# PARLIAMENT, PRESS AND PREJUDICE

## - the 'jewish question' in britain 1890-1905 -

*A thesis by Helene Chung B.A.(Hons.)*
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This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no copy or paraphrase of material previously written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis

Helene Chung

# CONTENTS


## introduction 5

Purpose and Method, Summary of Thesis, Acknowledgements, Abbreviations,

## problem

1 THE JEWISH QUESTION 14
*the question, prejudice, press, parliament*

2 THE JEWISH TREATMENT 33
*british tradition, anti-semitism, english outlook, restriction*

3 THE JEWISH PEOPLE 62
*men, creed, race*

## attitude

4 ALIENS 88
*swarming, destitute, diseased, sweating, criminal*

5 ANTI-ALIENS 127
*conservative reform, press*

6 PRO-ALIENS 154
*liberal tradition, press*

## outcome

7 LEGISLATION 177
*parliamentary pressure, royal-commission, minority report*

8 THE ALIENS DEBATE 199
*the bills, the value, the expense*

9 THE ALIENS ACT 221
*politics, elections, liberal victory*

## bibliography 244

## who's who in parliament 252

## chronology 260

# illustrations


*"a cry from christendom" — portia as Humanity (from punch, vol. lxxxii, 28 january 1882)* 34

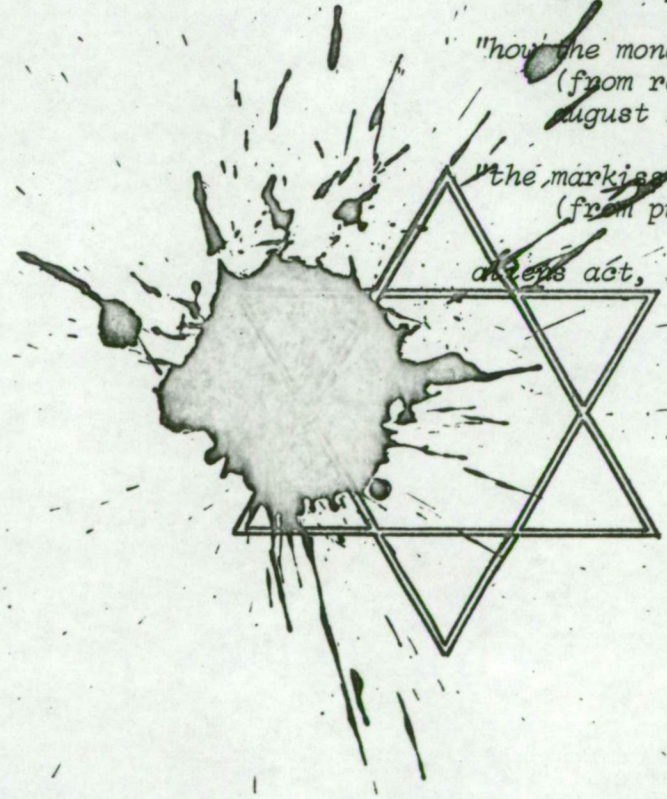
*"the evils of unrestricted immigration" (from review of reviews, vol. iii, may 1891)* 61

*map of the east end of london about 1900 showing distribution of jewish residents (from l.p. gartner, the jewish immigrant in england 1870-1914, adapted from russell and lewis by v.d. lipman)* 89

*"how the monopolist helps the anarchist" (from review of reviews, vol. x, august 1894)* 126

*"the markiss puts his foot in it" (from punch, vol. cvii, 14 july 1894* 178

*aliens act, 1905 (from public general acts)* 222

# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE AND METHOD

Any study of group relations is relevant to today. The advance in modern communications has rendered isolationism increasingly difficult. Ethnic segregation in particular is of necessity rapidly becoming a phenomenon of the past. With the present rate of population growth, the confrontation and intermixture of groups is inevitable. To a world torn by South African apartheid, the black power struggle, the Australian aborigine question and the problem of minorities in East and West, racial tensions are of special significance. Within this context 'The Jewish Question' in Britain between 1890-1905 is of interest on three levels.

In the first place, the latter part of last century saw the emergence of a virulent political anti-semitism, a prelude to that of this century. Originating in Bismarck's Germany, it reached a climax in France with the Dreyfus affair of the 1890s. Russia simultaneously inaugurated a series of bitter pogroms that directly affected Britain by compelling thousands of Jews to stream across the Continent, headed mainly towards the United States but frequently with Britain as their goal.

In the second place, this eruption of anti-semitism invigorated a renewed Zionism, determined to create a Jewish national home. With Palestine as its object, modern Zionism, inspired by Theodor Herzl and then Chaim Weizmann, met complications that germinated the present Arab-Israeli conflict. Though the most crucial events occurred after

1905, the years immediately before awakened British political interest in the movement. The assimilated Anglo-Jewry were now forced to consider the far-reaching implications of resurgent nationalism while statesmen, especially Chamberlain and Balfour, gained their first impressions of Zionism and formulated ideas for its advancement.

In the third place, an examination of British attitudes towards East European immigrants in this period throws light on the country's present situation. It was at the turn of the century that immigration became a serious political issue. The Jews who crowded into the East End of London seventy years ago met a reaction similar to that provoked by the Irish before them and the West Indians and Pakistanis today. The notable difference between the three incoming groups has been the replacement of the 'poor cousin' connotations of the Irish by the 'historical' associations of the Jews and finally, by the 'colour' of their immigrant successors. But the anti-alien propaganda in each instance has followed common patterns. Hostile natives have cited overcrowding, poverty, disease, unemployment and crime as evidence in their bombardment of Parliament and public opinion with the cry for tighter immigration control. Just as the Enoch Powell's of the 1960s deny racial discrimination, so their predecessors, the Howard Vincents and the Evans-Gordons of the 1890s, refuted the charge of anti-Jewish motivation. As the immigrants of yesteryear have become absorbed into the community, so too some recent investigations into the present problem have been optimistic.

Considerable research is currently being made in many fields of race relations, more specifically in the attitudes between indigenous

and foreign groups. The Institute of Race Relations has several publications on the question as it affects various parts of the world. Studies of the British experience itself have been conducted by J. Robb,[1] who has analysed the psychological makeup of tolerant and intolerant types; and by Sheila Patterson,[2] whose enquiry into the relationship between West Indians and the local populace of Brixton in London concludes on a comparatively sanguine note. Paul Foot[3] concentrates on the political aspects of immigration, particularly as it was exploited by Peter Griffiths in the Smethwick Elections of 1964. According to Foot, the years prior to 1905 were vital, for anti-semitism in Britain began with the adoption by the Conservatives in 1905 of the anti-alien slogans of their extremist minority.

The present work is set in the predominantly Tory Britain at the end of last century. The thesis is limited to the period from 1890 to 1905, beginning with the renewed burst of Russian persecution and ending with the Aliens Act of 1905, when Britain endorsed a measure of control which has developed into one of her most controversial policies.

Although British anti-immigrant sentiment was essentially anti-alien rather than anti-semitic, as the 1890s progressed the specific Jewish complexion of the aliens question became increasingly apparent. Since Jews constituted the bulk of incoming aliens, anti-semitism

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1 *Working-Class Anti-Semite A Psychological Study in a London Borough*, *London (Tavistock)*, *1954*

2 *Dark Strangers*, *Harmondsworth (Penguin)*, *1965*

3 *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, *Harmondsworth (Penguin)*, *1965*

inevitably coloured anti-immigrant attitudes. During Parliamentary debates on immigration, politicians cited Jews more than any other ethnic group. They interchanged the terms 'Jew' and 'alien' as though the two were synonyms. The position of the Jews, unlike that of other foreigners, provided the basis for the drafting of anti-alien legislation in 1905. The aliens problem in Britain thus grew into a version of the Jewish question. Even though anti-alien attitudes were not outright anti-semitic they were undoubtedly Jew-inspired and, to this extent, British anti-alienism developed into a mild form of anti-semitism.

Conventional economic anti-semitism played only an insignificant role. The Shylockean image of the Jew as usurer and manipulator of capital hardly featured in Britain at the time. Though established Anglo-Jewry controlled finance, they were not associated in this capacity with their poorer, immigrant co-religionists. Economic anti-semitism flourished only in the lower echelons, among native workers vieing with foreigners in the labour market, and among small shop-keepers unable to meet the alleged cut-throat competition of their Jewish neighbours.

Minor instances of racial anti-semitism sometimes arose because of the peculiar physical features of Hebrews. The growth of Zionism meanwhile enabled militant groups such as the British Brothers League to exploit the movement's concept of nationalism by stressing racial differences.

