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RECORDS
OF THE
NEWS IN LIVERPOOL

A Paper,
READ BEFORE THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE,
16TH NOVEMBER, 1899.

BY
B. L. BENAS, J.P.

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RECORDS OF THE JEWS IN LIVERPOOL.

By B. L. Benas, J.P.

SOME years ago, the late Sir James Picton, the eminent local archæologist, and author of the *Memorials of Liverpool*, urged me to supply him with information as to the records of a Jewish community existing in Liverpool about the middle of the last century. He was prompted to this enquiry by the fact that, in excavating beneath some structures situated between Derby Street and Cumberland Street, at the corner of Whitechapel, with which he had become professionally connected in his capacity as architect, he came across a few tombstones with Hebrew inscriptions. Sir James was not unacquainted with Hebrew, but the inscriptions were so much obliterated that he was unable to decipher them. He intended to preserve these relics in our local museum; a careless workman, however, had either broken them up or immured them in a wall. Despite all endeavours, they could not again be found.

Picton thus refers to this incident in the second volume of his *Memorials of Liverpool*, p. 195 :—

Hard by, on the south side of Cumberland Street, stood a small Jewish synagogue, the first erected in Liverpool. It is said to have been built by some German Jews, about the middle of the last century. There must have been a small cemetery attached, as fragments of tombstones with Hebrew inscriptions have been found in the neighbourhood. It has been stated that the Hebrew congregation removed to Frederick Street in 1794, but the building remained standing for some time afterwards. It is shown in the map of 1796, but at the time of Harwood's large survey [1803] it had disappeared.

I directed my efforts to find traces of this early settlement, and consulted a Mrs. Hannah Chapman, then in her ninetieth year. Mrs. Chapman was born in Liverpool in 1795, was exceptionally well informed, and, for the period in which she lived, must have had a fairly liberal education. Yet she knew nothing of the existence of such a synagogue: a building in Turton Court being her earliest recollection of a meeting-house for Jewish worship.

My interest in the early memorabilia of my community had been awakened. With oral traditions that I could collect from a few of the oldest survivors, and the scanty records and archives of the Old Hebrew Congregation, very difficult to decipher, I contributed, about twenty years ago, at the request of some esteemed co-workers in Liverpool Jewry, to a series of articles on the history of the Liverpool Jewish community; they appeared in the press, and a few of those indispensable materials I again make use of in this paper.

It seems evident that there must have been, about the period of 1750, a proem before the genesis of the present Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation. It can be accepted as a postulate that a synagogue and a burial ground existed, and that

probably several interments took place in that cemetery, and that its existence at that period was sufficiently well known to be indicated in the official map of the borough. Yet not one written scrap or vestige, not a single record of its life, is to be found outside the literary signposts I have indicated. (I shall mention, later on, how I came upon some footprints.) Even the oldest inhabitant, Hannah Chapman, who must have been a child when the building was shown in the borough map, had no recollection of the mention of either a synagogue or a congregation connected with the spot pointed out in the old chart.

Now how are we to account for the utter oblivion of every trace of a previous Liverpool Jewish settlement? I dare only venture a hypothetical speculation, and it is this: Ever since the United States of America have been a field of colonization, Liverpool seems to have been deemed by strangers the frontier town of the Old World. Many of the present residents and descendants of early Jewish settlers seem to have been those whose original intention it had been to emigrate to the New World. Some were deterred from proceeding further owing to the failure of resources; others there were whose courage failed at the last moment, at the prospect of what was, in those days, a long and wearying sea voyage in a sailing vessel, with little better provision for the observant Jew than a hard biscuit and water. Arriving in Liverpool, he found his way to the synagogue, and then probably decided to go no further.

Now, on all-fours with the position of Liverpool to America at the beginning of this century, Liverpool and Ireland were to the Jew 150 years ago, and especially the city of Dublin, which is believed to have Anglo-Jewish traditions almost as old as those of Commonwealth and Stuart periods.

Picciotto mentions, in his *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History*, cap. viii, pp. 76-7:—

We will here observe that among the muniments of the Spanish and Portuguese community is found a conveyance of a certain space of ground in the city of Dublin, bought in 1748 for the purpose of conversion into a cemetery; and we believe that the same land is now employed for that identical object by the Dublin Congregation.

The deterring influences of the long voyage to America applied, though in a much lesser degree, to the early Jews about to proceed to Dublin. In those days a voyage to Ireland was quite a serious undertaking. Liverpool and Hoylake were favourite ports of embarkation for the Irish capital, before the construction of the suspension bridge across the Menai Straits; and one dare venture to speculate that the Cumberland Street synagogue and cemetery were founded by Jews who originally intended crossing over to Dublin, but remained in Liverpool for some reason or other.

The property itself could not have been of much value. Whitechapel—or Frog Lane, as it is called in the *Directory* of 1766—was, according to Picton, a crooked and irregular avenue. The level of the surface being very low, little elevated above high-water mark, it was formerly subject in wet seasons to serious inundations, the communication between Church Street and Lord Street being occasionally for a time maintained by carts or boats. The houses built in the street were, therefore, not of a very superior character; but lying as it did in the direct line of traffic from north to south, business became naturally attracted to it, and it has now developed into a leading thoroughfare.

Derby Street exists no more, but a few yards of the old Cumberland Street still remain, and that is just the very boundary end and the site of the old primitive synagogue. This to-day is a lane, barely sufficient for one horse and cart to pass into, and as Cumberland Street is marked on the old maps as very much broader than Derby

Street, the inference is that Derby Street must have been a mere passage or entry, and that this first synagogue, at the confluence of Frog Lane (now Whitechapel), Mathew Street, Derby Street, and Cumberland Street, could have been little better than a corner cottage, with a small garden attached, used as the burial ground. I remember before that portion of the city was re-constructed, it consisted of wretched, dilapidated tenements. The house could not have been of much value: possibly the rental at that period may not have amounted to more than £5 per annum.

A tributary of the Mersey passed near the site of the synagogue, to a spot called Shaw's Brow. Later on the municipality deviated the course of this tributary, connected it with a sewer, and built over the stream. Until then, fishermen would perhaps disembark there, and bring business to the street where the synagogue was located. With the deviation of the stream, that neighbourhood for some time remained impoverished, the trade having been transferred to districts where rentals were much higher. Perhaps the last occupant of the little cottage synagogue and cemetery may have been forced to find his livelihood elsewhere; and thus the proem settlement of the Jews in Liverpool came to an end. But for the fact of the finding of the tombstones with the Hebrew inscriptions, and the indication of the site upon the old maps of Liverpool, these first pioneers would have been as completely lost to the world, as though they had never existed.

But light has come at last. Mr. Israel Abrahams, the honorary secretary of the Jewish Historical Society of England, called my attention to a *History of Liverpool*, by an anonymous author, printed in 1810, by William Robinson, Castle Street. He found this volume in the British

Museum. On page 388 we read the following curious paragraph :—

The Glassite or Sandemanian Chapel is situated at the back of the Baptist Chapel, at the foot of Mathew Street. It was formerly a Jewish Synagogue. It has been in the possession of its present occupants more than thirty years.

At length we have a clue to the fate of the proem synagogue of the Jews in Liverpool, the existence of which, but for Sir James Picton's discovery, might have been passed over. We now find the missing link, and secure the information that the early synagogue and cemetery of Liverpool Jewry of about 1750 was taken over by the Sandemanians or Glassites, a sect having then in South-west Lancashire probably fewer followers than those of the Jewish religion.

