



B. J. P. 1842

# A LETTER

TO

ABRAHAM GOLDSMID, Esq.

CONTAINING

STRICTURES

ON

Mr. JOSHUA VAN OVEN'S LETTERS

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE

**Jewish Poor.**

POINTING OUT THE IMPRACTICABILITY OF  
AMELIORATING THEIR CONDITION,

THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF

**TAXATION AND COERCION.**

WITH A PLAN FOR ERECTING

A JEWISH COLLEGE, OR SEMINARY, &c.

BY PHILLO JUDEIS.

... Hæc scripsi non otii abundantia, sed amoris erga te.

Th. Episk.

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The various charitable Societies instituted by their nation, are irrefragable proofs that they have not abandoned their Poor, to the partial relief which the circumscribed revenues of their Synagogues afford.—Voluntary Contributions have amply supplied their fiscal deficiencies; and Mr. Van Oven himself derives no inconsiderable portion of his professional emoluments, from their eleemosynary establishments. *He*, therefore, of all men, should have avoided detailing arguments which indicate, that the Sources of Jewish benevolence are dried up; and that it is necessary to resort to coercive measures, for opening new channels of beneficence.

Such an idea naturally excited a degree of resentment, in the minds of some very respectable members of his community; and, imparting their sentiments to the Author, he was induced to investigate Mr. Van Oven's Letters, with the sole view of reprobating the System he advocates.

Mr. Van Oven's sentiments *may flow from Benevolence*; and, emanating from *such a principle*, certainly claims our unqualified applause. But the Author deprecates the invidious measure he attempts to enforce.—*A measure*, likely to give additional vigour to that prejudice, of which the Jews have so long been the victims.

Prejudice, that Gentleman well knows, is a many-headed monster, whose yell drowns the voice of liberality; and, however the Philosopher and the Philanthropist, may despise its clamours; yet, the Multitude, unused to form their judgment of men, and things, upon abstract propositions, are too often hurried into its vortex.

*To improve the habits, and better the condition of the lower classes of society*, is certainly a consummation devoutly to be wished for.—But these salutary ends ought not to be attained at the expence of the frugal, and the industrious part of the community, who already groan under the pressure of Parliamentary and Parochial Taxes.

The Jewish Poor have hitherto been liberally relieved; and, if the Synagogue funds are inadequate to their more comfortable support, the sum placed in such worthy hands, by voluntary donations, will greatly extend the relief dispensed to the aged and infirm; enable the nation to erect a proper Seminary for educating the rising generation, and accomplish other beneficent purposes.

Every friend to morality would lend a helping hand, to render the lower order of Jews, *better men, and better subjects*; but the mode Mr. Van Oven has pointed out, for accomplishing

that grand desideratum, militates against the dearest privileges of the English Jews! It is evident to the most superficial observer, that no analogy can be traced between the Christian, and Jewish Poor.—The labour of the one may be uniformly exerted, while that of the other must ever be curtailed, by those religious impediments which restrain their energies.

To place the impracticability of removing the physical, religious, and moral obstacles, which preclude the Jewish nation from attaining a knowledge of the handicraft, and mechanical arts, through the medium of taxation and coercion, in a clear point of view, is the object of the following Letter.

If the Author has animadverted with freedom, he has likewise tenaciously adhered to the most scrupulous impartiality. In the detail of stubborn facts, observations may escape, unpalatable to some readers; but it must be remembered that the Author's chief aim is, to cloath *public opinion* in the solemn garb of truth, rather than display his own sentiments; or, in the remotest degree, to offend!

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To Abraham Goldsmid, Esq.

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SIR,

PERSUADED that you merit every eulogium, and confirmed in that opinion, by the testimony of those, who have had opportunity of experiencing how justly they are bestowed—I am induced, although a stranger, to address you, in order to point out in a plain and perspicuous manner, the danger of lending your name and influence to a measure, which appears to me pregnant with the most mischievous consequences to your nation, and likely to entail considerable uneasiness on yourself and family.

Rest assured, I am neither actuated by selfish nor sordid motives; in addressing you, my principal inducement for expatiating on the erroneous system you wish to establish, results from the unfeigned esteem I am impressed with, for your character.