Although certain religious practices and dietary habits irritated some anti-aliens, the old form of religious anti-semitism against the

Jews as the slayers of Christ excited little interest. A new psychological form of prejudice nevertheless developed to replace it. The medieval doctrine of Jews as sorcerers in league with Satan to ruin Christiandom transformed itself into the modern secular theory that the innate power of the Jews, if unchecked, would inevitably dominate the world. In its extreme form, this belief in an international Jewish conspiracy intent upon the subjugation of the rest of mankind was embodied in fabrications like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Though Britain remained immune to this particular publication until 1920, a similar strain of irrational fear exudes from the pages of Arnold White. He predicted that their admission into Britain would result in a calamitous takeover of all positions of influence in press, politics and finance.

Despite the existence of varying degrees of many types of anti-semitism, politics afforded the root to anti-alienism in Britain. Emerging in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, political anti-semitism emanated from a post-liberal age. Throughout Europe Jews especially seemed to benefit from the fruits of democracy. After centuries of discrimination, they took every advantage of their newly-acquired freedom and so furnished a convenient target of onslaught from those opposed to the new order. Reactionaries who resented the crumbling of tradition and privilege beheld the Jews as a disruptive force. By associating the products of nineteenth century democracy with the Jews, they hoped to make modernity despised by an ill-educated electorate.

Whilst virulent political anti-semitism found a fertile home in

Germany and Austria, its moderate counterpart appeared in Britain. The country had undergone the industrial revolution, evolved the institutions of democracy, and yet was experiencing a decline in liberalism. This made possible mass appeal and platform politics, the pre-requisites of political anti-semitism. After the Boer War, unable to offer a genuine programme of social reform, the Conservatives capitalised on immigration as a potential vote-catcher. Though the Liberal Opposition foiled their electoral bid by a more positive approach, the Conservative Government, in its attempt to gain seats through an appeal to anti-alien attitudes, enacted a form of political anti-semitism.

Anti-immigrants themselves generally protested against being labelled anti-semitic. They prided themselves as broad-minded Englishmen, denounced the rampant anti-semitism of the Continent, and asserted that Britain's interests alone motivated their stand. Though their claim cannot be unquestioningly accepted in all instances, since rarely do anti-semites acknowledge the fact, their case in general must be recognised. Yet the difficulty in drawing definite distinctions between anti-alien and anti-semite is perhaps best illustrated in the character and writings of Arnold White. A friend and adviser to the famous Jewish philanthropist, Baron de Hirsh, Arnold White was both instrumental in Jewish resettlement schemes and one of the most persistent advocates of restriction in Britain. Whilst he repeatedly denied the charge of anti-semitism, his books reveal the irrational fear and xenophobia characteristic of anti-semites. The thesis nevertheless stresses the comparative mildness

of anti-semitism in Britain. It makes the fundamental point that the small band of anti-aliens were primarily anti-foreign and only secondly anti-Hebrew. Specific anti-Jewish sentiment was incidental to a climate of anti-alienism in general.

Britain's tempered view becomes even more apparent when compared with the prevailing Continental outlook on foreigners. This was the period when Russian persecution forced Jews in their thousands to seek a new life abroad, and when the anti-semitic Dreyfus scandal awakened the conscience of the world. It was above all the time of burgeoning Austrian and German anti-semitism, the development of the intellectual framework of Hitler's Nazism, which was to justify a massive extermination campaign that eliminated more than half of the total European population of Jews.

The British experience pales alongside such examples. Popular and officially sponsored anti-semitism, measured from today's criteria with Nazi Germany as a fact of history, found no place in Britain at the turn of the century. But in 1920 a suggestion of popular anti-semitism resulted from the publicity accorded *The Protocols*. *The Times*, *The Spectator* and the *Morning Post* debated the advisability of admitting Jews to full citizenship, for if a secret, all-pervading organization intent upon world domination actually existed, then every caution should be adopted. The extension of Jewish power and influence throughout the civilized world should be suppressed. Yet after a short-lived period of anxiety *The Times* was responsible for the exposition of *The Protocols* as a forgery. A centre-page publication on three consecutive days in 1921 conclusively proved *The*

*Protocols* a monstrous sham, contrived from Maurice Joly's *Dialogue aux Enfers*, an imaginary dialogue between Montesquieu and Machiavelli as the opposing forces of liberalism against cynical despotism. As far as Britain and her leading newspaper were concerned, this terminated the matter.

The aliens question in Britain was a party question. Whilst the Liberals championed the existing open-door immigration policy, Conservatives stood for restriction. Exceptions naturally occurred but Members generally adopted the official attitude of their party. More particularly, of the thirteen representatives of the East End of London, the area which housed the bulk of alien immigrants, there were nine anti-aliens — eight of whom belonged to the Conservative party, and four pro-aliens — all Liberal. The East End Jewish M.P.s divided equally for and against immigration reform, there being three Liberal pro-aliens and three Conservative anti-aliens. But of the fourteen Jewish Members throughout the country during the period, the balance clearly favoured a continuation of the open-door, with ten pro- and only four anti-aliens.

This reflected a general pro-alienism among Anglo-Jewry. At a period immediately after the reign of a Jewish Prime Minister and when respected members of established Hebrew families wielded power and influence, Anglo-Jewry advocated the existing policy. But they confronted a difficult problem, fraught with complexities unknown to the rest of the Gentile community. Torn between their allegiance as citizens of the empire with a primary loyalty to Britain, and their duty as practising Jews with a responsibility towards their suffering

co-religionists, many faced a dilemma. To some the solution lay in a tacit support of the status quo but without any active encouragement of further migration. In fact they discouraged unsuitable prospective migrants and occasionally assisted their repatriation upon arrival, or helped in a scheme of re-settlement elsewhere. But some among Anglo-Jewry offered more forthright assistance to fleeing refugees, by providing limited financial aid and temporary lodgings.

Neither the more aloof, restrained section nor the warmer, open-handed group minimised the perplexities for new settlers. Nor did they allow immigrants to rely upon charity. In some instances, a maximum of only two weeks accommodation was available, while financial benefit sometimes depended upon a prerequisite of a minimum living time in Britain. Thus the immigrants could not trust to an unlimited period of shelter, nor qualify for financial relief till after they had demonstrated their self-sufficiency for a while immediately after arrival. Despite an extensive system of Hebrew assistance, at no stage did the alien immigrant lose his sense of personal responsibility.

Most of the British press held a liberal attitude towards Emancipation and the Jews' right to equality. They sympathised with Dreyfus and joined voice in the denunciation of Russian anti-semitism. But this did not necessarily indicate a pro-alien stand on immigration at home. In general the balance of daily newspapers approved of restriction, with *The Times*, the *Standard* and the *Daily Mail* leading the anti-alien press. Their views were nevertheless counterbalanced by a comprehensive range of pro-alien publications, including dailies such as the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Daily News*,

as well as the bulk of the more thoughtful journals and reviews.

Anti-alienism in Britain was characterised only by the typical, stereotype arguments assailed against all immigrants. Firstly they were too numerous; England was overcrowded with them. Secondly they were nearly all destitute and impoverished, thus constituting an additional burden on the rates. Thirdly their disease and ill-health posed a serious threat to native hygiene standards. Fourthly they perpetuated the sweating system and displaced native workers through unfair competition on the labour market. Finally, aliens were criminals and most probably involved in deep anarchist plots. Although pro-aliens refuted these claims from the evidence, and the Report of the Royal Commission of 1902-3 constituted a monumental rebuttal of anti-alien propaganda, the debate continued.

Anti-immigrants based their demand for reform upon the fact that Britain admitted a virtual unobstructed current of aliens at a time of rigorous restriction abroad. Countries throughout Europe, the British Colonies and the United States imposed strict barriers against migrants. A series of particularly stringent measures precluded the entry of several classes of 'undesirable' immigrants into Northern America. Because of the enforcement of legislation elsewhere, restrictionists in Britain complained that they received the refuse of Europe, that England was becoming the dumping ground for the 'undesirables' of the world.

The aliens controversy centred around the question of Britain's open-door policy. Why should Britain admit aliens at a time of almost universal discrimination and exclusion? But the policy of the open-

door was enshrined in Britain's heritage, part of her glory and her pride. For centuries she had been renowned as the sanctuary of refugees, as the one place where men fleeing from religious or political persecution could find comfort and peace to live as individuals.

When in 1905 the Conservative Government adopted the views of its extremist minority by enacting anti-alien legislation, they reversed a long-standing tradition. Though the new Liberal Government of 1906 administered the Act with leniency, even to the extent of being charged with evasion, the mere passage of the Act signified a change in principle. A much-hallowed, centuries-old policy had been successfully attacked. It is this reversal of tradition which marks the strength of anti-alienism in Britain.

The move towards immigration restriction coincided with a general waning of confidence in liberal tenets, the growth of protectionism, the imperialist spirit, organised labour, scientific concepts like eugenics, and the development of social-imperialism.