We now emerge from nebulous Liverpool Jewry, and enter upon solid historical ground, for which we have chapter and verse as well as oral tradition. The second coming of the Jews to Liverpool took place about the end of the last century. They seem to have known nothing of their predecessors, nor did they appear to have been aware of the previous existence of the little cottage synagogue and cemetery in Cumberland Street. We find that in 1780 they assembled for worship in a small house in Turton Court, near the present Custom House, and probably were for the most part persons engaged in vending new and second-hand wares to the seafaring population. Turton Court is no more in existence.

In December, 1789, the Corporation assigned to trustees, for Jewish purposes, the house in Frederick Street now occupied as a *mikvah* or ritual bath, for baptismal purposes, according to Mosaic and rabbinical rite. This house was consecrated as a synagogue, the yard in the rear

having been used as a burial ground. The house is a comparatively small one, in a side street, but near to what, at that period, was a prosperous neighbourhood; now, however, looking as though it has seen better days. All the rooms in the upper storeys appear to have been thrown into one fairly large chamber, which could possibly accommodate from 50 to 70 worshippers. There is a skylight and moveable glass roof at one end of the room, which points to that portion having been used as a *succah* or roofless tabernacle. The yard is about the size of the garden of an average semi-detached villa residence. It is now in a poor condition, wedged in among back slums, with a few erect and fallen tombstones, bearing here and there the trace of Hebrew characters, almost obliterated and illegible. This place, however, was a considerable step in advance from a mere *minyan*¹ room in Turton Court, for now the community were equipped with the necessary elements of a Jewish congregation, namely, a synagogue, a cemetery, and a ritual bath.

Picton writes, in his *Memorials of Liverpool*, vol. ii, p. 323:—

A few hundred yards above St. Thomas' Church on the east side of Upper Frederick Street, a little north of Kent Street, there exists, at the back of the houses, an old Jewish cemetery, of course no longer used, but still containing monuments of departed worthies of the Hebrew race. It is not of very ancient date, having been constructed about 1794, when the synagogue was removed from Cumberland Street, and having continued to be used until the synagogue in Seel Street was erected in 1807. There is nothing about it either picturesque or antique, but it illustrates in a striking manner the fugitive career and indomitable pertinacity of the chosen people of Israel.

We can now pause to examine of what materials this second wave of Jewish settlers in Liverpool

¹ *Minyan* means a quorum for Jewish public worship: the minimum number consisting of ten individuals.

was formed. These newcomers were a heterogeneous compound of nationalities. The best internal evidence is to be found in their first book of laws or rules, bearing the date of 5560, or 1799. The language in which these laws are written has no exact counterpart, perhaps, in the heavens above or the earth beneath. It is a Yiddish-Hebrew-Polish-German jargon, of the very poorest kind; and from its phonetic expression of German, the inference would be that the writer probably was of Lithuanian or Russian origin. The characters are in the square Hebrew type, not cursive. The social status of a portion of these immigrants may be conveyed by the provisions of rule six:—

"None of our congregation who receive a summons to be called to the *Torah*² dare wear jack boots outside his trousers, nor a coloured handkerchief around his neck, nor may he chew tobacco. Should he commit any of these offences he will be fined one shilling." Another law enacts—"No member called to the *Torah* on the festivals dare '*schnoder*' less than sixpence."³ Another runs thus—"The *Baalbattim*³ must be assembled at an *aseefa* which is in *loshon*³ English a meeting, and the decisions are to be arrived at by a *Roy Dias* which is in *loshon* English a majority." Again, "If any of the brethren of our community have a dispute, be it in civil matters or otherwise, it is not advisable to bring this before the public tribunals without the consent of the Parnass [presiding elder] and the other elders for the time being; and they should endeavour to make peace and conciliate; and if any one persists in litigation without first attempting to conciliate his opponent, he shall

² *Torah* means Pentateuch.

³ *Schnoder* signifies to donate. *Baalbattim* means head of a house. *Loshon English* means English language.

"be 'poresh' or excommunicated from the midst
"of his brethren."

The following names are extracted from the
Liverpool Directory of 1790 :—

D'Aguilar, Solomon, merchant, 29, Richmond Row, Everton Road.
Fonseca, Alexander, bead merchant, Tarleton Street.
Hart, Joseph, hardwareman, 12, Garden Street, Wapping.
Hime, M. and H., music warehouse, 56, Castle Street.
Joseph, Elias, silversmith, 16, Pool Lane.
Joseph, Samuel, silversmith and jeweller, 35, Castle Street.
Joseph, Simon and Co., wholesale watchmakers, &c., 29, Pool Lane.
Lemon, Josiah, slop seller, 4, South Dock.
Lemon, Isaac, broker, 11, Bridge Street.
Lemon, Myer, itinerant dealer, 20, Charlotte Street.
Levi, Michael, dealer, 46, Cheapside.
Mozley, Morris Lewin, silversmith, &c., 28, Castle street.
Nathan, Simon, itinerant dealer, 7, Barter Street.
Nunes, J., 2, Suffolk Street, Duke Street.
Mrs. Anna Nunes, 10, Benn's Gardens.
Samuel, Ralph, slop seller, 1, Bridge Street.
Schwab, Samuel, bookkeeper, 22, Cleveland Street.
Solomon Henry, itinerant dealer, 7, Bromfield Street.
Yates, Benjamin, Jews' High Priest, 109, Frederick Street.

Including the two Himes, one of whose parents is recorded in the register as born in Jamaica, we find that in 1790 there were twenty Jewish householders in the *Directory*. There were probably many more itinerant dealers (a euphemism for pedlars or hawkers) who are not there enumerated, but who lived in lodgings. So that a century ago there may have been about a hundred people of the Jewish religion in and about Liverpool. The person who conducted the prayer meetings appears to have been Benjamin the son of Eliakim Goetz, seal engraver, father of the Mrs. Chapman I have mentioned before. He seems to have continued working at his trade, that of seal engraving and working jeweller, which the cognomen in Hebrew, "Pach," indicates. It is difficult to find out whence he originated, but some of his writings

in Yiddish point out possibly a Polish or Lithuanian extraction. It has been stated that he came from Schwerin on the Warthe. It is, however, not safe to assume the last Continental residence of a *shochet*⁴ to be his birthplace. We find to-day Polish functionaries in Mentone, San Remo, Nervi, Dieppe, &c. I met, lately, a *shochet* and *chazan*⁵ in the Engadine, who rendered the religious services at St. Moritz. He frequently asked my advice as to whether he could find a larger sphere of usefulness in England or the United States. Now, if a reader of a paper at the Historic Society, some century hence, finds a record of this *shochet* and *chazan* settled, say, in Scotland, described as having come from the Engadine, in Switzerland, internal evidence probably would have proved that he was not Swiss, but by birth a Russian Pole. Mr. Goetz changed his name later on into Yates. According to his lights, he did good and zealous work for the infant community, and appears to have given his children an excellent English education.

We cannot now trace who is responsible for the term "Jews' High Priest" in the *Liverpool Directory*. Perhaps the enumerator of Gore's *Directory* may have imagined that the functions in the slaughterhouse had some remote connection with the sacrificial rite in the ancient Temple service. It does not seem that the Rev. Benjamin Goetz had any advanced knowledge of the English language, and it is quite improbable that he would have thus described his office. However, it remains recorded that whilst there existed no High Priest of the Jews in any part of the world, not even in Jerusalem, there was, at any rate, one so styled in Liverpool. His daughter, Mrs. Moses Chapman, died in 1884.

