

Chance does not underlie even the ordinary tide of human affairs, nay, if we may take Mordecai's mystic utterances as actually expressive of the author's views—and we must do so, considering the figure he makes in the book—then the meeting streams do not flow together by accident. As the threads of life were woven together, by apparently trivial causes, between Gwendolen's life and Deronda's, so, in another direction, were they spun between the death of Mordecai and the joyous love of Mirah. The two constitute the warp and woof of the story, and the entire fabric was the work of fate or God—that is, it would have been, had the narration been one of actual life instead of fiction. One brief sentence of Mordecai's will illustrate the theory:—"Daniel, from the first I have said to you, we know not all the pathways. Has there not been a meeting among them, as of the operations of one soul, where an idea, being born and breathing, draws the elements towards it and is fed and grows? For all things are bound together in that Omnipresence which is the place and habitation of the world, and events are as a glass where-through our eyes see some of the pathways. And if it seems that the erring and unloving wills of men have helped to prepare you, as Moses was prepared, to serve your people the better, that depends on another order than the law that must guide our footsteps."

There is much vagueness in the religious tone of the work; indeed, one almost hesitates to call it religious in any ordinary sense. It is deeply spiritual, often verging on mysticism, and yet its creed may be Pantheism, Theism, or Rationalism of the idealistic school, for aught that is made clearly apparent. The faith of Mordecai is almost vehement, but it is only in the future of his race and its mission, and his, as a prophet of it. The Greek doctrine of destiny, as sternly enforced by the elder writers of tragedy, seems to be recognized, in conjunction with a fervid and mystic Mosaism; yet the effect of the whole is strangely vague and impalpable. From time to time, glimpses are afforded the Christian world of the inner life of the Jewish Church, and our author doubtless has had exceptional opportunities of being well informed on the subject: but her readers would certainly like to get some firmer grasp of a movement which is to accomplish so much as a mediator between the religions of the East and West. If we could imagine that the Jewish element in "Daniel Deronda" were introduced solely for artistic purposes there would be an end to speculation in the matter. George Eliot would hardly be guilty of a blunder in introducing gratuitously either the mysticism of Mordecai or the *quasi* conversion of Deronda to no practical moral or spiritual purpose. A writer bearing so noble a reputation would hardly trifle with those who admire her genius, by wantonly introducing a somewhat annoying theory. It therefore seems

clear, especially when we remember the evident affection she bears to her hero, that giving prominence to Mordecai's views she naturally adopts them as her own. The type of character revealed and developed in Mordecai, with so much care and skill, no doubt exists, and was probably drawn in the main from real life. There is a family likeness among the heirs of enthusiasm—whether prophets or dreamers of dreams, whether great benefactors of mankind, deliverers, or the devotees of phantasmal discovery—from the first believer in his own inspiration down to the last inventor of an ideal machine that will achieve perpetual motion. The character is real perhaps, yet the fancies and the dreams are but a shifting and precarious foundation for either a faith or a philosophy.

Of the chief personages in the story there is not one which is not painted by the hand of a finished artist. Certainly in no previous work has George Eliot delved deeper into the secret recesses of the human heart. The analysis of Gwendolen's character, and its transformation under the discipline of sorrow could hardly be surpassed. The spoilt and wilful child, determined to shine and rule in every circle, having made herself wretched, but becoming ultimately penitent and, so to speak, regenerated, points by her life a moral often obtruded upon the attention of private circles, but never so deeply impressed before in letters which the world cannot mistake. The breach of faith with Mrs. Glasher—the mercenary marriage with the man whom she thought she could rule because he appeared suave, even-tempered, and patient—brought its own terrible nemesis along with it; and then the terrible revelation dawns upon her, "What was she to do? Search where she would in her consciousness, she found no plea to justify a plaint. Any romantic illusions she had had in marrying the man had turned upon her power of using him as she liked. He was using her as he liked." It was then that she learned to lean upon Daniel for advice, admonition, and stern reproof even. He became at once "her mentor and her conscience" and at last led her into the better way. "The poor thing felt herself strong enough to do anything that would give her a higher place in Deronda's mind."

The circumstances of his life, his solitary childhood, his uncertain parentage, acting upon a naturally warm and sympathetic nature had drawn him towards his fellows with a yearning tenderness always pure and unselfish. The return of Gwendolen's pawned necklace at Leubronn was effected with singular delicacy, his sacrifice of University prospects to assist Hans Meyrick, his providing a home for Mirah in her hour of extremity, his patient care of Mordecai—are all proofs of his spiritual goodness of heart. And when he has discovered his Jewish parentage he surrenders head and heart to the guidance of the mystic. After