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many dissentients. The Jews have, it must be confessed, too often been the victims of a spirit of persecution, resulting from a combination of ignorance, and gloomy superstition, tinctured with principles of avarice. But *they* have not been exclusively so!—Other sects have groaned under the dire effects of a ferocious enthusiasm! The Jeromists, and Hussites, of Germany; the Lollards, of England; the Albigenses, and Hugonots, of France—have all in their turns, been the martyrs of a sanguinary intolerance, nurtured by priestcraft, and matured by rapacity! The *Jew*, as the Author justly observes, “need not, at present, fear being expelled his residence, in a general banishment of his nation; nor dread having his teeth extracted, for attempting to withhold his property from the gripe of extortion!” Neither need the Christian divine entertain apprehensions of being consigned to the flames in Smithfield! And yet, by a recurrence to history, we shall find that, even under *our* envied and excellent constitution, such enormities were perpetrated; and at this day, remain an indelible stain on our statute book. Although in those dark ages, such acts were connived at by the nation at large, under an opinion, (certainly an erroneous one,) that the profligacy of the former, and the dereliction of the latter, merited the punishment inflicted:

but, surely no fair inference can be drawn from the conduct of our ancestors, during the period of general ignorance and barbarism, which pervaded all Europe.

But to proceed to his second proposition, namely,

“That their Poor, (meaning the Jewish Poor,) are numerous for want of handicraft trades.” The first part of this observation may be true, but the corollary is, in my opinion, extremely fallacious: and this is demonstrable, from the numerous Christian poor, who although perfectly capable of becoming artizans, unfettered by religious trammels, militating against their industry, are nevertheless found extremely burthensome, in every part of the empire; and yet, with all their capability for acquiring comfortable means of subsistence, we meet with sturdy beggars in every parish in Great-Britain!

Without attempting to develop the causes of these abuses, I shall content myself with observing, that they not only exist in one of the best governed States in Europe, but have hitherto been found irremediable: notwithstanding men of the most brilliant talents in this kingdom, have long been occupied in the most profound researches, to devise expedients for eradicating such evils. If British jurisprudence then, with all its advantages, has hitherto been

found inadequate to the reclamation of this description of mendicants; and incompetent to coerce them into habits of industry!—How can it be expected, that your proposed Directory with limited powers, (for the delegation of power, repugnant to our constitution, can never be looked for from a British legislature,) will be able to restrain such a licentious crew; and inculcate the principles of virtue, and habits of industry, in persons of such a description as your beggars are? especially after they are reinforced by a fresh importation of alien Jewish vagabonds; who may migrate hither, in order to seek what *they* may deem an asylum from penury and vagrancy. Surely Mr. Van Oven will not contend, that the aged, the infirm, and the Distempered Jews, reduced to mendicity, are fit objects for learning the handicraft trades? nor will he assert that the young and profligate Jews, will tamely submit to such an incarceration as he proposes, (by recommending a house of industry,) any more than young Christians?

Experience has already evinced, of how little utility these erections are, and how difficult it is to govern them properly. If Mr. Wood, (the Director of the Shrewsbury House of Industry, with all his acknowledged talents; sanctioned by legislative authority, for conducting the undertaking, is drawn so pathetically to com-

plain of the insuperable difficulties he encountered, in establishing a due subordination, and proper discipline, in such a receptacle of licentiousness—who is there among your nation, possessed of mental powers, adequate to so Herculean a task? But if you could find one every way qualified for the situation, would you wish the Jewish juvenile mendicants, to receive the rudiments of their education, and their initiation in the handicraft arts, in such a sink of vice and profligacy? For in order to lessen the number of Poor, of the rising generation of the Jews, and teach them to become artizans, you must shut them up in your House of Industry; or the evils you wish to remedy, will still continue to exist. And where are your funds for carrying the plan into plenary effect?—your operations must, inevitably be on a limited scale; for your funds cannot, however highly you may tax your community, enable you to support all the Jewish youth, whom it is your intention to shut up in your House of Industry. And you must extend your care to *all* who stand in need of aid, or you will only entail an odium on your *partial* operations.

