

1

December 29th 5Mr. Lewis Godlove,
City.

Dear Sir! I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 27th and to hand, since yesterday. I prefer answering your questions in writing, inasmuch as the points raised would, if I were to dwell on them in my next Explanatory Discourse, cause my straying from the real object of my work.

Your 1st question is: "What is the difference between a dogma and a doctrine as applied to the Jewish Religion?"

I reply to this: A Dogma is an authoritative tenet, which allows no reasoning and admits no criticism. The great Kant with his keenest of all analytical powers of the human research for truth, styles the two sides of conceiving + accepting a truth: Dogmatism & Criticism. This will clearly define also the application of the Difference ^{between Dogma & Doctrine as} to our transitory Reform-movement. For transitory it is by all means. It is going to result and must result in the establishment of a fixed and firm system of Judaism, which shall stand ^{but for a very length of time} not for ever; (for nothing in the world is immutable, except He who is, stands above, beyond and in the Centre of the Universe.) To give you a plain illustration of the Difference between Doctrine & Dogma. The Jewish Doctrine of the Messianic Hope teaches, that "the time will come when all the Children of man will worship God in truth and live together in peace". The Jewish Dogma about the same Messianic Hope Compels you to believe, that the son of David, that a ^{person, a} single individual will by a special miraculous dispensation bring about not a blood-bath of affairs. The first conception appeals to

x would compel me

(2)

with the most sublime of human ambition for the real Divine in man,
 my reason and inspires my mind, and at the same time leading me entirely
 free as to the method of the historical achievement of a historical anti-
 cipation. But, the second, ^{to} the Dogmatic Conception (or rather Article
 of Creed) I must subscribe, if I am an Orthodox Jew without
 murmur or Criticism. The Reform Jew knows no personal Messiah! —

Your 2^d question is: "Are not our National History and
 our Religion so inseparably combined, that the moment we begin to tear
 down parts of the one structure, the other is necessarily destroyed?"

Here you committed ^{of all} that biggest mistake which underlies
 the very drift of the ungodly antagonism to the Radical Reform of our
 and Country. History is not Religion. History is a Record of facts to an
 events as carried on by leading individuals and obedient masses. Religion is the
form and substance of that most subtle and spiritual ethical examination
 and Divine Providence (or rather Education) as resulting from History. The
one is the means, the other the aim! To illustrate it. Here is the Parade.
 A feast instituted of old for the Commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt.
 Do you think, that I, the Radical Rabbi, do pay less homage to the
 grand religion's result of that event in ancient Jewish History, when
 I simply celebrate it in the midst of my prayer in pure sacred joy
 and song without eating ^{the symbolic} crackers & bitter herbs? Am I, are my children
less religious, because we drink beer or golden wine during the Passover
week and eat all sorts of bread during Passover season? Do I believe
 less in the historical sacredness of the 15th of July, when you will not
 indulge (and for principles sake, not indulge) in prince crackers and doing
 all sorts of noisy and dangerous unwisdom on that National Holiday? —

3

As to destroying the religious integrity of Judaism by abandoning ^{even} once for all the last vestige of ^{old} ritualistic allusions to historical events, I will simply refer you to Lasker and Coenieur. They were both ~~expressly~~ historical, ^{they are both} immortal personages as Jews, and both of them publicly discarded almost every vestige of ritualistic Judaism, and they lived in the Old World. We here in America, ^{turn} ~~open~~ a new ^{leaf} Chapter in our History and foster a new Blossom in Religion! What is that new blossom? Here your 3^d question comes in. You ask:

"If the Mission of Judaism is to bring about the Common Brotherhood of man, if the doctrines of Judaism are the three named: Unity of God, Immortality of the soul and the binding force of the Mosaic moral Code, why not take a heroic step and become Unitarians? We would thus become a part of the Majority (represented by Christianity) instead of remaining a powerless minority daily growing weaker?"

No, my dear Brother! You are mistaken! We are not growing weaker, we daily increase in strength and influence. The pure Hebrew idea, stripped of all ritualistic ceremonies, is marching ^{steadily} ahead firmly. Christianity, in its self-constituted letter-worship and miracle-mongering, is on the wane. And even Christianity does not by any means & forces represent the majority of mankind. The Church in all her different bodies & sects stands only for about 20 per cent of all the inhabitants of the globe. There are about twice as many Jews living in the United States as there are Unitarians. Why joining the minority of the Minority?! I am ^{now} the truest friend of the Unitarian Church. I admire their independence, their courageous search after truth, their

4

broad Humanity, and indomitable intellectual Energy. I am at any
 time and in any place ready to extend ^{to} them my hand of fellowship
 and to worship with them, "our Father, who is Heaven" in the spirit and
 in truth! But I remain a Jew! I maintain with my ancestors
 whose doctrines I pursue and practice, that the salvation of the
 race is not accomplished yet, and that the messianic hopes
 of mankind are not fulfilled yet! "The grandest revelation of
 Divine grace among men is still hidden in the future and
 was not reached yet in the past!" ^{distance,} the Great Nazarene was
one of the Great ^{and destined} saviours of the Race, but ^{he is} not the Savior!
 In that belief I live and I shall die a true Jew! —
 I trust this will satisfy you ^{and satisfy anybody!}
 Yours fraternally,
 S. H. Jacobson