⁴ *Shochet* is one who slaughters cattle according to the Rabbinical rite.

⁵ *Chazan* is a precentor.

Her only child, Mrs. Gorst, an elocutionist of some ability, was well known on public platforms in Lancashire, and predeceased her mother.

At the end of the last century, an incident that caused the Jews to be talked about, was the robbery at the silversmith's shop of Mr. Samuel Joseph, for which, on April 10th, 1794, William Cummings was executed at Lancaster.

In 1798, the Liverpool Athenæum and Library was founded, an institution which is still in existence and has recently celebrated its centenary. Its first list of members contains the names of four Jews :—Abraham Joseph, Elias Joseph, Samuel Joseph, and Morris L. Mozley. Curiously enough, after a century the present number of Jewish members has only increased by three :—B. L. Benas, J.P., P. A. Benas, Bertram B. Benas, L. S. Cohen, Rev. S. Friedeberg, B.A., C. S. Samuells, and E. W. Yates.

From a small fishing port of under 30,000 inhabitants, for such was Liverpool when the first Jews began to settle there, it has now developed into the huge commercial and maritime centre, where nearly five millions of people radiate within about one hour's reach of each other by rail, in the three adjoining counties. Prosperity and population in the early part of the century increased by leaps and bounds. The city of Liverpool itself now returns nine members to the Imperial Parliament ; one division, that of East Toxteth, being until lately represented by Lord Pirbright, then Baron Henry de Worms, a member of the Jewish community.

This rapid growth synchronised with the development of the United States and Canada, and the Mersey became the favoured port of entry and exit to and from the Transatlantic seaboard. The Jews in Liverpool very naturally participated somewhat in this advancing tide of material

prosperity. The community was rapidly recruited and increased by arrivals of Jews from Bristol, Plymouth, Falmouth, Penzance, as well as from Bath, Exeter, Barnstaple, Market Harborough, Yarmouth, and Ipswich; and some few, but not many, from the Metropolis. The little upper room in Frederick Street could no longer contain the large number who now assembled for worship.

In 1807 the Seel Street Synagogue was erected, a building which, with another in Hope Place, until 1874 was sufficient for the requirements of the Old Hebrew Congregation. Picton thus describes it—

A little above Colquitt Street, on the north-west side of Seel Street, stands one of the Jewish synagogues, erected in 1807, from the designs of Mr. Thomas Harrison of Chester. The front, consisting of four attached Ionic columns, supporting an entablature and pediment, is neat, but is much injured in its effect by the meanness of the flanks, which consist simply of plain rough brickwork.

The site was obtained free of cost from the Corporation upon a perpetual lease, so long as the building upon it remained a place of worship. In 1874, when the synagogue was removed to Prince's Road, the tenure was altered into a terminable lease of 75 years, without conditions. By this means the building committee were able to secure a purchaser, and obtained about £1700 for the site and old building, the lease on the former tenure being unsaleable. The synagogue is now demolished, and the site occupied by warehouses and stables.

The congregation held a meeting on April 1st, 1806, when it was resolved that the laying of the first foundation stone be disposed of to the highest bidder. It was accordingly sold for £21 to a Mr. Samuel, payable May 1st next. Cash received July 22nd, 1806. The consecration of the building took place on Friday, September 16th, 1808.

Circulars were sent to all subscribers to the fund, and one to Rabbi Solomon Herschell, the Chief Rabbi in the Metropolis. Two constables were ordered to be placed at the gates. The cost of the building was £2241 15s. 2d. Mr. Elias Joseph acted as treasurer, and Mr. L. A. Bing as secretary.

Two entries from the old minute book recall the memory of Dr. Samuel Solomon, then known as far and wide as are to-day Holloway and Beecham. He was the proprietor and vendor of the then famous "Balm of Gilead," which was extensively advertised and brought a very large fortune to the owner. At the beginning of this century no lady's toilette would have been complete without a flask of the "Balm of Gilead." Dr. Solomon never occupied a seat in the synagogue, nor did he identify himself with the affairs of the Jewish community; he belonged to that type of Jew who in those days found no resting place for the sole of his foot either in Jewry or out of it. He seems to have had racial sympathies, but was indifferent to Jewish practices. He gave his children an education beyond the average of his generation. Knowing that neither he nor his family could claim any congregational privileges from the Hebrew community, he built a mausoleum on some land in Mossley Hill, remote, at that time, from habitations. The first record in the minute books of the community referring to him is that his daughter Sophia married a Mr. Samuel Tobias of London, August 22nd, 1810; and she died June 22nd, 1813, and was interred in Dr. Solomon's mausoleum, near Mossley Hill. Picton thus refers to him:—

A house and garden on the west side, at the corner of Dansie Street, was in 1803 the residence of Dr. Samuel Solomon, and the adjoining street was called Solomon's Place.

Dr. Solomon was for many years one of the institutions of Liverpool. Long before Holloway's Pills were heard of, or

Morrison had established his British College of Health, Solomon's "Balm of Gilead" had penetrated to the utmost bounds of the habitable globe. The doctor was a gentleman of the Hebrew nation, who commenced his medical career in a very modest way in Marybone, Tithebarn Street, some time before 1796. The precise period when the "Balm of Gilead" first diffused its soothing influences over the ills of humanity I cannot accurately determine, but by the end of the century he removed to Brownlow Street, corner of Dansie Street. (Very early in the present century Brownlow Hill and Brownlow Street contained a number of suburban houses, in the midst of pleasant gardens, and was quite out of Liverpool proper, and was the abode of merchant princes. It is now, however, in the very midst of an artizan district, and is a favourite quarter for Polish and foreign Jews, similar to the east end of London.) In 1804, wealth and reputation increasing, he built himself a noble mansion at Kensington, out of Liverpool, and called it "Gilead House," where he resided until his decease. Gilead House, or "Dr. Solomon's" as it was familiarly called, in old coaching days was the first house greeted in approaching Liverpool, and its trim parterres and close-shaven lawns were grateful to the eyes as a harbinger of home after a long and tedious journey (of course in mail-coach days).

In another paragraph Picton remarks—

It attracted great attention from the beauty of the grounds and the trim style in which they were kept. The Doctor died about 1819, and was interred in the mausoleum he had erected for himself on an estate belonging to him in Garston. Many years after his decease the estate was sold by his representatives, his remains removed to one of the cemeteries, and the mausoleum pulled down. . . . Well might the philosopher of Norwich say, "All was vanity feeding the wind and folly. The "Egyptian mummies which time had spared, avarice now "consumeth—mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures "wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams."

Dr. Solomon evidently intended erecting what he deemed would be a perpetual monument of himself and family, but his mausoleum is gone, and in 1846 his house was dismantled, the land sold for building purposes, and "King Jerry" has succeeded where Gilead once reigned supreme.

At the celebrated Gascoigne, Canning, and Sefton parliamentary election, in 1818, Dr. Solomon was

very much to the fore. The following is a copy of a letter of his which was printed and largely circulated :—

Gilead House, June 16, 1818.

Worthy Freeman and Dear Sir,

The honour of your attendance is earnestly requested at Gilead House on Thursday morning next, the 18th inst., to proceed with the full band of music and colours to the Tally; when I shall have the honour personally to accompany you as the friend of Lord Sefton, and the rest of my honest set of staunch fellows, who are in my list of freemen, to regain for yourselves and brave companions the blessings of real freedom.

