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## eColenso supplement

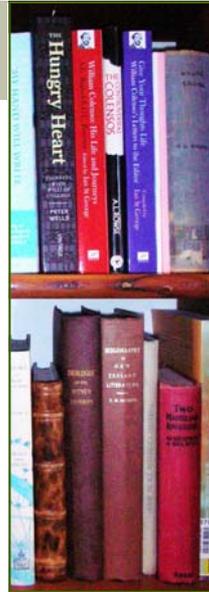
### Against antisemitism

Colenso to David Balfour 28 March 1881, "... on Sat night, Webers long letter appeared in the D. Telegraph against the Jews, and that so stirred me, I gave all yesterday in writing a reply, & in copying *half* for the D.T., which I hope may appear in this evenings paper."

Three letters, against anti-Semitism, were not accessible when I compiled Colenso's letters to editors in *Give your thoughts life*, but now that the Alexander Turnbull Library's newspaper collection is again available, I have traced them to the *Daily Telegraph* of 28, 30 and 31 March 1881. They are copied here rather messily, but they do constitute an important statement.

Colenso wrote them in response to Carl Hermann Weber 1822–1886, a German migrant who had penned a letter defending attempts in Germany to limit the human rights of its Jewish population.

Napoleon had emancipated Jews across Europe, but his fall in 1815 marked the beginning of pogroms in nationalistic Germany. After German unification under Bismarck in 1871 the response to the influx of eastern Jews fleeing Russian anti-Semitism was strong, resulting in the formation of an Anti-Semitic League and the *völkisch* movement.



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*eColenso* is a free email publication which might be forwarded to interested others.

Contributions on William Colenso should be emailed to the editor, Ian St George, [istge@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:istge@yahoo.co.nz).



Weber and his two brothers had fled Germany as pacifists. He was approached to come to New Zealand in 1860 as a surveyor. He purchased "The Pines" (now the oldest surviving house in Waipawa) from TH Fitzgerald. He was appointed Provincial Engineer and Chief Surveyor for Hawkes Bay and was the first Harbour Board Engineer.

He was an active member of the HB Philosophical Institute and collected insects for

Colenso, who quite genuinely refers to him as "my good friend" in his letter.

The settlement of Weber in Southern Hawkes Bay is named after him.

Weber disappeared near Woodville, and despite a search party, his body was not recovered for nearly three years.

Colenso to Harding 12 August 1890, "You will, no doubt, have heard of the finding of the bones of poor Weber: I preached a special Sermon last Sy. night at Wdv. on lonely sudden death; a large & most attent. Congn.—Weber's remains were taken to Napier for burial: his son Arnold was quite satisfied respecting them.

#### PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN GERMANY.

[To the Editor of the DAILY TELEGRAPH.]  
SIR,—Since my letter of the 19th ultimo on this subject you have reprinted several extracts from the Jewish Chronicle and other English and American papers, all denouncing the attitude of the anti-Jewish party in Germany, and attributing it to the fact that the Germans have come to the conviction that the remarkable success in the race for wealth obtained by the Jews is due to their superior natural abilities, and that the Germans, feeling themselves unable to hold their own in the open field, have raised a cry of commercial dishonesty and conspiracy against them as affording a palpable pretext for placing the Jews under certain disabilities so as to drive them out of the country. The Jewish Chronicle puts it, the Germans have found out that "the Jews are too clever for them." The fact that some of the Jewish papers in Germany have made similar assertions has led to very considerable discussion, and ethnologists, phrenologists, and historians, have all had their say upon that subject. As the question, whether the Semitic type is superior to



the Teutonic, cannot be without interest to many of your readers, I will, with your kind leave, submit a synopsis of the arguments, incurring of course the risk of being again called narrow-minded by my friend Mr Levi. The anti-Semitic party maintain that the Teutonic branch of the human family is superior to the Semitic; both physically and mentally, and that the ascendancy gained by the Jews recently is due principally to the advantages derived for commercial and political purposes from the organization of the Jewish associations, and to the fact that modern society is so constituted that the Jews have now ample scope for employment in those walks of life for which they have a superior aptitude, that is, trade and commerce, while none of them are forced into handicrafts, agriculture, or manual labor, for which, it is said, they are *physically not adapted*. Phrenologists assert that the Semitic type is superior in some of the intellectual faculties, such as time, tune, comparison, casuistry, etc., but that it is remarkably deficient in constructiveness, imitation, etc. In support of this theory it is shown that the Jews have produced a very large number of musicians; that they excel as financiers, lawyers, and mathematicians, while hardly a Jew has left his mark as architect, engineer, or mechanic, and that scarcely a single invention can be traced to the Jews. A writer not at all unfriendly to them, says that he never knew a Jew who could drive a nail straight into a board, or could hold a plough, and that if the Jews were to return to Palestine, they would require Gentiles to build their houses and plough their fields. These typical characteristics are traced in the career of the Jews back to Palestine. The archaeologist does not find in Palestine, as proved of former high civilization, the remains of magnificent buildings, of aqueducts and irrigation works, such as he meets with almost everywhere in the East. The Jews have traded with China and India; they have brought thence gold and rich material, but they were

