

the distributing commission, to be appointed in Palestine; and we can give the most positive assurance that the wishes of the donors shall be faithfully carried into effect.

“ Invoking the blessing of God on you all, we sign ourselves

“ Your brothers,

“ RABBI JOSEPH SCHWARZ,

“ RABBI ZADOK LEVY,

“ Messengers from Jerusalem.

“ New York, Elul 13th, 5609.”

NOTE.—Rev. Dr. Lilienthal, Rev. Mr. Isaacs, Messrs. M. M. Noah, Jacob J. M. Falkenau, Simeon Abrahams, (who lately returned from Palestine, and is therefore cognizant of all the above,) and Henry Moses, President of the Anshay Chesed congregation, of New York, and Mr. L. Bomeisler, and the Editor of the Occident of Philadelphia, will for the present receive any donations and forward any letters to the messengers; but each congregation can establish its own committee, and enter into correspondence with either of the gentlemen named.

כשפטֿיך לארץ

GOD'S JUDGMENTS ON EARTH.

A SERMON DELIVERED IN THE SYNAGOGUE “SHEARITH YISRAEL” MONTREAL, DURING THE PREVALENCE OF ASIATIC CHOLERA.

BY THE REV. ABRAHAM DE SOLA.

כי כאשר משפטֿיך לארץ צדק למדו ישבי תבל : ישעיה כ"ו ט'.

“ For when thy judgments are on earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”—ISAIAH xxxvi. 9.

BRETHREN :—

In speaking to you respecting the teachings of Holy Writ, I have considered it my duty to direct your attention, more than once, to the subject of the Divine Providence, and to show you

how infinitely merciful, just, and benevolent are its dispensations. And now, when "God's judgments are on earth"—now, when that fatal epidemic which, some sixteen years back, carried death and desolation into almost every home, both in the old and new world;—now when that fatal scourge has returned to us, has committed the most appalling ravages in many cities and states around us, has carried off before our eyes the young and the old, the feeble, and the strong, and caused us, the survivors, to tremble under the apprehension of its farther progress: it is surely fitting that we turn our thoughts yet again to the ways of the Most High; inquire whether He is, indeed, vindicating his offended majesty by sending in our midst the dire calamity, and seek, by our prayers, heartfelt humiliation, and proper conduct, to obtain the withdrawal of his dread, but just decree. That we are now peculiarly and imperatively called on to do so, none can doubt. For never did judgment, whether appearing in the angry passions and wars of man, or in the failing and scarcity of the earth's productions, more clearly show us the uncertainty of this terrestrial life; never did judgment more signally assure us of the truth of the scriptural monition, that we "cannot know what a day may bring forth," and of the beautiful imagery employed by the inspired David, when he exclaims, in Psalm ciii., "The days of man are as grass; as the blossom of the field, so doth he bloom. For a breath passeth over him and he is not; nor shall his place know him more." Ah! my hearers, there may be some amongst you, who, unlike him who now addresses you, have not been deprived by this destructive epidemic, either during its last or its present visitation, of a dear relative or of a cherished friend; yet, there are surely but few of you who have not at some time felt the pangs of unexpected bereavement. It were needless then to remind you how sorrowful, how appalling the sight of one, who but a few short hours since,* trod this earth in all the pride and joyousness of health and strength, now lying without motion or

* Of this character was the death of the speaker's younger brother, Raphael, who fell a victim to the malignancy of the cholera morbus during its fatal ravages in London, (A. M. 5593—1833,) after an illness of only some three or four hours. Departing this life young in years and guiltless of transgression, his spirit is now partaking of the bliss reserved for the just, (ת' נ' צ' ב' ה' א').

