

take gives us two successive issues marked as chapter ten. Apart from making us realize that this is, and has to be, a casual autobiography, it seems to have no significance.

<sup>30</sup>*History of the Hebrews' Second Commonwealth*, 1880.

<sup>31</sup>*Pronaos to Holy Writ*, 1891.

<sup>32</sup>From *Die Deborah*, Vol. XLII, No. 34, February 18, 1897, pp. 4-5. Some interesting sidelights on the beginnings of the Hebrew Union College can be

seen here. Withal, it is a reminder that this must be read in the context of his *Reminiscences* and of other histories of the time.

<sup>33</sup>From *Die Deborah*, Vol. XLII, No. 38, March 18, 1897, pp. 4-5. This ends the reminiscences, as informally as they were begun. Yet, in their own way, they touch on the important aspects of Wise's life. And they leave him, at the peak of his career, surveying a past which any man might prize.

## That Ebrew Jew

BY BRET HARTE

On May 31, 1877, Joseph Seligman, a financier, was refused a room in the Grand Union Hotel at Saratoga, New York, because he was a Jew. The order against Jews had been issued by Judge Henry Hilton, administrator of the hotel for the A. T. Stewart Estate. Stewart, who had recently died, also operated a large wholesale and retail dry goods business.

The following poem, from the pen of Bret Harte, the well-known American writer, deals with the Hilton-Seligman *affaire*. Harte himself was the grandson of a New York Jewish merchant, Bernard Hart.

The poem originally appeared probably in the *Washington Capital* in June, 1877. It is here reprinted from the *Detroit Post* of July 1.

Apparently Hilton, who had no love for Jews, had no prejudice against "Hebrews," whoever they may have been. The tradesman referred to in the poem is, of course, A. T. Stewart; the lawyer is Hilton, and the "Israelite" in mind here is Seligman. Harte identified Giuseppe Verdi, the operatic composer, as a Jew. In this he was mistaken.

### THAT EBREW JEW

There once was a tradesman, renowned as a screw,  
Who sold pins and needles, and calicoes, too,  
Till he built up a fortune—the which, as it grew,  
Just ruined small traders the whole city through.

Yet one thing he knew  
Between me and you:  
There was a distinction  
'Twixt Christian and Jew.

Till he died in his mansion a great millionaire,  
 The owner of thousands, but nothing to spare  
 For the needy and poor who from hunger might drop,  
 And only a pittance to clerks in his shop,  
     But left it all to  
     A lawyer who knew  
     A subtle distinction  
     'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

This man was no trader, but simply a friend  
 Of this gent who kept shop, and who, nearing his end,  
 Handed over a million—'twas only his due,  
 Who discovered this contrast 'twixt Ebrew and Jew.  
     For he said, "If you view  
     This case as I do,  
     There *is* a distinction  
     'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

"For the Jew is a man who will make money through  
 His skill, his *finesse*, and his capital, too.  
 And an Ebrew's a man that we Gentiles can 'do.'  
 So you see there's a contrast 'twixt Ebrew and Jew.  
     Ebrew and Jew,  
     Jew and Ebrew—  
     There's a subtle distinction  
     'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

So he kept up his business of needles and pins,  
 But always one day he atoned for his sins,  
 But never the same day (for that wouldn't do)  
 That the Jew faced his God with the awful Ebrew.  
     For this man he knew,  
     Between me and you,  
     There was a distinction  
     'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

So he sold soda water and shut up the fount  
 Of the druggist whose creed was the Speech on the Mount;  
 And he trafficked in gaiters, and ruined the trade  
 Of a German whose creed was by great Luther made.  
     But always he knew,  
     Between me and you,  
     A subtle distinction  
     'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

Then he kept a hotel—here his trouble began—  
 In a fashion unknown to his primitive plan.  
 For the rule of his house to his manager ran:  
 “Don’t give entertainment to Israelite man.”

Yet the manager knew,  
 Between me and you,  
 No other distinction  
 ’Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

“You may give to John Morrissey supper and wine,  
 And Madame N. N. to your care I resign;  
 You will see that those Jenkins from Missouri Flat  
 Are properly cared for, but recollect that

Never a Jew  
 Who’s not an Ebrew,  
 Shall take up his lodgings  
 Here at the Grand U.

“You’ll allow Miss McFlimsey her diamonds to wear,  
 You’ll permit the Van Dams at the waiters to swear,  
 You’ll allow Miss Decollete to flirt on the stair,  
 But, as to an Israelite, pray have a care.

For, between me and you,  
 Though the doctrine is new,  
 There’s a business distinction  
 ’Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

Now, how shall we know? Prophet, tell us, pray do,  
 Where the line of the Hebrew fades into the Jew?  
 Shall we keep out Disraeli and take Rothschild in?  
 Or snub Meyerbeer and think Verdi a sin?

What shall we do?  
 Oh give us a few  
 Points to distinguish  
 ’Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

There was One—Heaven help us!—who died in man’s place,  
 With thorns on his forehead, but love in his face;  
 And when “foxes had holes,” and the birds of the air  
 Had their nests in the trees, there was no spot to spare

For this “King of the Jews.”  
 Did the Romans refuse  
 This right to the Ebrews,  
 Or only to Jews?