set a goal and terminus to their Eastern Empire, the Euphrates, but before long it was beaten back and rejected bit by bit. The Hebrews solely by their laws were held and restrained within their own limits. And is it not unbelievable that the prophets would have declaimed so much against the nations who usurped the rights of the Hebrews oppressed them if it had been permitted to the Hebrews to use similar actions against the invaders. And it is^a certain and indubitable thing that among the Hebrews the defrauding of the one who was outside their religion was held to be a greater sin than the defrauding of a fellow Hebrew. Rather such a crime is numbered among the ex-

amples of the profanation of the name of God, which is the extreme of wickedness. (48) For that reason the Hebrews believe such crimes to be unpardonable and that God deprives such transgressors of the ordinary succor and customary relief that He offers to penitents to exculpate themselves - such transgressors as these giving occasion to the people to debase and calumniate the Hebrew institutions and to render the Nation more odious to peoples. To which attack one ought to make a remonstrance through the greatest exemplariness.

The abovementioned Philo writes that if it were indeed permitted to the Hebrews to look down upon and to exterminate the idols of the ancient gentiles while they (the Hebrews) were a conquered and subject people, nevertheless when they were independent and free, the Hebrews were prohibited from deriding with public derision the abovementioned idols in order not to provoke reciprocally the pagans to deride the true God as a form of revenge for the mockery practiced toward their false gods. But let us hear his own words translated from the Greek: "non permittit ef-freni lingue petulantia conviciari Diis creditis falsa persuasione aliarum gentium, ne ille irritate prorumpunt in voces nefarias contra Deum optimum ~~Maximum~~." In the same way would it not be prohibited and forbidden to the Hebrews to commit any criminal action of fraud, cheating, and ex-

tortion against anyone who is outside their religion? And particularly in order not to bring about the opportunity for uttering any execrable blasphemy and impropriety against their law and institutions with the attendant danger (48b) of offending God Himself, the principal Institutor of these laws.

There are with regard to this point some notable documents in Scripture. Elisha, al though he would receive gifts and presents from the Hebrews, as Scripture attests, nevertheless after having healed the hitherto incurable leper Naaman, general of the king of Damascus who was harassing him, when the Damascan pagan wanted to present a mediocre gift, he did not want to receive it but magnanimously refused it, as is read in the chapter of Kings. On the other hand when Gehazi, his servant, followed and requested clandestinely from the abovementioned Naaman a certain gift, he was for that reason discharged by Elisha and condemned to the perpetual infection of an indelible leprosy, he with all his posterity - all this to show to that gentile and his king how diverted his mind was from avid thoughts of acquiring what belonged to others when he refused what was offered to him as a reward for the healing. So Abraham refused to keep the wealth acquired by the four kings of ^{and Mesopotamia that they had previously plundered from the kings} Syria, of Pentapolis, which booty Abraham by the law of nations and war would have been able to keep. Neverthe-

less, he wanted to show what was his best institution and excellence of customs, and he magnanimously released that booty to the king of Sodom and his allies, the first possessors of it. And those Hebrews living under the dominion of Ahasuerus, king of Persia, when permitted (49) by royal edict to execute a vendetta against the life of their enemies and to seize their property, performed the former act, but abstained from the latter. These examples must be matters as much to be observed by he who professes the Hebraic law as must be the maintenance of the ceremonial precepts contained in the law, which likewise with such great scrupulousness must be performed by all. One can add to the abovementioned examples the tender speech and intercession of Abraham with God for the salvation of those criminals of Pentapolis who not only were excluded from the religious institution and cult which Abraham observed but were entirely bereft of any appearance of humanity. And so was Jonah punished by God and placed in such great danger of his life because he had refused to rebuke and warn the people of Nineveh of their execrable enormities. From both of these events we have clear instruction as to how any one must implore God for the salvation of any other man and how even one can, by admonishing a man, raise him to a better state, if not to perfection at least to a moderation of the excess of his vices. But concerning the judg-

ment which is commonly made of this Nation there occur the fallacies which are accustomed to come up in consequences badly established and badly understood - that is, using a misunderstanding of names, not distinguishing individual circumstances, and concluding (49b) universal propositions by induction from a few particulars. Therefore it is necessary to clarify and ventilate this point with much exactness. Then the many imputations and impostures attributed in this regard to the Nation will be resolved and rendered vain.

