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ORIGINAL LETTERS,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

ENGLISH HISTORY;

INCLUDING

NUMEROUS ROYAL LETTERS:

FROM AUTOGRAPHS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM,

AND

ONE OR TWO OTHER COLLECTIONS.

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY

HENRY ELLIS, F. R. S. SEC. S. A.

KEEPER OF THE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

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ORIGINAL LETTERS,

ETC.

LETTER CCCIX.

Mr. Jo. Greenhalgh to his friend Mr. Thomas Crompton. A Visit to the Jewish Synagogue established in London.

[MS. LANSD. 988. fol. 184 b.]

* * * The exact time when the Jews were suffered to return to England, as a People, has been disputed.

Burnet expressly says, that a company of Jews was brought over into England by Oliver Cromwell, and that he gave them leave to build a Synagogue.^a Tovey, in his *Anglia Judaica*, denies this, and states upon the authority of the Rabbi Netto, who, in his time, was the Governor of the Synagogue, that even so late as 1663 the whole number of the Jews in London did not exceed twelve. He expressly adds that King Charles the Second was their Introducer.

The Letter here given to the reader lends its assistance to clear this dispute.

It certainly shows that in 1662 the Jews were existing in London, with a Synagogue built after the fashion of their own worship; that the congregation which the writer saw assembled, consisted of a hundred Jews besides women; that they were not people who appeared as strag-

^a Hist. of his own Time, vol. i. p. 71.

gling sojourners, but gentlemen and merchants, rich in apparel even to the wearing of jewels, and that they had not one mechanic-person amongst them. It expressly states that in Oliver's time the Jews had celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in booths, upon the southern side of the Thames; and has a direct reference to their withdrawing themselves as much as possible from public notice upon the Restoration of King Charles the Second, evidently from the circumstance that the Act for their exile had never been formally repealed.

The evidence of this Letter too is to a certain extent corroborated by two entries upon the Journals of the House of Commons; one, in 1660, representing the Jews as a people existing amongst us without protection; the other, in 1670, ordering an Inquiry to be made upon what terms they were permitted to reside in England.

It is evident then that Cromwell brought them back.

“Monday, 17th Dec. 1660. Mr. Hollis represents to this House an Order made by the Lords of H. Majesty's Privy Council, and specially recommended to this House for their Advice therein, touching Protection for the Jews: which was read.

“Ordered, that this business be taken into consideration tomorrow morning.” Journ. H. Com. vol. viii. p. 209.

“Lunæ 6 die Feb. 1670. Ordered, that a Committee be appointed, to inquire into the Causes of the Growth of Popery; to prepare and bring in a Bill to prevent; and also to inquire touching the Number of the Jews and their Synagogues, and upon what terms they are permitted to have their residence here; and report it, with their opinions, to the House.” Ibid. vol. ix. p. 198.

But we have evidence which is still closer to the point.

Thomas Violet, a goldsmith of London, in a Petition to the King and Parliament dated December the 18th. 1660, which was printed in 1661, settles the question.

Cromwell, it will be remembered, after the arrival of Menasseh Ben Israel in England, summoned by his Letters the two Lords Chief Justices and the Lord Chief Baron, seven Citizens of London (including the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs) and fourteen of the most noted Preachers, to attend him at Whitehall Dec. 4th. 1655, there to debate two questions before him and his Council; first whether it were lawful, at all, to readmit the Jews; secondly (if it should be thought lawful) upon what terms to admit them. Hugh Peters, with some other divines, were afterwards added to the number of the debaters.

The Lawyers were not against their return; and the citizens were somewhat indifferent, but the preachers assailed each other furiously with texts of Scripture, and spent so much time in turning over their bibles for proofs that they passed four days in the discussion; till one of them

having concluded a senseless Argument with a Prayer, which he said was conceived by the godly Beza, Cromwell grew tired, and told them with some warmth, that they did not answer his expectations. "He hoped, he said, to have had some clearing of the Case, *as to his CONSCIENCE*; but instead of that, they had made the matter more doubtful to him and his Council than it was before: wherefore that he might do nothing rashly, he desired no more from them than the assistance of their prayers that the Lord would be pleased so to direct him as he might do every thing for His Glory, and the good of the Nation; and thereupon dismissed the Assembly."^a

^a The following official notice of this Conference in the *Mercurius Politicus* from Dec. 20th. to Dec. 27th. 1655, is worth perusal.