The questioning of the open-door was part of a widely-based attack upon many aspects of declining nineteenth century liberalism, especially the concept of free trade, which implied the unimpeded flow not only of goods and ideas but of men. Avoiding the label 'protection', the opponents of laissez-faire insisted upon what they called 'tariff reform'. They pointed to a disintegrating economy, stiffening foreign competition and the prospect of unemployment. While European countries like Germany and Austria now challenged the home market with manufactures which had hitherto been exclusively

British-made, industry suffered a further drawback in that Britain remained the only country without protective trade barriers. Whilst admitting that foreign competition had altered the established pattern of British industry, free traders stressed the undisputed improvement in trade. Indeed British exports continued to rise until the 1st World War.

Protectionism had emerged as an explicit policy in the early 1880s with the formation of the National Fair Trade League. For some time commentators interchanged the term 'fair trade' with that of 'tariff reform'. But the movement gained in strength and organizational support when the Tariff Reform League itself was inaugurated in 1903. Ostensibly for the defence and expansion of industry throughout the empire, it was motivated by the brand of protectionism advanced by Joseph Chamberlain, and aimed particularly to convert working classes to the creed. Tariff reform would mean work for all.

The protectionist move came at the height of nineteenth century imperialism, when Britain not only held vast colonies peopled by her emigrants, but when she controlled tracts of land inhabited by underdeveloped nations. Imperialist ventures were made East of Suez under Disraeli's Prime Ministership, when Queen Victoria was named Empress of India, and in Egypt with Cromer as the all-powerful British Consul General. But the discovery of gold mines and diamond fields in the 1870s and 80s acted as the catalyst for imperialism. According to the legend of Rudyard Kipling, the British Isles, being surrounded by the seas, was driven to conquer the elements of water, wind and sun. Having achieved this goal through the invention of the ship, she was

compelled to civilize the world. It was to her that the mission of the white man's burden fell.

The liberal economist, John Hobson, regarded maladministration of wealth as the cause of imperialism. In his Marxist interpretation, he asserted that the only beneficiaries of imperialism were capitalists with idle funds, manufacturers with war materials and industrialists seeking markets. Cecil Rhodes propounded a similar yet more simple explanation. The empire to him was a question of survival. The acquisition of new lands not only provided an outlet for British goods but an area for settling the surplus population. At a time when native Englishmen were becoming disillusioned by the prospects at home, and hopes could be revived only through the allurement of distant pastures, emigration from Britain steadily increased. Throughout the period emigration far outweighed immigration. Yet the fact that so many Englishmen sought security overseas yielded a basis for anti-alien objection to the Government's acceptance of foreigners from abroad. Migrants were forcing natives out of their own land, ran the propaganda. On a more general level, the support for social homogeneity, encouraged by both Hobson and Rhodes in their different ways, strengthened feeling against alien immigration.

It has already been suggested that the numerical preponderance of Jews entering Britain transformed the aliens problem into a Jewish question. This was aggravated somewhat by the Jewish role in South African imperialism. Though Hebrew financiers were not decisive in the African venture, they were of vital importance in its early stages as middlemen through whom European capitalists invested in the gold

and diamond industries. Even when their importance fell after the turn of the century, the fact that they played any part at all in the operations of the continent excited fury among both anti-imperialists and anti-semites. The band of Jewish financiers active in the Rand were totally unconnected with immigrants then seeking refuge in Britain, yet in the mind of a prejudiced public, the association of the two constituted a further small factor to intensify any latent anti-Jewishness.

Just as Chamberlain led the move towards protectionism, he initiated imperial thought. Though he opposed religious persecution, and as Colonial Secretary was partially responsible for the British contribution to Zionism, he personally despised the Jewish race. Another conspicuous anti-alien, the most tenacious of Conservative M.P.s, Howard Vincent, also justified protectionism. He in fact embraced the doctrine long before Chamberlain succeeded in popularising it. Vincent also founded the United Empire Trade League. To both men, as to many of the opponents of laissez-faire liberalism, protectionism went hand in hand with imperialism.

Accompanying the cry for protectionism and the growth of imperialism was the emergence of organised labour. The trade depression of the 1880s, increasing industrial competition from abroad and the simultaneous lack of employment revived the sentiments of the earlier nineteenth century. In 1882 Henry Hyndman instituted the Marxist-based Social Democratic Federation. The decade also witnessed the birth of the Fabian Society under the Webbs and Bernard Shaw. In the 1890s Keir Hardie formed his Independent Labour Party, the first

popularly-based non-Marxist brand of Socialism. The merger in 1900 of the Social Democratic Federation, the Independent Labour Party and the Trade Union movement created the Labour Representation Committee, which six years later became the Labour Party. But of all the Socialist organizations, only the Socialist League of William Morris associated itself with any of the extensive number of Jewish Socialist groups.

With the acceptance of Darwinism and Spencer's concept of 'the survival of the fittest' dawned the new science of eugenics. Though opposed by traditional liberals who advocated personal liberty, it found a strong body of support among imperialists. For Benjamin Kidd, a leading British sociologist, it afforded the opportunity to extoll Teutonic racial superiority. His *Social Evolution* demands individual sacrifice in the interests of greater, national, imperial ideals. To retain her world position, Britain must improve the condition of her own people even if at the expense of other inferior nations.

The science of eugenics itself is based on the belief in the primacy of heredity over environment as a determinant of the human species. The theory was first propagated in Britain by Francis Galton, who was supported by the research of the German biologist, August Weismann. Galton's theory that the national efficiency of future generations depends upon the strict application of eugenics was endorsed by some of the leading members of the Fabian Society as well as by Karl Pearson, the barrister and academic who later held the Galton Professorship of Eugenics at the University of London. It

is not difficult to see how eugenics included a barrier against 'undesirable' aliens who might pollute the stock.

Attempts to gain protectionism were integrated with the labour movement in what is known as social-imperialism, an endeavour to build mass support for imperialism through a programme of social reform. By seducing the workers into the belief that their interests coincided with those of other classes, social-imperialists aimed at national unity, essential to the development of an overseas empire. Chamberlain accordingly maintained that the welfare of the workers depended upon the continuing strength of imperial markets. Only through the dual policy of tariff reform and imperial preference could Britain uphold her station. He stressed the necessity to purchase home manufactures as the country's prosperity lay in its industrial capacity. At the same time only imperial preference could ensure the empire's potential as a market.

Though critical of British imperialism, the leaders of Fabianism opposed liberal cosmopolitanism and lent their weight to Chamberlain's social-imperialism. Adapting themselves to the reality of the world at the turn of the century, they denounced the Boers' viewpoint as outmoded, and argued that small republics should give way to powers like Britain, with an ability to govern in the interests of civilization at large. Though most socialist bodies rejected imperialism, this small but vocal minority officially subscribed to the Conservative attitude in Bernard Shaw's tract, *Fabianism and the Empire*.

Just as imperialism divided the Socialists, it created dissention among the Liberals, though of a more serious nature. The Liberal

Opposition fell into two camps, the Liberal-Imperialists under Lord Rosebery, Sir Edward Grey, Asquith and Charles Dilke, and the Radical Anti-Imperialists under Campbell-Bannerman, Lloyd George and the majority of the Liberal Party. In rationalising the Boer War, Rosebery asserted that part of Britain's responsibility was to give the world an English-speaking complexion rather than that of other nations. It was her duty to civilization.

Both Liberal-Imperialists and Socialists converged in a demand for efficiency in their imperialist campaign. The needs of the empire could be met only through a firm basis of national fitness. The rearing of an imperial race depended upon preparedness in every respect, in the navy and militia, as well as in social reform. Out of this concerted call for efficiency grew the Coefficients Club in 1902, with members such as the Webbs, Shaw, Bertrand Russell, H.G. Wells, Leopold Amery and the Liberal-Imperialists. But although the Club united various brands of social-imperialism it failed to progress beyond the function of a dining club.

Both Liberal-Imperialists and Conservative-Imperialists stood for efficiency, the Boer War and the extension of the empire. Liberal-Imperialists personally supported Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary, and admired the work of the South African representative, Sir Alfred Milner. Yet despite their common interests, they proved insufficient to combine the two groups in opposition to the Anti-imperialist wing of the Liberal Party. Essentially the difference lay in emphasis. While Conservatives valued the position of industry despite increasing competition from manufactures abroad, Liberals

emphasised capital at the very moment when the financial importance of London was growing. The personality and interests of the leaders reflected this difference. Chamberlain the screw manufacturer from Birmingham thought predominantly in terms of industry, while Rosebery, with his connections with the Rothschild family, emphasised capital rather than productive capacity.

The most significant variance between the two lay in their stand on immigration. Whereas the Conservatives requested protection in both goods and people, the Liberal-Imperialists joined with the rest of the Liberals in upholding the laissez-faire principle of free trade, including the open-foor for alien immigrants. Even the possibility of a union between the two Imperialisms was dissipated in 1902 when Rosebery formed the Liberal League. As its President, he resolutely rejected Conservative-Imperialism as seven years lost.