You will find, Sir, upon a fair investigation of the subject, that genuine charity, sound policy, and a pure, and unostentatious humanity, should direct your attention in a pre-emi-

ment degree, to the rising generation; for the probability of inculcating moral precepts in their infant minds, and impelling them to early habits of industry, are infinitely greater than the chance of reforming the adults, whose enormities you will find yourselves wholly incompetent to restrain; and who by coercion, may perhaps be driven wholly to secede, or apostatise from your religion, instead of contenting themselves with simply innovating its ceremonial precepts.

And if you should find means to acquire legal power to coerce the English, and alien Jewish vagrants, of both sexes, who now infest the streets—can you possibly conceive that a house, where the most depraved Jews of every part of Europe; and females, long habituated to vice and profligacy, are to form so considerable a portion of its family, a proper ~~arrangement~~ for the education and instruction of your juvenile Poor? I am convinced you would be struck with horror, at the idea of affording them early opportunities of seduction! and would be the last man existing, to resort to so hazardous an experiment!—Your character is, to me, a sure pledge that it is unnecessary to press this point further.

You would find too, if the experiment was made, that the expenditure would greatly exceed your resources; and after all, your Poor would

*discharge*

rather *increase*, than *decrease*, by the adoption of Mr. Van Oven's plan; has ~~not~~ fatally been experienced in many parishes, where similar measures have been attempted. But we will now proceed to the investigation of his third proposition, viz.

“That the relief, as at present allotted for this Poor, is very inadequate, and requires amendment.”

I profess myself greatly at a loss, to comprehend the Author's meaning, when he talks of *allotted relief*. That your means of relief is at present limited, I can easily conceive; from the pressures of the times, it is an universal complaint in every parish of the empire, and not peculiar to your nation! The calamity of the poor, are deplored in every part of the country, but alas! much is to be ascribed to the degeneracy of the human mind! That idleness, profligacy, and vice, have ever pervaded a large portion of every community, even in the best regulated societies, is a melancholy *truism*! Like weeds, in the richest soils and best cultivated gardens, they are not to be kept under by ordinary means, in spite of our unwearied efforts, they too often check the growth of the most luxuriant vegetation! The Allwise and Omnipotent Author of Nature, has permitted this inexplicable arrangement, doubtless for

ulterior purposes of beneficence; although to finite beings, whose views and comprehensions are as superficial as they are limited, the system may appear somewhat defective.

It is owing to the depravity of our species, rather than the contracted operation of charity, that the funds appropriated for the comfortable subsistence of the poor of every description, have hitherto been found inadequate. The bounty of individuals is often abused, and eleemosynary establishments are frequently perverted.—You would early perceive that your more extended benefactions, would have a tendency to multiply mendicants: and, after you had shut up those who at present infest you, (which you could only effect by coercive measures,) you would open another door for the ingress of a fresh set, who would overwhelm you from the Continent.—Thus, without remedying the existing evil, you would subject yourselves to a greater, by alluring, (from a prospect of pecuniary aid,) the very refuse and dross of mankind; and entail on the English Jews, a degree of odium, from the turpitude and licentiousness of these emigrants, greater than that from which they now begin to emerge!

Can you expect to obviate the consequences, or remove the evil, by a partial tax on your nation, resident in London? How few are there

among you, who are permanently established? And still less are the number of those, who may be able to discharge an assessment of from £3 to £20 annually, over and above their parliamentary, and parochial assessments. You are too well acquainted with mankind, not to be sensible that the Jew who is capable of paying £20 one year, may from the vicissitude of human affairs, and the fluctuations of property, be rendered incapable of contributing as many shillings the next!

The system of Poor Laws founded upon the 43d. of Elizabeth, and the subsequent statutes enacted, for perfecting that system, have been found wholly inadequate to effect the salutary purposes for which they were projected and framed, by the greatest men of this, or perhaps any other age or kingdom.—And do you expect to find among your nation, men capable of improving upon the collected wisdom of Great-Britain, and her most eminent and distinguished Senates?