unable to learn the arts of these countries and to transplant them to Palestine, having no constructive talent. After their dispersion from Palestine, they brought no arts and sciences from the cultivated East to their new homes; they arrived there with unskilled and empty hands, and had therefore to take the lowest places, from which they never rose. In those countries where they are most numerous, in Morocco, Tunis, Bulgaria, Wallachia, Volhinia, Lithuania, and Poland, the Jews have never been able to raise themselves above the lowest positions, merely because they were unable to exercise handicrafts and such useful but laborious occupations as are required in less advanced societies. The Jewish population amongst the Moors in Spain was very large, and although the Moors have treated the Jews with kind consideration, they never advanced higher than hodmen to the masons who built the Alhambra. Nevertheless they have done better in Spain than anywhere else, and they have left there behind them a few respectable Synagogues. After the expulsion of the Moors, the Jews who accompanied them to Africa descended as rapidly as the Moors, but keeping always a lower level than their patrons. Since the beginning of this century the Jews in Central and Western Europe have made rapid strides towards influence and wealth, as the organisation of modern society gives them ample scope for following the walks of life suitable for their taste, that is, business, music, light literature, law, etc., while very few have to take to handicraft, agriculture, and manual labor. A clever writer sums up that history proves that the Jews can never make a great nation, but that dispersed among other nationalities, where they have scope to follow their tastes and talents, they are successful. Whether a section of the community that will not or cannot take to manual labor is beneficial to the State is one of the points now at issue in Germany.—I am, &c.,

CHARLES WEBER.

Napier March, 26, 1881.

Colenso's lengthy reply is in the form of three letters to the editor...

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## THE JEWISH QUESTION.

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[TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH.]  
SIR,—I read with mingled feelings of pleasure and surprise Mr Weber's letter in your paper of yesterday; and as I cannot help thinking he has (in his zeal for the Father-land, and his electrically-rapid review of the history of several thousand years) overlooked many items of considerable importance, I would venture to write a couple of letters bearing on the subject, by way of friendly correction, or necessary addition. For to say all I could say, or should also like to say, on such a momentous subject, would occupy vastly more space than you could well afford me.

While I confess there is much to admire in Mr Weber's letter, (as also, in not a few of his former letters with which he has from time to time favoured us though your columns)—for sweet indeed and highly praiseworthy is the love of one's country—that *dulcis amor patriæ* which Mr Weber so eminently shows,—still, I much fear, that my good friend has in this case allowed his zeal to carry him a little too far. Be that as it may, one thing has comforted me under this late peculiar Germanic crusade against the Jews, and that is, that nearly the whole civilised world outside of Germany has loudly joined in condemning it; showing also by their acts—as, notably, in the two recent instances of the Prince of Wales publicly attending the marriage of

a Jewish couple in London, and the Crown Prince of Prussia openly at Berlin condemning the movement,—what they think of it. And as “coming events cast their shadows before,” the Jews may also take comfort from those two patent facts and acts of the two greatest and early-future European Kings and Emperors, and it is well for us, for the Jews, and for society, that it is so; that we have those two notable doings, as well as the general wide-world feelings and sympathies so abundantly shown in their favour, as a set-off. For there is much in that Germanic upheaval which is both ugly and unpleasant, Bismarckian and Mephistophelian; savouring of the high handed dealings towards France in exacting her millions of gold and taking away from her the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, and that against the wishes of their inhabitants. I confess (though in my doing so, I may lay myself open to the charge of stupidity!) that I can see but little difference between all such doings and those other equally notorious and equally condemned ones, known under the modern names of Fenianism, Communism, Nihilism, anti-Jew, and Boycotting! all are equally the wretched and bitter fruits (though varying in hue and size,) arising from the one bad and extensive root, which at present, I fear, is more or less, underlying all society!

In order, therefore, to do our good fellow citizens the Jews justice, I will also, following Mr Weber, take a rapid glance over their past history, which I will divide into five brief heads, from their first commencement as a kingdom under Saul; omitting all before that time, "when every man did just what was right in his own eyes."

But here, at their very outset, (to which Mr Weber has also referred, in his speaking of the Jews in Palestine,) I would *again* call on your readers to consider well the real size and situation of that so much talked of and belauded little kingdom! (As, indeed, I showed some 2 years ago, in exposing some of Mr Sidey's assumptions and historical errors, in my "Tract for the Times." No. 1, page 8,) "The actual size of the whole country of Palestine, or the Holy Land, containing the two petty kingdoms of Israel and Judah taken together, was not

so large as the small tract of country extending from Napier to Cape Palliser and from the Ruahine mountain range to the sea on the E. coast!" and the whole of its small amount of sea-board on the W. shore of the Mediterranean, and that too without a single harbour! was less than 150 miles,—or the coast-line in Hawke's Bay from Portland Island to Black Head.

Now it is needful to keep this in mind when duly considering Mr Weber's lowering remarks on the want of high civilization, arts, commerce, &c., among the ancient Jews.