The issue of free trade versus protectionism thus found supporters on both sides. The Liberal-Imperialists joined force with the Radical Anti-imperialists, the international Socialists of the Labour Party and the organised working class. On the other hand, Chamberlain's Conservative-Imperialists with a vocal segment of the Fabians demanded tariff reform and protectionism.

The fact that Liberal-Imperialists agreed with the Liberal Party rather than with the Conservatives had vital implications for the aliens issue. Though divided on the Boer War, they stood together on the policy of the open-door. Lord Rosebery in fact delivered one of the most memorable recorded defences of the status quo in his rebuttal to Salisbury's proposal for restriction in 1894. Charles

Dilke, author of imperialist literature, consistently championed the rights of refugees throughout the period. Despite the Liberal-Imperialists' hold of foreign and military power during the Liberal reign from 1906, the Radicals directed a revolutionary new programme of social reform. It was the ministry of this Government, marked by history as one of the most remarkable for the accomplishment of social legislation, which constantly battled for the continuation of the open-door. The Jewish question had threatened, though not destroyed, the British Liberal tradition.

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My principal sources have been Parliament and the press. As immigration grew into a party question, it featured with increasing prominence in the Parliamentary debates. As well as Hansard, the Sessional Papers and the Journals of both Houses, I have used the contemporary press, both as a commentary on Parliamentary proceedings and as a reflexion of attitudes outside Westminster. The sources have been mainly two representative compendiums, the popular weekly *Public Opinion* and the more discriminating monthly of W.T. Stead, *Review of Reviews*. With their divergent styles and appeal, the selections of each together cover an extensive range of specialised journals, general periodicals and innumerable newspapers. They thus embrace almost all the themes pertinent to the Jewish question in Britain.

The BIBLIOGRAPHY falls into three categories: reference, primary or contemporary — Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary — and secondary.

Because of the vast number of M.P.s who contributed to the aliens discussion, I have prepared a WHO'S WHO IN PARLIAMENT, which is restricted to Parliamentary figures and their political activity. All non-Parliamentary individuals as well as the non-political activity of Parliamentarians is, where necessary, covered in the text itself or the footnotes. The distinction between pro- and anti-aliens has been based on their speeches, votes in Parliament or activity outside the House. Where Members have revealed an ambiguity in attitude, I have classified them either pro- or anti-alien according to their overall position throughout the period, the stand finally adopted or according to views expressed after 1905.

SUMMARY OF THESIS

Part One attempts to outline the PROBLEM, for despite formal Emancipation, 'The Jewish Question' persisted in Britain in the 1890s. The term 'alien' was synonymous with 'Jew'. A prejudice clouded the attitude of natives towards the East European immigrants, whose forebears had recorded a long and chequered history in their country. At the same time, proud of Britain's heritage as the land of freedom, statesmen denounced the rampant anti-semitism of the Continent. But a comparison between their lenient immigration policy with the austere regulations governing 'The Jewish Treatment' elsewhere posed the question: was Britain therefore the dumping ground for the 'undesirables' of the world? "The Jewish People" considers the Jews themselves and the sometimes tenuous but insoluble bond uniting established Anglo-Jewry with their immigrant brethren. The dilemma confronting the former as individuals, in their religion and in their approach to Zionism, was reflected in Parliament and the Hebrew press.

Part Two, on the clash of ATTITUDE to the problem of immigration, is an analysis of conventional anti-alien warfare. The stereotype propaganda against "Aliens" alleged overwhelming numbers, poverty, disease, displacement and crime. All serious charges, they were either found exaggerated or misleading or they simply evaporated under scrutiny. "Anti-aliens" and "Pro-aliens" concentrates on the leaders of the campaign, in which traditional party roles were reversed, for Conservatives usually advocated reform while Liberals upheld the status quo. Although the Unionist Government showed initial reluctance to accept the anti-immigrant allegations, they

ultimately fought for legislation. On the Opposition side, whilst some voted with the Government, the controversy gained virtual unanimity of support for tradition. Whereas the daily newspaper press divided between pro- and anti-alienism, with *The Times* leading Conservative opinion, the thoughtful journals fell more heavily towards the Liberal cause.

The OUTCOME of this conflict in attitude was firstly, intense and constant pressure for "Legislation"; secondly, "The Aliens Debate" which disrupted the Sessions of 1904 and 1905; and thirdly, "The Aliens Act" of 1905. The issue was raised each year from 1890, the agitation being excited primarily by Howard Vincent; and from 1898 by Evans-Gordon, whose East End constituency housed the majority of Jewish immigrants. Despite a barrage of questions, Amendments to the Address and four proposed Aliens Bills, the Government failed to implement restriction. Only in desperation did they finally decide to appoint a Royal Commission in 1902, almost as a pact with their resolute extremists. In a tacit agreement, the anti-aliens undertook to quieten their efforts on the understanding that legislation would result from the Royal Commission.

After what appeared to be an interminable delay, the Commissioners eventually presented a Report of over a thousand pages. It constituted a positive exoneration of Jews from the impeachment of anti-aliens, yet recommended control of the most stringent nature. This contradictory character was mirrored by the Commission's chairman, Lord James of Hereford who, before the House of Lords, refuted charges of Jewish destitution and crime yet voted for restriction.

After years of vacillation, the Government seized the aliens question to introduce reform — on the eve of the Elections. With the force of the 'guillotine,' they carried a Bill to establish elaborate and expensive machinery that opponents demonstrated would be futile in excluding the worst 'undesirables', but which would inevitably operate against Jewish refugees, the bulk of alien immigrants.

The General Elections of 1906 nevertheless proved an outstanding vindication of Liberal pro-alienism. With one exception, East End reformers were rejected for the guardians of tradition. The new Liberal Ministry was now compelled to administer an Act with few genuine supporters — principally the outcome of a political manoeuvre by a defunct Conservative regime.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

In the footnote references throughout, I have used these abbreviations:

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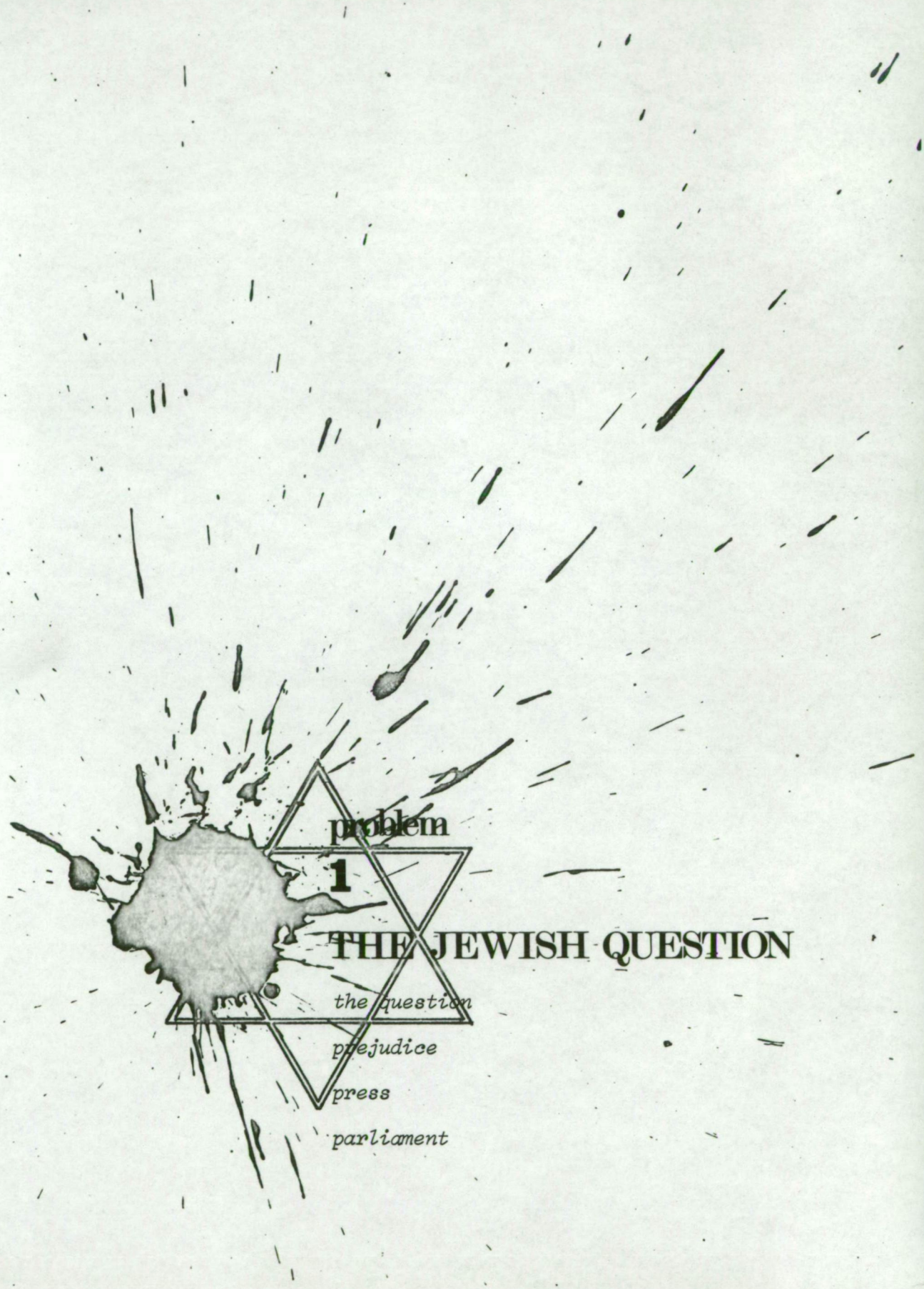
| C. | Conservative or Unionist |
| H | Hansard's Parliamentary Debates |
| HC | House of Commons |
| HL | House of Lords |
| JHC | Journals of the House of Commons |
| JHL | Journals of the House of Lords |
| Lab. | Labour |
| L. | Liberal |
| L.U. | Liberal Unionist |
| N. | Nationalist |
| PO | *Public Opinion* |
| R. | Radical |
| r | Reading of Bill |
| RR | *Review of Reviews* |
| SP | Sessional Papers |


