

ONLY A JEW.

PAST AND PRESENT.

It is the year of grace one thousand one hundred and eighty nine, and gay Cockaigne shouts a joyful cheer for Richard Plantagenet, King of England, who to-day is crowned at Westminster. To distinguish him from the cruelly brave warriors around him he is called the Lion-hearted, and Richard Cœur de Lion is feared as he is loved. All Westminster is astir, and from far and near come the loyal subjects of the young prince, dressed in their best. Among those who are to greet their sovereign are bearded, dark-visaged men, in whose countenances fear and hope call up alternating tears and smiles; oppression has written deep lines upon their brows, and they gaze furtively around though they dread the fatal spring of a tiger. They are gorgeously attired, and the richness of their apparel evokes admiration, not unmixed with envy. They keep together, and speak to none around—for none will speak to them, except it be a sneer, to laugh, and gibe. And why? Soft—they are Jews, descendants of Abraham; men of whose nation Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah and Christ were members. Therefore they must be despised, scorned, trampled underfoot, robbed—murdered. What have they done, these Jews, that they should be driven from one corner of the earth to the other—deprived of all joys which make life bearable, and held up as the scum of the world?

of the douceurs to win him to their side. All seemed to go well, when, suddenly, the word went around that a massacre of the Jews had been decreed, and that their property was consequently confiscated. The mob—headed even by gallant knights not too proud or too brave to attack a defenceless people—rushed upon the Israelites and streams of blood ran through Westminster, and soon all London rang with the death-shrieks of the victims. The cry of mercy was loud, but the pack had tasted blood, and knew not mercy. Old and young men, women and children, fell beneath the sword of the Christian; bigotry spared but a few who hid themselves from the murderous crowd.

Throughout England the bloody herald went and roused the populace to deeds of desperation, and everywhere Jews and Jewesses fell, the murderers, incited by the preachers of the Crusade, believing it a virtue to immolate the race upon the altar of intolerance. In many towns, including Norwich, Edmondbury and Stamford, they offered in vain resistance; their chattels were seized, and themselves tortured and killed. At York, however, the faint hope of defending themselves seemed to inspire the Jewish residents; drowning men catch at straws, and the ill-fated Israelites of that old city made for York Castle, fondly hoping that its strong walls would shelter them and their treasures. Taking advantage of the temporary absence of the governor whose fidelity they suspected, the Jews seized the stronghold, an act which so

and for which, for the many consolations it has given us, and the belief in eternal life which it communicates, can we do less than die? Posterity shall behold its solemn truths sealed with our blood; and our death, while it confirms our sincerity, shall impart strength to the wanderers of Israel. Death is before our eyes, we have only to choose an easy and honorable one. If we fall into the hands of our enemies, which fate, you know, we cannot elude, our death will be ignominious and cruel; for these Christians who picture the Spirit of God in a dove and confide in the meek Jesus, are athirst for our blood, and prowl like wolves around us. Let us escape their tortures, and surrender, as our ancestors have done before us, our lives with our own hands to our Creator. God seems to call for us; let us not be unworthy of that call."

These words, looked upon even through the spectacles of the practical nineteenth century, are soul-inspiring and ennobling, and thoroughly in harmony with the characteristics of the race. The Rabbi's advice, fearful in its import, was eagerly appreciated, and at the break of the next day the rabble were horrified to observe flames issuing from every part of the Castle. The five hundred beleaguered Jews had killed themselves, but not before they had destroyed their riches. The fury of the mob on this discovery was redoubled; a Jew hunt followed, and the chase was well rewarded. And this happened in England not several hundred years back! The martyrdom of

confidence is Sir George Jessel, and since his occupancy of that proud position, no shafts of ridicule or spite have been hurled against him, though he too is "only a Jew!" Naturally the Hebrews of England are proud of this distinguished jurist, for in his person they recognize the establishment of a powerful and salutary principle that a Jew is a man and a brother.

And let us say a few words anent the term "Jew" and its application. Despite the spread of intolerance, it is not unusual to observe in a newspaper the defendant in a legal matter cited as "a Jew." The religion of other malefactors is never mentioned—why then make this invidious distinction? There is an impression abroad that "Jew" fully describes nationality, whereas it but indicates religious profession; Jews born in England are as English as Protestants and Catholics indigenous to that soil, and it is therefore either out of sheer ignorance or out of stupid spite that the words "a Jew" are placed after the name of an offender.

The position of Sir George Jessel cannot fail to suggest a contrast to the thoughtful Jew between the relative conditions of the Jews of the twelfth, and the Jews of the nineteenth century. When, in years to come, the student attempts to draw conclusions from these facts, he will be at some difficulty to account for the alteration in the status of the Jewish nation, and for the nature of the feelings with which they are regarded. When Sir George Jessel was called to the bar, he practiced



THE HOME OF AN OREGON FARMER.