perception, ay, inanimate and senseless as the very death-couch, whence he shall be taken to return to the ground from which he was formed! one, formerly the object of our admiration and love, now that the breath of the pestilence "hath passed over him, and he is not," presenting to us an object of fear and dread. Painful and dreadful is it to behold the eye, which erst beamed on us with all the fire of intelligence and affection, now fixed, glassy and unmeaning, unable to behold our anguish; the hand which, but a few short hours since, clasped ours with all the warmth of friendship and love, now cold, cold, powerless, and immovable; the lips whence issued the sounds to which we were wont to listen with delight, now closed and unresponsive to our cries and lamentations; but far more painful, far more awful than all this, is the consideration that he whose welfare and happiness were as dear to us as our own, has now departed, with but a brief warning, to appear before the throne of the dread Judge of all spirits,—has departed, when he hath had but little time or opportunity to recommend his soul to the merciful consideration of its Almighty Bestower. O, my beloved brothers and sisters! this is an awful case for contemplation; but I put it to you, nevertheless, as one which is likely to be our own; yes, of the healthiest, and proudest, and best amongst us. How important and all-absorbing then the duty, how unspeakably great the inducement to withdraw our attention from those trivial mundane matters, which are but too wont exclusively to engage it, and direct our minds and hearts to the righteousness and mercy of God's ways, and the sinfulness and corruption of our own; to inquire why our Almighty Parent is angered with his children, and how we may hope to induce Him to turn the fierceness of his wrath from us, and finally avert the destructive pestilence. I am assured, my hearers, that you will consider such an inquiry, at this juncture, both timely and welcome, therefore do I propose to show you in the present discourse:

First. That national calamities, whatever their kind or degree, are from God, being nought else but his judgments upon earth.

Secondly. That the sending of these calamities is not only quite consistent with the divine attributes and excellencies, but is rendered necessary by our own disposition and deportment; and then we will inquire,

Thirdly. What should be our conduct pending such calamities, and more especially during the prevalence of the present epidemic.

And O may God grant, in his infinite mercy, that our meditations may tend to his glory, and to our profit, both here and hereafter. Amen.

I.

Were it not, my brethren, that we are well aware of the limited capacity of the human intellect, we might be justly surprised to observe in the discourse and writings of the wisest philosophers and greatest geniuses, the use of words and expressions to which the very persons who employ them can attach no definite, correct idea, but have recourse to them to give a vague notion of something equally vague in itself. As one word of this class, let us adduce the term *chance*. Now of all those who are accustomed to use this word, how few are they who stop to consider what it really means, or, whether it have any meaning at all. If we require any proof of the inferiority and obtuseness of man's nature and intelligence, we might sufficiently adduce it from the one circumstance upon which we have just remarked. For we observe that, from the earliest ages of the world, man has always sought, naturally and properly enough, to refer by philosophical process all phenomena to certain causes; has generally endeavoured to establish as an indisputable maxim that, an effect without a cause is an impossibility; and has, when unable to determine the cause of certain effects, even referred these effects to certain occult powers or causes;* and yet, we find him at the same time inculcating by his language an absurdity, at which the human mind always did, and ever will revolt. I say absurdity, and consider it unnecessary to show you at any great length, that it would be so considered in every branch of human knowledge; that the logician, for example, would show you that the idea of arriving at a conclusion in any and every

* Such as attraction of cohesion, elective attraction and repulsion, &c., among the ancients; and among the moderns, attraction and repulsion of magnetism, galvanism, caloric, &c.

argument by chance is absurd and impossible ; that the chemist, again, would tell you that the idea of certain gases being generated and acting by chance is absurd and untrue ; and again, that the astronomer would prove to you, that the idea of the revolution or eclipse of any of the planets or their satellites being governed or influenced by chance, would also be absurd and false. And indeed, so in all branches of science. If, then, the application of the term chance, to denote an effect without a cause, be scientifically considered an absurdity : when so applied in a religious point of view, it is atheism. For atheism, I need not remind you, my brother Israelites, does not only consist in denying the existence of the Supreme, (blessed for ever be his name,) but, it also consists in maintaining that He does not exercise any superintendence or control over the world, and the creatures it contains. It is chiefly in this latter sense, that our sage teachers apply the term אפיקורוס, stigmatising as such, all who were tainted with this wretched dogma of the benighted followers of the heathen philosopher, the so-called Epicureans. They also applied the term to those who did not entirely exclude the divine agency in human affairs, but denied it in trifling events or small matters, believing that it was inconsistent with God's majesty and excellence so to exercise it. Our pious Rabbis sought to undeceive such, by reminding them that God in his creations has not formed every object with the like capacities, sizes and perfections ; that some of his creations are inferior to others, but that these inferior portions are nevertheless indispensable to the perfection of the whole, even as the smallest wheel, or spring, or tube is indispensable to the completeness of the machines of human contrivance, requiring the same attention and care from the machinist, if he would have it act at all, as the largest and most complicated part thereof. And so in the moral world. The perfection of God consists in the universality of his superintendence and providence. The most trifling events we are taught, and were we capable of unravelling the intricacies of the divine economy we would find, God permits to become necessary to the completion of his all-wise scheme of legislation ; we would find that in his all-benevolent providence He permits the continuity of the chain to depend as much upon the small as upon the large links. Now, my friends, let these considerations be sufficient to show us that such