I am, Sir,

Your most faithful obliged and very humble Servant,
(Sgd.) S. SOLOMON, M.D.

Dr. Solomon and his party were not successful at this election, for, after a seven days' poll, the result was declared—Canning 1654, Gascoigne 1444, Sefton 1280. It was at this election that Canning used the epigram, "Peace has its triumphs "as well as war," which has lived ever since. What interests us most, as showing the racial sympathies of Dr. Solomon, is the following letter, copied from the minute book of the congregation :—

Old Hebrew Congregation,
Liverpool, July 11, 1808.

My Dear Sir,

I am to acknowledge receipt of Ten Guineas, which you was pleased to hand me on the 9th inst., as a donation towards the completion of our new Synagogue. Permit me, in the name of our Congregation, to tender thanks for this mark of your attention and liberality, particularly so as it was unsolicited.

Sincerely hope these will find you better than when I left you on Saturday.

I am, with sincere regard for Mrs. Solomon and family,

My dear Sir,

Your obliged and humble Servant,
ELIAS JOSEPH,
Treas. and Secy.

We have now concluded the Solomon episode in Liverpool. His descendants have ceased to maintain any connection with the congregation. One of them, the late H. J. Byron, author and dramatist, was at one time lessee of the Alexandra Theatre, in Lime Street.

Reverting to the direct annals of the Jewish community, we find that in 1802 a new cemetery was acquired from the mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of Liverpool, in Oakes Street, off London Road. It was then thought to avoid the mistake of the Frederick Street burial ground, and acquire one so remote from the busy centre of Liverpool that the town could no more encroach upon the abode of the departed. The young municipality, however, continued to grow, and Oakes Street is now in the midst of a densely populated, almost slummy, neighbourhood. The cemetery was closed in 1835. It contains the remains of some prominent Jews of Liverpool, and the parents and connections of many influential metropolitan co-religionists.

Again a move took place, this time to Fairfield, beyond which the wildest anticipations of a Greater Liverpool could never hope to reach; a quiet, rural hamlet, surrounded by farms, meadows, and market gardens. The ground is ornamental, beautifully laid out, and well kept: a pleasant contrast to the original burying place of the first Jewish settlers. The entrance to the ground is by a chaste portico in pure classic style, and bears upon the pediment a verse in Hebrew, with the translation, "Here the weary are at rest." This burial place is still used by the Old Hebrew Congregation, but what was the hamlet of Fairfield is now quite urban, and called Deane Road, is surrounded by a thickly inhabited neighbourhood, and it is now quite a little journey from Deane Road to reach a rural district.

The synagogue of the Old Hebrew Congregation was best known among the Jews by the term Seel Street Shool.⁶ Around this edifice were clustered such cherished Liverpool Hebraic traditions as a metropolitan Sephardi Jew might perhaps associate with Bevis Marks, or the Society of Friends round their meeting-house in Bishopsgate. A former generation would have been loth to have parted with the building, though there were many regrettable records of discord in Betheldom associated with its memory.

It was in the Seel Street Shool that the first addresses in the English language were ever preached in an Anglo-Jewish synagogue. These were inaugurated in 1806, soon after the consecration, by a Mr. Tobias Goodman, a schoolmaster, and took the form of an exposition of the weekly portion of the Pentateuch from the *almemar* or reading-desk. The pulpit, as a piece of furniture, came in later on ; it was then deemed a dangerous innovation.

These weekly addresses were continued by the brothers Nathan, one of whom, the Rev. M. N. Nathan, afterwards proceeded to Jamaica and to St. Thomas, in the West Indies, and became minister of Jewish communities there. In Liverpool he acted as secretary of the congregation as well as expositor in English, for as yet he can hardly be said to have functioned as a lecturer. In this position he was succeeded, in 1833, by Mr. D. W. Marks, who at that time attracted attention by ability and originality of thought, and by his persistent preaching that a new departure in the methods of preaching the Jewish religion had become imperative. It is not difficult to understand

⁶ *Shool* is now equivalent to a synagogue ; it formerly signified a school, because, in ancient times, teaching and worship were carried on in the same building.

how a young man with so much incipient earnestness evolved into a leader of a religious movement in English Jewry, pregnant in result alike to the traditional as to the non-traditional organisation. The Rev. Professor Marks, the senior minister of the London Berkeley Street Secession Congregation, once again preached at a special Sunday service, in December, 1879, after an interval of more than forty years, in the synagogue of the Old Hebrew Congregation; thus practically bringing about a reconciliation. This time it was to plead for the Liverpool Hebrew Philanthropic Society.

The Philanthropic Society is the oldest local Jewish charity. It was founded in 1811, by Moses Samuel, who is not to be confounded with another Moses Samuel, an English Jew, editor of the magazine called *The Cup of Salvation*, to which we shall refer later on. It appears that the founder of the Philanthropic Society was a German-born Jew, though his wife was English, of Lancashire descent and Christian birth, a woman, it is said, of remarkably fine presence. They were without children, and devoted themselves to works of kindness and charity. The society still exists: it provides weekly stipends during the winter months, for impoverished residents. The original officials in 1811 were: Moses Samuel, founder; Humphrey Hime, president and treasurer; Lewis Samuel, secretary.

Mr. Moses Samuel bequeathed a curious miniature *Sepher Tora*⁷ and a *Megilath Esther*,⁸ full of excellent pen-and-ink drawings of the Italian school, to the Liverpool Athenæum, and they still exhibit these relics in their famous library.

I refrain in this paper as much as I can from any references of a critical nature to any persons now living, and merely record facts and incidents such as are not likely to be debateable.

⁷ *Sepher Tora* means a parchment scroll of the Pentateuch.

⁸ *Megilath Esther* = the book of Esther, in scroll form.

In 1836, the Rev. D. M. Isaacs was elected lecturer to the Seel Street Synagogue. It is maintained that he was the first regularly appointed English preacher, as such, in an Anglo-Jewish traditional synagogue. He was possessed of a powerful eloquence, coupled with religious earnestness and an original style. It may be asserted that with him was the alternative direction of the course in the parting of the ways which had now been reached in the Liverpool Jewish community; and he could, had he so willed it, have determined it otherwise. His influence during the first years of his ministry was unbounded; crowds flocked to hear him, both Christians and Jews. His methods were popular, and in his fulmination against sin and wrong-doing, he at times so focussed his remarks that, perhaps unwittingly, a peccant member of the congregation betrayed emotions that ill-concealed his identity. The preacher, however, was no respecter of persons, and really never went further than to draw a harrowing word-picture, that made some few cry, "Hold, enough!" but for whom, possibly, the verbal spectre was never intended.

For the first time, the Jews heard themselves spoken of in the press as an element of ethical value in the social life of Liverpool. These very Jews, who but a generation ago courted obscurity, were now forced, *nolens volens*, into the fierce light of public criticism.

A funeral oration, on the occasion of the death of King William IV, in 1837, delivered at the close of the Sabbath, caused the synagogue to be packed full of listeners, and throngs of Jews and Gentiles reached, it was stated, as far as the Royal Institution, on the opposite side of the road. It was reported that when the young preacher uttered the words, "May the soul of the lord, the King, be

bound up in everlasting life, and under the cover of Almighty God may he find stay and refuge," such was the dramatic effect of his elocution, that the "Amen" of the multitude, it is said, was heard as far as the adjoining street.

