

misery caused by this decree. The records of the times as made by the non-Jewish pens, and most of them by servants of the dominant church, blot to all eternity the pages of Spanish history with the tortures, indignities and atrocities endured by this people, with none to condemn the outrages, none to protest against them. The question has been asked: Can the Jew be patriotic? We have become so inured to being considered as of different flesh, disposition and temperament to the rest of humanity that we seldom note these questions, save in the silent protest of the misrepresented soul. We know that none can form deeper, more lasting attachment to home and country than those of our race. Spain had passed from a land of adoption to a land of inheritance to them. It had been for centuries the home of their ancestors who had been consistently and conspicuously devoted to its interests. Parents, children, brothers, sisters had been born there, lived there, died there, and in Castilian ground their loved remains were lying. They had reared their homes of comfort and content, cultivated the fine arts, reached the most advanced standing in the professions and sciences of the day. Prescott and Millman both declare that even the humblest among them were possessed of a marked degree of intelligence and dexterity in various skilled pursuits. And now they were to leave their homes, all the fond ties of memory and hope, forbidden to carry either gold or silver with them, given over to the pleasure of a blood-thirsty, greedy mob and the fearsome silent halls of the Inquisition chambers, to depart—whither? Oh, pregnant spectacle! Look at it now with the light of four hundred years of history shed upon it! Faith inspired, with constancy and courage, they started forth, God their hope, his promises their heritage. Clinging to a religion which taught charity universal, they fled from the barbarity of those who raised the black flag in the name of abundant mercy and sharpened the sabre of assassination on the stones of love, peace and good will. Four hundred years have passed, and how wonderfully has the course of events been directed. Upon the shores discovered the very year our Spanish ancestors were given to torture, spoliation and death, has been established a government—may heaven bless and preserve it—which acknowledges equality of man and protects his personal and religious freedom. The influence of the example of this just and generous government has broadened the humane views of the contemporary world, has shed the lustre of the divine light of man's inherent liberty, replacing with its radiance the darkness of contracted views and prejudiced opinions. Thought and reasoning have, through it, taken the place of blind acceptance of traditional error and conceptions clouded by the superstitions of periods averse to investigation or the regeneration of fixed ideas. But alas, with some exceptions. The spirit rampant in France, Germany and England in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, culminating in Spain in the fifteenth, still flourishes with added complexities and dissimulations. Direful is that spirit to-day in the land governed by a despot who trusts not his own flesh and blood, places no confidence in the sons of his own mother. Who sees conspiracy in every line traced by the hand of intelligence, who reads revolt in every expression of individual opinion. Shall we trace the parallels to be drawn between the Russia of to-day, impeding with all its absolute power the course which knowledge and the love of liberty always pursue together, and the Spain of four hundred years ago, controlled by an element jealous of the spread of general information, stunted in soul and absolutely heartless in regard to human rights? No! I feel that the mere suggestion is sufficient. Whatever the pretext, if pretext be made, the real cause of persecution is to-day as it was four hundred years ago, as it always has been agreed, bigotry, hate, dense, unreasoning ignorance and natural brutality. The lot of the Jews living beneath Russian rule has never been happy and many have been the periods when their treatment has been barbarous and cruel in the extreme. At no time have they been regarded as possessing any rights or privileges save those of sufferance, and even these at the caprice of petty officials and frequently at the will and pleasure of an ignorant, unreasoning mob, authorized to plunder to ravish and to kill. They have been debarred from following agricultural pursuits, forbidden to rent, own or occupy lands. They have been restricted in all other avocations, shut out totally from all the recognized industrial guilds, and burdened with arbitrary and exorbitant tribute, obliged to purchase the very air they breathe. Educational institutions have been closed to them, the practice of the liberal professions prohibited and their dwellings fixed within limits subject to the change and whim of those vested with irresponsible authority. And then the world has been called upon to point at them the finger of scorn, and taunt them with following the only pursuits left them to eke out an existence. But the ever-increasing severity, the inhuman restrictive measures and compulsory edicts, which, in 1882, forced eighty thousand of these people impoverished from their homes before the protest of civilization were heard and recognized, and which have now been revived with additional severities not then conceived, arise from the fact that instead of being reduced to the level desired by the government, the level of ignorant and mere animal existence, they are held high above it through powers as inexplicable to themselves as to the world at large. Miraculous as it may appear, large numbers of them have gained knowledge and acquired an intelligence which makes them marked in their surroundings.