Whitehall, Decemb. 18. The Conference concerning the Proposals about the admission of the Jewes ended without any further adjournment. The Proposals are as followeth;

A Translate of the Proposals of Manasseth Ben Israel, &c. These are the Graces and Favours which in the name of my Hebrew Nation, I Manasseth Ben Israel doe request of your most serene Highness, whom God make prosperous, and give happy success to in all your Enterprises, as your humble Servant doth wish and desire.

1. The first thing which I desire of your Highness, is, that our Hebrew Nation may be received and admitted into this puissant Commonwealth, under the protection and safeguard of your Highness, even as the natives themselves. And for greater security in time to come, I doe supplicate your Highness to cause an Oath to be given (if you shall think it fit) to all the heads and generals of Arms to defend us upon all occasions.

2. That it will please your Highness to allow us publicke Synagogues, not only in England, but also in all other places under the power of your Highness; and to observe in all things our Religion as we ought.

3. That we may have a place or Cemiterie, out of the Town to interr our dead, without being troubled by any.

4. That we may be permitted to traffick freely in all sorts of merchandise, as others.

5. That (to the end those who shall come may be for the utility of the people of this Nation, and may live without bringing prejudice to any, and not give offence) your most serene Highness will make choice of a person of quality, to inform himself of, and receive the Passports of those who shall come in, who upon their arrivall shall certifie him thereof, and oblige themselves by oath to maintain fealty to your Highness in this Land.

6. And (to the intent they may not be troublesome to the Judges of the Land, touching the contests and differences that may arise betwixt those of our Nation) that your most serene Highness will give license to the head of the Synagogue to take with him two Almoners of his Nation, to accord and determine all the differences and process, conformable to the Mosaick Law. with liberty nevertheless to appeal from their sentence to the civil Judges; the sum wherein the parties shall be condemned being first deposited.

7. That in case there have been any Laws against our Jewish Nation, they may in the first place and before all things be revoked, to the end that by this means we may remain with the greater security under the safeguard and protection of your most serene Highness.

Which things your most serene Highness granting to us, we shall always remain most affectionately obliged to pray to God for the prosperity of your Highness, and

Violet expressly states in his Petition that, after this Debate, Cromwell and his Council gave a DISPENSATION to a number of Jews to settle in London, that they were suffered to exercise their religion, that they were in reality invited in by Thurloe and protected by Cromwell, and that the greater part (answering to the description of the persons mentioned in the present Letter) were "Portugals or Spaniards" by birth.

This fixes the time of the Re-admission of the Jews to the opening of the year 1656.

Violet further states that it was Cromwell's intention to have made them farmers of the Customs and Excise, and to have given them naturalization.

At the very moment when Cromwell's Conference was held, the war between the Swedes and the Poles had driven a large number of the Jews who were resident at Cracow, to Hamburgh: and the circumstance of a temporal Prince arising who was inclined to encourage their settlement in his country, appears to have attracted their most serious attention.

Raguenet, in his History of Cromwell's life, details the particulars of a very extraordinary fact; that, much about the time of Menasseh's coming into England, the Asiatic Jews sent hither also the Rabbi Jacob Ben Azahel with several others of his nation to make private inquiry whether Cromwell was not that Messiah whom they had long expected; and that under pretence of viewing the Hebrew Books and Manuscripts belonging to the University of Cambridge, they took the opportunity to ascertain amongst Cromwell's relations at Huntingdon whether any of his ancestors were of Jewish origin. The real object of their errand becoming known, and being unlikely to suit the Saints of the day, Cromwell is said to have dismissed them hastily. The whole passage from Raguenet's History will be found in the Note below.*

of your illustrious and most sage Council, that it will please him to give happy success to all the Undertaking of your most serene Highness. Amen.

" An ADVERTISEMENT.

The Reader is to take notice, That his Highness at severall Meetings, fully heard the Opinions of the Ministers touching the said Proposals, expressing himself thereupon with indifferency and moderation, as one that desired only to obtain satisfaction in a matter of so high and religious a concernment, there being many glorious promises recorded in the holy Scripture concerning the calling and conversion of the Jews to the Faith of Christ. But nothing at all hath been concluded as to their admission; his Highness proceeding in this, as in all other Affairs, with good advice, and mature deliberation." Merc. Polit. Dec. 20 to Dec. 27. 1655.