Liverpool Judaism had now entered a new phase other than that of the time of the Frederick Street Shool of 1789. Forty years had intervened, and a new generation had been born in the town. The modest immigrants that worshipped in the "upper room" had obtained their knowledge of Hebrew and religion in Poland, in Holland, in Germany, some few in Bevis Marks, London, and elsewhere, where it was to the manner born with them—the whole environment of their youth was a Jewish one. In the early days of Liverpool there never existed a Jewish quarter, no self-imposed ghetto, the Jews living here and there among their Christian fellow-citizens. It is only within the last few years that anything like a Jewish district has been formed, but of this, later on.

So in the early half of the century there grew up a generation of young men and women in the community, liberally educated, cultured, well mannered, and of a high type of man and womanhood. Possibly they were prone to blame and adversely criticise the former generation for failings which were perhaps more foreign than Jewish, and might have been just as apparent in members of the same nationality not of the Jewish religion. Young Liverpool Jewry yearned to become more Lancashire than the Lancashire men themselves, who, Christian as they are, are in touch with Biblicism. With the young Jews of that period, however, it appeared as though traditional Biblical and lingual Hebraism was representing an ever diminishing quantity, whilst science and general literature

seemed an ever increasing one. That the people of Liverpool, irrespective of creed, began to esteem their Jewish fellow-citizens, is evidenced by the fact that a few years before, in 1830, Huskisson (who then represented Liverpool in Parliament) presented a petition signed by two thousand voters, including bankers, merchants, shipowners, solicitors, and other prominent tradesmen, in favour of the political emancipation of the Jews; then a burning question of the day. The young men who influenced this request were Mr. Abraham, Mr. John Simon (then quite a youth), Mr. Sylvester Joseph, and Mr. D. W. Marks, all of whom attained eminence in later years: as Sir John Simon, M.P. for Dewsbury, Professor Sylvester, the distinguished mathematician of Cambridge, and Professor Marks, the leader of neo-Judaism and lecturer in Hebrew at the London University College.

The Rev. Mr. Isaacs was now known as Professor Isaacs, having accepted the chair of Hebrew in Queen's College; and many lay and clerical Christians remember him and his teaching with respect and reverence.

Probably at this period the community may have numbered about 250 families. The symptoms of a centrifugal tendency were manifest, partly on account of residential grouping, and partly owing to the conflict of opinions on matters, more of ritual than of doctrine, for which a common denominator was not easily to be determined.

A schism in the community, however, did take place. One might have anticipated that it would have been brought about by the diverse opinions held by its members on the question of Jewish ritualism. I shall not use the terms "orthodox" and "reform" as applied to Liverpool Jewry, for the section who desired to remain within the

sphere of ancient traditional influence were content to initiate permissible and salutary modifications, which have since then been adopted elsewhere. The secession was brought about on other and irrelevant grounds, thus bringing no ideal satisfaction to the one side or the other. The struggle appears to have centred around the question of the power to possess and control the mere building of the Seel Street Shool. Had the men with ultra-advanced views on ritualism in those days, had the same courage of their opinions as had the founders of the West London Synagogue of British Jews—had they themselves seceded from the Seel Street Shool, Liverpool, for good or otherwise, might have had an independent organisation, on neo-Jewish or non-traditional lines, perhaps before any other community in England. As it was, the ultra-advanced section clung tenaciously to the building, and they were eventually seceded from, not because of their advanced opinions, but on account of some petty differences in the government of Betheldom.

I append the following extract from a pamphlet, printed in the year 1838 by Mr. J. Pannell, 24, Byrom Street. It is an address by Mr. B. L. Joseph to the seatholders of the Liverpool congregation, at a meeting which took place at the Clarendon Rooms, October 1st, 1838. "This address," it says, "has been printed at the express wish of a committee, as it embodies their reasons for dissenting from the congregation, and which could not be made known by any other channel."

Now, sir, having exhibited to this meeting that in the first place there is a total want of representation, to which the seatholder is clearly entitled, and which places them in the power of men who can (when they please) use the authority they hold to their injury, it becomes a matter for consideration whether such a state of things shall any longer exist, for to that want I attribute all and every grievance of which the seatholders have to complain.

In the next place, I consider that the "election of officers" should be in the hands of those who ought to be the best judges of the competency and fitness of men who are to rule over them. I further consider that all men should have a control, either by themselves or their representatives, over the funds which they contribute to raise. I therefore call upon this meeting to adopt the resolutions which I am about to propose, for the purpose of, if possible, removing irresponsible authority, and placing it in popular hands, so that the seatholders shall not be subject to extortion, nor the poor to contumely and contempt.

Having said this much, I do hope that the Congregation will receive our remonstrance in the spirit of peace and goodwill, and that they will not "force a separation," which I have before stated would be much to be deplored, but that they will put out the right hand of good fellowship and admit all to equal rights who may be entitled to them; that the Congregation may increase in acts of kindness to their fellows, and in benevolence and charity to their poorer brethren who stand in need of their assistance. This result once attained, the Hebrews of Liverpool may really call themselves a "respectable" Congregation.

Very soon after this meeting, of which no notice seems to have been taken by the free or privileged members of the Seel Street Synagogue, the secession took place; a cemetery was purchased by the seceders in Green Lane, Tue Brook. A small building was also secured in Hardman Street, within a few minutes' walk of Seel Street, now used as a temperance hall. There they worshipped until 1857, when they built their present synagogue in Hope Place—a rather handsome building, with a manse and a meeting-room attached. For many years some little coolness existed between the members of the Old Hebrew Congregation and the New Hebrew Congregation, as they now styled themselves. There was really nothing new in the Hope Place Synagogue except their building, for their services were, if anything, more conservative or traditional than those of the Seel Street congregation. In the whirligig of time, however, theirs is now the oldest building in use for Jewish worship, and all the slight illwill has passed away.

Evidence of the friction then existing in the community is afforded by some very modest verses which appeared in No. 1 of *The Cup of Salvation* or *Kos Feshuoth*, a magazine most interesting, dated March, 1846, and being one of the early productions of the Anglo-Jewish press. It was edited by Professor Isaacs and Mr. Moses Samuel, issued monthly, price one shilling; but the magazine did not live very long. The co-editor, Mr. Moses Samuel, was a silversmith in Paradise Street. He is not to be confounded with Mr. Moses Samuel, the German, who in 1811 founded the Philanthropic Society. The foreign Moses Samuel died without issue, and his generation knew him best by the cognomen "Rother Moshe" or "Red Moses," owing, no doubt, to his capillary distinction. The editor of this magazine, the English Moses Samuel, had to support a large family, and notwithstanding the cares, anxieties, and struggles for a livelihood, he was yet enabled to do work with his pen, and could write classical Hebrew with some degree of fluency. The lines referred to are on page 25 in No. 1 of the magazine. They were composed by a very young and earnest member of the Seel Street community, whose identity was barely concealed by the initials "E. L. S."

'Tis sad to see our hallowed creed
By ignorance decried,
The faith for which our hearts would bleed
Fell prejudice deride.
But sadder far 'tis to behold
The men who should protect
The members of the Jewish fold
Conspiring 'gainst their sect.
Whose hearts, to pity's prompting dead,
No patriot's flame can feel,
The germs of dire dissension spread,
Regardless of our weal.

So that half-a-century ago the Jews seem to have had their little ritualistic troubles, just like their Gentile fellow-citizens to-day.