problem
1
THE JEWISH QUESTION
the question
prejudice
press
parliament

THE QUESTION

Emancipation failed to solve the Jewish question. While the Act of 1858 gave Anglo-Jews legal equality with their social peers, it made little impact upon the Russian Hebrews who streamed into Britain at the end of the century. If any alien problem perturbed the 1890s it was undoubtedly Jewish. In the first place, immigration from Eastern Europe increased; secondly, the term 'alien' became synonymous with 'Jew'; and thirdly, in the debates preceding the Aliens Act 1905, Jewish refugees excited more controversy than any other ethnic group.

Nineteenth century immigration waves generally moved from East to West, from Europe and Russia to the United States and Britain. Acceptable in principle, the practice was challenged as the rate of growth intensified.[1] Between 1861-81 the total population of England and Wales increased by 20%, while the total foreign population rose by 40%.[2] Within the alien population, the number of Europeans grew by 38%, while Austrian, Hungarian, Russian and Polish immigrants increased by 135%. Between 1881-1901 the total population of the United Kingdom expanded by 19% while the aliens multiplied by 112%.[3] In the final two decades the percentage of foreigners to the total population moved from 0.39% to 0.58% to 0.68% in 1901. At the beginning of the century Russians and Poles constituted 33% of the

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1 *See "Swarming" in Chapter 4*

2 *Rep. Sel. Cttee. on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners), SPHC, X, 8 Aug 1889 (Cd. 311), p. 271*

3 *Rep. Roy. Com. on Alien Immigration, SPHC, IX, 10 Aug 1903 (Cd. 1741, 1742, 1741-1, 1743), p. 14*

alien populace.

Russian immigration was almost entirely Jewish. The Russians themselves are not an emigrating people and until the outbreak of anti-semitism in the 1880s, emigration from the Far East was negligible. The Tzarist government not only disagreed with emigration but actively discouraged it through legal penalties. Immigration statistics moreover varied according to the degree of anti-Jewish persecution. The passage of Russians to the United States for example was barely noticeable. Between 1861-71 only about 300 entered annually. In the next decade this rose to almost 24,000 until by 1892, 79,000 Russians each year sought their fortune in the new land.[4] Within thirty-one years Russian nationals in the United States numbered more than 360,000, of whom more than 300,000 arrived in the eleven years from 1881, the beginning of Russian pogroms.[5] Residential restrictions, occupational and religious prohibitions as well as other partisan legislation made expatriation the only possible fate for thousands of Russian Jews, who found their way to the States, the Colonies and Britain.

The term 'alien' became interchangeable with 'Jew'. As one paper wrote: *"Disguise it how we may, the bulk of our alien immigrants are of the Jewish faith, and the question is essentially a Jewish question."*[6] In Parliament, Liberals were aware of the anti-

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4 *1861-71 314; 1871-81 23,865; 1881-92 79,294; Rep. Alien Immigration, SPHC, LXXI, 30 Jun 1893 (Cd. 7113), p. 273*

5 *364,119; 317,948*

6 *The Shoe and Leather Record in PO, LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 228*

semitism underlying the gathering campaign against aliens. *"The Russian Jews...are...the whole people against whom this agitation is directed,"* claimed one M.P.[7] *"The foreigner is a Jew for the most part,"* asserted another.[8] But their opponents emphatically denied racialism, insisting that 'alien' embraced all non-British immigrants. It was "a great mistake" to describe supporters of anti-alien legislation as anti-Jewish.[9] Evans-Gordon, the spearhead of anti-alien propaganda, nevertheless admitted that whilst London was infested with the "scum of all nations," Jews were central to the debate.[10]

They certainly predominated as the victims or villains in the anti-alien drama at the turn of the century. In introducing the Aliens Bill of 1905, Prime Minister Balfour referred to them specifically and at length. He failed to understand Jewish opposition to immigration restriction and tried to assure the advocates of the open door: *"I cannot imagine anything more disastrous than that any legislation by this House...shall attempt to join...with the bigotry, the oppression, the hatred of the Jewish race."*[11] Though British anti-alienism may not have been outright anti-semitic, it was positively Jew-inspired. Almost to refute the accusation, the three-man Board of Appeal envisaged by the Aliens Bill included a representative of the Jewish Board of Guardians. In fact the initial description of

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7 *Dilke, H 4th, CXXXII, 29 Mar 1904, p. 994*

8 *Atherley-Jones, H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 792*

9 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1110*

10 *ibid., 25 Jun 1904, p. 1087*

11 *ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 795*

the Board distinguished only this one member.[12]

The aliens or Jewish question gained in momentum throughout the 1890s. Constant questions and frequent Bills plagued Parliament. Once mounted, the anti-alien campaign forced the Government to surrender. In 1905 it formed the principal legislation proposed in the King's Speech.

PREJUDICE

Prejudice inevitably coloured the attitude of both politicians and the press. Their outlook on the Jewish question was conditioned by conventional stereotype. Society in general held certain preconception while both anti-aliens and pro-aliens used stock arguments in Parliament. At the same time Russian anti-semitism, the most extreme form of prejudice, precipitated the aliens question in Britain and so bred the racial tensions of today.

English literature has consistently fostered Jewish stereotypes. The worldly Jew, the intellectual, the stage villain and the romanticised good-doer prevailed until the eighteenth century.[13] Then they were joined by newer types, the peddler, the Hebrew hero or heroine and the realistic Jewess. The epitome of these models, Shylock combines many of their hackneyed features. An exotic, hook-nosed, swarthy usurer, he is familiar with the ways of the world, has some

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12 *ibid., 18 Apr 1905, p. 467*

13 *Modder, M.F., The Jew in the Literature of England to the end of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia (The Jewish Publication Society of America), 1939, passim*

intellectual pretensions and, whilst being the incarnation of evil, is genuinely fond of his daughter. Fagin also conforms to this pattern of the gesticulating, fawning, bowing and scraping Israelite. The possible danger of such literary conventions is intimated by E. Rosenberg, when he states they *"may exist independently of historical changes and often in the very teeth of historical change."*[14] Unlike their fictional counterparts, nineteenth century Jews in Britain and wherever else possible adapted themselves to their environment and became assimilated with the community.