Believe me, Sir, my principal object is to extricate you from that vortex of prejudice, in which you have been nearly ingulphed.—I entreat you to pause therefore, and to exert your natural strength and vigour, to extricate yourself from the perilous situation, some interested



men have hurried you into. I would ask you if it be your aim to coerce the poorer Jews, and force their children into such a receptacle as is recommended by Mr. Van Oven *nolens volens*? Or is it your intention to require Parliament to arm you with the invidious power of compelling adult Jews to become inhabitants of what, I am convinced, they will in spite of your benevolent intentions, view as a prison? And can you conceive it will be promoting Judaism, (already so much on the decline, as your Author can testify, *maugre his orthodox principles*,) to impose additional taxes on your brethren; many of whom would probably gladly avail themselves of opportunities, for wholly withdrawing themselves from your community!

Are you so misled by your counsellors, to conceive that the existing penal, or poor laws, will be increased, altered, or abrogated, upon slight or trivial grounds? You are aware, that your nation already enjoys all the immunities of other British subjects, who dissent from the established church. Do you imagine then, that the legislature\* will sanction a new power in the state, or delegate an authority to the opulent Jews, to assume an unconstitutional controul over their poorer brethren?

\* Mr. C.—n's sentiments in his letter to your author, pretty clearly insinuate what would be the fate of your application for new immunities.

And would you wish to immure *them* against their will, whose *poverty* is, perhaps, their only *crime*! while the rich and licentious may, with impunity, condemn every precept of the Mosaic polity?

*Dat veniam Corvois, vevat censura Columbas!*

We will not however, dwell on this theme, but proceed to the discussion of your Author's deduction, or what he terms his fourth conclusion, viz.

"That any plan for the amelioration of the state and manners of this Poor, must be managed without the smallest infringement of their ceremonial law."

I cannot contemplate this fourth conclusion, or proposition, repugnant as it is to every principle of liberality, without calling to your Author's recollection, that to such inhibitions, and not to any political or moral restrictions, is the ignorance of the modern Jews, in literature and arts, ascribable! They have hitherto bred up their youth, in a singular contempt for all kind of profane learning, and arts; and we find in the Apostil to the Text of the *Mishna*, a severe anathema denounced on him, who suffers his son to learn Greek, and him who breeds up a boy in profane learning; as if the one was equally impure as the other; (\*). Your Author,

(\*) Gantz Zemiach David p. 134 & alii.



who has doubtless read the Work I allude to, should therefore, ascribe the ignorance of his nation in arts and sciences, to its true source.

But as I have already disclaimed all intention of entering into a polemical disquisition of religious topics, I shall content myself with observing that your Author will certainly obtain the ready acquiescence of every good and virtuous man, when he asserts that "He considers the man who *apostates*\* from motives of worldly interest, as a scoundrel whom no tie can restrain!" But he would have found such an acquiescence more general, had he added that, the *hypocrite* who assumes a whining cant about religious precepts, which he has repeatedly violated from motives of *lucre*, a still more detestable character!—For my own part, Sir, I honor the man whose tenacity to the religious tenets which he deems just, is as uniform as his adherence to the ritual of his ancestors; such a one, acting sincerely, and from internal conviction of the divine origin of his religion, is entitled to applause! But I detest the *hypocrite*! and were I disposed to recur to antiquity, I might ask this son of Æsculapius, whether *Moses himself*, if he were to revisit our earth, and be introduced into one of your Synagogues, would understand the modern Hebrew gabbled

\* Vide p. 14 of Letters, &c.

there; or could possibly form any idea, from what part of his oral, or written law, the modern Jews had framed their ritual!\*

Having endeavoured to place the propositions contained in the "Letters on the present State of the Jewish Poor, &c." in that point of view which they have occurred to me, and a great number of respectable persons of your nation; I must beg leave to observe that you lay *too great a stress* on Mr. C——n's approbation of your proposed plan.—That gentleman, whose talents and character have a just claim to our tribute of applause, has certainly drawn his conclusions from an erroneous opinion, that *all the Jews in London* are unanimous, in the proposed application to Parliament, for power to tax themselves for the support of their Poor: than which nothing is less true; a very large portion being decidedly inimical to the adoption of the plan; although perfectly willing (I am informed) to contribute towards the erection of a Seminary for the education of the Jewish youth, &c.

