

THE INFLUENCE OF THE JEWS UPON CIVILIZATION

by

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CHAPTER SEVEN

JEWISH SCIENCES

The twentieth century is pre-eminently a century of scientific progress. Preceding generations have prepared the way. The scientific verities of the present are based upon the partial truths of the past. Every race and every people have been gathering and storing up knowledge for further development in all branches of science. Our remarks here, however, shall be confined to that numerically small and much persecuted people, the Jews.

Among the more than five hundred prominent physicians listed in *Who's Who in American Jewry*, more Jews of Germany occupy prominent places in all branches of science and medicine than any other people. This fact alone should merit the gratitude, not only of Germany, but of the entire world for what the Jew has contributed toward the welfare and progress of humanity. A survey of the Nobel Prize winners is a further confirmation of the notable achievements of Jews in science and in medicine. Of the thirty-eight Germans who have been awarded this high honor since its establishment, eleven, or twenty-nine per cent, were Jews; and of the eleven Jews the ten listed below received their awards in science and medicine:

Adolf von Bayer, Munich, 1905, Chemistry; Paul Ehrlich, Frankfort, 1908, Medicine; Otto Wallach, Gottingen, 1910, Chemistry; Richard Willstatter, Munich, 1915, Chemistry; Fritz Haber, Berlin, 1918, Chemistry; Albert Einstein, Berlin, 1921, Physics; Otto Meyerhof, Berlin, 1922, Medicine; Gustav Hertz, Germany, 1925, Physics; James Franck, Gottingen, 1925, Physics; Otto Warburg, Berlin, 1931, Medicine.

By including the former Austria, which is now part of Germany, the names of three more Jews are added to the impressive list of Nobel winners, two of whom were given the awards for their contributions to science and medicine:

Roger Barany, Vienna, 1915, Medicine; Karl Lansteiner, New York, 1930, Medicine.

One might add, also, that in former Austria three of the six Austrians who have been awarded the Nobel Prize were Jews. Before the subjugation of Austria by Germany, the Jewish inhabitants composed less than four per cent of the total population.

Since the rise of the Nazi regime, someone has written significantly:

“A Nazi who has venereal disease must not allow himself to be cured by salvarsan, because it is the discovery of the Jew, Ehrlich. He might not even take steps to find out whether he has this ugly disease, because the Wassermann reaction which is used for the purpose is the discovery of a Jew. A Nazi who has heart disease, must not use digitalin, the medical use of which was discovered by the Jew, Ludwig Traube. If he has a toothache, he will not use cocaine, or he will be benefiting by the work of a Jew, Carl Koller. Typhoid must not be treated, or he will have to benefit by the discoveries of the Jews, Widal and Weil. If he has diabetes, he must not use insulin, because its invention was made possible by the research work of the Jew, Minkowsky. If he has a headache, he must shun pyramidon and antipyrin (Spiro and Eilege). Anti-Semites who have convulsions must endure them, for it was a Jew, Oscar Liebreich, who thought of chloral hydrate. The same is true of psychic ailments: Freud is the father of psychoanalysis. Anti-Semitic doctors must jettison all discoveries and improvements by the Nobel Prizemen, Barany and Otto Warburg; the dermatologists, Jadassohn, Bruno Bloch, Unna; the neurologists Mendel, Oppenheim, Kronecker, Benedikt; the lung specialist Fraenkel; the surgeon Israel; the anatomist Henle; and others.”

As early as the middle of the eighteenth century we find the name Marcus Eliezer Bloch, who was born in Germany. At the age of twenty-four he was a practicing physician; he, however, devoted himself entirely to natural science and became the foremost German authority in his day on the natural life of fish. He wrote twelve volumes on fish life, which remained for almost a hundred years the chief, if not the only, scientific work on the subject. Sir William Herschel, the greatest of astronomers, was known as the founder of sidereal science. His views on the position of the solar system in relation to the Milky Way still form the central factor in the modern theory as to the constitution of the universe. He is also known as the discoverer of the infrared and solar rays. It was with a telescope of his own contrivance that he discovered the planet Uranus in 1781. He was afterwards appointed astronomer to the king and advanced to the foremost rank of contemporary scientists.