Stereotype attitudes nevertheless persisted. Jews were accredited with intense physical ugliness and with overwhelming mental prowess. Commentators noted an unusual degree of deformity among Jews.[15] Anti-semites claimed that with the era's preoccupation with beauty and aesthetics came added repugnance towards the Jews, the personification of ugliness.[16] Others felt threatened by their insidious intellectual strength. Without immigration control, they foresaw *"the certainty of the Jews becoming stronger, richer, and vastly more numerous,"* with an inevitable predominance in public life.[17] Arnold White for example, though shocked by Russian anti-semitism, justified repression on the grounds of Jewish superiority. Were the laws repealed, he believed that *"eight years would not pass*

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14 *From Shylock to Svengali Jewish Stereotypes in English Fiction, Stanford (Stanford Uni. Press), 1960, p. 10*

15 *Leroy-Beaulieu in RR, IV, Aug 1891, p. 152*

16 *'Philo-Judaeus' in PO, LXXVI, 29 Sep 1899, p.392*

17 *White, A., The Modern Jew, London (Heinemann), 1899, p. xiii*

*before every post worth having outside the army and navy would be filled by an official of the Hebrew faith."*[18]

Examples of popular prejudice abounded. Depicted on the players' board of a Victorian parlour game was a villainous-looking bearded Jew with bulging money-bags. These were central to the game, as the object of each player was to conceal the bags with his counters.[19] Jews suffered further disquiet from early editions of Webster's Dictionary, which defined the verb 'to jew' as *"to cheat, to play with, etc."* On the request of several influential men, it failed to appear in later editions. As it expired however, the word had no racial connections but was derived from the French 'jeu' and 'jouir', and subsequently corrupted to 'jew'.[20]

In official circles, politicians fought with the weapons conventionally used against invading aliens. The Jews, they claimed, were destitute, diseased and criminal. They took the jobs of honest Englishmen and disgusted the populace with their foreign habits. As the imperial jingle rang: *"The English, the English, the English are best! I wouldn't give twopence for all of the rest!"* It was almost blasphemous for the Liberal M.P., Charles Dilke, to suggest that immigrants were *"not of a stock inferior to our own."*[21] When he claimed that *"they are of a stock which, when it mixes with our own in course*

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18 *RR, V, May 1892, p. 481*

19 *Henriques, U.R.Q., "The Jewish Emancipation Controversy in Nineteenth Century Britain" in* <u>*Past and Present*</u>*, no. 40, Jul 1968, pp. 128-46*

20 *PO, LXXIV, 30 Dec 1898, p. 862*

21 *H 4th, CXXXII, 29 Mar 1904, p. 995*

*of years, goes rather to improve than to deteriorate the British race,"* he was overwhelmed by Ministerial cries of "Oh!"

Jews were attacked both as money-grabbing capitalists and as subversive communists. A typical case history was that of a destitute alien who, after a few years thrift, purchased a furniture factory, equipped it with modern machinery and employed about three thousand workers, mostly non-Jews. Through personal effort his London business gradually acquired an enormous export trade. According to an official Report of 1894: *"The same individual within a few years excites the hostility of his English neighbours for his pauperism and their indignation for his wealth."*[22] But antagonism was not confined to the anti-alien lobbies. John Burns for instance, one of the most ardent supporters of pro-alienism, combined sympathy for the poor Jew with the anti-semite's hatred of his rich brother.[23]

Anti-semitism was the most blatant manifestation of anti-Jewish prejudice. Its most extreme form in the late nineteenth century emanated from Eastern Europe and parts of the Continent.[24] The malady affected Britain in two ways. Firstly, the severity of Russian policy provoked migration on a grand scale and hence furnished the seeds of the aliens problem. Secondly, anti-alien agitation was infused with varying degrees of anti-semitism. Though most advocates of restriction were basically anti-alien rather than specifically anti-Jewish, anti-semitism as such emerged from their stereotype

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22 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1905, p. 1071*

23 *ibid., p. 1158*

24 *See "Anti-semitism" in Chapter 2*

judgements and from their earnest denial.

Many aspects of anti-semitism permeated the period. The Jews' alleged financial agility aroused envy. Some contemporaries considered that the Jewish question was inherently economic, a drive for freedom from alien usury and domination.[25] Others stressed racial origins, and noted the distinctive peculiarities in skin colouring and facial features.[26] Possibly the oldest form was religious, the assault upon the Jews as the slayers of Christ. As late as the 1890s, Britain reported Continental fabrications of ritual murder.[27] A psychological stimulus to anti-semitism accompanied the discovery of a Jewish world conspiracy, which explained the French Revolution and all its consequences.[28] But of paramount significance was political anti-semitism.

The product of a post-liberal age,[29] political anti-semitism found encouragement in the conditions of late nineteenth century Britain. The country had experienced the industrial revolution, developed a democratic framework and, though not anti-liberal, was

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25 *Smith, G., "The Jewish Question" in Essays on Questions of the Day Political and Social, London (Macmillan), 1894, pp. 241-82; The Money Lenders Act 1900 stipulated the registration of money lenders, though the Board of Inland Revenue declared their intention to ignore it. The question of usury was relatively unimportant in the debates.*

26 *White, A., p. 3*

27 *PO, LXXVII, 9 Mar 1900, p. 307; See "British Tradition" in Chapter 2*

28 *RR, V, May 1892, p. 481; Cohn, N. in de Reuck, A. & Knight, J. (ed.), Caste and Race: Comparative Approaches, London (J. & A. Churchill Ltd.), 1967, pp. 240-54*

29 *Pulzer, P.G.J., The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria, New York (John Wiley), 1964, p. 293ff.*

approaching a decline in liberalism.[30] Its institutional strength permitted the operation of platform politics and mass appeal, two pre-requisites for political anti-semitism. At a time of extraordinary immigration, with the Conservative Government incapable of offering a positive social programme, restrictive legislation was seized upon as a popular issue.

PRESS

The press expanded in the final decades of the century, as newspapers became a major industry controlled by great commercial corporations. More than anything else, the abolition of the Stamp Tax in 1855 and of the Paper Duty in 1860 facilitated the emergence of cheap dailies. Technology, increased literacy and a new economic basis furthered the process. While printing techniques improved, the German Jew, Paul Julius Reuter,[31] introduced his telegraphic services into Britain in the fifties. The 1870 Education Act enlarged the literate public. Newspapers appealed to those who could read at all, not necessarily to those for whom reading was a literary or intellectual pleasure. At the same time advertising assumed novel dimensions as the financial guardian of the press.

From the 1820s the middle classes had been served only by the Sunday papers, with their 'common' style, quick summary of the week's news and lively stories of human interest. Now they were attracted

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30 *Dangerfield, G., The Strange Death of Liberal England, New York (Capricorn), 1961 (1st pub. 1935), passim*

31 *Naturalised British subject in 1851*

by the revolutionary cheap dailies, which multiplied in number and sales at a phenomenal rate. The Sunday press nevertheless retained its lead well into the twentieth century. In 1920 they sold thirteen million copies, almost two and a half times more than the total daily newspapers. While *The Times*[32] and *The Spectator*[33] upheld the dignity of the British press, a type of capsule literature infected the public. Readers were fed on 'tit-bits' of information.

In October 1861 a new weekly compendium announced its intention to be the *"mirror of Public Opinion....indispensable to every class of readers."*[34] It aimed to cover every shade of opinion on political, social and commercial matters of importance. Most material was derived from a remarkable range of published newspapers and reviews, although some original writing — such as book notes and comments — appeared. Letters to the editor revealed a keen interest in topics of the day. *Public Opinion* sometimes published segments from another abstract, *Review of Reviews*.

The brainchild of W.T. Stead, this latter publication had a more manifest policy. Its opening number in January 1890 described its object as an impartial resume of periodical literature, to enable everyone to be acquainted with the best thoughts of wisest minds. Each issue comprised an editorial survey of the domestic and foreign scene, a list of important journals and books with their prices, a

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*32 Began as* <u>*The Daily Universal Register*</u> *in 1785*

*33 Weekly periodical from 1828, to be distinguished from the 18th cen. periodical of Steele and Addison*

*34 PO, I, 5 Oct 1861, p. 1*

condensed novel and a character-sketch of some prominent contemporary. Though *Public Opinion* was equally comprehensive, it lacked the avowed serious and edifying purpose of *Review of Reviews*. A weekly, more popular paper, *Public Opinion* left its editor unnamed and virtually anonymous.[35] On the other hand, the monthly *Review* was obviously under the vigilant direction of W.T. Stead.

From his inaugural exaltation of imperialism and salute to English-Speaking Men, the editor thrust his personality upon readers. They were consciously guided by him not only in his editorial "Progress of the World", but in his selection of articles and the moral bias of his character-sketches. Stead believed in Englishmen as the leaders of mankind, the race with a mission in life. While he aggrandised the concept of empire, he stood for democracy in colonial administration and at home fought for the amelioration of the people. An energetic man, he involved himself in innumerable causes — Russian refugees, the Salvation Army, the British navy, Cecil Rhodes, pacifism, female amancipation and spiritualism. He was immersed in the world of journalism, being at various times editor of the *Northern Echo* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*, as well as founder and editor of the successful *Review of Reviews*[36] and less successful *Daily Paper*. A flamboyant radical, he was among the first of the 'yellow'[37] journalists.

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*35 P. White 1880-90, P. Fisher from 1890*

*36 A. Shaw edited a subsequent American edition*

*37 The term derived from appearance in 1895 of issue of New York World, in which a child in a yellow dress — "The Yellow Kid" — was the central figure of the cartoon, this being an experiment in colour printing to attract purchasers.*

Until his death in the *Titanic* disaster in 1912, Stead wielded considerable influence as an active social commentator.