The issue of *The Cup of Salvation*, it is said, was intended to reach the section of the community who did not attend worship on the Sabbath, yet were prominent in committee work of the congregation. They very queerly allude to this in their magazine, thus :—

Of our wealthy brethren we ask such aid that shall resuscitate many excellent institutions now languishing for adequate support ; we ask for no more. We desire not their interference in matters that are always by far safer when left in the care of those erudite and God-fearing men in our midst who best understand them, whose lives have been devoted to the acquisition of that necessary learning and wisdom whereby alone our best and dearest interests are consolidated.

A quaint old-world production is this *Cup of Salvation*, not because it is only fifty years old, but because the writers themselves speak with a voice of a century ago ; an interesting paper might be inspired by the contents of this monthly magazine. Its Answers to Correspondents, its advertisements, its Jewish news, all carry us back to struggles which we to-day deem almost prehistoric. Thus, it speaks of No. 24, vol. ii, of the *Jewish Chronicle*, of London (now an influential journal among the Jews, which has celebrated its jubilee) and recommends it to Jewish readers ; “it was to be obtained from Wm. Britain, 11, Paternoster Road, London, and from Godfrey Levy, 17, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool.” “Mr. T. Molineux, printer, 2, George’s Street, Chester,” half-a-century ago announces in Hebrew type, “The Northern Anglo-Jewish Press.” “Mr. Moses Samuel again begs to inform his friends that, having by the mercy of God nearly recovered from a long and serious illness (paralysis), it is

“his intention to give up his shop, and depend “chiefly upon his literary labours”: from a hygienic or therapeutic point of view, possibly the very worst course the old gentleman could have adopted; yet it seems, after all, he did not give up his shop in Paradise Street. The magazine contains a long article on the return of Sir Moses Montefiore from his mission in St. Petersburg, in 1842. One is tempted to go on, but for the fact that many items are interesting to Liverpool Jews only, and deal with ephemeral subjects.

The *Jewish Chronicle*, then barely four years in existence, in its issue of April 16th, 1846, thus speaks of the *Cup of Salvation*:—

We congratulate the editors of *Kos Yeshuoth* on the appearance of their long-promised publication. We advise them steadfastly to persevere in the course of impartiality, and not to be daunted by the formidable difficulties which they may be sure to encounter. Much praise is due to the editors of an orthodox magazine for their speaking out on the defects of our ritual worship, and on the necessity of remedying them.

The *Voice of Jacob*, an Anglo-Jewish journal, long since extinct, in its number of March 27th, 1846, observes:—

This new periodical, as expressed in its title, and as guaranteed by the known principles of its conductors, will no doubt prove another valuable accession to the ranks of those numerous papers now engaged in defence of orthodox Judaism. We hail this new publication with satisfaction. As it is our wish that our readers should resort to the pages of this periodical itself, we will not present to them any extracts.

Professor Isaacs, we have previously remarked, had at one time, so to say, “the ball at his feet.” The different sections of the community each hoped to find in him an exponent of their views; but, whilst he declined to break away from conservative traditional influences, he began to lose touch with the neo-Jewish element, while many of the foreign

Jews deemed his methods too Anglo-Jewish for their uncompromising disposition. It took no one by surprise when, in 1849, Professor Isaacs sent in his resignation to the Old Hebrew Congregation, and cast in his lot with the secession community in Hope Place, where conservative ideas in matters of ritual preponderated.

The annals of the Hope Place congregation are not specially eventful; they appear to go the even tenor of their way with their traditional worship. They are an earnest congregation, and identify themselves with their co-religionists in every good work.

A late member of their community deserves a special record, viz., the late Mr. Joseph Harris. When the secession synagogue was in the darkest period of its financial history, he came to its rescue with zealous service. He was born in Liverpool, had a liberal English education, but at the same time had an excellent training in Hebrew and religion; moreover, he had a tuneful voice, and his elocution was good. For many years Mr. Harris volunteered to conduct the Hope Place services on Sabbaths and Festivals without any fee or pecuniary reward. With that true chivalrous feeling, notwithstanding that he had seceded from Seel Street, and in spite of a still lingering friction between the two congregations, he was able to render on one occasion an important service to the synagogue from which he had separated himself. It appears that more than a generation ago the entire clerical staff of the Seel Street Synagogue were *hors de combat* on the morning of the New Year, or *Rosh Hashana*, owing to a prevailing malady. Mr. Harris immediately volunteered to conduct the services both on that day and on the Day of Atonement, reminding one of those mediæval days

in Jewry when there were almost as many capable celebrants of divine worship as there were members of the congregation. Such generous services deserve to be recorded, equally as well as the gifts by legacy of surplus accumulations, which the donor can no longer use for himself.

The Rev. Dr. Stern, afterwards Principal of the Aria College, in Portsea, undertook the ministration of the Hope Place Synagogue, and for many years did good work in Liverpool, both in and out of the congregation.

Let us return to the Seel Street Shool, with which, after all, the thread of historic continuity remained.

The secession of Professor Isaacs and the rivalry of the new congregation produced a period of severe trial to the parent community. Had the men of the old congregation been less virile or tactless, they might have become so reduced in numbers as to have virtually succumbed to the many reeling blows then levelled against them. They pulled themselves well together, relaxed many of the causes which induced the secession, and entered into a course of conciliation towards those who meditated following Professor Isaacs to the other synagogue. Some yet wavered, because one or other of their family were interred in the Deane Road Cemetery, and in many instances the sentiment of resting with those who had departed overcame the centrifugal tendencies of the period.

From 1849 to 1855 the affairs of the parent congregation remained in a somewhat dormant condition.

The income from seat rentals in 1835 and 1836, when there was still a united congregation, was, according to Mr. B. L. Joseph's pamphlet, but £287 2s. 6d., supplemented by voluntary offerings

amounting to £364 : the income has been since, at times, over £2000 per annum. The Rev. Mr. Oppenheim, who was an effective and tuneful *chazan* or *precentor* of the olden time, died in 1855. In that year Dr. Fischel functioned as lecturer, but after a brief tenure of office he resigned, and proceeded to the United States.

The place of Mr. Oppenheim was taken by the Rev. Jacob Prag, afterwards known as Professor Prag, he having occupied the Chair of Hebrew in Queen's College. He was a thorough Hebrew scholar, a man of all-round culture, and well respected in learned circles. Many an epoch-making work in Hebrew and theology has been inspired by his teaching and influence, which was largely availed of by Christians and others. A poet of no mean order, he wrote graceful Hebrew verse with ease and facility. He composed an elegy, in classical Hebrew, on the death of Miss Louisa Benas, a young woman of considerable promise, who died in 1873, in her twenty-second year. The poem appeared in the press.

Professor Prag once more re-arranged the method of rendering the Sabbath and festival liturgy without infringing traditional essentials. A numerically larger and fuller choir was organised. In this department he was aided by the late Abraham Saqui, author and composer of *The Songs of Israel*. Forty years ago, before choral music was attempted in the metropolis in traditional synagogues, the choir of the Liverpool Old Hebrew Synagogue adopted anthem singing.

The old choir-master, Abraham Saqui, has joined the majority, yet a little corner is due to him in the annals of Liverpool Jewry. Had he devoted himself to the lyrical stage, which he first adopted, and where he achieved some success in his early

youth, he might have earned wider fame, and certainly wealth and worldly fortune. He preferred to be a singer in Israel. He led his choir until within a few hours of his final collapse. He was always the first to arrive in the synagogue, and the last to leave it. The veteran choir-master would often linger in the House of God long after the services had concluded, as if, indeed, his choir and congregation were with him in spirit. Of silver and gold he possessed none too much. He was, indeed, of those who could faithfully and truthfully utter, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy House."