I hold it as certain that the principal reason of the illusion proceeds from the act of embracing under the name "alien" all Nations alike and of believing that among the Hebrews no distinction is made concerning the treatment of peoples who are outside the Hebraic rite and that these peoples are all measured in the same manner. But if with diligence someone would apply himself to investigating what Scripture says in this regard, he would find that divers nations are treated in distinct ways, and he would be able to erase from his mind every scrupulous doubt. Scripture makes mention at great length of some nations contiguous to the Holy Land but distinguishes the customs and manners of these which the Hebrews ought to follow. Concerning some nations, it is ordained that one ought to strive for their complete annihilation. There are other nations

with which one ought to abhor all conversation and mingling at any time even though they be converted to the Hebrew religion. There are other nations which ought not to be abominated and which, being on a third level, could convert and unite indifferently with the people. Other nations are passed over without (50) any mention, their treatment being left to the judgment of the Nation. There is no doubt that Scripture (being indicated by God who perceives in His eternity the infinite that will come to pass) not only instituted the Hebraic action regarding those small peoples and special nations named in Scripture as living contiguous to the Holy Land, which in short and limited space of time ought to be abolished and made extinct so that even the place of their dwelling was pointed out - but with the specifications of such nations, Scripture represented the differences between peoples, the diversity of customs, and the manner which the People ought to observe toward them. The Cannanites resemble idolators, abhorrent sacrificers of men and their own children, adulterers, committers of incest, sodomites, who were condemned to complete annihilation. Through the Amalekites inhuman persecutors were represented who, without any rational impulse, with a hatred more than Timonian, wished to bring about the extermination of the human race. For that reason they likewise were sentenced to total extermination with the absolute abolition of their memory - the hatred that one bears toward men

not being less abhorred by God than the failure to observe customs proper to humanity. In the Moabites and Ammonites are recognized ungrateful people who do not remember the bond of blood, nor the knot of beneficence, for their family was common (50b) with that of the Hebrews. And likewise Lot, their original father, received so many favors from the patriarch Abraham, but with all that they refused to grant slight refreshment and the necessary aid on that long journey made in the desert. For that reason God prohibited the granting to them of any benefit and forbade everlastingly any family union of the Hebrews with them. But still God forbade hurting them because in effect the people received no outrage from their hands. From the Edomites came the same ingratitude, but because they followed the example of the ~~Ammonites~~ and Moabites, because of the relationship and the brotherhood of Essau (called Edom) with Jacob, and also because their national jealousy which made them refuse the Hebrews transit through their country could be excused, it was forbidden to molest them. Therefore a relationship after the third generation was granted them. Like the ~~Edomites~~ Edomites, the Egyptians were treated with a temperate penalty for the torment they inflicted upon the Hebrews in that long asylum they granted them in their country. It was forbidden to offend them, and only in the third generation was it permitted to mingle with them. And if it was per-

mitted in the exodus from Egypt to despoil the Egyptians of some valuable goods, this was a reward for the servitude the Hebrews bore so many years to the profit of the Egyptians. With regard then to the Philistines and Damascans and other neighboring northern and eastern peoples, since the Hebrews had not (51) received any favor from them in their burdensome journey, nor offense (for they were not situated in a place where any favors could come forth from them), Scripture gives no information as to how one should deal and converse with them. But in conformity with the occasion and opportunity, the Hebrews were to respond either to their good or depraved conduct. So in every time when the Hebrews find themselves in conditions and customs similar to the abovementioned, they must act toward others in conformity with the rule and norm mentioned in the established law.

Now then if had been ordered to not insult, abuse, abhor and harm the Egyptians by reason (as Scripture expressed in Deuteronomy 23.8) of that unhappy and tyrannical asylum that the Hebrews had in their country although they had tolerated such a calamitous oppression in the making of pyramid mausoleums and in the erecting of very high walls and besides on the slightest suspicion of state, the kind condemned their little male children to be drowned before they were conscious of any guilt and before

they had tasted life - if all this be so, then in what manner can one uphold that that the Hebrews are permitted to harm and practice extortion against those people who give them free living room and pleasing habitation and (51) who let them have the ordinary commodities on an equal basis with other subjects? And would they be permitted with so much ingratitude to reward and pay for such and so many benefits? This is a reason so efficacious and an argument so conclusive that it ought to render the most irritated mind ever mild and tender toward the Nation.

Consideration XIV.

Although the Hebrews differ in religion from other peoples, it is not permitted to them to wage war on their neighbor for any arbitrary reason.