* " Enfin sa réputation s'accrut de telle sorte, que les Juifs qui étoient en Asie ayant appris toutes les grandes choses qu'on disoit de lui, par la voix de la Renommée qui les grossissoit toûjours de plus en plus à proportion qu'elle les portoit plus loin, résolurent d'envoyer quelq'uns des leurs en Angleterre, pour s'informer si il n'étoit point

Whatever Cromwell's ultimate intentions may have been in favor of the Jews, they were frustrated by his death. To say nothing of ancient prejudice, he had mercantile jealousy to contend with; and the sort of Return to which the Jews had submitted, having made them available for the purposes of his policy, it is not unlikely that Cromwell would have done nothing more to serve them.

le Libérateur qu'ils attendoient, et qu'ils ont toujours cru trouver dans tous les Capitaines extraordinaires qui ont paru au Monde depuis leur dispersion.

“ Ils choisirent, pour cette Commission, le célèbre Jacob Ben-Azahel qui eut ordre de prendre avec lui, en passant par la Bohême, David Ben Eléazar Rabin de leur Synagogue de Prague qui savoit toutes les langues de l'Europe en perfection, et le Rabi Manassé-Ben Israël d'Amsterdam qui leur devoit servir de conducteur.

“ Lors qu'ils furent arrivés à Londres, pour cacher le véritable sujet de leur voyage, ils ne montrèrent d'abord qu'une Lettre de Créance touchant l'établissement d'un Bureau pour le Commerce du Levant dont ils faisoient espérer de grands avantages aux Anglois; la Chambre des Directeurs du Négoce les reçut avec joye, et leurs propositions y furent très-favorablement écoutées; mais comme on ne pouvoit les recevoir sans introduire une nouvelle sorte de Religion dans la République, on les renvoya à Cromwel qui avoit seul l'autorité de le faire en qualité de Protecteur.

“ Cromwel leur fit, de même, un très-bon accueil en considération du Commerce qui pouvoit devenir plus florissant en Angleterre par leur moyen. Il leur accorda même une Audience secrète qu'ils lui demandèrent, dans laquelle ces deux Juifs lui ayant témoigné combien ils estimoient la fameuse Bibliothèque du Collège de Cambridge, Cromwel qui ne pouvoit pardonner à cette Université le zèle qu'elle avoit fait paroître pour le feu Roy, promit à ces étrangers de leur en vendre tous les Manuscrits avec les autres volumes qu'ils trouveroient les plus rares.

“ Ils allèrent donc, encore une fois, pour revoir les Livres et prendre un mémoire de leur nombre, et de leur qualité, ce qu'ils firent en présence des Bibliothécaires qui les leur montrèrent, et qui crurent qu'ils n'avoient point d'autre dessein en cela que de satisfaire leur curiosité, comme ils le témoignèrent. Mais au lieu de revenir droit à Londres, ils prirent occasion de ce petit voyage pour se transporter, suivant le principal dessein de leur commission, dans la Province de Huntington d'où les parens de Cromwel étoient originaires, afin de s'informer de sa Naissance, et apprendre de ceux qui pouvoient le mieux connoître sa Généalogie, s'il ne se trouvoit point quelqu'un parmi ses Ancêtres qui fût sorti du sang des Hébreux.

“ Quelques précautions qu'ils prissent pour rendre secrète cette recherche insensée, ils ne purent si-bien faire qu'elle ne fût découverte; la nouvelle s'en publia aussi-tôt dans Londres où l'on en fit des railleries piquantes contre le Protecteur qui en conceut un ressentiment si vif, que non seulement il refusa à ces malheureux Juifs la liberté du Trafic, et le traité de la Bibliothèque du Collège de Cambridge qu'il leur avoit fait espérer, mais de plus il leur déclara avec beaucoup de chaleur, dans une Audience qu'il rendit exprès très-solemnelle, que la République et lui faisoient profession d'adorer un Dieu crucifié; et qu'ils ne vouloient avoir aucun commerce avec eux qu'ils regardoient comme ses plus irréconciliables ennemis; et en même tems il les congédia, sans leur vouloir permettre de répondre le moindre mot.

