

tion commenced, but Judaism had about the same time reached its lowest ebb. A bright light began to shine. Uriel Acosta, a writer and nationalist, born at Oporto, Portugal, in 1590, came to Amsterdam for liberty, but found Judaism a rigid, cumbersome and prosaic accumulation of ritual observances, very different from the liberal religion which he longed for. Feeling the inspiration of his high ideals, he was frank enough to express his disgust with the formal Judaism of the day, and to denounce the Pharisaism of the Amsterdam Jews. On the other hand, the Amsterdam Jews, who had known persecution, were not disposed calmly to see an impetuous young enthusiast openly assail the ancient faith. After printing his works, "An Examination of Pharisaical Tradition" and "Immortality of the Soul," he was indicted before the magistracy for the utterance of views subversive of the foundation, not only of the Jewish but also of the Christian faith, and judgment was asked against him as "a public enemy to religion." He was arrested, thrown into prison, and fined three hundred gulden, and his books were condemned to be publicly burned. He undoubtedly possessed the uncommon intellectual endowments and enthusiasm of the reformer, and so he gave his life, for he died after receiving thirty-nine stripes in the Synagogue in Amsterdam in 1647.

After Acosta's tragic death, Baruch Spinoza, philosopher and Biblical critic, appeared one of the most celebrated of the Spanish Jews. He, too, dissented from traditional Rabbinism. Born in Amsterdam, Novem 24th, 1632, his history is common property, and there is no need to