The communion of religion is the greatest bond and most tenacious knot which keeps human society united, as that pagan said: "vita humana Religione constat"; and Phile, the very learned and eloquent Hebrew, wrote: "nam unius Dei cultus est amoris mutue benevolentie vinculu insolubile." But it does not hold among the Hebrews that those are outside the observance of their rites and do not give assent to their particular beliefs are therefore considered entirely free and loosened from any bond of humanity and reciprocal friendship. But the Hebrews consider that there are diverse grades of relationship among men as there are also diverse grades in the same nation with regard to

the obligations of charity among one's subordinates. (52) The love of self obtains first place, afterwards comes the connection of blood, then the friendship among citizens; and for that reason the Hebrews believe that foreigners and those not of their religion participate with them in a common humanity which joins them together, and they therefore observe the precepts of natural morality and have some cognition of a superior cause. And in order to prove that, I have gathered together some arguments which probably demonstrate it.

First, I do not find in the Scripture that God ever commended the Hebrews to occupy themselves with striving to insert into the minds of their neighboring peoples the proper beliefs in order to introduce their special rites to them, but most certainly He ordered and commanded them to teach these peoples some general beliefs such as the omnipotence, wisdom, greatness, clemency, and justice of God. Wherefore Jeremiah (10.11f.) admonished the people, captive in Babylonia, that in the Chaldean language one ought to notify those gentiles: "Thus shall ye say unto them: 'The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, these shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.' He that hath made the earth by His power, that hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His understanding..." Wherefore He does

not order them to narrate the prodigies and miracles that happened in Egypt, nor the liberation of the people, nor the drawing back of the sea with the subsequent drowning, nor even the great pomp and commotion of nature (52b) in the promulgation of the law; but they must convince them of the existence of God and of His providence by the movement of the heavens, by the production of beings, and by the unanimous correspondence together of all things.

And in another place the Psalmist says (105.1): "O give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name; make known his doings among the peoples," i.e. that one ought to relate and divulge the operations of God and the effects of His justice. On the contrary, in another place, with regard to special rites, in Psalm 147.19f: "He declareth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for His ordinances, they have not known them." And thus one admitted that the dead flesh of animals, forbidden to the Hebrews, might be given and set before the gentile pilgrim. As in Deuteronomy, chapter 14, and Malachi, in chapter 1.11: "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name is great among the nations; and in every place offerings are presented unto My name, even pure oblations; for My name is great among the nations, saith the Lord of hosts." This alludes to the fact that

in a certain manner God in that time remained satisfied and contented with that simplicity and shaded cognition that the Gentiles held concerning a principal cause that aided the government of the world. And when Naomi was returning to her land, Ruth her daughter-in-law made a resolution, in following her, to become converted to the Hebrew religion. But not only was she not supported by her mother-in-law and confirmed in such a thought, but she was rather persuaded to return to her prior (53) state and condition (1.15). "And she (Naomi) said: 'Behold, they sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god; return thou after thy sister-in-law.'"

Nor does one find that in past time that any city of gentiles was conquered because of its lack of observance of Hebrew rites and particular incredulity - but only if it had not performed the natural impulses of reason and of humanity. Pentapolis was upturned and burned because of obscenity, inhospitality, and injustice. On the occasion of the Deluge Scripture makes mention only of the carnal corruption and iniquitous rapacity and extortion. And the gentiles of Nineveh, when they did penitence, did not convert to the Hebrew religion, but they ceased thieving, extortions, and frauds, but they remained gentiles as before. And if even some nation were reprimanded and castigated for its cult, it was because of the iniquities

added to it such as human sacrifice, and the sacrifice of their own children. And Amos, prognosticating the ruin and annihilation of many peoples, their sins being threefold, inveighs and declaims against the heathen Damascenes, Gazites, Tyrians, Idumeans, Ammonites, and Moabites for crimes and transgressions committed only against human equity and good morality. But afterwards when declaiming against the Jews, he specifies sins against their religion and their omissions of legal precepts. And Joshua, after the acquisition of the Holy Land, again granted freedom to the people and their own choice either to confirm themselves for the future (53b) and to keep themselves in the Mosaic law or, without their incurring any of the penalties provided, to refute it and to free themselves from it entirely without their bringing any punishment upon themselves for this action. Wherefore if with regard to the Hebrew people, having already accepted the law, Joshua nevertheless freed them from the penalties, how much the more do the Hebrews consider absolved from obedience to the law other people who had never assumed the obligation - as long as they observe what belongs to them as I have said?