“ Mais de quelque artifice que Cromwel se servit, pour persuader au peuple que le zèle qu'il avoit pour la Religion Chrétienne avoit été le motif de sa rupture avec les Juifs; cela n'empêcha pas que tout le monde n'apprit que son seul ressentiment en avoit été la cause, par le moyen d'un libelle qui courut alors, intitulé, *Cromwel Lion de la Tribu de Juda,* dans lequel ce que je viens de dire de la députation des Synagogues d'Asie et d'Allemagne étoit rapporté avec toutes les réflexions fines, et toutes les railleries délicates qui se pouvoient faire, sur cette matière, contre le Protecteur.” Histoire d'Olivier Cromwel, par Raguenet. 12^e. Par. 1691. p. 290—293.

MR. CROMPTON,

WHEN any thing ever occurred in my reading any where concerning the manner of the Jews divine worship (though since the Destruction of their City and Temple) I have always thought it worth the seeing of a Christian ; at least for once where it could be obtained. And amidst other fashions of Religions which my curiosity hath prompted me with a desire to see in this City, having been at the meetings and worship of Papists, of Anabaptists, of Quakers, of Fifth Monarchie men, and I considered and concluded with myself, that there must in reason need be some number of Jews in this City, though those only merchants, and that consequently they must have some place of meeting together for their divine worship. Whereupon, as occasion offered me to converse with any that were likely to inform me, I inquired hereof, but could not of a long time hear or learn whether or where any such thing was. But lately having a desire to spend some of my time here in learning the Hebrew tongue, and inquiring of some one that professed to teach it, I lighted upon a learned Jew with a mighty bush beard, a great Rabbi as I found him afterward to be, with whom after once or twice being together, I fell into conference and acquaintance ; for he could speak Latin, and some little broken English, having as he told me been two years in London. He said he was an Hebrew of the He-

brews of the Tribe of Levi, and his name (I had liked to have said his Christian name) Samuel Levi. He told me his own mother is yet living, and dwelleth at this present in the City of Jerusalem, from whence he had received ten several Letters within these two years. For it is a custom amongst them, that those who are of able estate, though born and have lived in other countries, yet when they grow old they transport themselves thither to end their days, and lay their bones there in the Holy place as he called it. He said he was brought up, and was a student eleven years, in the Jews College in Cracovia the chief City of Poland, where the Jews have an University, and that he had newly written over the Five Books of Moses with his own hand in Hebrew, without points, in rolls of parchment, for the use of a Synagogue: and that himself had formerly been Priest to a Synagogue of his own nation in Poland. A very modest man, and once with much ado I got him to accept of an invitation to take part of a dinner with me: at which time he told me that he had special relation as Scribe and Rabbi to a private Synagogue of his nation in London, and that if I had a desire to see their manner of worship, though they did scarce admit of any, their Synagogue being strictly kept with three doors one beyond another, yet he would give me such a ticket, as, upon sight thereof, their porter would let me in upon their next Sabbath Day in the morning being Saturday. I made

show as though I were indifferent, but inwardly hugged the good hap.

When Saturday came, I rose very early, the place being far from my lodging; and in a private corner of the City, with much ado, following my directions, I found it at the point of nine o'clock, and was let come in at the first door, but there being no Englishman but myself, and my Rabbi not being there then (for they were but just beginning service) I was at first a little abashed to venture alone amongst all them Jews; but my innate curiosity to see things strange spurring me on, made me confident even to impudence. I rubbed my forehead, opened the inmost door, and taking off my hat (as instructed) I went in and sate me down amongst them; but Lord (Thoma frater) what a strange, uncouth, foreign, and to me barbarous sight was there, I could have wished Thoma that you had then sate next me, for I saw no living soul, but all covered, hooded, guized, veiled Jews, and my own plain bare self amongst them. The sight would have frightened a novice, and made him to have run out again.