Dr. Baar, who was for some time associated with Dr. Bartle at Freshfield College, for several years occupied the pulpit of the Seel Street Synagogue. Invited to Liverpool from Hanover, as teacher of German in a public school, he soon acquired considerable influence in literary circles. In December, 1859, he preached a sermon on charity, on behalf of the destitute Jews of Morocco, which was printed and published. This led to his appointment, in May, 1860, as lecturer to the Hebrew Old Congregation, which he held until 1867, when he resigned, owing to ill-health. He then proceeded to the United States, and has since been the Chaplain to the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York. The *Transactions* of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, and those of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society, contain valuable contributions read before those societies by Dr. Baar.

In 1865, Mr. Charles Mozley, a member of the Seel Street Synagogue, was elected Mayor of Liverpool.⁹

⁹ This paper concludes with the period of the building of the Prince's Road Synagogue, in 1872. It is, however, interesting to note that Mr. L. S. Cohen was elected Lord Mayor of Liverpool in 1899.

In 1867, the first branch of the Alliance Israelite in England was founded at a meeting in the School House, Hope Place; but as the author of this paper had something to do with its inception, I merely record the event. It was subsequently merged into and affiliated with the Anglo-Jewish Association, yet Liverpool can claim to have given birth and cradled the infant idea until it matured into a more vigorous existence, with its centre in the metropolis, and with branches throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire.

A new strata of settlers now made their presence felt in the Jewish community. The revolutions abroad in 1848, the civil war in the United States, the cotton famine in Lancashire, then the Franco-German war—all these incidents contributed to bring a fresh contingent to the commercial world of the city of Liverpool. The cotton exchange, the wheat and metal markets, the stock exchange, the shipping and maritime interest, had in these departments a few, and in some cases many, Jewish representatives. Coming from different quarters, they brought new traditions and other feelings to the community. London, Hamburg, Frankfort, Vienna, Bavaria, France, Holland, New York and other parts of the United States, contributed members to this contingent.

The proem settlement of Jews in the middle of last century consisted for the most part of itinerant dealers, which accounts for the extinction or dispersion of the first community.

Again, the second wave, at the end of the last century, consisted mostly of tradesmen and shopkeepers, with but very few merchants; yet this tenacious shopkeeping element took root and grew, recruited, as it was, by a constant flow of similar material.

The later settlement, about the end of the fifth, sixth, and seventh decade, was, however, largely composed of persons engaged in mercantile operations and in touch with the produce and other markets of the world, and whose views ran in a different groove to those who had hitherto administered the affairs of their congregation. They had, moreover, brought with them experience probably gained in several other Jewish communities. Such a one was Mr. Abraham Hoffnung, who was in 1871 elected president of the congregation, a post he held successively for four years.

In a previous paragraph I stated that I would adopt the principle of refraining from critical reference to all persons still living. I had to adhere rigidly to this principle in writing the annals of a community, in the work of which I have taken some little part myself. I make an exception in the case of Mr. Hoffnung, he having left Liverpool more than a quarter of a century ago, and has since filled, with distinction, a diplomatic function to the Foreign Office.

It is, however, *hors de discussion* that during the four years that Mr. Hoffnung presided over the old Hebrew congregation, no period was ever pregnant with such eventful and enduring results as that inspired by him.

The new element had no sentimental feelings whatsoever with the mere structure of the Seel Street Shool—a synagogue where, in youthful days, Professor Sylvester, Dr. Van Oven, Dr. Behrend, Dr. Douglas Cohen, Professor Marks, Sir John Simon, Sir Samuel Montagu, Professor Leone Levi, the distinguished political economist (whilst yet a conforming Jew), and many others prominent in

various walks of life, had religious associations and worshipped. The later arrivals could only see in the Seel Street Shool a little unæsthetic building in a back street, fast invaded by factories, and too far off from the parks, the now favoured residential quarter of new Liverpool Jewry. They brushed all sentimental talk aside, and determined to remove elsewhere. In 1872 a building committee acquired a site in the Prince's Boulevard from the Earl of Sefton upon a perpetual lease, and a sum of £12,722 was collected, almost entirely in Liverpool, and perhaps the finest synagogue for Jewish worship in England, at that time, was completed, the architects being Messrs. W. & G. Audsley. A building on similar lines was, several years later, constructed in St. Petersburg Place, in the West End of London.

A feature in connection with the means of raising funds, was a bazaar held at St. George's Hall, which realized £3,700. The new Prince's Road Synagogue was consecrated September 3rd, 1874, by the late Chief Rabbi, Dr. Nathan Adler; the Mayor and leading corporate officials attending in state. The seat rental of the new synagogue yielded £1,600: a vivid contrast to that of £287, the sum contributed in 1838.

The historian of Liverpool, the late Sir James Picton, who was a guest at the festal celebration of the event, made the following remarks in an after-dinner speech, which pithily crystallizes the status of the Jews in Liverpool:—"He observed
"one of the best proofs that could be afforded of the
"wonderful advance which had taken place, not only
"in the trade of the city, but in the liberality of those
"who carried it on, was found in the fact that the
"highest sum subscribed to the Seel Street building
"was 18 guineas, whereas that evening he had heard

"it announced that one gentleman had given a thousand pounds. Therefore, as eighteen guineas were to a thousand pounds, so was the trade of Liverpool in 1807 to that in 1872."

The testament of the late James Braham, who died some years ago, provided £5,403 12s. 7d. new consols and £7,929 19s. 4d. 2½ per cent. annuities to provide a portion of the salaries of a reader, precentor, and lecturer, providing the incumbents are English born and of British parentage. The services in the new Prince's Road Synagogue were conducted by Professor Prag, and the Rev. Morris Joseph was elected English lecturer. But owing to a clause in the Braham bequest, rendering it imperative that the incumbent should be not only of British birth but also of English parentage, the Rev. J. Polack, B.A., who succeeded Mr. Joseph, resigned in 1890, to take up an appointment in connection with Clifton College. The Rev. S. Friedeberg, B.A., and the Rev. J. Harris adequately fulfilled the conditions of the trust, and now minister in the Prince's Road Synagogue; the former as English lecturer and minister, the latter as Hebrew reader and secretary.

There is another sum of £6,075 invested by this trust, to produce an annual sum to provide a marriage portion for a girl in the Liverpool Jewish Schools. These were founded in 1842 in Slater Street, with ten boys, who occupied a room in a street adjoining the synagogue, for which they paid £20 per annum. The schools own now a pile of buildings in Hope Place, commenced in 1852, and educate more than 600 boys, girls, and infants, earning a Government grant of over £600. Mr. Charles S. Samuells, barrister-at-law, has been President of the Schools for a long period.

The history of the modern Liverpool Hebrew schools has yet to be written.

The Rev. Professor Prag died December 27th, 1881, a man of ripe scholarship. His methods were somewhat Socratean, and his works and inspirations are recorded by his pupils and associates rather than by his own pen. An imposing monument in granite has been erected to his memory in the Deane Road Cemetery. Some of the inscriptions in this burial ground are interesting. I have deemed it desirable in the first instance to record the living impulses of a community before such traditions are lost in oblivion, but hope later on to copy some of the quaint inscriptions before they are obliterated altogether.

