

when learning was so neglected that the warlike barons could sometimes not so much as write their names, the Hebrews and the Moors were kindling in Spain the fires of knowledge, and could point with pride to their libraries and great universities, to their colleges of music, to their academies of languages, to their schools of medicine, and to their institutes of philosophy and science. It was then that there shone forth that bright constellation of great Spanish-Jewish intellects, whose brilliant achievements in science, in medicine, in poetry and in philosophy have not been surpassed in the whole range of post-Biblical Hebrew



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history. The names of Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Jehudah Halevi, Ibn Ezra, Alfasi and Don Isaac Abarbanel are among the very greatest that Hebrew genius has given to the world. But there is one Sephardic Jewish name that transcends all others—that of Maimonides, or Rambam, of Cordova, unquestionably the greatest philosopher whom the Jews have ever produced.

These were halcyon days for the children of Jacob, when on the banks of the Guadalquivir they shared in the dominion and prosperity of the Saracens. No narrow restrictions confined their powers. They occupied the highest social and political positions. Often they held the highest offices of state. Rank and titles were frequently accorded to them. Their synagogues vied in architectural magnificence with the mosques of their Mahometan neighbors; and the half ruins of some, long since converted to other purposes, still exist to excite the wonder and admiration of the world. The homes of their great men in Cordova, Toledo and Granada in Lucena and Seville, were models of elegance, luxury and refinement, and reflected well their affluence and culture.

But, after centuries of prosperity, changes at length came. Spain was once more to undergo a transfer of mas-