Every man had a large white vest, covering, or veil cast over the high crown of his hat, which from thence hung down on all sides, covering the whole hat, the shoulders, arms, sides, and back to the girdle place, nothing to be seen but a little of the face; this, my Rabbi told me, was their ancient garb, used in divine

worship in their Synagogues in Jerusalem and in all the Holy Land before the destruction of their City : and though to me at first, it made altogether a strange and barbarous show, yet me thought it had in its kind, I know not how, a face and aspect of venerable antiquity. Their veils were all pure white, made of taffata or silk, though some few were of a stuff coarser than silk ; the veil at each of its four corners had a broad badge ; some had red badges, some green, some blue, some wrought with gold or silver, which my Rabbi told me were to distinguish the tribes of which each was common.

I was a curious and critical spectator of all things there, and when I came to my Chamber in the afternoon I wrote down the particulars in my note book, while fresh in memory.

Their Synagogue is like a Chapel, high built ; for after the first door they go up stairs into it, and the floor is boarded ; the seats are not as ours, but two long running seats on either side, as in a school : at the west end of it there is a seat as high as a pulpit, but made deskwise, wherein the two members of the Synagogue did sit veiled, as were all both priest and people. The chief Ruler was a very rich merchant, a big, black, fierce, and stern man, to whom I perceive they stand in as reverential an awe as boys to a master : for when any left singing upon their books and talked, or that some were out of tune, he did call aloud with

a barbarous thundering voice, and knocked upon the high desk with his fist, that all sounded again. Straight before them, at some distance but on a seat much lower, sate the Priest. Two yards before him, on midst of the floor, stood that whereon the Service and Law were read, being like to an high short table, with steps to it on one side as an altar, covered with a green carpet, and upon that another shorter one of blue silk; two brass candlesticks standing at either end of it; before that on the floor were three low seats whereon some boys sat, their sons, richly veiled, as gentle comely youths as one should see; who had each his Service Book in hand, in Hebrew without points, and were as ready and nimble in it, and all their postures, as the men.

There was brought in a pretty Boy at four years old, a child of some chief Jew, in rich coats, with black feathers in his hat, the priest himself arose and put a veil over the child's hat of pure white silk, fastening it under the hatband that he should not shake it off, and set him upon a seat among the boys; but he soon leaped off, and ran with his veil dangling up and down; once he came and looked at me, wondering perhaps that I had no veil; at length he got the inner door open and went to his mother; for they do not suffer the Women to come into the same room or into the sight of the men: but on the one side of the Synagogue there is a low, long, and narrow latticed window,

through which the women, sitting in the next room, do hear ; as the boy opened it, I saw some of their wives in their rich silks bedaubed with broad gold lace, with muffs in one hand and books in the other.

At the east end of the Synagogue standeth a closet like a very high cupboard, which they call the Ark, covered below with one large hanging of blue silk ; its upper half covered with several drawing curtains of blue silk ; in it are the Books of the Law kept. Before it, upon the floor, stand two mighty brass candlesticks with lighted tapers in them ; from the roof, above the hangings, two great lamps of christal glass, holding each about a pottle filled up to the brim with purest oil, set within a case of four little brass pillars gilded. In the wall at either end of the Synagogue, are very many draw boxes, with rings at them like those in a Grocer's Shop ; and in it (as I came sooner in the morning than many or most of them) I saw that each Jew at his first entrance into the place did first bow down towards the Ark wherein the Law was kept, but with his hat on, which they never do put off in this place ; but a stranger must ; for after a good while two Englishmen were brought in, at which I was glad, being alone before, and they were bareheaded until they were set down amongst them, which then put on their hats. The one I knew to be a citizen and shopkeeper. At last I saw my Rabbi come in. Each Jew after he had bowed went straight to his box, took a little key out

of his pocket, unlocked it, took out his veil and books, then threw his veil over his hat and fitted it on all sides, and so went to his place, and fell a tuning it upon his Hebrew Service Book as hard and loud as he could ; for all is sung with a mighty noise from first to last, both of priest and people ; saying some prayers ; and all was done in the right true Hebrew tongue, as my Rabbi affirmed to me afterwards ; which, to this end, they do industriously teach all their children from their infancy, having their schoolmistress on purpose, especially their Service books, which they have at their fingers' end. There was none but had a book open in his hand, about the bigness of our hand Bibles. I looked upon several of their books as they sate by me and before me, yea I could plainly see both lines and letters in the Priest's book wherein he read, I sate so nigh him, and all were the true Hebrew letters, but in all the books without any points. The Priest's son, a comely youth, standing at the Table or Altar alone, sung all the former part of the Service which was a full hour long, all the rest singing with him, with a great and barbarous noise ; this consisted mostly of the Psalms of David, with some prayers intermixed, which they sung standing up looking East, and with a lower noise and in tune not unlike to that when the reading Psalms are sung in our quires ; but their reading Psalms they sung much what like as we do sing ballads ; and I observed that when mention was made of