I must apologise, however, for this digression, and proceed to a further investigation of your

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\* Vide Basnage, Spankeim, Buxtorf, Pierre de la Croix, D Herbelot, Prideaux, Warburton, Newton, &c. and your own Aben Ezra, and Gantz Tzemach David, Kinchi and others, who have demonstrated that the Modern Jews have perverted the *language* as well as *Laws* of Moses.

Plan. You plainly intimate, in the 8th article of your projected Bill, that the Directors can only appropriate *relief*, to the extent of your *funds*; and that the remaining Poor are to receive the usual Benefactions at their own habitations. If you cannot comprehend all your Poor, in your proposed operations, where is the utility of resorting to partial remedies? and shutting up one part of them in your House of Industry, while you leave the remainder to their former habits of vagrancy? Such a step will at once defeat your main object—which is, to regulate the œconomy of the Jewish Poor; and make them *better men*, and *better subjects*. Those who will remain at large, *maugre* your donations, are likely to entail as great a degree of your nation, as your present race of mendicants. And who is more likely to feel the effects of such general odium, than yourself—the ostensible head of that people? Every man, from the natural malignity which pervades so large a portion of mankind, may then impute the profligacy of the lower Jews, to those, whom they suppose, possessed of plenary powers to restrain their enormities.

By adverting to the history of the country, you will find in the less enlightened ages of the Henrys, the Edwards, &c. that a superstitious prejudice against your nation, pervaded every part of the kingdom; when the first objects of

public indignation, or clerical persecution were, generally, the most opulent and prominent characters among them.—An unprincipled avarice too frequently compleating, what originated in a sanguinary enthusiasm.

But it was not in England alone, that humanity was thus outraged. The Crusaders of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, perpetrated the most horrid cruelties against your nation, under an idea, that slaughtering the Jews would propitiate heaven, and ensure them victory! and some of those fanatics, in their march through Germany, actually caused fourteen hundred Jews to be burnt, at Mentz, in a single day!\*

The persecution of the Shepherds of France, Spain, &c. in the beginning of the fourteenth century, furnishes us with another sanguinary feature of European intolerance in those days. †

Thus the spirit of persecution pervaded all Europe, and continued to increase in England, until its effervescence caused their final banishment, in A. D. 1291. And it was not until the usurpation of Cromwell, (when your famous Manasse Ben Israel, obtained footing in this country, and so effectually wrought with the Protector,) that your nation was permitted to return to England; although he could not suc-

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\* Moulins Chron. Germ. lib. 15 & 16 p. 123, 126 Pistor Hist. Germ. em. 3 Sub. A. D. 1089.

† Vide Basnago lib. 9 cap. & lib. 19. cap. 10.

ceed in obtaining a repeal of the statutes which had expatriated them.

The liberality of succeeding times, sanctioned their residence in England, and sub silentio, allowed them to participate of the same advantages as other recusants. But the ferment which the naturalization Bill caused, is still recent in the memory of some of your people.—If an intolerant spirit, in this enlightened country, in the middle of the eighteenth century, tended to preclude your nation from a participation of the common rights of men; and could excite such clamours, that it became dangerous for a Jew to shew his head in the public streets; what may you not apprehend, when your measures shall render you more obnoxious to public censure?

Forbear then, the adoption of all projects which may provoke discussion: rest satisfied with the tacit immunities, (if I may be allowed the expression,) which you at present enjoy; and permit me to deprecate every attempt at raising imposts upon yourselves.—The experiment may be dangerous, and perhaps, open a new channel of Fiscal resource, which it were as well to leave undisturbed. The levying taxes upon your nation, by legislative authority, will be found a measure equally irksome and dangerous; and the mode of imposing it may, to say the least, be only opening a door for litigation and controversy.—The mode of taxation which you pro-

pose, is repugnant to the letter and spirit of the constitution.

