

DEFENCE OF THE JEW

VERY INTERESTING ADDRESS MADE
BY BISHOP USSHER.

He Maintains That the Persecution of the Semite Is a Blot on Christendom—Achievements of the Jew in the History of Finance, the Arts and Religion—Universal Brotherhood.

Thomas Dawse of this city is in Boston confined to his room with a broken ankle. He has sent B. Silberstein the Boston Transcript of Feb. 15, containing a very interesting article on the defense of the Jew, by Bishop Ussher. The article is here reproduced:

Bishop Ussher spoke before the Victorian club last evening on the persecution of the Semite as a blot on Christendom, and his paper was a vigorous and substantial defence of Jewish national and individual character. He declared that he would appeal not to sentiments, but to facts, and said that if they could not be gainsaid then he should expect his converts to remain. "Popularity," he said, "is but a toy for adult childhood. It is better to starve for truth's sake here, that eternally may witness your glorification. He who stands for truth regardless of the enemies that hate it gets strength to stand; he who goes on the crutches of expediency advertises himself as morally lame, and what is true of an individual is also true of a nation. The spectacle of a powerful nation poised on the brink of ruin is a grievous sin in this end of the nineteenth century, and the more so when it stands at a witness to the failure of religious influence and the beneficial development of the supremacy of the mob. The eyes of the world have been focused upon France and the blush of the nations at the iniquity of the Dreyfus persecution is the more telling because the several governments are silent save as they exonerate the accused and suffering Jew from any wrong doing with their representatives." From this point and again in later passages the speaker offered elaborate defence of Capt. Dreyfus and keenly scored his tormentors.

"I assert," he continued, "and am prepared to defend the statement, that neither the Jew of the past nor the present deserves the hatred or contempt of the Gentile; literature has lied them into undeserved disrepute, and I go further to say that the senseless antagonism of Christianity as represented by so-called Christians is enough to make him that sitteth in the heavens laugh, were it not for the cruel, unjust condition that is produced by the bigotry of ignorance and the senselessness of superstition. The world is coming under the influence of that grand idea of a universal brotherhood. The tide may rise and fall, but the ships of human righteousness will cross the bar and discharge their freight for the enriching of the world, and the low tide will see them harbored at the wharf." After reviewing the world-wide persecution of the Israelites as a race and in their national aspect, he said: "I shall now enter a less traversed field and I venture to say that the Jews would appear to the individual Gentile in quite a different light if he knew more about them. I ask you, Gentile Americans, Christians, and you Jewish-American citizens, what do you know of each other? What do you refined Christians know of your refined Jewish fellow-townsmen and his family, or they of yours? Have you Gentiles entertained these Jews at your home, or they you at theirs? Is this loving your neighbors as yourself? Yet that is your duty. What is the reason for this social gulf? Simply lack of knowledge. Had you not better drop your prejudice and see for yourselves what the Jews really are. I tell you, your highly cultured people will find them equals in knowledge and refinement. Your kindly people, their equals in all that is good and true and pure.

"The Jew in Palestine is the most elaborate specimen of what tyranny can make a man, but when the Jew gets a chance, as in England and the United States, I say it without fear of successful contradiction, you find ladies and gentlemen the peers of any and the superiors of many. The Jews have handicapped themselves by their national exclusiveness and they have been held back by ceremonialism and social difficulties, but in spite of it all, in spite of practically losing two days out of the seven for trade they have swept past their neighbor in affluence. Instead of being American Jews religiously they have been Jews in American nationality, and that is a mistake. The generosity of the Jewish merchants of large means to his own people far exceeds in proportion the liberality of the Vanderbilts or the Astors and their philanthropy is of so full a measure that it overflows and many Gentiles benefit.

"Most people are inclined to regard the Jew as a merchant, a seller of something, a man lacking in love for country, art and refinement. It is a very great blunder. He is no fonder of money than you and I are, and he is as fond of art as the best of us. It is because there were delightful Jewish homes where culture reigns that we are so rich today in the monuments of the divinest art. What cultivated part the earth has not been ravished by the wordless songs of Mendelssohn, who has not been charmed by the living compositions of the dead Donizetti and the laurel-crowned Rossini? Who could give reality to melody with greater skill than the master hand of Rubinstein? Nor must I forget to enroll among the kings of music, Halevy, Moscheles, Meyerbeer, Joachim; and if I am wrong I am open to correction, but I think I should place upon the list Paderewski, the Polish Jew, and possibly his new rival, Emil Sauer. When Wagner, the Jew hater, composed a work that was to prove the Jews were the inferiors of the Germans in music, judge of his chagrin when he discovered that all the first violins of his orchestra were in the hands of Jews and that they also were capable of interpreting his theme. On