the Edomites, Philistines, or any enemies of David, or Israel's, they stamped strongly with their feet, that all the Synagogue sounded again. There were two or three composed Hymns, which they, all standing up and looking toward Jerusalem, sang very melodiously. After this former part of the Service finished, the Priest's son officiating hitherto, which was about an hour, there was deep silence for a pretty while; then the Priest arose and some of the chief Jews with him, and they went with a grave, slow pace, up the Synagogue, to fetch the Law of Moses, and when they came to the Ark wherein it was kept, the priest drew the curtain, and opening the double door of it, the Law appeared, then the whole assembly stood up and bowed down just toward it, and the priest and those chief ones with him, stood singing a song to it a little while. The Law was written in two great rolls of very broad parchment (as my Rabbi told me afterwards, and he told me the meaning of each thing that I desired, to which you must impute all that I here interpret). The roll contained the Book of Genesis and was much lesser; the other being three times as big, contained the other four Books of Moses. This roll was as thick as a pretty round pillar. Either roll had two fine thrown Staves of black wood, one fastened to either end of it, whereon it was rolled up, the staves meeting in the middle; and the roll was swaddled about with a fine blue scarf, and over it was put a

covering or case of blue silk fringed at the bottom ; and in the top of the over roll was stuck like a fine tree of silver, hung full of silver bells, which my Rabbi told me they called the Bells of Aaron, and in the top of the other roll was stuck a rod, having artificial flowers upon it, in remembrance of Aaron's Rod that budded. The priest took forth the two rolls of the Ark and delivered them to two of those with him, who taking the bottom of the staves in their hand, carried them straight upon high, rearing them to their shoulder ; so they came back in a solemn procession, bringing the Law with singing (those only sang who brought it) melodiously one of the Songs of Zion. ' The Law shall forth out of Sion come,' &c. And as the Law thus passed along by them the people bowed towards it, and such as could reach took up the fringe of its costly covering in their hands and kissed it. When they had brought it to the altar, four or five were busied in uncovering and unswaddling the roll. The priest's son took in his hand the Silver Bells of Aaron and the budded Rod, and came and sate down next of all to me, thrusting his side so close to mine that part of his veil lay upon mine arm, he holding the Bells and Rod all the while close by my nose : then the priest opened and spread the Law about a yard wide, and lifted it up a full yard above his head, turning himself, and showing it East, West, North, and South. The Jews meanwhile bowing down towards it

with great reverence. The parchment of it was full yard broad, the ground yellow, the letters pure black, and all without points. I sate within two yards of the Altar. Then the priest laid the Law upon the altar and took in his hand a small silver cane or quill, with the sharp end thereof pointing at the lines of the Law as he read, for the greater reverence ; it was half a yard long. Then there arose one out of the assembly and came unto the priest, making low reverence ; when the priest asked aloud whether he desired to hear the Law read, who saying ‘ yes,’ the priest bade him pray then, and he looked upon his Hebrew Service Book which he had in his hand, and read over a short prayer very fast ; then the priest read a few lines of the Law with a loud voice, in a thundering barbarous tone, as fast as his tongue could run, for a form only ; then asked the man whether he had heard the Law, who saying ‘ yes,’ he bad him give thanks then, and he read a short prayer out of his book as before : so, bowing himself to the Law and the Priest, he went to his place, and another came, and did in like manner until five or six had thus heard the Law read to them ; which they count a special piece of honour to them. After that, five or six were busied in wrapping up swaddling and veiling the two rolls of the Law again, whereon they put their Bells and budded Rod again, and carried back with solemn procession as before, and the priest placed it in the Ark ; and they stood singing

to it awhile. Afterwards the priest alone, at the Altar, read very many short prayers, to which they all standing up said 'Amen,' using this same word.