Why avoid them as a pestilence? They are Jews, they are rich, they are usurers. Are they not men? No, they are Jews! They may be hanged, drawn, quartered: their wives and daughters offered as sacrifices to lust and brutality: the whole family exterminated. Laugh at him, spit upon him, tear him to pieces, throw his carcass to the dogs. Ha! ha! he is but an infidel an Israelite. He is only a Jew!

Are we wrong in ascribing these sentiments to the Christians of England at the time of the ascent to the throne of Richard I.? We fear not, though it is hard to understand the intensity of the intolerance directed against the unhappy Hebrews. Shut out from the participation in the learned professions and from numerous mechanical trades, the Jews were compelled to give their almost undivided attention to money-lending, and it was not unnatural that they took advantage of the chronic impetuosity of their noble clients to place an enormous percentage upon the money lent. The chances for repayment were small, and the security being thus well nigh "nil," the interest was proportionately large. Where one baron would honestly discharge his obligation to the Jew, fifty barons would fail not only to pay the interest, but the capital, adding insult and blows to the pecuniary injury already inflicted upon the luckless lender. Hoping to gain the goodwill and protection of Richard the Lion-hearted, many of their number proceeded to the coronation with presents for the king, fully relying upon the strength

exasperated the absent functionary that, with the assistance of the sheriff and an armed force, the castle was at once besieged. The word was out and the fiat gone forth, and the Jews shut up in the castle knew well that they could hope for no mercy from the maddened mass of Jew-haters who surrounded them. The mob was roused to the pitch of bigoted passion by the clergy, who hurled their denunciations at the Jews, dubbed them sorcerers, and cried for their blood. But the Jews knew how to suffer, how to die; they had been brought up in peace and had little idea of warfare and bloodshed, save what they saw of the oppression directed against them. They were looked upon as mean money-grubbers, blood-suckers who thirsted for Christian blood; none believed that a spark of bravery or courage existed among them. But beneath the timid mien of the Jews, the half-sycophantic, half-helpless attitude with which they addressed the nobles, there lurked a dormant heroism which only danger could call into action.

Seeing that their case was becoming utterly hopeless, the besieged met together in council, and the Rabbi of York thus addressed his brethren:

"Men of Israel, the God of our ancestors is omniscient, and there is no one who can say, 'What dost thou?' This day He commands us to die for His law—that law which we have cherished from the first hour it was given, which we have preserved pure throughout our captivity in all nations,

the brave Jews is all but forgotten and unthought of even by modern Jews themselves, for the mind and the heart of the Christian are changed. But not fifty thousand years will wipe out from the national escutcheon the foul blot upon its brilliancy incurred by the fearful massacre of the Jews. Strange that men fired by religious zeal, in what they termed their love for God, should spill the blood of His creatures—His chosen people. Still, in the year 1877, there is a feeling, unexpressed as it generally is among Christians, that a Jew is infinitely inferior to the rest of mankind. This prejudice will never be wholly effaced, though its operation may not manifest itself. Can it be denied that a misfortune to an Israelite is made little of; that his aspirations, his ambitions, his woes, his peculiarities, his customs, his sensitiveness, are not respected? It must be conceded that, despite his improved position, he is a member of a despised race; he may be rich, talented, influential—gifted with all the graces and virtues of mortals, but—he is only a Jew.

On September the third, one thousand one hundred and eighty-nine, was enacted the tragedy we have endeavored to describe. The waves of the time have rolled away much of the fanaticism prevalent in this country. On September the third, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-three, a Jew was raised to the dignity of the Master of the Roll—a Judge of the English Bench. The Jew in whom the government of England thus reposed its con-

only by favor of the benchers, "for a Jew was deemed unfit to enjoy the state of a barrister." That so great a revolution of feeling should be effected in less than two decades is very remarkable, and must be traced to a more important cause than the marked ability of the Master of the Rolls. Public opinion has undergone a stupendous change, and the intolerant minds—and there are many—are led by the thoughtful and liberal, who do not see in the Jew any characteristic dangerous to the general weal. Tolerance has gained the day. The Jews are talented and useful members of society, and their hearts beat in accord with the hearts of the rest of the population; they worship at the shrines of art, literature, and science, as devoutly as their fellow-citizens. Jews and Gentiles are identical in every respect in the social and political worlds—they differ but in the mode of worshipping the Creator. In this respect they will always differ—and in this matter a Jew will always be "only a Jew!"—Whiteaker's Mo.

DAIRMOUTH COLLEGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, has had among its alumni 31 Judges of the United States and other courts, 15 Senators, 61 Representatives to Congress, two Cabinet Ministers, four Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers, one Postmaster-General, 14 Governors of States and one Governor of a Territory, 25 College Presidents, and 104 Professors of Colleges and Academic, Medical, and Theological Institutions.