While the quality of his journal was undoubted, its objectivity was occasionally open to question. A man of stern morality, he upheld the inherent wickedness of theatrical personalities, organised a sensational exposure of juvenile prostitution and wrote a five hundred-page, fifty cent book, *If Christ Came to Chicago*.[38] This moral righteousness prompted him to present for example a disparaging account of the life of Sir Charles Dilke, one of the foremost pro-aliens of the period. According to Stead, Dilke's alleged private immorality demanded his banishment as a public figure.[39]

In some respects the *Review of Reviews* was the organ of restrictive legislation. To preserve and extend the English-speaking race, it pressed for knowledge of the language as a requirement for immigration. It deplored the *"non-English Canker"* at the core of the empire, and detested Britain's role as *"the dumping-ground for the overflow of the Ghettos of Europe...undesirable Continental outcasts ....To put it on the lowest ground,"* explained the editor, *"we are stocking the ancient breeding-place of our Imperial family with a mongrel horde of semi-Asiatics who cannot speak our language, who do not understand our laws, and who have no part in our civilization."*[40]

The difference between *Review of Reviews* and *Public Opinion* was

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38 *Smith, W.S., The London Heretics 1870-1914, London (Constable), 1967, pp. 260-4*

39 *RR, VI, Aug 1892, pp. 127-41*

40 *ibid., III, May 1891, p. 422*

shown by their divergent outlook on the writer Hall Caine[41] and his relationship with the Jewish community. When Caine made a visit to Russia, the *Review* commented: *"The Jews, bethinking themselves of the wisdom of keeping their grievances before the world, have despatched Mr. Hall Caine, the well-known English novelist, to Southern Russia, for the purpose of getting up some local colour for a romance which they hope will be the* Uncle Tom's Cabin *of the Russian-Jewish controversy....whether...a masculine Mr. Beecher Stowe...is calculated to lead to good results is open to question."*[42] A year later, when Caine spoke to East End Jews one Sunday night, *Public Opinion* reported with more sympathy. It said that audience reaction to the speaker's narrative, *"Scenes on the Russian Frontier,"* indicated a *"depth of feeling that will surely some day take a more practical form than mere inactive sentiment."*[43]

Despite Stead's own anti-immigrant proposals, he rejected the restrictive legislation of Parliament. His compendium generally gave as fair a coverage in quantity and attitude to the Jewish question as *Public Opinion*. One edition devoted three entire pages to the problem. In view of the nature of the publication, these six columns represented considerable space, while the subject matter embraced the whole spectrum of thought from Jewish pro-alienism to English anti-semitism.[44] Though the editor's views permeated its

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41 *1853-1931, author of* The Bondman, The Christian, The Eternal City, The Prodigal Son *and others*

42 *RR, IV, Nov 1891, pp. 442-3*

43 *PO, LXII, 16 Dec 1892, p. 791*

44 *Contributors included Baron Hirsch, Rev. S. Singer, M. Leroy-Beaulieu, Cyrus Hamlin, Major Conder and Arnold White: RR, IV, Aug 1891, pp. 150-2*

pages, *Review of Reviews* sought to meet its own challenge to *"endeavour without fear or favour, without political prejudice or racial intolerance, to represent the best that is said on all sides of all questions."*[45]

Russian pogroms of the nineties outraged almost the entire British press. In a voice they denounced this renewed burst of anti-semitism. Periodicals like *Blackwood's Magazine* and the *Fortnightly Review*[46] joined with the Conservative anti-alien *Times* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*[47] and the Liberal pro-alien *Daily Telegraph* and *The Daily News*[48] to condemn this vicious persecution, this "revolting incarnation of cruelty." They demanded diplomatic intervention in the name of common humanity. Echoing this indignation, the London evening *St. James's Gazette* nevertheless observed that of the four million Russian Jews, about a quarter would be compelled to flee. It sympathised with the Jewish predicament but queried the refugees' destination and warned that *"any attempted migration of pauper Jews to England on an enormous scale would have to be prevented."*[49]

PARLIAMENT

Conservative rule prevailed in the 1890s. The Liberals enjoyed but one brief, three-year interlude when Gladstone, under the cloud of

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45 *RR, I, Jan 1890, p. 14*

46 *ibid., II, Oct 1890, p. 350*

47 *PO, LVIII, 1 Aug 1890, p. 129*

48 *ibid., 8 Aug 1890, p. 160*

49 *ibid., 1 Aug 1890, p. 129*

the Parnell case, returned by a slender victory[50] for his fourth administration from 1892 to 1894, when Lord Rosebery assumed power. For the rest of the period, Salisbury[51] and then his nephew Arthur Balfour[52] led a Unionist Government.

The Boer War, education and religious problems, the development of Labour and the tariff question dominated the political scene. Immigration fell into the category of social legislation and was eventually incorporated into a spurious programme of social reform. Whenever raised in Parliament, it impelled investigation into a range of topics, the principle of religious and political asylum, Britain's tradition as a retreat for refugees and the effects of sanction upon the native poor.

The aliens question undoubtedly became a party question. While the two Conservative Prime Ministers adopted an anti-alien attitude, both Gladstone and Rosebery opposed restriction. Their conflicting views became apparent in 1894 when, during Rosebery's premiership, Salisbury introduced an Aliens Bill into the House of Lords, only to have it rejected by the Liberal Earl. Though Gladstone relinquished his seat in 1895, his pro-alien stand was upheld not only by his party but also by his son Herbert, who became Home Secretary in 1906. As such, the younger Gladstone endeavoured to maintain the practice of asylum despite the Tory Act of 1905. In a similar way, Arthur

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50 *1892 Elections: L. - 273, N. - 81, C. - 268*

51 *1895-1902, 1895 Elections: L. - 177, L.U. - 71, N. - 82, C. - 340*

52 *1902-5*

Balfour continued the policy of his uncle until the country imposed immigration control.

Most M.P.s followed the party line, anti-aliens being predominantly Conservative and pro-aliens Liberal. As Jewish immigrants tended to congregate in the East End of London, representatives from these constituencies held the most significant vote. Of the thirteen East End Members, Conservative anti-aliens outnumbered Liberal pro-aliens. Altogether there were nine anti-aliens — eight Conservative and one Radical[53] — and four pro-aliens — all Liberal.[54]

Although the six East End Jews divided their support evenly, according to party affiliation, the general Jewish outlook was pro-alien and politically Liberal. Of the fourteen vocal and professing Hebrew M.P.s throughout the period,[55] ten favoured the open door and four restriction. While the pro-aliens comprised seven Liberals[56] and three Conservatives (including one Liberal Unionist),[57] all four anti-aliens belonged to the Government side.[58]

In the early years, the Liberal creed of laissez-faire — free trade and the free flow of goods, men and ideas — sustained pro-alienism, but as the decade passed a resolute protectionist lobby

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53 *C. - Colomb, Dewar, Evans-Gordon, Isaacson, Lawson, Ridley, Ritchie and H.S. Samuel; R. - Buxton*

54 *Bryce, Montagu, S.M. Samuel and Straus*

55 *They did not all hold seats simultaneously.*

56 *East End Members: Montagu, S.M. Samuel and Straus; Non-East End Members: Herschell, Isaacs, N.M. (Lord) Rothschild and H.L. Samuel*

57 *Goldsmid, F.J. Rothschild and L.W. Rothschild (L.U.)*

58 *East End: C. - Isaacson, Lawson and H.S. Samuel; Non-East End: C. - Cohen*

gathered strength. It ostensibly sought to save the British worker from inundation by the "dustheap of Europe".[59] Fear of wholesale invasion grew as exaggerated reports of migration flooded the press and infiltrated Parliament. The Conservatives were uncertain. They agreed to scrutinise rumours and check statistics, but in general displayed tolerance and claimed there was no cause for alarm. This failed to satisfy the anti-aliens who demanded remedial action rather than mere submission.

In response, the Government simply pointed to the Report of the Select Committee of 1888/9,[60] but this offered no solution.[61] Firstly, it stated the impossibility of obtaining accurate immigration statistics. Secondly, it examined the types and occupations of aliens in the United Kingdom. Finally, it made five recommendations: it called for more exact and frequent alien returns; stipulated that records be kept at every port; that all passengers without 'through' tickets be registered; that British consuls abroad be instructed to collect relevant information; and drew attention to the difficulties of enforcing immigration restriction. But while the Select Committee was not prepared to recommend legislation in the late 1880s, it contemplated "the possibility of such legislating becoming necessary in the future."

This final clause haunted the Government throughout the nineties

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59 *H 3rd, CCCXLV, 3 Jul 1890, p. 636*

60 *Members in 1888 included: Colomb, Marriott, Montagu, Lord Rothschild, S. Smith, Tanner and Cremer; In 1889: the above plus Long and Vincent*

61 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1889, pp. 265-403*

into the new century. It was quoted with monotonous frequency by the anti-aliens and vehemently defended by their opponents. At first reluctant, the Conservatives could not forever evade the question posed by their extremist minority: had the time foreseen by the Select Committee arrived?