Then a comely youth standing in the midst of the Synagogue, and looking towards the Law, sung alone a long Anthem, and after this was there long Supplication, which was the most solemn part of all their service; which they all spake together standing (for they never kneel), with their faces East, often bowing down altogether; it being partly a complaint of the long desolation of their City and Temple, partly a prayer for the coming of Messiah and their Restoration (thank my Rabbi for the interpretation); 'Sion is become a ploughed field, and Jerusalem made an heap of stones, thy servants think upon her stones and it grieveth them to see her in the dust; our ancient and our beautiful House, where our fathers served thee, lieth waste; then gather us o Lord from amongst the Heathen; remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; remember thy promises made unto our fathers, in our time, in our time, O Lord,' &c.

I confess that looking earnestly upon them in this, and thoughts coming into my mind of the Wonders which God wrought for their fathers in Egypt, and who heard the Voice of God speak to them out of the midst of the fire on Sinai, and seed of Abraham the friend of God, I was strangely, uncouthly, unaccustomedly moved, and deeply affected; tears stood in

my eyes the while, to see those banished Sons of Israel standing in their ancient garb (veiled) but in a strange land, solemnly and carefully looking East toward their own Country, confessing their sins and the sins of their forefathers, humbling themselves and bowing down together (as often they did in their Supplication) before the God of their Fathers, who doubtless will hear them or their posterity better than they desire, will open their eyes and let them see that the true Messiah came long since, even he whom their fathers pierced, and they shall mourn over him and be brought unto him; and to their own land. After this, for a conclusion of all, the Priest read certain select promises of their restoration, at which they showed great rejoicing, by strutting up, so that some of their veils flew about like morris dancers, only they wanted bells. This forenoon service continued about three hours, from nine to twelve, which being ended, they all put off their veils, and each man wrapping his veil up, went and put it and his Hebrew Service Book into his box, and locking it departed.

My Rabbi invited me afterwards to come and see the feast of Purim, which they kept he said for the deliverance from Haman's Conspiracy, mentioned in the Book of Esther; in which they use great knocking and stamping when Haman is named. Also he desired me to come and see them eat the Passover, which they did ten days before our Easter, and he had got me to

the door of the place, but I felt such a reluctance in me, as that having in part satisfied my Curiosity by seeing their manner of Service once, my heart would in no wise give me to go again amongst those Unbelievers, in that place where my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom is all my hope and trust for ever, was not owned. So I came away back again without seeing it; though afterwards I understood that several had been there to see them eat it, who brought away some of their unleavened bread with them, and showed to some who told me, one year in Oliver's time, they did build booths on the other side of Thames, and kept the Feast of Tabernacles in them, as some told me who saw them; but since the King's coming in, they are very close, nor do admit any to see them but very privately.

When I was in the Synagogue I counted about or above a hundred right Jews, one proselite amongst them, they were all gentlemen (merchants) I saw not one mechanic person of them; most of them rich in apparel, divers with jewels glittering (for they are the richest jewellers of any) they are all generally black so as they may be distinguished from Spaniards or native Greeks, for the Jews hair hath a deeper tincture of a more perfect raven black, they have a quick piercing eye, and look as if of strong intellectuals; several of them are comely, gallant, proper gentlemen. I knew many of them when I saw them daily upon the

Exchange, and the Priest there too, who also is a merchant. It were tedious to relate the several disputes I had with my Rabbi at our being together, and his strange rabbinical and indeed irrational reasonings against Christ. In a word the curse is upon them to the uttermost; and they have a grosser veil over the eye of the soul, than that which covers their heads; they are so firmly possessed with an invincible prejudice against the Cross of Christ, and so doat upon their imaginary Messiah to come a temporal King that shall conquer all the princes of the earth, and make their nation Lords of all the World, that an argument from the strongest, clearest, and most convincing reasons that can be brought for Christ, is but an arrow shot against a wall of brass. Bene vale mi Thomâ et ora tu pro Judæis, et pro miserrimo peccatore omnium Christianorum. Ille tuus olim fraterrimus et in perpetuum frater ubicunque terrarum,

JO. GREENHALGH.

London, April 22^l.

1662.

Quod ad Judæos.

Cœpit ab his, delata ad nos, referetur ad illos

Nostra fides, et erunt sub Mundi fine fideles.

For my worthy friend Mr. Thomas
Crompton, Minister of Astley Chappel,
These.