*Epoch I.* The short-lived palmy days of Palestine while united under her three kings, Saul, David, and Solomon. That the Jews were from their earliest days great agriculturists (wheat and barley), and gardeners (figs, olives, raisins, nuts, and herbs), and owners of extensive herds of kine and of goats, and of flocks of sheep, which latter were by them, as now, regularly shorn for their wool, is absolutely certain from their history. Agriculture, too, being ever rightly deemed as the highest and most honorable of all institutions. The times of her first two kings (Saul and David)

of her first two kings (Saul and David) were sad times of war and blood; throughout which the Jews were generally victorious. Such however served to bring about and consolidate the peaceful reign of David's son Solomon, extending over 40 years; under whom the Jews showed themselves to be men of a high standard of civilization,—such as Mr Weber himself would approve of. They were even then (at that early date) splendid engineers, daring merchants, clever workmen, and great navigators. Solomon built the first temple at Jerusalem, a wonder in itself; in which, we are told, 153,600 workmen were employed; after that he built a magnificent palace for himself, and another for his Egyptian Queen, and a third called “the forest of Lebanon”;—by his trade with Egypt he introduced among the Jews the manufacture of linen, and a breed of fine horses, “having 4000 stables, 40,000 stalls, and 12,000 horsemen”; and very likely had obtained and possessed the profitable monopoly in the whole trade of horses between Egypt and Syria and Phenicia, which must have passed through Solomon's dominions,—

as the learned commentator Michaelis has pretty conclusively shown. For before his day (as we are told, but in a much *later* book—Deuteronomy,) the Hebrews were prohibited by God from breeding horses! By his trade, with Ophir and other places, he made gold and silver as common in Jerusalem as the stones in the streets; and valuable cedar logs as plentiful as the common fig-tree of the lowlands of that country. The fleet which he sent from Etath (on the Red Sea), once in three years, brought him from Ophir nearly £2,000,000 sterling. He also built the two famed cities of Tadmor and Baalath in the desert, (Palmyra and Baalbec,) whose magnificent ruins (though mainly of a later age) are still extant, and are among the architectural and engineering wonders of the ancient world. He, also, built the aqueducts, or “cisterns of Solomon,” for supplying pure water to Bethlehem and Jerusalem; these are still to be seen, and (for Mr Weber’s special information) I will just give their measurements, &c., as supplied by an eminent French traveller. *Cassas*:—

"They are three in number, of a rectangular figure, and connected with each other; the first two are nearly of the same size, but the third is longer, narrower, and deeper. The upper, or southern reservoir, is 366 feet in length, 200 in length, and from 30 to 36 in depth; the second, 206 in breadth, but same length and depth as the first; the third, or lowest, 480 feet long, 166 broad, and from 50 to 60 deep. They are lined with masonry, and there is a descent in each by a narrow flight of steps at one of the corners. They are still in tolerable preservation, and might at a slight expense be perfectly restored." In the time of the old traveller Maundrell, who visited and accurately described them,— "they were covered with handsome stone arches; and by an aqueduct of brick the water was carried by many turnings and windings about the mountains to Jerusalem."

All those enormous works were executed by the Jews some hundreds of years before the city of Rome was built,— "ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled!" At a time, I fancy, when Mr Weber's (Teutonic) and my own (British) ancestors were far worse barbarians than our New Zealanders

were prior to Cook's first voyage hither. Such, indeed, were the wonderful works done by the Jews in those days of Solomon, especially in the great matters of architecture and engineering, that by the Persians, Arabians, and nearly all Oriental writers, his skill was uniformly imputed to the supernatural aid of demons or genii. Now all this information, though so greatly condensed, about a fine breed of horses, manufactures of linen and of metals, logs of cedar brought in from the far distant mountain forests, reservoirs of "living" water, the building of stone palaces, enterprising fleets for distant commerce, gold and silver in abundance, and peace and plenty everywhere—we here in Napier, just 3000 years after Solomon's time, can form a pretty correct opinion of; and, also, vainly wish, that we too knew by real experience a little more of all those good things!—

*Epoch II.* From the death of Solomon to the return of the Jews to Judea from their long Babylonian captivity. Unfortunately for the Jews, their rapid declension as a nation commenced very soon after the death of their best and wisest King Solomon. This was begun by the rending of the Union of the tribes into two small kingdoms,—Judah and Israel; and kept up by their own civil wars, by their almost continual warring with each other, and with all their bordering States,

Add to this, their being also repeatedly ravaged, and, at last, carried away into slavery by their powerful neighbors, Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon,—the whole of those wretched times taking up about 500 years; and the marvel (almost unparalleled, even in the history of much larger nations and peoples,) is, that the Jews held their ground so well, and managed to preserve their nationality, and, like the fabled Phœnix of old, repeatedly rose anew from their many disasters and destructions!