a thing as chance cannot be, and that when we make use of the word, it is merely to veil our ignorance of certain causes which we have in vain endeavoured to discover. There is another term of the class under notice, to which we must now devote a little attention, and that is *nature*. We are accustomed to talk very learnedly, but with very little sense, and still less piety, of "the operations of nature," "the influence of nature," "the benevolence of nature," and the like; and by thus personifying and bestowing an abstract mystical existence, we put ourselves in danger of forgetting the Operator in his operations, and the Creator in his creations. The employment of the term is but seldom suggestive of our heavenly Father; but we are very prone to regard all visitations, and even afflictions similar to that now amongst us, as effects of nature, quite unmindful that the operations of nature are merely the manifestations of Almighty God, the Supreme Creator and Director of all that is. My brethren, as for us, be it our constant aim to avoid falling even into the semblance of so gross and fatal an error. Let us recollect, that the so-styled laws of nature are nought else but the decrees of nature's God, the subordinate causes or means employed by the Almighty Causer of all causes; that not the least of these causes can exist, or the most trifling effect take place, independently of his appointment, and that, consequently, national calamities, (and among such we include the prevailing epidemic,) whatever their kind or degree, are from Him to whom alone adoration is due. For, as saith the prophet Jeremiah,* "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass when the Eternal commandeth it not? Do not both evil and good alike proceed out of the mouth of the Most High?" And again the prophet Amos, "Shall there be evil in a city and the Eternal hath not done it."†

II.

In attempting now to show you that the sending of national calamities is not only consistent with the Divine attributes and perfections, but is also rendered necessary by our own conduct and disposition, I do not fear, my brethren, that there is eve

* Lament. iii. 37.

† Amos iii. 6.

one now before me, who, because he or she can assign no reason for the existing calamity, will therefore maintain that none can be assigned. I am confident that there can be none so fatally in error, as to suppose that caprice enters at all into the Divine government. No, we are too well assured בבל דרכיו זריק'ה that all the ways of the Lord are most benevolent, wise and just, and that if He does keep to himself the reasons for any one of His dispensations, it is to vindicate His supreme sovereignty before the children of men. Our text shows us, however, that the Almighty has not left us in ignorance of the general cause of our suffering, though He may have chosen to do so in respect to special ones. "When his judgments are on earth," He tells us through the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, "the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness," implying, that such judgments are necessary to recall men from those derelictions and sins which an uninterrupted course of worldly happiness and prosperity may have induced them to commit. The reasonableness and correctness of this view of the case all must be disposed to admit. So viewed, we see displayed the benevolence, mercy, and justice of God; so viewed, we witness a faithfully drawn picture of the insensibility, ingratitude, and corruption of men. And when I remind you how wont we are to receive the daily blessings God so bountifully showers upon us, without being animated by any of those sentiments of gratitude and thankfulness which should be ours, without that gushing forth of our hearts' and souls' best affections, and praises, and adorations, to our heavenly Benefactor; when I remind you that in our prosperity, we are invariably apt to forget God, and to refer our weal rather to our own influence and power in obtaining it, than to His bestowal: when I remind you of these things, you will admit the truth of the view just taken. I observe, again, that the reasons assigned for God's judgments, as conveyed by the words of our text, eminently display the benevolence, mercy, and justice of God; and to show you this in a clearer light, I would ask you to consider for a brief space the great and various events that have lately occurred around you. Cast a retrospective glance on the state of Europe in particular during the past eighteen months. Behold how revolution has followed revolution, rapid and irresistibly; see how angered and in-