And Ezekiel, in chap. 20.32f: "And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all; in that ye say: 'We will be as the nations, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.' As I live, saith the Lord God,

surely with a mighty hand....will I be¹king over you." In such a manner He discoursed with the people because if many times they had placed themselves voluntarily under the law, with a promise stipulated for themselves and their posterity, they were not for that reason at liberty to free themselves from it. And in a similar sense also speaks the prophet Amos, in Chap. 3.1f.: "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying: 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities'".

According to the chief expositors in the Nation, Rabbi Samuel and David Kimchi, these words mean that since the people voluntarily had taken upon itself and its posterity the observance of the law in the time of Moses and Joshua (54), therefore God was the particular exactor and accuser, the Receiver of the penalties which were due Him. He does not execute this demand upon other peoples, gentiles and heathen, but with them He overlooks and is indulgent, because it is reasonable according to the rule of lawyers: "secundum naturam est commoda cuiuscunq rei cum sequi, quem sequuntur incommoda." And likewise for the converse. Jethro, the gentile, having come to visit his son-in-law Moses in the desert after the liberation of the people and the miracles which occurred in Egypt, said, according to

the Hebrew text (Ex 18.11): "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods." He admitted the superiority, but he did not negate absolutely the existence of the other minor imaginary gods, like the Romans who pretended to have a certain hierarchy of greater and lesser gods. But the Psalmist in his more judicious and ^{he}corrent manner said: "For the Lord is a great God, and a ¹great King above all gods." (95.3). It is different when one says that the emperor is greater than any other king, or that he possesses superiority over them.

And Naaman, when he turned toward God because of the cure from his infection, obtained from the prophet a certain dispensation that it should be permitted to him that when he should be in the company of the king, to kneel before the idols - negotiating such a transaction in a religious matter that would never have been allowed a Hebrew, already obligated to a punctual observation of all the rites of the law.

Now, in order to seal this discussion, I wish to cite (54b) a place in Deuteronomy, chapter 33, which expressly shows that God, if ~~He~~ indeed favored the Hebrew Prophets, yet in the very time of the promulgation of the law, He did not hate the other people (to whom it was not communicated) but still loved them; for in the last blessing by Moses, after the legislation had been described, Moses adds, accor-

ding to the Hebrew text, approved by the masters of the city (33.3f): "Yea, He loveth the peoples, all His holy ones - they are in Thy hand; and they sit down at Thy feet, receiving of Thy words. Moses commanded us a law..." He meant by peoples the gentiles, deprived of the Mosaic law concerning which he told in the antecedent verse that it had been communicated to the Hebrews.

It is indeed true that notwithstanding such love that He bore for the gentiles, nevertheless the holy ones of the Hebrew people were nearer to Him and more favored. Moses uses the metaphor of the hands (v.2) as the Psalmist does when he wishes to denote the special protection that God had over his, the Psalmist's, soul and spirit. He said (31.6): "Into Thy hand I commit my spirit." He refers to the relation of God to the Hebrew people expressed in the antecedent verse. And thus in conformity with such a sentiment, the subsequent verse corresponds with "Moses commanded us a law." It is as if he said the love and charity of God extends universally over all men, but that the favor of the law was in those times granted only to the Hebrew people. And this is the easiest and least involved exposition that has ever been found by the Hebrew commentators, for this place (55) in Scripture is very abstruse and recondite. These are reasons and arguments drawn from

within the sacred Scriptures, to which must cede any authority whatsoever of the rabbis and doctors who hold the contrary. The contrary I do not believe, for, if it were so, Scripture would have treated of the nations infected with vices and criminality similar to the Canaanites and Amalekites (~~the sons of Canaan~~), who were iniquitous toward men and ~~impious~~ toward God. And everyone has spoken of such a matter in conformity with the quality of his own times, but not with the spirit of the prophets to reveal the universal infinity of the future-that which is the proper cognition of God.

But if someone should seek among the Hebrews the reason why God did not care to have His religion and the observance of rites propagated among the gentiles, one might answer that that reason is enveloped in the deep secrets of the Divinity. This is just the same as one's not being able to comprehend also what might have been the reason that only a few thousand years ago the world had its beginning and the reason that God delayed the diffusion of his benignity among His creatures. Also one cannot find out why He created such a number of men and such a number of angels. But only in general one can say that thus He completed the ornamentation of the world. And if some human reason can reach the arcana of His Divine Majesty, one could still reply according to the Hebrews that God, wishing

to keep the religion among the Hebrews, did not care to have the Hebraic rite revealed to the neighboring gentiles. (55b). And the reason for it was this: Antiperistasis (lit. standing around and against) reinforces the strength of natural things and invigorates them; cold standing around heat increases its (the heat's) strength so much so that the Stoics said that when cold air suddenly confronts a new place and finds heat there, the heat becomes more live. Thus too, is the standing around of the enemy. Terror inures the people to war and infuses in them a military spirit. In the same manner repugnance for the religion of neighbors rendered the faithful people more alert in their own belief and more militant in the defense of their native rites.