They have attained professional prominence and ability, and although only ten, and in some districts five and even three per cent. of the students at any educational institution can be Jews, one of the present reasons given for the revived persecution is that this five per cent. dominates the remaining ninety-five per cent., to the detriment and injury of the great, populous and absolute monarchy of the Romanoff's and the established religion of the powerful Greek church. All the other charges are worthy of precisely the same credence. Permit me to analyze them. But first, note as significant the fact that this autocratic and determined power, with its traditional policy of quick, silent and effective cruelty to all whom it would strike, has designed to make any charges at all. In a brief notice, however, of the protests of England recently vouchsafed through the columns of the Imperial organ of Russia, three causes are stated for the oppressive measures against the Jews. First, that they remain as aliens in the country and endeavor to shirk army duty. Secondly, that they loan money to the peasants and consequently render their debtors dissatisfied and engender hate. Thirdly, that they spread nihilistic doctrines among the students, if allowed in any of the colleges, and become, thereby, a dangerous element to the established form of government.

As to the first charge, statistics show a fair proportion of Jewish subjects in the army and show also that their treatment there and the special rules and regulations applied to the Jewish soldiers alone, are hardly such as to impel their voluntary influx into the ranks. No matter what their bravery or services may be, and there are many instances of exceptional qualities recorded, they can never advance—promotion is an absolute impossibility. Nor do they rank with the common soldiers who are not Jews. They are a specially degraded class, without right of appeal. Their lives are considered of no value, and no hesitation is felt in putting them to torture or death either for avowed cause or through official caprice. Can they be expected to enthusiastically enter a slavery more abject than that endured by their Egyptian predecessors, without that hope of bettering their condition which sometimes renders a temporary servitude bearable? But admitting that they may endeavor to escape this service they are not permitted to do so. If the Jewish recruit, when called for, does not appear, all his relatives, paternal and maternal, in all their branches, are liable to punishment and fine for his failure, and their liability is exacted to its fullest extent and discomfiture. This count of the indictment against them also terms them "aliens." Oh, how bitter is the mockery of that word as thus applied. Aliens indeed! Born beneath the skies destined always to be cold to them; drawing in their first breath, air to which they have no title; lifting up baby hands to a sun which shines not for them; doomed to skulk along the byways of life, shunned and despised by those of happier fate who may walk boldly along the joyous highways. Aliens! Denied that precious, elevating feeling which makes the scent of certain flowers so sweet to us, the blades of grass so green, the sky so beautiful, because they are the flowers, the grasses and the skies of our native land. Bitter indeed is the fate of the man without a country; stunted his heart; all the blossoms of love, loyalty, hope and pride nipped in the bud by the frosty breath of that cruel mandate "You shall have no life with us." Aliens! I can speak to you of the love of the Jew for the land in which he is born; of the loyalty which is a very part of his nature. Only permit him to love your flag, let him feel that you do not grudge him a share in the common weal, and to the day of his death unwavering is his patriotism, and the lesson and example which he displays to his children. The Russo-Jewish question would be speedily settled if the government did not force these people to be strangers and aliens to their native land and heap still further indignity upon them in holding them up to the derision of the world as what this attitude compels them to appear.

In the second charge the Jews are accused of lending money to the peasants and taking therefor mortgages on their personal property. It is far from my desire to utter a word of harshness concerning the Russian peasant. My heart harbors the deepest pity and consideration for his condition. Not upon his soul rests the guilt of the evil which through him finds its expression and culmination. I will simply sum up these statements upon which those who are competent to express the facts agree. As a rule he is licentious, intemperate and improvident. The Jew is none of these. He marries in Russia very early in life and devotes himself from the very threshold of his manhood to the ties of family life. Although burdened with special taxation and subject at all times to the legalized robbery of officials, without rights of remonstrance except at the risk of liberty, he does somehow manage, through thrift, industry and frugality, to save a few poor coins year by year. And is it not a sad commentary upon the human sense of justice to note in this connection that what is considered a virtue in the Christian is made to appear a hideous vice in the Jew? He pays all the taxes demanded of the most severely taxed classes, and in addition a tax for wearing his hat in his synagogue, a tax nearly doubling its cost upon his table to welcome the Sabbath eve, a tax for placing candles upon all meats killed and prepared according to Jewish rites, a special license tax for performing any religious ceremony in his home; and to offset all this two great privileges are offered to his race—an absolute divorce and release