

The March of the Jews.

Some judge the grandeur of a nation by the extent of its dominions and the number of its great castles, but this is not an infallible test of greatness for history shows us that such nations are not always the greatest nor do they leave the greatest effect upon the world.

In the southwestern corner of Syria, is a country small in extent, not over one-hundred and fifty miles long and fifty miles wide, known as Palestine, the home of the Hebrews or Jews. Of all the nations of the world, this nation has the most wonderful history. From the earliest time to the Christian era, it may be traced like the course of a mighty river. Even there, when their national existence is broken up, they are not lost among the nations, but still are like the river which keeps the color of its waters far out upon the open sea. As a writer says, "When little more numerous than a family, they had their language, customs

and peculiar observances, treated with
princes, and in every respect acted as
a nation. Though broken as if into atoms
and scattered throughout all climes,
among the rudest and the most civil-
ized nations, they have preserved through
thousands of years, common features,
habits, and observances, common relig-
ion, literature, and a sacred language.

From age to age and from land to
land, they have been torred and driv-
en, by their fellow men, from every place
of rest. They glide amidst the throng
of nations always the victims of a
strange hostility. It is the marvel of
history that this little people, beset
and despised by all the earth for ages,
maintains its characteristics unim-
paired.

Reduced to slavery by the Egypt-
ian rulers, the persecutions of the
Jews began. But in this state they
were not destined to languish long.
The task-master is smitten by the
hand of Moses and the Children of
Israel are delivered into the promised

land, Here they rise to be a great nation. Jerusalem became beautiful, and the fame of the wisdom and magnificence of Solomon spread throughout the world. But the fall of this grandeur is near. Soon they are divided by internal dissension. Israel is swept away by the Assyrians, and shortly Judah which resisted the Assyrians, is carried into captivity by the Babylonians. Again they are reduced to slavery, but only to rise again. For as Nineveh had fallen before Babylon, Babylon was to fall before Cyrus. Once more the Jews are restored to their native land, and they endeavor to anew its former grandeur. With astonishing vitality, the little handful that was left to return, soon develop a new Palestine.

Through all their harsh experience their feeling of nationality had not been at all abated, and again they confront the hostile world. While they thrived under

the rule of Alexander the Great, they received oppression at the hands of his successors. Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple defiled with pagan worship.

But again they were to rise. Under the leadership of Mattathias and Maccabaeus, struggle for national existence was begun. Once more the foreign yoke was thrown off and national independence was enjoyed for the last time by the Jews. But peace was not enduring to them. The iron hand of Rome was soon felt. Jerusalem was besieged, the city razed to the ground, and its people dispersed throughout every country of the world. Thus the Jews bid farewell to their home.

Does the career of the Jews end here? Not so. Fierce as their struggles were; and as nearly exterminated as they were by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Syrians, and Romans, they have long outlived these foes and as it is said, "they might well boast

that the vengeance of Heaven has fallen upon these persecutors." Long before this, the Jews were found in every known country of the globe. Their wanderings had commenced as early as the Babylonian captivity. Alexander the Great found Jewish culture and energy in every country of the day. Their faces had become well known in Rome, and they had penetrated with the legions into Spain and Gaul. Unlike their neighbors, they flourished in every climate of the world.

For the first few centuries of Christianity, the Jews lived on the friendliest terms with the Christians, and it was at a later age that they were to be held guilty of the crucifixion. They were received as brothers and honorably established in all civilized lands. But the time was soon to come, when at the hands of the western nations, the Jews were to receive the fiercest persecution man has ever seen. Gradually

the feeling of contempt was growing towards the Jews until all semblance of unity was lost. The hand of fate had smitten Rome, but it would seem only to make room for a new foe, for then came the Northern barbarians, and with a half savage Christianity knelt in Jerusalem and cursed its gifted founders. The Papal Church arose and man's only object seemed to be to persecute the Jews. Fierce inquisitors Spain, saintly kings in France, English monks and German burghers, fastened their malediction on the hated race. Their sorrows deepened to the lowest abyss, and cries for mercy were heard on every side.

First they were exiled from England, the land where commerce and refinement was planted by them in the day of the Saxon kings. Here their industrious race had accumulated immense wealth, only to have it rung from them by cruel exact-

ions. They try to depart in peace but thousands are forced to a watery grave in the turbid Phames.

In France they have reached a greater prosperity, but only to meet a greater fall. When in the sixth century they begin a period of progress. Schools and libraries are established, wealth comes in to them, the natural product of careful industry. Their fall was near. The wealth that they had painfully accumulated through ages of toil, was wrung from them, and they were driven from the kingdom. France was the loser and soon invited them back. But peace was short. They were robbed and massacred and again driven from its boundaries. Once more they return, and France rises under their intelligent industry. The third time they are banished, now to return with perfect freedom, until the stormy revolution has swept away their persecutors.

But it is in Spain where the

Jew reaches the highest culmination, to fall at the bloody hands of his persecutors. Here they established libraries and endowed colleges, that filled Europe with intelligence. Their physicians were sent for to heal European kings. Their wealth eclipsed that of all other nations. But soon the Jews were to leave all this. Spain falls into the power of the Catholic kings. Inquisitions are established, and used with unrelenting vigor on the Jews. When they established colleges, they see their former established places of human woe. Queen Isabella culminates their sorrows by ordering their expulsion from their luxurious homes. Once more they go forth to seek some unknown refuge. Their sorrows are unparalleled. At last they receive hope. The reformation comes to their rescue, and slowly the natural right of men to live on the same earth unmolested by each other was acknowl-

edged.

But the Jews did not spring in a moment from their depressions and persecutions. Although the massacres and fierce bodily tortures are things of the past, except in some secluded places, in many places they are subject to insult and hardships. In America where the Jews were offered the first peaceful and happy home, public opinion has not yet reached that point "where it absolves the race from the sin of the individual." It is but a short time since their political disabilities were removed in England. In Italy, it takes but the report that the Jews have murdered a Christian child to cause the massacre of a dozen Jews. It is said that they are exposed to injustices more in proportion to the barbarity of the nation which surrounds them. What a melancholy and disgraceful fact, in these enlightened times, that Rus-

sia has renewed her restrictions on the Jews. Here they are forced to live in certain districts, excluded from schools and colleges, restricted to certain mercantile occupations, forbidden to own real estate, and no Jew can become an officer in the army or civil service.

But in spite of all this the Jew still rises. During all their early persecutions; they had not neglected their mental culture, and their intellects have remained clear and active, eager for knowledge, laborous in study and fertile in production. They were poets, musicians, scholars, and thinkers when the rest of the world was a wilderness. Education was their stepping stone to all success. "A few decades of freedom" says Johann Jacob "were sufficient to efface the inherited trace of an oppression lasting thousands of years". The saying is "that the intellect of any people must of necessity de-

cline with years, that the races have their seasons of progress and decay, but the Jews, whose ancestors guided the politics of Egypt and Babylon, may be found equally active and valuable in modern states and nations. It was because they were educated to industry, neatness, docility, and order, that they survived the persecutions of priests and kings, and have beheld the destruction of all their foes. In the words of Hosmer, "it seems if we are to be pushed to the wall by the all conquering Israelite, that the money power is falling into his hands, and political power is following; that he is, in fact, seizing up the best places in every country; that the time is at hand when the Jews, with all his haughty pride of race is to grasp the headship of the world."

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