From the discourse just made one may take a firm precept and certain assertion that the Hebrew has never been permitted to practice any act of inhumanity and offense toward anyone who might have a different rite and belief, provided that such a one observe the moral precepts and also be not infected by some enormous vice but rather be informed of the omnipotence, goodness, knowledge, providence of a superior cause which rules and moderates all. But if some one again should object about the Hebrew's being forbidden to take usury from another Hebrew but not

from a foreigner, I answer that in that the Hebrews are not far from the common opinion, that it is rather a tolerance than a concession. I do not wish to cite that among the Romans some forms of usury were permitted, for I do not intend to defend what is not approved (56) universally. Rather I should like to say that formerly when the Hebrews were in more comfortable estate, it was forbidden by the teachers that they practice usury with anyone at all even though the person outside their religion, as one reads expressly in the gloss expounding the Psalm which begins (actually verse 3 of Psalm 24): "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord?"; and this prohibition had many just motives.

First, one does not know in Scripture exactly who are properly called brothers and foreigners since under the name of brothers the Idumeans are more than once named. Second, because usury practiced against a Hebrew is a most grave sin, and one believes that in such a depraved type of negotiation the lender, borrower, guarantor, notary, and witnesses concur in the guilt; it has been prohibited even with the profit ceasing and the loss rising. Therefore usury was forbidden so that such a practice might not be engaged in with any person at all in order that for the joy of such gain the people might not become accustomed to practice usury even with the Hebrews. Third,

in order to obviate usurious pretexts and concealments that under the name of, and through means of, foreigners might be practiced with the Hebrews themselves. Fourth, the same teachers say that such a profession is not decent since usury is abstracted from the commerce of men and alien to the profit (56b) of the republic. But after the Hebrews were forbidden the possession of stable wealth by princes and forbidden the practice of some of the more principal professions and other industries of civil life, then the teachers, in order to relieve the urgent needs of the nation in obtaining sustenance, relaxed the rigor of such a prohibition and restored all the former premissions of the Mosaic law. And so, to my way of thinking, this lamentable declamation against the nation is satisfied and fades away.

I cannot desist from mentioning in such a discussion a custom, a rite never transgressed and very rigorously observed by the Hebrews. And that is never to meddle or interpose oneself in matters of state prejudicial to the princes under whom other Hebrews take refuge, for they consider those Hebrews as hostages. So great is the feeling of charity among them which proceeds from the uniformity of their religion. And the illustrious officials destined for the Porte of the Grand Turk have many times declared that in their journeys through Turkish territory they are received by the Nation as angels of peace and the extreme

of the Nation's influence is extended to them. And in the very city of Constantinople the Hebrews give them a reverent homage just as if they were the above-mentioned native subjects. All this derives as much from the subjection that has become habitual in the mind of the Hebrew to revere great personages (57) as also from a desire to make recompense in part for the good treatment that is practiced toward their Nation in the City in which they have refuge. Just as the Hebrews have no precept, as I have said, to spread abroad their religion, so also they never have any thought to try any novelty to alleviate in general the state of their race; for they believe that every change that may happen to them, must depend on a superior cause and not on human attempts.

At the occurrence of the exile from Castile and from the other adjacent kingdoms, in the time of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, nearly half a million souls lived there together. Of the exiles who did not want to convert to the Christian religion there were three hundred thousand (as Isaac Abravanel, the very learned author who was then a leader in the country, relates) among whom were men of great spirit and counselors of state, as was Abravanel himself. But there was never found in such a great number anyone who yearned to propose any resolute means to alleviate himself from that miserable exile. But they dispersed

themselves and went on their way through the world. This is an evident sign that the daily institutions of the Hebrews and their subdued customs incline them to subjection to, and reverence for, their princes.

Consideration XVII

One discourses concerning the cause of the various permissions granted the Hebrews and also concerning some of the expulsions which befell the Nation.