The whole of this long calamitous period was, of course, wholly opposed to any great advance in "high civilization"; still we find the Jews actively employed, as opportunities offered, in the arts and manufactures, especially in vessels of gold, silver, and brass, and in textile fabrics, and in rebuilding and repairing their ruined towns and cities; and, at last, on the general return of the sad remnant of the nation from their long captivity in Babylon, they once more rebuilt their temple, palaces, and fortifications. In all this I cannot but perceive ample proofs of great abilities, and of a high and proper national spirit.—Yours,  
&c.,

WILLIAM COLENSO.

Napier, Sunday, March 27, 1881.

*(To be continued.)*

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## THE JEWISH QUESTION.

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(Continued.)

*Epoch III.* From the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, to the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem under Titus, A.D., 70: comprising a period of nearly 600 years.

But few, comparatively, of the Jews who had been carried away captive ever returned to the land of their fathers; and

those who did were remnants only of two of their original twelve tribes—Judah and Benjamin. Of course, on their return, they found their country a desert; and what they were now permitted to occupy was very small indeed. I have already drawn attention to the smallness of Palestine at its best, but that was big and extensive compared with this portion of it, now newly named Judea, and comprising an almost rectangular block, having only 20 miles of seaboard and running back some 46 miles to the sterile shores of the Dead Sea! their old possessions, N. and S., being in the hands of their enemies the Samaritans and the Idumeans. Still the energies of the Jews never forsook them; though surrounded by bitter foes they worked with a will, and in the course of a few years had rebuilt their Temple and were again prospering. But their old fate awaited them! first the Persians ravaged their country, burnt their towns, and carried off many thousands of prisoners: afterwards the Egyptians did the same, took Jerusalem and carried off 100,000 prisoners: then the Syrians, in a subsequent generation under Antiochus, again took Jerusalem, and pillaged and destroyed and carried off thousands of Jews: then followed the celebrated "wars of the Jews" under the brave Maccabean family (so ably told in their books, and by Josephus): then several wars with the great and powerful Roman nation, ending in the total destruction of their once more renewed grand and beautiful Temple, the utter desolation of their city, and their entire dispersion!

Long, however, before their last fatal wars with the Romans, the Jews had recovered much of their ancient possessions N. and S. in Palestine, through the bravery and victories of the valiant Maccabean family, and the beneficence and aid of several emperors and kings of Egypt and Rome,—not omitting Alexander the Great, who had previously visited Jerusalem and was their friend. They had even colonies of great note in Egypt; and built several new towns, generally bearing Grecian names. Herod, their last king, tyrant though he was, built largely in many places of his dominions; among other matters restoring or rebuilding their beautiful Temple. A celebrated modern writer, speaking of Herod and of his public works in Palestine, says:—"Few men ever lived who, within so short a time, so transformed the outward face of a country. That Grecian, Roman, Westering coloring which Antiochus Epiphanes had vainly tried to throw over the gray hills and rough towns of Judea was fully wrought out by Herod the Great. At the several newly-built towns of Cæsarea-Philippi,—at Sebaste,—at Anthedon,—at Ascalon,—and at Cæsarea-Stratonis, his public works were enormous; at this last place, on the coast, beside a desert spot hitherto marked by the tower of Strato, with a village at its foot, he constructed a vast haven which was to rival the Piræus.

Around it and within it were splendid breakwaters and piers. Abutting on it a city was erected, so magnificent with an array of public and private edifices, that it ultimately became the capital of Palestine, throwing Jerusalem itself into a place altogether secondary. Houses of shining marble stood round the harbour; on a rising ground in the centre, as in a modern crescent, rose the temple of Augustus, which gave again the name of Cæsarea to the town. In all those maritime towns, as far north as the Syrian Tripolis, and, not least, in that Hellenised city of Ascalon, he established the luxurious and wholesome institutions of baths, fountains, and colonnades, and added in the inland cities, in the romantic Jericho, and even in the holy Jerusalem, the more questionable entertainments of Greek theatres, hippodromes, and gymnasia,—and the splendid spectacles of the Roman amphitheatre."

Here, too, the enormous size as well as the beauty of the stones of the Temple, which had been contemplated by Jesus and his disciples with wonder, should be remembered. Josephus describes some as being "45 cubits long, 5 high and 6 broad," as others as being "20 cubits long by 10 and 5," (a cubit being about 1ft 9in. English measure;) and the pillars, each of a single stone of white marble, were 25 cubits high: so, also, its splendid yet enormous gates ("Beautiful") of Corinthian brass, overlaid with gold; its many large ornaments, &c., &c. And very sure we are, that all that work was executed by Jews alone, and not by "Gentile carpenters." The sub-basement stones, ascribed to Solomon, in the ruined temples at Baalbec, measure (according to Irby and Mangles,) 66 x 12 feet; while others, (described by Wood,) "in a neighbouring quarry, cut

and shaped, measured 70 feet by 14.0 x 14.5; containing 14,128 cubic feet, and which would, if of Portland stone, weigh 1135 tons."