The only just criterion for every species of parochial assessments, is by a pound rate on house-rent; and your assessment cannot be less, in many instances, than 10s. or 12s. in the pound; which, in addition to the parliamentary and parochial taxes, will be found an insupportable burthen on many Jews, who at present live in credit; and must inevitably create considerable uneasiness among you; while the mode of appeal pointed out, is of such a nature as may ultimately be found inefficacious; as in all parochial assessments, an appeal lies from the Quarter Sessions, (or Justices,) to his Majesty's Court of King's Bench; and the powers of your intended Act, cannot extend so far; unless that Court is armed with an express jurisdiction in this particular instance, a measure which may be found inexpedient in more respects than one.

And to resort to your proposed Directors for redress, is metamorphosing the party into Judges, who will thereby be empowered to decide on their own *malfaisance*; while a direct appeal to His Majesty's Courts of Record, may perhaps, be found incompatible with the existent system of jurisprudence of this country. The courts of law are certainly competent to take cognizance of the acts of a corporate body, recognised by statute; but such statute invariably arms the superior courts, with a power to discharge or

enforce a rate, made by persons fully competent to its formation. A single statute cannot, in my humble apprehension, delegate the necessary and requisite powers to our courts, without trenching on existent laws, which ought neither to be modified nor repealed, merely to enable your nation to impose a tax on yourselves. However specious the theory of your project may appear, the excellent and truly estimable system of British jurisprudence, cannot be deranged for trivial, or unimportant causes, unconnected with the political or fiscal arrangement of the empire. Nor does it less savour of presumption, to conceive that the Chief Justice of England, is to be interrupted in his important vocations, in order to superintend, revise, and correct, the bye-laws framed by the Jewish Directory! This absurd proposition, certainly requires an apology to his Lordship; and your modern *Solon* should, as the best atonement he can make, for the insertion of so indecent an article, immediately obliterate it from his code.

Yet, Sir, in deprecating all attempts for legislative interference, in the œconomy of the Jewish Poor; or rather in inveighing against the project of procuring an Act, for the purposes so often alluded to—I am anxious to be understood, not in the most distant degree to urge any arguments which may ultimately militate against the extended operations of Charity, or the utility of erecting a proper College, or Se-

minary, for the education of your youth—on the contrary, I would have every proper object participate in the one, and the rising generation derive the most beneficial effects from the erection of the other.

Your principal objects, namely, that of extending your charity; and making the rising generation, *better men*, and *better subjects*, is not only laudable, but highly meritorious; nevertheless, I am decidedly hostile to the accomplishment of these most desirable ends, through the medium of taxation or coercion.—Voluntary contributions have never yet been withheld, and that mode alone must be still resorted to, for accomplishing your wishes.

You are, (I am informed,) possessed of a fund sufficient to erect a proper Seminary, for the education of the Jewish youth; and I beg leave to recommend that measure as a primary object: and its accomplishment will probably be found, productive of all those beneficial effects you aim at, without attaching such an odium to the measure, as must inevitably fasten on it, if you resort to a compulsory system, for establishing, what should only be formed and supported by voluntary benefactions.

By erecting a proper College or Seminary, for the education of your Jewish youth, you need not lose sight of revenue, for it may be divided into three classes, viz. one for the poor children; another for those whose parents are in middling

circumstances; and a third for the offspring of more opulent parents.

The first should be clothed and educated gratis, and taught to chaunt their prayers in Hebrew, reading and writing English, and arithmetic, until they attain the age of 14; and then be apprenticed to Taylors, Weavers, Glass-Cutters, Watch and Clock-Makers, Engravers, &c. these trades the Jewish children may be taught, and practise without violating their ceremonial law, as they can work at their own houses on Sundays.

The second class should pay a small sum annually for their education, and be clothed by their parents, and taught the same as the poor class; with the privilege of paying the masters for teaching them any extra branch of learning or science.

The third class should pay from £20 to £30 per annum, and be taught the Hebrew, Latin, French, German, and English languages grammatically; together with the sciences; drawing, music, dancing, and other accomplishments might be separately paid for, by those who wished their children to acquire them; this mode of education would operate in the most salutary way; it would render your nation more respectable, and ensure them the esteem of their fellow subjects, and create such a revenue, as would in time, enable you to apply a surplus to eleemosynary purposes.