In philosophical questions and scholastic deductions, after the contending of reasons, it is the custom to arrive into the inexorable and sometimes invincible arms of authority. Thus I believe that when someone cannot meet the above-mentioned matters face to face, he will strive to fight with the weapons of example and authority. And they say that if the Hebrews bring so many conveniences to the state then what is the reason that the most prudent princes and most wise republics exclude the Hebrew Nation from their states as have done Spain, France, England, many German cities and not a few Italian ones. To which instance one may answer that in political cases it is of little moment to argue from the place of the example, just as it is a vanity to employ authority as evidence and certitude in mathematics. So also in political matters it is an absurdity to argue on the basis of the contingency and diversity of individual accidents. Every dominion and city have their particular circumstances and attributes which do not

fit the government of others. There is no city in Europe which in civil (86b) and criminal matters does not have its particular and municipal laws. Therefore one is not a form of instruction and documentation for the other. And even if the authority of the most excellent senate of Venete, in the matter of embracing the Hebrew Nation, ought to be an example to all others and the model for admitting the Hebrews into their states. And there is no doubt that all equally should permit the Hebrews to enter, for all states are lovers of population and desirous of having profits and entrance taxes. But the diverse disposition and employments of peoples is the reason that these princes incline and dispose themselves to second the caprices of their people and do not ^{at} with, or find it convenient, to use force. And the same Most Serence Republic grants habitation to the Hebrews in its own City, the leading one of the dominion, but it does not do so in Brescia, Bergamo, Crema, and some other cities of the state -- and this is because of the repugnance and the retentiveness of the peoples. And if indeed one cannot with ^{any} reason discourse among so many varieties of thoughts and peoples, nevertheless one can probably say that the cities which do not have a seaport, a numerous population, a concourse of foreigners, and commissions of trade from all parts of

the world, as Venice does -- in those cities it is necessary that the Hebrews who live in them support themselves in one of three ways. First, by usury as they do in some Italian and German cities. Second, by means of (87) the practice of the common skills of the cities. Third, by incomes from stable wealth, as in the Levant.

Usury causes the Hebrews to be disliked by all ranks of the city equally. The practice of skills makes them disliked by the small people. The possession of stable wealth makes them disliked by the nobles and eminent people. These are the essential and efficacious causes why the Hebrews do not live in many places. But this does not happen in the City of Venice where usury is only at five per cent, and the banks are set up for the convenience of the poor and not for the profit of the bankers. Here the practice of skills is forbidden them along with the possession of stable wealth, but trade and traffic supply the needs of the Hebrews in such a manner that to no state and rank of the City are they dangerous and troublesome. But beyond that with great verisimilitude one can investigate the cause of some notable expulsions of the Hebrews.

In many cities of Germany it happened in the time of Godfrey of Bouillon, on the occasion of the Crusade to the Holy Land, that the soldiery, becoming stirred up against any nation that was not Christian, carried out against

the wretched Hebrews memorable and pitiful slaughter. There was almost no place of exile for them, and in the mind of peoples hatred for and aversion for the Nation became customary. In France at the very time that the slaughter at the hands of the Knights Templar occurred, also very severe decrees of confiscation and exile were fulminated against the Hebrews for the causes noted in the histories.

They were driven out of Spain in the time of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella after the subjection of the Moors of Granada. And if one wishes to attribute another cause, that of a pure religious zeal, one can conjecture that with their kingdoms full of Moors and Mohammedans, though in appearance Christian, they did not want to support in their kingdoms such a great mass of Hebrews and Moors separated from the common religion. But the Hebrews alone numbered a half million, as I have said, wherefore there could easily take place among the above-mentioned nations some plotting leading toward a rebellion; for the Hebrews and Moors were equally conquered and discontented subjects. And if that were really not so, appearances alone were sufficient to make those princes suspicious. Therefore they resolved to lessen jealousy and banish rather the Hebrews than the Moors, for the latter were more necessary to their kingdoms in agriculture and the practice of skills than the Hebrews who were deprived of such callings. In addi-

tion, the Moors were not banished in order to irritate this group which still preserved its early ferocity and which had a most powerful head of its own religion.

With regard then to the King of Portugal who a little later took the same action against the Nation, (88) persuaded continually by the above-mentioned Ferdinand and Isabella, in his country the attempt was directed and aimed rather at conversion than at exclusion and exile. The Portuguese king possessed through navigation many countries on the African coast and planned to make new acquisitions in the Indies and to spread his dominion still farther. Thus, he needed many people to make up such expeditions, his own population being exhausted of subjects because of the smallness and narrowness of his kingdom (which was a not too large portion of Spain and in itself little habitable). Therefore, he tried to convert to the Christian religion a great number of Hebrews who then were in his kingdom, having arrived there through the exile of the above-mentioned Ferdinand and Isabella. The king wanted to add and join them to his own people and to make use of them in his undertakings, navigations, and colonies and did not care whether violence was used in a matter of faith and religion. Wherefore he published a haughty and cruel decree of sudden exile and total confiscation of wealth against those who were not willing to consent to the above-

mentioned conversion (as such an event is related in the history of the very eloquent Bishop Osorius). The result was that about a hundred thousand were disposed and resolved to obey him, and the smaller part accepted banishment and preferred exile.