I have been induced to bring forward those few archæological items, and that very briefly, from among many other similar ones, to show what the Jews anciently were in their own small land;—in the midst of constant wars, enemies within as well as without on all sides, and many disadvantages. These things serve to attest their ability and energetic spirit in the matters of public works and undertakings; which Mr Weber says they never anciently possessed, and that "no magnificent ruins remain in Palestine as in other Oriental countries." Forgetting (as I take it,) in so comparing, the smallness of their country, and the notable historical fact of everything pertaining to the ancient Jews having been diligently destroyed by their enemies! Even the very foundations of Jerusalem having been ploughed up by the Roman Commander Turnus Rufus, so that of their magnificent and stately Temple one stone was not left upon another.

*Epoch IV.* From their total dispersion by the Romans, A.D. 70, down to modern times;—say, nearly to the end of the 18th century.

Hitherto we have seen little but of war and its consequent miseries, ending in the total dispersion of the Jews from the lands of their fathers; and now, throughout this subsequent long period of 1700 years, there is very much of a similar character attending this people. For although hundreds of thousands of them perished at Jerusalem and its neighbourhood during the last fatal war and seige, and hundreds of thousands of them were also made prisoners, sold as slaves &c., &c., yet tens of thousands survived, and in the next generation rose in revolt, and murdered many thousands of their Roman fellow-subjects. On this Trajan subdued them again with terrible bloodshed. Then followed the (second) period of their false Messiahs, (whom, like the Maori of to-day, the Jews too readily believed,) when again, under Hadrian, hundreds of thousands of Jews were slain! And here I would observe, that however severe the Romans might be in the wars which they carried on against the Jews, they readily laid aside their resentment when the occasion passed away; and so, under Antoninus Pius we find the Jews again restored to their ancient privileges, and while they were exempted from many expensive and burdensome offices, they en-

joyed municipal honours in common with the other citizens.

The establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire and the rise and progress of Mohammedanism, had a marked influence on the condition of the Jews. The first Christian Emperors conducted themselves towards the Jewish people with a lenity and forbearance that was not always agreeable to some of their subjects. Under Constantine the right of the Jews to the privileges of Roman citizenship was fully recognised, while the Rabbis had the same exemption from civil and military offices as the Christian clergy. But this peaceful state of things was soon changed. The church, having declined from simplicity and truth, attained to the height of secular power and honor, of wealth and lordly pride, and being divided into rancorous partisans—hating and excommunicating each other most heartily!—the Jews soon experienced the difference, and felt her malevolent rule, and while she possessed that dominion her persecutions of them in all countries never ceased!—The Florentine poet Dante might truly say—(in the end of his bold and faithful address to a Pope of Rome whom he saw suffering torments in hell,—

“Ah, Constantine! of how much ill was mother,  
Not thy conversion, but that marriage dower  
Which the first wealthy Father took from thee!”—

Strange that it should have been so! that the church could so soon have forgotten her origin.. ("the hole of the pit whence she was digged,") her Jewish mother!—her first teachers, Jesus and his disciples, all Jews!!—their teachings, too, all Jewish. Her very sacred books all written by Jews! But, alas! so it was, (that I say not, *is*) The Church has ever remembered that Judas was a Jew, but conveniently forgotten that Jesus was a Jew also.

During many hundreds of bitter and dreary long years of distress, the Jews were always persecuted; often robbed and tortured, murdered and repeatedly banished from many Christian European kingdoms and states, including our own England; and horribly tortured burnt and slain by the accursed inquisition (slanderously misnamed "*Holy!*") and by bigoted Popes; still, and marvellous to relate, they outlived it all. And here it should be noted, that while the Christians (in name) persecuted and killed—and, no doubt, in doing so, thought, aye, believed they were doing good service!—the Arabs and Mohammedans often aided and saved them: this, no doubt, arose from their both having descended from one patriarchal stem, Abraham,—and both holding to that one great and glorious truth *the Unity of God*. A truth taught also clearly and openly by that greatest of all Jews—JESUS; but, alas! dreadfully obscured and debased by his so called modern followers.

in the Oriental court of the caliphs the Jews were favorably received, and became the merchants by whom the business between the Eastern and Western world was conducted; while for centuries the whole management of the Eastern coinage was committed to them. Nor did the Jews only flourish there in commercial greatness; they became highly distinguished in science and literature. Many of them were eminent in astronomy, mathematics, languages, grammar, and medicine. Wherever the Moslem arms extended the Jews were for a time in a prosperous condition; in N. Africa, in Egypt, in Persia, and even in Spain, under the Moors the Jews generally did well, and were held in high esteem. In that country they enjoyed full toleration, and the Arabico-Jewish literature forms an important chapter in the history of learning from the 7th till the 12th century.