Albert Einstein, of world fame, through his theory of relativity can be appreciated only by very few, may well be classified as the foremost physicist and mathematician of our day. In 1929, Einstein startled the scientific world again with his “unitary field theory,” wherein he tried to formulate a single set of mathematical equations which would contain the equations for both gravitation and electromagnetism. It was to a fellow Jew, Albert Michelson, that Einstein is indebted for the apparatus which has proved his theory of relativity.

Michelson held his position as professor of physics at the University of Chicago until his death in 1931. He became identified with a long series of experiments arranged to determine the velocity of light. His patience and extreme accuracy won him international fame. Honors were showered on him by virtually every important institution of learning in the world, and by a number of governments. His greatest effort was the building of a light tunnel one mile in length in order to determine the time of the passage of a ray of light.

Classed with these great scientific minds is Jacques Loeb. Doctor Loeb was born and educated in Germany. He came to America in 1891.

After graduating in medicine he drifted into brain physiology, then into zoology, later turned to the chemico-dynamics of physiology, and finally become one of the leading workers in the field of colloids and general physical chemistry. As head of the department of experimental biology at the Rockefeller Institute, he began a series of startling experiments in the field of artificial fertilization, the results of which opened up an entirely new and potentially invaluable avenue of medical work. The wide variety of fields in which he worked and the amazing results he achieved until his death in 1924, mark him as one of the greatest figures in American medicine.

In chemistry as well as in physics and invention the Jews have made significant contributions. Julius Stieglitz, one of the greatest chemists America has produced, is a Jew. So, also, are professor Moses Gomberg, one of the greatest authorities in organic chemistry; Emile Berliner, inventor of the telephone transmitter and the first workable flying machine of the helicopter type; Leon M. Moisseff, one of the greatest bridge engineers in the United States, and designer of the Manhattan Bridge and the Interstate Bridge connecting Philadelphia with Camden, New Jersey; Fritz Lowenstein, inventor of the wireless switchwave; Dr. Louis Cohen, who aided in eliminating static from radio reception; Dr. Arthur Korn, inventor of a new device to transmit photographs by radio; Henry Arnstein, one of the chief chemical engineers in America (Masserman and Baker, *The Jew Comes to America*, pp. 450-451).

From the earliest days Jewish physicians have played important roles in medical research. They were favored advisors and consultants of pope and prelate; of shah and sultan; of king, caliph and kahn. We mention only a few: Maimonides, physician to the Spanish court; Vichino, physician to the Portuguese court; Bonet de Latis, personal physician to Pope Leo X, and Jacob Montino, physician to Pope Paul III; Isaac Israeli, who served the Fatimite Caliph at Kairwan; Elias Montalto, who attended Marie de Medici, and the Jewish physicians who attended Francois I.

A biographer of Jewish contributions to medieval science listed no less than 2,168 physicians of the Jewish faith living between the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century who made contributions worthy of note.

Even the casual reader of medical works will come across such names as Ludwig Traube, the originator of experimental pathology and scientific thermometry in Germany; Wilhelm Winternitz, who introduced the scientific use of hydrotherapy; Professor Bela Schick, the creator of the "Schick test" to determine the presence of an immunity to diphtheria. In *The Struggle for Health* Hoffman says: "Today we are able to test our children to find out which are susceptible and which are immune to the disease, and if all parents were quick-witted enough to avail themselves of the opportunity of this simple test elaborated by Dr. Schick, now of New York, diphtheria would vanish from all civilized communities." Professor George Ferdinand Widal created the "Widal Test" to diagnose typhoid fever.

Twenty-five American Jewish physicians were recently cited by various scientific societies for distinguished service to mankind. We can mention only a few: Dr. Simon Flexner, the famous Rockefeller Institute pathologist, who revolutionized medical educational methods, and developed a serum against meningitis.

Dr. Joseph Goldberger, a federal officer, whose pioneer work in discovering the cause of and cure for pellagra, has resulted in the saving of countless lives. Casimir Funk, a Polish Jew who worked first at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and later in New York, and discovered those strange substances called “vitamins”; Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and for a long time president of this association; Dr. Carl Lucas Alsberg, head of the Food Research Institute at Stanford University, who is probably the greatest food chemist alive.

This list of leading names is far from exhaustive, but we have already exceed the scope of this brief chapter.

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