Filial love and respect for one who to me was the best and wisest of men (and to whom I owe the inspiration to endeavour to render myself useful to my fellows in however modest a capacity) compels me to copy an extract from the *Liverpool Daily Post*, of April 29, 1890:—

DEATH OF A LIVERPOOL GENTLEMAN.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Louis Benas, formerly head of the firm of Messrs. L. Benas & Son, bankers, Lord Street. He expired at his residence, 5, Prince's Avenue, on Sunday. The deceased was long and favourably known in city circles, and was always noted for his high integrity and benevolence. Mr. B. L. Benas, J.P., son of the deceased, who was last night elected president of the Literary and Philosophical Society, was prevented attending the Browning Symposium owing to his father's death, and great sympathy was expressed with him in his affliction. For more than twenty years the deceased gentleman had taken no part in public business. He was a man of considerable literary attainments, a good classical and Hebrew scholar. For a long time he suffered from paralysis, which prevented him from taking any part in municipal, political, or other affairs. He was formerly a prominent member of the Jewish community, and took a leading part in the struggle for the emancipation of the Jews from political disabilities.

A number of letters were found among his literary remains, showing his correspondence with the late Professor Graetz, the eminent historian, and many others, who consulted him and asked his advice. The *Daily Mercury* of May 1st, 1890, states that at his funeral a large number of gentlemen (of all denominations) assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to his memory.

The traditional chain of *chazonim*, or precentors, is continued by the Rev. H. Burman, an excellent musician, who instructs the choir in succession to Mr. Saqui. It may be useful to record the list of secretaries of the congregation since the minutes were transcribed in English. They began with L. A. Bing, 1806, A. Ansell in 1832, M. N. Nathan, 1833, D. W. Marks, S. Y. Hess, hon. secy., Marcus Wolff, Raphael Harris, H. M. Silver,¹⁰ from 1863.

In 1882 the Mansion House Relief Committee appointed a Liverpool commission, of which Mr. B. L. Benas, J.P., was appointed chairman, Mr. Edwin Davis, treasurer. The Venerable Archdeacon Taylor and the Rev. Samuel Pearson, the former a distinguished member of the Church of England, the latter an eminent Nonconformist minister, were joint honorary secretaries of the Town Hall Russo-Jewish Relief Funds in aid of the work of the commission. It undertook the task of dealing with the Russo-Jewish fugitives, and from April 27th to July 12th it dealt with 4,422 adult emigrants, 1,325 children, and 527 infants; total, 6,274 persons, which required 31 steamships to convey them across the Atlantic, to new homes in the United States and Canada. A sum of £30,209 13s. was expended for that purpose. The clerical expenses of this vast

¹⁰ Mr. Silver resigned shortly after this paper was read.

enterprise amounted to less than one hundred pounds, voluntary aid being forthcoming to do much of the work necessary for the operations. A most appreciative letter was addressed to the chairman and committee by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir John Whittaker Ellis, Bart., a copy of which is to be found in Orchard's *Liverpool's Legion of Honour*.

The Crimean war brought over the first wave of Russo-Polish-Jewish emigration. The episode, described in the former paragraph, accounts for the very latest wave of Russo-Jewish settlement in Liverpool itself, bidding fair to outnumber all the rest of the Jewish population put together. It has caused two new congregations to be formed. One is in Kirkdale, a suburb of Liverpool. A synagogue was consecrated for worship there on August 5th, 1888, and was formerly a place of worship for Christian Nonconformists. The other, which was opened and consecrated in 1896, is situated in Crown Street, around which now cluster most of the wage-earning Jews. The facility with which these disused chapels are to be obtained has given quite an impetus to Jewish Hebras¹¹ to start on independent lines. They seem to secure these buildings at small rental, and what in a former generation was almost prohibitive—nay, an obstacle and a deterrent—the difficulty to collect money to build a new edifice, seems now to be obviated. This is owing in a great measure to the large number of Christian nonconforming sects, who in many instances no sooner build their chapel, than their organization is perhaps in process of dissolution, or else removes to another neighbourhood, and their building is for sale or to let. Again, land

¹¹ *Hebras* or *Chebras* signifies small Bethels outside the official spheres of supervision.

in Lancashire is now so readily procurable, and on such very easy terms of repayment, that the provision for a burial ground seems to be handled by these Jewish societies without abnormal difficulty. Another Hebrew congregation is in process of formation in Birkenhead, on the other side of the River Mersey.

The vast majority of the Russo-Jewish wage earners (unlike the early settlers, who were petty dealers, these are artizans, several hundred alone being in joinery and cabinet-making) evince a desire to worship only with their fellow immigrants, and to adopt a ritual after their own methods. The modest meeting houses of these new settlers are crowded to repletion by throngs of earnest and enthusiastic worshippers. To see them at prayer is quite a revelation to modern Liverpool Jewry. Their services are full of emphatic, vivid, even if uncouth, devotion. To listen to their ready and soulful responses, to see the weird swinging of their bodies during their orisons, to hear the loud and earnest sounds of their great Amen, their hearty unison in songs of praise, wanting perhaps in musical culture, yet giving food for inspiration. One may admit that, if coupled with a high standard of ethics, civic patriotism, and a lofty tone of social and public morality, they have a perfect right to pray as they please. English Jewry objects to use revivalist methods, which they have outgrown, and seem quite unsuited to the calmer Anglo-Jewish temperament. Yet these (may I call them) Puritan Jews have succeeded in bringing religious and ethical influences to bear upon their suffering and their weary, which, after all, appears to be the final aim of every spiritual striving. It is satisfactory to know that cases of crime and delinquency are rare and

exceptional in their midst, and that the lists of drunken, disorderly, and riotous in Liverpool are not recruited from Polish or Russian Jews. A late veteran officer of our police force quaintly expressed to me that for the district inhabited by these foreign Jewish artizans the mere button of a constable would be sufficient to keep the peace, so inherent seems to be their instinctive regard for authority, law, and order. My records would be incomplete if I refrained from mentioning this phase in the latest evolution of Jewish life in Liverpool.

It is evident that a self-imposed ghetto is for the first time in process of formation in our city. Entire streets are being wholly occupied by Russo-Polish immigrants in the Brownlow Hill district, which was in the early part of the century a favourite residential suburb. The non-Jewish residents are removing to the more distant outskirts.

Porcupine, a local journal, in its issue of March 13th, 1897, refers to the incident:—"The Gentiles in the neighbourhood of Brownlow Hill are complaining of the incursion of the Jews. The Israelites, it is said, have descended like wolves on the fold, and scattered the Christians and taken possession. Many of the shopkeepers have already thrown up the sponge, retired from the conflict, and gone to fields and pastures new."

Let me add that landlords do not complain of the change in their tenantry. The pre-disposition of the wage-earning Jew to adopt gregarious methods causes rentals in decaying neighbourhoods to be maintained at a much higher value than non-Jewish residents would be willing to pay.

I dare not venture to speculate what the ultimate effect of these masses of immigrants (outnumbering

over and over again the original Liverpool-born Jews) will have upon the future of the entire community. It is not within the scope of this paper, which, as I observed previously, terminates with the consecration of the Prince's Road synagogue in 1874. The object I have set before me has been to record oral tradition, folk lore, and the early memorabilia of Liverpool Jewry, ere they become lost in oblivion and obliterated altogether.

Perhaps a later historian of the Jews in England may find, for his future guidance, a few "footprints in the sands of time" here preserved.