About the same period a combination of circumstances proved favourable to the condition of the Jews, for a short time, throughout Christendom; Charlemagne protected their interests. He is said to have had a Jewish merchant always near his person, and the correspondence between that great monarch and the celebrated caliph Haroun Alraschid was under the care of a Jew. The immediate successors of Charlemagne followed the same line of policy, France numbered the sons of Abraham as the richest of her merchants. Their fame as physicians also widely spread; and their intelligence and activity commended some of them to high political offices. But a time of change was at hand; and the rapid yet gradual decline of the condition of the Jews followed, till at last that unhappy people were trampled upon, crushed, butchered, proscribed, in almost every country in Europe. A celebrated writer of 50 years ago has written so truthfully and clearly on the causes of this great change,—which words are also highly suitable to the present movement in Germany, that I cannot but transcribe

them.—

“ We find the Jews abhorred by the superstitious on account of their religion, envied by the powerful on account of their riches; and, amidst the contempt and injustice to which they were subjected, crouching before and cozening their hated oppressors. In many parts of Europe they were not allowed to possess land, and were forbidden to aspire to offices of trust or honour. The injurious effects of this exclusion were soon manifest in their character and habits. Shut out from all the paths which lead to distinction, the aspiring aims of honourable ambition, and the ennobling feelings connected with the love of country became strangers to their bosoms. Their efforts were limited to the accumulation of wealth; and in the decay of commerce during the middle ages, their minds were debased by the petty details of the lower species of traffic, which was all that was now open to them. Their ambition being thus fixed upon one subject, and prohibited from investing their gains in the purchase of land, they found a profitable employment of it in lending it. The effect of this was inevitable. At a time when commercial pursuits were held in contempt, the assistance of the Jews became indispensable to the nobles, whose hatred rose in proportion to their obligations; and, where there was the power; the temptation to cancel the debt by violence became often irresistible. The Jews had

no means of resisting such injustice, and so things went on, till every atrocity was considered as justifiable when directed against a Jew."

In the Germanic empire the rights which the Jews had enjoyed under the ancient Roman law were to a certain extent, and for some time continued to them. It was at Treves, however, that the suggestion was first made to the fanatical multitude proceeding under Peter the Pennyless to take possession of the Holy Land, that they should fall upon the enemies of the cross living among themselves. The choice of death or of conversion was given to the miserable Jews of that city, and only a few escaped from the general massacre. Fathers presented their breasts to the sword after putting their own children to death; and wives and virgins sought for refuge from the brutality of the soldiers by throwing themselves into the river with stones fastened to their bodies. Similar scenes were repeated in Cologne, Mentz

Worms, and in all cities on the Rhine; and the progress of the armies (in the Crusades) was marked by the blood of the Jews until they reached the plains of Hungary. Upon a moderate computation not fewer than 17,000 Jews are supposed to have perished. The minds of those whose who escaped were filled with consternation; and their synagogues resounded with their appeals to the justice and mercy of the God of their fathers, who seemed to have forsaken them who refused to forsake Him. Many fled to Silesia, Moravia, and Poland, where they laid the foundations of great communities. Thus, then, it was in Europe in the middle ages, and in Germany in particular the condition of the Jews was most wretched and degraded. History teems with their many and great and prolonged sufferings: volumes have been, and could be, written concerning them.

WILLIAM COLENZO.

Napier, March 29, 1881.

*(To be concluded in my next.)*

## Correspondence.

### THE JEWISH QUESTION.

(Concluded.)

On the revolt of the Netherlands many of the Portuguese and Spanish Jews took refuge there from the horrid barbarities of the Emperor Charles V., and Philip II. and III. There, after sometime, the distinctions on account of religion were to a certain extent removed, and the Jews of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp vied, in the highest qualifications of commercial greatness, with the citizens of the new republic. They were afterwards joined by many of their nation from Germany and Poland. Off-shoots from the new community in Holland grew up in circumstances scarcely less favourable in Denmark and Hamburg.

In Germany little change had taken place in the condition of the Jews for many centuries. The diet of Frederic the Great (1750)' for the regulation of his Jewish subjects, was of the most intolerant description. The severest measures were resorted to for preventing their increase beyond a fixed number. They were excluded from all civil offices, and from many departments of lucrative and honourable employment, and subjected to an unequal load of taxation. Their condition in other parts of the empire was not more favourable till towards the end of the last century. Various circumstances contributed about that

period to a decided improvement. Among these the writings and character of Moses Mendelsohn may be mentioned as having had considerable effect in elevating the character of the Jews in the general opinion. An edict of toleration was also published by the Emperor Joseph II. The most important part of it perhaps consisted in the support which it promised to elementary education, and to its throwing open the schools and universities of the empire to the Jews. Freedom of residence and of trade was also granted to them. They were no longer excluded from public places of amusement; and they were permitted to wear certain decorations.

By the restoration of letters, the printing-press, and the work of the Reformation, a small change for the better was being wrought in the general condition of the Jews; the progress however was but slight. Still the steady advance of civilization was silently preparing the way for greater justice being done to this people; and their conduct, in circumstances where they were allowed scope for the development of their better qualities, tended greatly to the removal of the prejudices that existed against them during the dark ages of ignorance. In England the Jews again obtained a legal re-establishment under the protectorate of Cromwell, and have ever since maintained their footing. A bill for their

naturalisation was passed in the year 1753; but the prejudices against the measure were so strongly expressed, as to lead to its repeal in the following year. In no history have we more remarkable illustrations of the great truths, —that to enslave is to degrade, and that to render men useful citizens, it is essential to bestow upon them the rights of citizens. It is not however till within the last 100 years, an instance has been afforded of the full concession of all the privileges of citizenship to the Jews.