censed, and frantic multitudes have arisen, overthrown the established state of things, and created a new one. See how this nation has concluded to banish kings and monarchy for ever from amongst them; how quickly that one has followed their example, notwithstanding that he whom they drove from amongst them, was the representative of a class who had been religiously revered by many nations, in many parts of the world, and for many centuries. And to the thinking mind what is the lesson taught by these mighty and sudden changes? It is, that there exists an under current, so to speak, directing the course of human affairs, which is not perceivable to short-sighted men, but which God permits to exist, so that, at the time appointed by Him, events and phenomena shall obtain which by their unexpectedness and general nature, shall make us fully sensible of our own weakness and incompetency to foresee or control them, recall with irresistible force our attention to the Almighty Disposer of all events, cause us to be justly apprehensive at his manifestations, and to induce in our minds humble, penitent, and pious sentiments. Now, let us superadd to this the fact, that there exists an almost universal inclination in our hearts to forget and neglect the service of the Supreme in the sunshine of our prosperity, which inclination, however, as I shall, God willing, endeavour to show you on some other occasion, is not, more than any other moral evil, from the Eternal;* farther let us recollect, that while things pursue their ordinary course, we but seldom permit our thoughts to rise from them to the Power which directs them; that adversity is all-useful, all-valuable, to counteract the pernicious tendencies of prosperity; and then we cannot say that there is no benevolence, no mercy, or no justice in the Divine chastenings; but we shall be constrained to admit that they are as much the just recompense of our own sinful disposition and behaviour, as they are consistent with and demonstrative of the Divine perfection.

III.

We have now to consider the last topic of discourse proposed, and inquire what should be our conduct during the prevalence

* כשא' חו"ל הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים :

of this God's dread judgment upon earth. This question we shall consider,—first, in respect to ourselves; next, in respect to our fellow-man; and lastly, in respect to our Creator. And now, in respect to ourselves. The all-merciful God, my brethren, requires that we should preserve to the utmost of our ability, the life He has given us. He hath proclaimed a curse against him who taketh the life of his fellow; and also uttered his denunciations against him who presumes to shorten, either by violent means or otherwise, the brief space allotted him on earth. Hence it becomes us to adopt every human precaution, and make use of every means and remedy, that may shield us from the attacks of the fell destroyer and stay its farther progress. The members of the medical profession, both in this city and elsewhere, have, with consummate ability, foresight and care, shown us the means by which the ravages of Asiatic cholera may be checked, if not entirely stayed; and these means, being within the reach of all, it becomes us strictly and readily to use. Other duties which we owe to ourselves being intimately connected with those we owe our God, we will consider presently; let us now see what should be our conduct towards our fellow-man. To Israel, who are so strictly taught and are so religiously observant of the duties of mercy and charity, it were unnecessary to display the peculiar duties now devolving upon them as the *רחמנים בני רחמנים*; nevertheless, to you, my hearers, who thanks to Divine Providence, have but few needy brothers likely to require your assistance, it may now be proper to recall a passage in that authoritative book, the *Yad Hachasakah* of the great Moses Maimonides. The Rabbi says, “Our wise men have commanded us in respect even of heathen, that we should visit their sick, bury their dead with the dead of Israel, and maintain the poor even as we would maintain the poor of Israel.”* Now, my friends, what though there be no Hebrew brother requiring your aid, there may be a gentile brother in such need. Go then seek him, assist him to the fullest extent of your power and means, visit his sick couch, tend it carefully; and if the soul is about to free itself from the body, cheer, encourage, and sanc-

* אפילו הגויים צוו חכמים לבקר חוליהם ולקבור מתייהם עם מתי ישראל
 ולפרנס ענייהם בכלל עניי ישראל: Hilchoth Melachim, cap. 10, § 12.