(88b) This is as much as one can discourse about the causes of such events which happened before our time and are wrapped up in the darkness of the unsearchable hearts of princes.

Consideration XVIII.

Herein the dispersion of the Hebrews and their position under various potentates and their number is discussed.

Peoples and nations have their periods prescribed no less than all other mundane things. They are warned that when they are at the summit of favor and applause, they may fall headlong into the abyss of oblivion. The poet said: "Muiono le Città, Muiono i Regni. Copre i fasti e le pompe arena & herba."

There are two ways in which things come to an end. A thing may either be corrupted entirely and be transformed into something else, or, retaining its own essence, its simple shape may be broken and deformed by a dissolution of its continuity as in the case of crushed glass and water that is separated. In the same manner nations are

destroyed and come to an end. Chaldea, Persia, Greece, and Rome and all the heathen world were entirely dissolved and disappeared and became transformed through a new metamorphosis. Wherefore of some of them we know today only the name. Of others (89) only some fragments of their memories are preserved like planks which escaped from a shipwreck. With regard to the Hebrew Nation there did not occur such mutations and changes; and though it was beaten and divided almost into infinite portions, beaten and dispersed through the whole world, it kept in great part the identity of its essentiality. And there is no doubt that by itself the Nation would not have had so much vigor to oppose the edacity of time and to free itself from the fierce insults heaped upon it for a space of about sixteen hundred years, but all that depended upon the will of God who preserved the Nation for ends manifest to Him. And if indeed captivity and dispersion are the greatest calamities that can befall a people and a nation, rendering it base and abject, the scorn and derision of peoples, nonetheless these scourges are a most efficacious remedy for duration and preservation; for they remove from the ruling princes jealousy and suspicion and from the distraught people, pride and boasting, for they become humble and manageable.

The ancient Hebrew teachers observed that Balaam after

having been first an enemy of the Hebrew people then wanted to bless them in order to make himself appear reverential to God and likened the people to a very high and robust cedar. And Ahijah, the Shilonite, a Hebrew, in prognosticating some evil for the people, compared them to a reed in the swamp which moves at every (89b) wind.

(89b) Wherefore the teachers say that the threat and execration of the true and pious Silonite prophet who compared the Hebrews to a pliant and flexible reed, which yields before every violence and therefore remains whole, were better than the blessing of the rescally pseudo-prophet who compared the people to the cedar which, in using force against the violence and fury of whirlwinds and the vehement blowing of winds, is often finally loosened from its roots: "Electitur obsequio curvatus ab arbore ramus. Frangas si vires experiere tuas." The dispersion of the people has not only helped make them yielding before superiors, but it has also guarded them from innovations in dogmas and rites, for they were not able to meander about and spread through the world through a division and diversion of the component parts of the Nation.

With regard to the number of Hebrews one cannot give it exactly, for we have no certain knowledge of all the places they live. With regard to the Ten Tribes who were captured by Shalmanezar before the destruction of the first

Temple, no certain information is known concerning them even though today the entire world has been searched and discovered. Beginning with the Eastern part we know that under the Persian king a great number, with middling freedom, has taken refuge. The state of the Turkish ruler is the principal center of the Nation not only because it was (90) their place of dwelling in former times, but also because of the concourse of Hebrews who had been expelled from Spain, a great portion of whom finally came under Turkish dominion. The cause of such a movement was first the granting by the Turks of the right to practice the Hebrew religion, a right which they granted to all who were different than they in the matter of religion. And since there was an infinite number of Greeks and observers of other rites, no reflection was made concerning the Hebrews. In addition they are permitted the possession of stable wealth and the practice of any profession at all; and with no nobility among the Turks the question of the possession of land raised no question. The Greeks, too, possessed a great deal of land, and the Turks themselves, for the most part applied themselves to the working skills. The Turks attend to the militia and the government of the people in such a way that there is no occasion for hatred and strife. One might be led to say that circumcision, being practiced both by Hebrews and Turks, would cause some friendly relationship; but that is not true because experience teaches that

people who possess certain rites in common and differ in others get along together less well than those whose practices are absolutely distinct and separate. In Constantinople and Salonika there is a greater number of Hebrews than in other cities, and in these two alone it is judged that there are more than eighty thousand. It is estimated that thousands live under the Turkish rule.