the continent and in England the educated Jew ranks second to none. He has developed the world by his genius. What if he does get rich? The only reason some of us Gentiles do not is because we can't. We would fast enough if we could, but we owe the Jew what money cannot give us and which he has bestowed out of the wealth of his mind—the Bible, the foundation of the moral law of Christendom. In comparatively modern times where are the superiors of Heine and Auerbach in the field of poetry and literature. Both these men have distinguished themselves, as have Hartmann, Kompert, Frankell, Fanny Blumenthal, Edward Ottenger, Disraeli (afterward Lord Beaconsfield) Castelar, Gambetti, Lessing, Lascar, and our new star, Israel Zangwill. At the head of the supreme court of France we find a Jew; at the head of finance and reform in Russia we find a Jew; at the head of the greatest navy in the world is Goshen, a British Jew. In the field of philology there stand out the names of Monk, Durenberg, Saunders, Garmatelles, Bingfroy, Levi, Furst and Kohert; in archaeology, Oppert; in philosophy, Lazarus and Steinhart; in biography, Schlemmschneider; history, Philippson, Jost and Goetz; in ophthalmology, Traube, in botany, Cohen; in comparative mythology, Chevolski, Kaufman and Goldsecker; in sculpture, Antokolski; and in painting, Rosenthal, Moran and scores of others."

The Jews' achievements are nothing new in national history. Summoned from the past the great heroes of military achievement and out of the land of shadows will come trooping Abraham with his victorious corps of trained servants and scattered under his leadership the armies of four kings; Joshua, whose battle plans receive the encomiums of military leaders of today. "Twas David's generalship which selected Jerusalem as his capital, a city which has been besieged nineteen times and only fallen to the foe eight times; Gideon, Saul, Joab, Judas Maccabaeus, and scores of other anti-Christian warriors covered themselves with glory, and as we come down the line and have Massena, called by Napoleon "The Favored Child of Victory," and Marshall Soult, the Von Moltke of his day, and if we call up the hosts of the blue and gray, be it on the field or in the hospital, the Jew has done his part, not excepting the late war with Spain; in philanthropy and finance where are the equals of Baron Hirsch, Sir Moses Montefiore and the Rothschilds? Upon the stage the Jew and Jewess have created their own peculiar glory, as shown by Madame Tachel and Sarah Bernhardt. If in your society set you have a philosophic turn of mind you must sit at the feet of Maimonides, Spinoza, and Moses Mendelssohn, the hunchback, with the straightest soul a human body in his land possessed, and Heinrich Heine, a pure deep thinker, by good men well beloved. Go into the solemn sepulchres in Rome where the first and best Jesuits lie buried; call back the dust to life and the lifted cowl would reveal the features of the Jew.

The Jew is and will be. Let us recognize this fact, and in the fear or reverence of our common God profit by what is best in each of us, and convinced of the great manhood of man let us who claim to be Christians so exalt our own individual humanity that the Jew has touched us all, Jew and Gentile alike. This is your God-set task; here in the United States the work needs to be done if you would make strong the nation of your love, neglect it and the best interests of your children will pay the forfeit of your iniquity. Virtue uncultivated will die, and usefulness set aside will wither. Our business is to bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captive and open the prison to them that are bound. There are fetters of sin to be unloosed and broken, consolation of soul to the afflicted, news of humanity to be supplied. The Church of God has given no creed. We can well afford to be poor in creed if we are rich in deed. A religion that has any vein of hate in it is to be rejected as of the devil if it has any claim to the iniquities of humanity. A religion of love is of God, and a life without a religion is a lantern without a light. Make a choice; push over the precipice of everlasting oblivion the already fleeing spirits of bigotry and superstition, welcome advancing enlightenment if it does reveal, and cause you to regret, the artificially made products you have revered as divine. Use the light for the dispelling of darkness, not for the setting of humanity on fire, and in the growth of divine love in the heart of Jew and Gentile under the light of truth and the warmth of love will be found a perpetual safeguard against the renewal of injustice or the iniquitous persecution of any of the human race, and belief in God, being universal, Christ's prayer "believe also in me," will be answered by the adoption of his principles by all those who love the teaching and practice of what is true.