

wealth, and when imprisonment and torture could no longer produce gold, the inhuman expedient of trafficking in the hapless usurers themselves was resorted to, and during a period of ten years absolute control over lives and property of the Jews was transferred five times for the consideration of a few thousand marks.

In reviewing this series of calamities, this iniquitous system of oppression and robbery, one is led to ask, what further injuries can be inflicted, what new trials can await the wretched people that seem to be deserted by Heaven and abhorred by their fellow men? But one step remains. Prohibited by the last solemn act of Henry III. from holding any lands in England; with their title-deeds and mortgages cancelled; denied the right to own even tenements unless actually occupied by their families; commanded by a statute of Edward I. to abandon their old trade of money lending and betake themselves to occupations with which they were unfamiliar, while their Christian neighbors were forbidden to supply them with the commonest necessities of life; a number of them in their despair fell to clipping and adulterating the coin of the realm. Those found guilty were hanged without mercy, but their punishment was only the signal for the plunder of the innocent, until the populace tired of personal vengeance, but with wrath insatiate rose, and with a voice as of one man, demanded that the infidels should be driven from the land. The king listened; the edict of expulsion was issued, and the Jews had no longer an abiding place in England. The tenth day of October, 1290, saw them hurried to the coast, where, bound for lands in which no welcome awaits them, they turn their backs upon home and country forever.

We regard, with feelings akin to sympathy, the three thousand unfortunates who were necessarily transported from our own province, and we cherish the memory of that poet who has made immortal their place of embarkation, and told in gentle measures the homely virtues of the simple-hearted Acadians. But the mournful march of five times as many Jewish exiles across as fair a land, but toward less hospitable shores, has waked but little pity in succeeding generations. No muse has told of what was fairest in their lives, nor sung the grief of the

weeping maidens, the frenzied youth and the despairing rabbins of that sad company. But their faults have been remembered, and long ago one as great as Chaucer lent his inimitable art to perpetuate the story of their crimes.

When the sons of Jacob appear again in England a brighter star is in their horizon, for bigotry and intolerance have received a blow at the hands of Cromwell from which they never recover. By his permission the Jews returned, since which time they have steadily advanced as citizens with the progress of the country. English prejudice was not overcome in one generation. At different times serious outbreaks threatened, and Jewish life and property was endangered; but the wisdom of statesmen has saved enlightened England from the disgrace of renewed race persecution. As the popular mind has been educated to consider with fairness the rights of all citizens, instead of those of a powerful sect or party, disabilities have been removed until all civil distinction between Jew and Gentile has been obliterated. Jews have repeatedly held the highest office in the gift of the City of London. They are equally honored with their Christian countrymen in the legislative halls of the nation. Their free schools rank highest in the kingdom, and they are providing, wherever necessary, higher institutions of learning for their own people. They have not been slow to take advantage of their position in the midst of a nation of advanced thought and culture, and many Jewish names stand high in science and literature. Their wealth is proverbial, and their reputation as financiers world-wide, while the honesty and integrity of more than a few give proof that to be a Jew is not necessarily to be the impersonation of sordid avarice and contemptible greed. Who, that wishes England well, can be but thankful that she has seen and seized her opportunity to undo, if wrong acts can be undone, the dark deeds of early days? And who can but rejoice that the Jew in England is rapidly reaching a position in which he will be able to do much to bring his scattered brethren to the possession of that sacred land, which was given to their fathers for an everlasting inheritance.

A. F. N., '92.