In the Holy Land, and in particular in Jerusalem, there arrives annually not (800) only a great number of Hebrews from all the nations of the world, but even a very great amount of annual revenue which comes as an offering to support the poor and maintain the academies. In Germany under the Emperor, there are a great number, but there are many more in Poland, Russia, and Lithuania where are situated academies and universities attended by thousands of youths. They train themselves in the civil and canon law of the Hebrews, and they have in those regions the free power to judge any difference or controversy either civil or criminal which may occur among the Nation.

For the most part Hebrews do not live in the territories separated from the Roman Church. It is certain that the Hebrew Nation in some articles inclines more to the Roman than to its own opinion. The Hebrews hold Scripture in many places to be unintelligible without the light of traditions, for they set great store by these traditions

as a basis for a clearer understanding, as I have already shown. They believe that although the value of meritorious deeds is great in the sight of God and although they practice them to a great extent, they should accompany them with faith. They affirm the freedom of the will, and they consider this to be the principal article of their belief. They affirm likewise that the merits of others can help those who are imperfect, and the living pray (91) for the souls of the dead. They say that the vindication of the penitent is real and not putative and absolutionary, as Calvin has held. And if indeed the name of purgatory is not mentioned frequently in their authors, they divide into three the fate of the souls - the souls are separated with regard to beatitude, finite temporal penalties, and eternal ones - for they hold that God absolves guilt but nevertheless exacts the penalty. Their prayers are made in the Hebrew language, not in the bulgar tongue - which matters are discussed and aired in the treatise on Dogmas and Rites [not extant].

In the Low Countries they are treated with very great charity and kindness, as in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Hamburg. These are places which, because of the flourishing of the mercantile profession, grant humane asylum to all. Toward the West then there remains only Italy, and on the coast of Africa the kingdom of Fez and Morocco.

With regard to Italy they receive universally from the princes protection and favors, and their indulgences and privileges are honored without any change. But since the situation here is under the eye of everyone, it is not necessary that I dwell on it at length. I believe the Hebrews here number twenty-five thousand.

In Morocco and Fez and in other neighboring cities (91b) the Hebrews are not under Turkish rule. A very great number of them is in these cities, for some of the exiles from Castile and Portugal went there also because of the nearness of the places. It is said that there is an infinity of Hebrews in the Mediterranean cities of Africa, but because this is unfrequented and unknown country, the number cannot be given with certainty. The opinions and dogmas of all this Nation, so divided, torn, and dismembered, are uniform; the ceremonial rites are the same and the Hebrews differ only in non-essential matters and then only slightly. Wherefore Haman, the enemy of the Nation said to King Ahasuerus (Esther 3.8): "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and in their laws are diverse from those of every people". Among so many charges one could not hide this condition of uniformity, with variation in customs alone - a considerable diversity for the reason above-noted.

This is as much as has come to my mind to say with regard to this Nation in so far as it pertains to the interests of prince and peoples who give shelter to it, and particularly to the Most Serene Venetian Republic, which with so much benignity receives it into its states and protects it with its customary justice and clemency. Venice abhors and detests in its every action that unjust and inhuman saying of the impious statesman Photinus uttered to the young emperor Ptolemy, as Lucan sang in the Pharsalia:

(92) Dat penas laudata fides, cum sustinet inquit
 Quos fortuna premit, fatis accede deisque,
 Et cole felices, miseros fuge, sydera terra,
 Ut distant, sic flamma mari, sic utile recto.

When this was pronounced, it produced treachery against the greatest warrior who lived in that century; I mean the slaying of the great Pompey. With his decapitation the head of Roman liberty was slaughtered and cut, and a monument of eternal infamy was erected to the one who approved such an execrable sentence. Rather may the Most Serene Republic be subject to that prophecy expressed by the very prudent father to a pious son (as Vergil simulates) that he (the son) would later bring forth the grandeur and glory of the Roman people. And then perhaps one day, through the benignity of the Heavens, the Republic, which is the rival of Rome in virtue, could also be the emulator of her triumphs:

Tu egere Imperio populos Romane memento,
Hæ tibi erunt artes pacisque imponere morem
Parcere subiectis, Sc debellare superbos.

THE END