Half the sum you are in possession of will be sufficient to erect such a College or Seminary, as I have presumed to recommend, and if the revenue arising from the payment of the opulent and middle classes of students should be found inadequate for its support, it may be endowed with the surplus revenue of your Synagogue; and perhaps increased by that of the other two, by coalescing with them for these very salutary purposes; a measure which the Portuguese Jews might, perhaps accede to, when its adoption only embraces superior education in the rising Hebrew generation, without resorting to coercion or taxation, for its accomplishment.

The remaining sum might be most laudably expended, in the erection of an Asylum, for the lame, blind, and infirm Jews, incapable of procuring means of subsistence by their infirmities.—And likewise, in the erection of an Hospital, for the sick and distempered Jews, or those suffering from casual causes.

To effect these desirable ends, voluntary contributions would, I am persuaded, be poured in from the benevolent of all nations, should your means hereafter, be found unequal to their support. Charity pervades all sects, and every class of people; it knows no distinction; it is as much an attribute of the untutored savage of the southern hemisphere, as of the refined and highly civilized European; and nothing tends more to the illustration of this position, than

your own princely benefactions, to the several Institutions that record your liberality in such appropriate terms of applause.

Your Author by his Letters, rather insinuates that the Jews require an additional stimulus to acts of beneficence; and that their charity, without the intervention of Parliament, must be on a confined scale. But upon what data does he found these conclusions? It is proverbial among the Jews, that their benevolence to their own poor, is as boundless as it is indiscriminate. If they merit censure, it is not for withholding their bounty, but for extending it with too indiscriminate a hand: this amiable failing however, is with them amply atoned for, under a religious opinion, that no Jew ought to be denied participating in their bounty, lest such denial should furnish them with excuses for transgressing their ceremonial law; and therefore, those who were capable of aiding them, would be inculpated in their sins, were they to withhold their charity from such delinquents.

You have had ample experience, that the Jews, influenced by your noble example, have poured forth their benefactions to the Christian Poor, with as lavish a hand, as they have contributed towards the support of their own distressed brethren.—And can you possibly conceive, that it would now be restrained, if *you* thought proper to convene the whole body, and demonstrate the existing necessity for its exten-

sion? Where is the member of your society that would withhold his mite on such an occasion? Were you to adopt this method, before you proceed with your projected Bill, you would find the hands and hearts of the whole community, co-operating in your wishes.—But if you persist in procuring by coercive means, what you may with facility accomplish by voluntary subscription, you will rouse a spirit of opposition, which may ultimately destroy the harmony and union, which your own influence and example, have so eminently contributed to cement!

Try the experiment of a ballot on the question, when the minds of the congregation are left to display their sanction, or disapprobation of the measure: by such a medium you will arrive at their true and unbiassed sentiments.—A public discussion of the question may be inexpedient, as those who consider themselves under personal obligations to you (and your liberality has certainly placed many in that predicament,) may be deterred from delivering themselves with that freedom and sincerity which the discussion of so important a question merits.

Remember, Sir, that there is an imperious necessity superseding all lesser considerations, for your proceeding in this measure with the utmost caution and deliberation. The native Jews of this kingdom, long habituated to the franchises and privileges of Englishmen, will

not easily be brought to compromise that freedom to which they conceive themselves entitled by inherent right! Difference of religion may indeed disqualify them from participating in common with their Christian countrymen, in the legislative, and municipal honors of the empire, but it ought not, *nay, it cannot*, debar them from their natal rights and immunities.

The jealousy expressed by the Portuguese Jews, of your intended measures, is sufficient to rouse your attention to the difficulty, if not impracticability, of carrying it into execution. That community, when applied to, plainly told you they should watch the progress of your Bill through Parliament, with a wary eye, lest they should be dragged into a system, repugnant to their ideas of freedom, and especially as they had effected by voluntary contribution, what you aimed to accomplish by the most ungracious means.

I will not, however, encroach further on your time at present:—the argument I have adduced, flows from a sincere desire to make your nation *better men*, and *better subjects*; without rendering them obnoxious to those animadversions, which a premature obtrusion on the public is likely to provoke.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

PHILO JUDÆIS