tify its last moments on earth. Go, do this, notwithstanding that the sufferer dies not with the Shemang Yisrael on his lips; go, do this, the dogmas of your faith and the promptings of your nature alike command you. — We will now address ourselves to the important inquiry, as to what should be our conduct in respect to our Heavenly Father. The wisest of men has said, "In the day of adversity consider;" that is, consider whence, why, and for what purpose, it hath come upon you. We have just seen that our adversity is from Heaven, from Almighty God, who sends it when other and more gentle means fail to awaken us to a sense of our duty; that it has come upon us in consequence of our sins, and that its design is to induce us to devote a more fitting attention to matters appertaining to our salvation, and so to afford us the means for moral reformation. Our duty is then clear. It is to improve these means to the fullest extent; to "turn to Him that smiteth us," to acknowledge the justice and mercy of his decrees, and piously determine, as did David, *נפלה נא ביד ה' כירבים רחמי*, to throw ourselves on the benevolence of God, since "his mercy is great." And if such be not our determination, what will and must be the result? Surely that announced by the prophet Isaiah in these words, "Inasmuch as the people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts: therefore the Eternal will cut off from Israel, head and tail, branch and root, in one day."* My beloved hearers, let us strenuously and prayerfully exert ourselves to induce the Almighty to avert this dreadful doom from us. For although God be both merciful and gracious, He is also all-just; and although there may appear to many no indications, at present, of so dreadful a fate threatening us, the disastrous inroads of the cholera in our city having been comparatively limited, and the disease just now appearing to have been disarmed of its virulent rage, still who and where is he who shall say we are secure for the future? And, although the medical profession here, fearless of the dangers of infection, constantly and unweariedly toiled, both in mind and body, to stay the farther havoc of the disease, and, let me add, have thereby earned for themselves a reputation most honourable, as well as the gratitude of their fellow-men: still does the question irresistibly present itself, Are we secure? I answer, We are not, my

* Isaiah ix. 13.

friends, we are not, notwithstanding all the labours of love, and charity, and opulence, and skill; for, "unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth but in vain."* Never let us forget that the efficiency of all second causes is entirely dependent on the blessing of Almighty God; that to lean on the broken reed of human strength and wisdom, would be as foolish as it would be sinful, and that it becomes us to look for cure and salvation to Him who alone can cure and save. Let us then address to the Eternal our sincere and ardent aspirations, and shed before him our penitent tears. And if we desire that He should have regard to us, let us take care that our deeds correspond with our protestations. For it is only on this condition that God will listen to our prayers. When He commissioned His destroying angel to pass through the land of Egypt, He required of the Israelites an active, practical proof of their obedience. It was not enough that they promised to sprinkle the blood on their door-posts; the neglect of performing God's commands would have brought certain death into their dwellings. My friends, we are just now in a very similar position to that of our ancestors in Egypt. If we discharge, with implicit obedience, God's commands, we need not regard with fear, but with hope and resignation, the danger that threatens us. To the faithful and just man the prospect of dissolution affords no terrors, but rather an object of delightful contemplation. The minister of religion, whose duty it is to tend the last moments of the dying, will tell you that there can be no more edifying or elevating a scene, than the deathbed of the good and pious man. If, then, our homes present only so many habitations in which the name of God is glorified, and his behests performed with due obedience, we need neither fear nor tremble because the destroying angel passes over them with unsheathed sword. But if they consist of so many temples of Mammon only; of altars, whereupon Sabbath after Sabbath, and new moon after new moon, we sacrifice our holiest and highest interests to the love of gain, and this too in the worst spirit of disobedience: can we then hope to escape, seeing that God is all-just? We cannot, my friends. Oh, then be it our constant aim and employment, to prepare ourselves for that death which, if not this calamity, some other cause, must bring upon us, and perhaps, speedily and

* Psalm cxxvii.

unexpectedly; for "we cannot know what a day may bring forth." Let us remember that God delighteth not in the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn him from his evil way and live; and let us turn from our evil way that we may live, and let us strictly perform all that God hath commanded us in the sacred volume. Then, we can witness the approach of the death-angel without fear or sigh, and can smile and rejoice, even whilst he severs the thread of our mundane life, convinced that we are about inheriting an estate where death and sorrow can find no place, but where God and love alone do reign. Oh, let such be our conviction, such our sentiments at all times, and then shall we have become duly and profitably instructed by the important and gracious lessons inculcated by GOD'S JUDGMENTS ON EARTH.

Let us now prayerfully supplicate the throne of grace, and in the language which the patriarchs and prophets of old used, when they interceded for themselves and for Israel.