*Epoch V.* From near the end of the eighteenth century to the present time.

This portion of their history may be considered as the best in every respect for them since their great dispersion. Much of this may be traced to the influence of the French Revolution. In 1791 the Jews in France were admitted to equal rights as citizens. Many privileges were granted them by Napoleon I., and these, happily, were not interfered with at the restoration of the Bourbons; and since the Revolution in 1830 the Jewish rabbis as well as the clergy of the different Christian sects receive a stipendiary allowance from the State.

The recognition of the independence of the United States in America may be marked as the epoch that secured to the Jews the prospect of their being admitted to the full privileges of citizenship, and freed them from the disabilities that had been so long considered as inseparable from their religious condition. The fundamental principle of the new republic involved the treating of the Jews upon the same terms as the other inhabitants. It was not acted upon, however, throughout all the States, till the year 1822. They are now distinguished in no respect, except their religion, from any other part of the population.

The influence of Napoleon I. was exerted for the advantage of the Jews in many parts of the German States; and from 1809 to 1813, ordinances were issued for the bettering of their condition, admitting them to civil rights, and abolishing odious distinctions. In the Rhenish provinces of Prussia many restrictions afterwards took place in their privileges, by disqualifying them for certain civil offices; and again in 1822, their learned men were excluded from holding offices in Schools and Universities. In the free towns, for long after this, commercial jealousy more than feelings of a religious

nature still kept the Jews at disadvantage.

To come down to our own days, the days pre-eminently of much Reform in the United Kingdom, — of Catholic Emancipation, and the removal of Jewish disabilities, — the condition of the Jews in England, as elsewhere, has been wonderfully benefited ; and they have increased, in numbers, in wealth, in education, in position. Eminent Jews and their descendants are now to be found filling honorable and high situations and offices ; in England, in the Houses of Lords and of the Commons ; on the legal Bench and at the Bar ; among the first Artists, Literaturemen, Merchants, and Brokers ; and so in many places on the Continent, — notably in France and in Italy.

From my infancy I have intimately known them : born, brought up, at school and at play, among many of their children ; often in their dwellings ; a welcome guest at their annual feasts, and not an unfrequent worshipper with them (or visitor) in their synagogues and, in later years, I have had many dealings with them — honest ; more so than many (so-called) Christians ! Therefore, I love the Jews, and sympathise with them, and am always ready to take their part.

Few popular political movements of late have more surprised me than this retrograde one in Germany against the Jews. Were I a German, I think,—I hope,—I should be manly enough to feel ashamed of it, and truthful enough to avow my honest convictions. Could it be said of the German Jews, as of the Jesuits in France, or of their cloaked *confreres* the Ritualists and Puseyites in England, (would there were none of the spawn in N.Z.!) that they are dangerous to both church and state, and, so far, corrupters of youth, then the case would be widely different, and the generally wise circumspect and far-seeing Germans, would have (at all events, the semblance of) political right on their side; but the contrary is the case. For the Jews are well-known as a diligent, persevering, loyal, quiet, prudent, patient, unobtrusive race; highly charitable and religious—sufferers, indeed, even now for their religion, many of them conscientiously closing their shops on Saturdays (their Sabbath) as well as our Sundays,—ever temperate without belonging to either a Rechabite or a Teetotaler club; maintaining their own poor while paying the rates, and but rarely found as defendants in our criminal courts.

Mr Weber says, (1.) that "the Jews cannot take to handicraft and manual labour." This, in part, I deny; for I have known not a few Jews, both in the country towns and in London, who were very industrious at their respective trades, of printers, bookbinders, opticians, polishers, watchmakers, joiners, hatters, tailors, shoemakers, tinmen, &c., &c.: in part, however, I might allow this, viz. their not *now* following the heavier occupations of stone-masons, house-carpenters, agriculturists, &c., but then, such has reference to the *past*, when they could not legally possess house or land; the very laws made them unsettled, &c.—why, then, should they choose to work at those heavier distasteful trades for their Gentile masters? Now, however, that they may have and hold lands and houses of their own, the cases will, I think, be very different; they will become more settled. But this can only be a work of time; the habits of 1700 years,—so deeply ingrained, so constantly perpetuated, owing to their oppressors, are not easily or quickly altered. It is certain, that when they were a nation, they followed industriously all those heavy agricultural, manual, and handicraft trades; there were none idle among them. [See above, in their heavy buildings, agriculture, &c., &c.] It was a strict rule with the ancient Jews to have all their children, whatever their situation in life, taught handicraft employments; hence we find (casual) mention made of Paul and of Aquila as tent-makers (a rather heavy dirty work, I ween!); Peter, Andrew, James, and John, as fishers and menders of nets (perhaps their own boat-builders also);

Simon, a tanner; Joseph, a carpenter, and his son Jesus as being also of the same trade. One of their most illustrious teachers, Rabbi Judah, says,—“He that teaches not his son a trade, is as if he taught him to be a thief.” This was before the time of Jesus; and the Jews hold most tenaciously to the sayings of their ancient Rabbis.