אנא האל הגדול הגבור והנורא • משגב לעתות בצרה •
 אנחנו עבדיך וצאן מרעיתך באנו לפניך היום • למעון ביתך
 ומקום משכן כבודך • באימה • ביראה • בלב נשבר ונדכה •
 כי נשמע גם כבי גם צעקה בבתינו • וישוד ושבד בגבולינו •
 עלה מות בחלונינו להכרית עולל מחוץ בחורים מרחבות •
 ובצרת נפשנו ידנו רפות וברכינו כושלות • אין מרפא
 ותרופה אתנו לחבש את עצבותינו • ואנחנו לא נדע מה
 נעשה כי עליך עינינו • ועל כן ה' אלהינו אנו מתפללים
 ומתחננים לפניך שתשמע ותקשיב לקול צעקתנו • אל
 נא רפא נא לנו • השקיפה ממעון קדשך מן השמים
 והצילנו מכל חלי רע מכל נזק ומכל צרה • היה לנו לצור
 מעוז ובצל כנפך תסתירנו • הבה לנו עזרת מצר • כי ירך
 ה' לא תקצר:

אלהים חיים גדול העצה ורב העליליה • אשר עיניך
 פקוחות על כל דרכי בני אדם • ידענו ה' ידענו כי אין צדק
 אתנו • כי גוי חטא ועם כבד עון אנחנו • ומכף רגלנו ועד
 ראשנו אין בנו מתם • הן ה' אלהינו חטאנו עוינו פשענו
 ותט אשרנו מני ארחך • עונותינו רבו למעלה ראש
 ואשמתנו גדלה עד לשמים • על אלה בשנו להרים פנינו

אליך ומודים אנחנו לפניך כי באמת ובצדק עניתנו וצדיק אתה על כל הבא עלינו ואנחנו הרשענו. ועתה אבינו אם אתה דן כמעשינו אויה לנו אוי לנפשנו כי אבדנו כלנו אבדנו. אכן על חסדך הגדול באמת נשעננו ושכנו היום בתשובה שלמה לפניך. כי יודעים אנחנו כי אין אתה חפץ במיתתנו. אלא רחום וחנון אתה ומרבה להטיב לכל ברואיך. כן ה' אלהינו אמרנו בלבנו נשוב מדרכנו הרעה ומן החמס אשר בכפינו וה' אלהינו בחסדיו הרבים ישוב ונחם ושב מחרון אפו ולא נאבד. אנא אלהינו אבינו אב הרחמים זכרה לנו לטובה ולחיים. קבל תשובתנו וביום נקרא מהר עננו. עננו ה' עננו ועשה למענך אם לא למעננו. כי אתה מלא רחמים ורב חסד לכל קוראיך. מהר לרפא נגענו. שובנו אלהי ישענו והפר כעסך עמנו. שוב מחרון אפך והנחם על הרעה לעמך:

ולי אני עבדך אשר נפשי נכספה וגם כלתה לחצרותיך ה' העומד היום במקדשך המעט להתפלל ולהתחנן בעד בני אברהם אברהם העומדים פה היום לפני כסא כבודך. ובעד כל ישראל סגולתך בכל מקום שהם. הטה נא אוזניך לשועתי. תנה לי נפשי בשאלתי ועמי בבקשתי. אנא ה' הכון תחנונתנו קטרת לפניך וקבל ברצון את התפלה אשר אנחנו מפילים לפניך ברוח נשברה ובתשובה שלמה. הסר תסיר ממנו כל המחלה אשר בגודל צדקך שמת עלינו. ואתה ה' אל רופא רחמן ונאמן אתה ואין בלתך היה עם כל איש ואיש אשר נדב לבם להביא למלאכת רפאות. אנא אבינו תן בלבם בינה להבין להשכיל ולהוליך המכים אשר הנגף. כם מיגונם לשמחה ומאבלם לששון. ויען כי טוב היה בעיניך ה' לקחת לך מן העם אשר אתנו אנא אבינו סלח נא והושיעה נא ובעדן תהיה מנוחתם. ה' צבאות. היה עמנו עם הבריאים והתמד בריאותנו שלא יצלח הכלי יוצר עלינו ולא יכרת ממנו איש. לא תאנה אלינו רעה ונגע לא יקרב באהלינו. כי מלאכיך תצוה לנו לשמר אתנו בכל דרכינו עד יום הגדול והנורא (ב"ב) יום אשר פרוי' ה' ישבון ובאו ציון ברנה ושמחת עולם על ראשם ששון ושמחה ישיגו ונסו יגון ואנחה. אמן:

The following is a free translation of the above prayer:—

Thou great, mighty, and tremendous God! Thou who art a safe shield in the hour of distress, we, thine unworthy servants and objects of thy tender care, approach Thee now in this thy sanctuary, with fear and trembling, yea, with hearts sorely oppressed; for, the pestilence hath gone forth, and is in our midst, and taketh from us both old and young, and there is no power nor ability with us to stay its ravages. Wherefore come we, beseeching Thee to listen to our supplications, and, O, our God, heal us now, we beseech Thee; yea, look down upon us from heaven, thy dwelling-place, hearken to our cries, and deliver us from this thy dread judgment. Spare us, O Lord, this great affliction, and cover us with the shadow of thy wing. Almighty Father, spare us, protect us, deliver us, we pray Thee, for thine hand hath not become shortened.

Everlasting God! who art of infinite wisdom and discernment, who fully knowest all the ways of the children of men, we acknowledge, O Lord, we acknowledge that there is no righteousness in us; that we are a sinful people; that we have transgressed and done abominably; that we have inclined our steps from walking in thy ways; that our trespasses have been manifold; and that the cry of our unrighteousness is so great as to reach unto heaven. And it is because we feel that we have grievously sinned, that we are now ashamed to raise our eyes to Thee, dread Judge, fearing thy just anger and punishment. We know, O Lord, that if Thou visitest us according to our works, that we are lost; but we depend upon thine infinite mercy and compassion, which, most gracious God, we implore thee to let prevail over thine attribute of strict justice, and, to this end do we present ourselves before Thee to-day, with contrite and penitent hearts; for we also know, O Lord our God, that Thou wouldst delight more in our penitence than in our death, and therefore have we determined to turn us from our evil way, and from the violence which is in our hands, that Thou mayest repent of the evil which Thou hast thought to do unto us thy people. Then accept our humiliation, we pray Thee, and grant our prayer. Hasten to heal our wounds, and turn the fierceness of thy wrath from the sons of Israel, thy chosen, for thy sake, O Lord, if not for ours.

O regard with favour the supplications which thine unworthy servant has ventured to present to Thee, on behalf of these, thy children, now standing in thy minor sanctuary, and of all thy people, wherever they be. Lord, deign that our supplications may ascend before Thee as sweet incense, and listen to our prayers with gracious favour. Remove completely from us the pestilence, with which, in the vindication

of thy justice and sovereignty, Thou hast been pleased to visit us. Be with all those who attempt to heal the wounds wherewith it doth wound us; and as Thou art the only true and faithful physician, do Thou graciously bestow on them such a spirit of knowledge and discernment, as may enable them to assuage somewhat the pains of the sick bed. Pardon, O Lord, all those whom the pestilence hath taken suddenly from us; O save them, and take them unto Thee. Continue to show thy loving kindness unto those on whom thou still bestowest the blessing of health; so that the destructive instrument formed against us may not prosper. O give thine angels charge concerning us, to guard us at all times, and speedily bring unto us that day, when "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; joy and gladness shall they obtain, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Amen.

ISRAEL'S UNION.

A VISION.

THE sun, in his purple robe, had set in the endless west,
 And night, clothed in sable garbs, had sent the earth to rest;
 In silence was all nature wrapped, a starry sky above,
 Which filled the heart with holy awe, devotion, faith, and love.
 Even the nightingale was still;
 Holiness did all nature fill.

Wrapped in deep and holy thoughts, I gazed up to the sky,
 My breast was of emotion full, I sighed and knew not why;
 When suddenly a solemn voice, so plaintive and so sweet,
 Approaching me, I knew not whence, my list'ning ear did greet.
 I looked around in the dark of night,
 And oh, what vision met my sight!

Methought I saw a female form, descending in a cloud,
 Her dress, her form, the East betrayed—she wore a mourning shroud:
 Her countenance, of beauty rare, and majesty divine,
 Had traces of misfortune's seal stamped on every line.
 Ah, ne'er shall I that face forget,
 That tearful eye when mine it met.