Mr Weber also says, (2) that “they have no constructive talent.” This I, also, deny: there are large numbers of Jews, excellent workmen, employed in modelling, engraving, and chasing in gold and silver. A large number of the workers in diamonds and precious stones at Amsterdam (the chief establishment,) are Jews: and not a few of the fashionable tailors, and *modistes* and *artistes* are furnished from the ranks of the Jews.

Mr Weber also says, (3) that “they can never make a great nation.” How can they possibly make a nation, before they obtain a land, a country, a national home? Will a bird lay its eggs without first possessing a nest? or bees make honey without a hive?

In conclusion, Mr Weber says, (4) “Whether a section of the community that will not or cannot take to manual labour is beneficial to the State, is one of the points now at issue in Germany.”—This, I fear, is a kind of *after-thought*; brought forward there, to vamp up and to give a better appearance to the movement. But will it hold water? Let us try it: say, our numerous army of British *writers*, those whose sole occupation is to handle the pen? or, our British Coventry *weavers* of silks and ribbons? or, our British *sailors*? Again, why, “a section of the community”?

What is a section composed of? Individuals. Follow this out to its logical conclusion, and then the State must interfere with the liberty of her subjects, and choose and fix for all and every one as to employ! (much as in the olden time it regulated dress, and boots and shoes!) and then, where would Mr Weber, and myself, and one-third of Napier be?

One more sentence of Mr Weber's, and I have done. (It is one that I wish he had not penned; such might do as a passing joke in conversation, but is surely out of place in such a grave and important matter as this!) Mr Weber says,—“A writer not at all unfriendly to the Jews, says that he never knew a Jew who could drive a nail straight into a board, or could hold a plough.” This saying, however, serves to remind me of one that I have met with, that “A German could not exist, without his pipe, his lager-beer, and sauer-kraut:”—both sayings, I fancy, of equal value.

During my writing this long and hurried letter, I have again been led to review—in quick succession—the more prominent acts and sufferings of the Jews, extending over 3000 years! particularly their unexampled long and cruel hardships in Christian lands, since their expulsion from the homes of their fathers; and I feel more deeply convinced than ever, (and therefore I make this public avowal,) that what has enabled them to endure, aye, and to overcome,—is the grand, the holy, the true, the never-dying trust in God, which they

and their forefathers have ever shewn;  
their constant cleaving to that *one great*  
truth,—which first emanated from them,  
which we do not at present sufficiently  
consider or value, and which is destined  
to overspread the whole globe—the  
*Unity of God.*

“Tyre mock'd when Salem fell; where now is  
Tyre?

Heaven was against her. Nations thick as waves  
Burst o'er her walls, to Ocean doom'd and fire:  
And now the tideless water idly laves  
Her towers, and low sands heap her crowned  
merchants' graves.”

—I am, &c.,

WILLIAM COLENZO.

Napier, March 30, 1881.

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## MR. COLENZO AND THE JEWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH.]  
SIR,—It was with much pleasure that I read Mr Colenso's brief history of the persecution of the Jews in your paper last week. Every sensible person, free from prejudice, will agree, I think, that persecution of any form or kind is to be condemned; it is degrading, base, and cruel, and eventually retaliates upon those who use it. But at the same time I cannot help expressing my regret that Mr Colenso, in his able treatment of this important question, should have been so misguided (whether intentionally or otherwise I cannot say) as to have betrayed some symptoms of leniency towards persecution. I allude to his remarks concerning the expulsion of the Jesuits from France, and also with regard to the Ritualists in England. Mr Colenso, to my mind, is very inconsistent in this. While commending the Jews for the sacrifices which they have made for their faith, he condemns and despises those who do the same thing, only under different circumstances. Mr Colenso states that the Jesuits "are dangerous to both church and state, and, so far, corrupters of youth." This I deny, and challenge Mr Colenso to prove his statement. Even admitting it to be correct, is it not persecution to banish these men from a country which boasts as its motto

"Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity"—those grand words, which are so often used, but, apparently, so little understood. To put my contention plainer. Take, for instance, this colony. Mr Colenso holds religious views which, perhaps, are shared in by a great many, but which are denied by others. In the early days he instilled into the minds of people—especially the natives—these views. Can this be called perversion? And if Mr Colenso was condemned and expelled this country by those who did not agree with him, would not he and his followers regard the expulsion as an act of tyranny and persecution? Of course, and so it would be. It is exactly the same thing that has happened to the Jesuits in France, and yet Mr Colenso, who so grandiloquently condemns persecution, and who professes to love the oppressed, can at one and the same time be found to laud tyranny and injustice. Mr Colenso, I think it will be conceded, exhibits himself thus—he is either a bigot, or he is terribly insincere in his professions. It is to be regretted that Mr Colenso should have marred an otherwise able epitome of the persecution of the Jews by allowing the blemishes which I have pointed out to have crept in.—I am,  
&c.,

T. M. M.

Napier, April 4, 1881.