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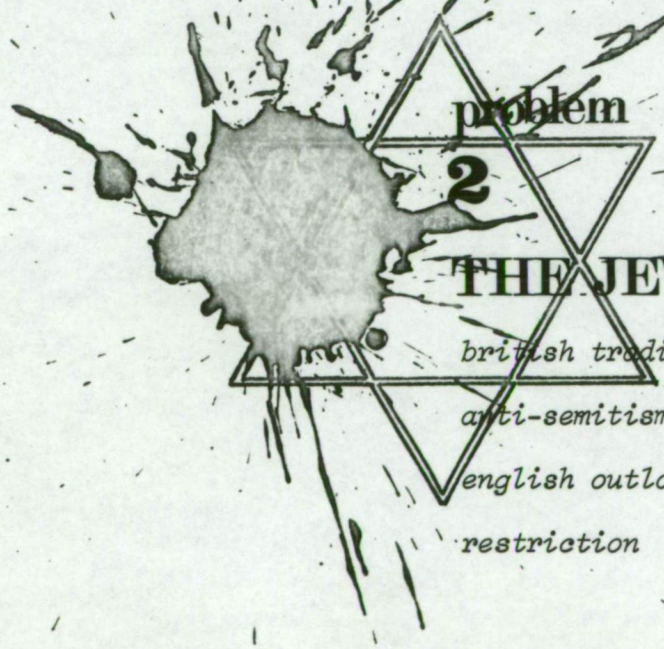
Despite the Emancipation Act of 1858, the Jewish question in Britain grew rather than diminished with the stream of East European immigrants at the end of the nineteenth century. Met by a prejudiced attitude from all sides, the new settlers encountered bitterness and resentment from hostile natives whilst being placed in a special category by tolerant pro-aliens, who stressed the Jews' historical role as the persecuted race. Although the British press in general decried blatant Continental anti-semitism, it foresaw the difficulties and intimated the dangers of increased immigration. Ultimately unable to offer any genuine social reform and constantly plagued by demands from their protectionist minority, the Tory Government detected in the aliens question an expedient political issue.



problem

2

# THE JEWISH TREATMENT

*british tradition*

*anti-semitism*

*english outlook*

*restriction*

6711148

## A CRY FROM CHRISTENDOM.

WHOSE ear is so dull in its deafness, whose heart is so callous and cold,
As to turn from the cry of the wronged, ringing forth as so often of old,
Though uplifted by alien lips?
Or what matter whence under Heaven the piteous plaint cometh forth;
As of late from the plains of the East, as to-day from the snows of the North,
Sable-shadowed with Hate's dark eclipse?

Stay question of race or of creed, let the spirit of Party shrink mute,
Whilst a greater than it standeth forth, and espouseth the suppliant's suit
In imperative accents and stern;
For the things that are told in her ears, and in ours, are the records of shame,
Black stories of slaughter and lust, make the cheek of the coldest to flame,
And the heart of the gentlest to burn.

"*Hep! Hep!*"—the old cry has gone forth, and the Hebrew is hounded again,
In the name of the Cross. Can it be that its tenderest teachings are vain,
Where its merciful rule is men's boast?
Oh, out on the Tartuffes of Creed! Let the Spirit of Christendom speak
Plain words of unfaltering truth for the cause of the helpless and weak,
In the teeth of brute Tyranny's host.

For the wise of the earth are but fools, and its mighty but little of soul,
The Teuton's grim truculent Chief, striding on to his much-desired goal,
Would trample a people as dust;
And the Muscovite, mouthing the name of humanity, closes his ears
To the wails from the homes he has wrecked, to the pleadings of women in tears,
From the revels of murder and lust.

No respecter of race or of faith, let Humanity lift up her plea,
Like a *Portia* who pleads *for* the Jew, since the wronged and the hated is he
Who so hated and wronged in the past.
Put aside all the pitiful plaints, the reproaches, half malice, half fear,
When the frenzy of rancour is stilled 'twill be time for cool reason to hear,
And for Justice to settle at last.

But the horrible rage of brute hordes by the slack hand of Power let slip,
The cold Mephistopheles smile on Authority's cynical lip,—
These Christendom fearlessly brands:
Tells Emperor, Prince, or dull Peasant 'tis playing a ruffian part,
To share in such revels of shame, with the throb of black hate in the heart,
And the red stain of blood on the hands.

A CRY FROM CHRISTENDOM.

BRITISH TRADITION

The complete immersion of Jews in English society was but one manifestation of Britain's traditional role as the sanctuary of refugees. Inscribed nowhere as official policy, this principle commanded respect from both pro- and anti-aliens. According to the Royal Commission of 1902: *"Many foreigners sought a home here... a land wherein men could live according to their convictions."*[1] From the sixteenth century Protestants found protection in England,[2] where they established a number of colonies.[3] Similarly, at the end of the seventeenth century thousands of Huguenots retreated to communities along the South coast. Revered as part of the country's "great and honourable"[4] heritage, part of her "glory",[5] this time-honoured custom distinguished Britain as "the classical land of freedom."[6]

Within this tradition Jewish migrants played an exceptional role, that transformed them from a privileged minority, through rejected outcasts to fully assimilated members of the empire. From the time of the Norman Conquest they made a vital contribution to the economy, becoming the bankers of England under the personal aegis of the king.[7]

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1 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 9-10*

2 *In 1540 one third of those who paid subsidy to the King in London were aliens.*

3 *The Norwick Colony of Dutch and Walloons numbered 3,993 in 1569.*

4 *H 4th, LIX, 20 Jun 1898, p. 736*

5 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1108*

6 *PO, LXXV 10 Feb 1899, p. 163*

7 *In the 12th cen. their taxation amounted to one seventh of the total revenue i.e. about £3,000 each year.*

But their situation was extremely precarious as it depended upon the whims of each individual monarch. Whilst they were protected by Henry I, as his principal source of revenue, they were the victims of virulent persecution during the Crusading era of Richard the Lion-Heart. In fact the first recorded accusation of ritual murder in the medieval world occurred in twelfth century Britain, when the people sought to avenge the Crucifixion by attacking the Jewish infidel at home.[8] With King John a political anti-semitism developed, as the disaffected nobles identified the Jews with Royal oppression. At the same time their financial burden was increased until, in the reign of Henry III, they were almost unable to meet their commitment. When he was succeeded by Edward I in 1272, the once prosperous English Jewry was impoverished. Wearing the badge of shame — a red disc on a yellow cloth[9] — and restricted by the Statutum de Judeismo,[10] they were then expelled by the Royal decree of 1290.[11]

For about four centuries Britain disappeared from the Jewish world of experience.[12] It needed the Renaissance, Cromwell's economic policy and a growing religious tolerance to permit their gradual resettlement. By the seventeenth century however, a Marrano colony[13]

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8 *Altogether four accusations occurred in Britain between 1144-83, while similar charges reverberated throughout Europe.*

9 *Decreed by the 4th Lateran Council in 1215.*

10 *1275, which in effect forced them from their customary occupations into illegal means of subsistence.*

11 *Edward I thus ignited a series of expulsions throughout Europe.*

12 *References in their literature very sparse*

13 *Crypto-Jews from Spain and Portugal, who outwardly professed Catholicism*

of considerable importance was established in London, and in 1698 the practice of Judaism was legalised. Although relations between Jew and Gentile improved in the following years, the Jewish Naturalization Bill of 1753 brought an explosion of anti-semitism. As the agitation died as quickly as it appeared, the final decades witnessed a relaxed assimilation of the Hebrew population who enjoyed virtual social equality. The Napoleonic Wars meant a new era of indispensability to the Government,[14] and formal Emancipation naturally ensued.

Nineteenth century Britain not only esteemed its own Jews but valued the rights of those elsewhere. A policy of intervention on their behalf extended into the 1890s. An outbreak of Persian anti-semitism for example sent Jewish representatives to the Foreign Office, whereupon the Teheran Minister was immediately alerted. According to the *Jewish Chronicle*, this prompt intercession so impressed the Persian government that it summonsed the Mohammedan priest responsible and averted bloodshed. On another occasion, a report of persecution received on Friday evening was rapidly relayed to the British consul at Tripoli, so that by Monday the Jewish community in Britain were assured that the threatened massacre at Barbary had been prevented.[15]

The annual naturalisation of aliens further illustrated British tolerance towards immigrants. Between 1894-1904 the numbers naturalised each year ranged from over five hundred to almost a thousand, the average being seven hundred per year.[16] In 1902 for example seven

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*14 Goldsmid brothers, Rothschilds and others in finance and professions*

*15 PO, LXXI, 26 Feb 1897, p. 274*

*16 From 542-974; H 4th, CXLVI, 24 May 1905, p. 1229*

hundred and eighty-eight were naturalised of whom four hundred and fifty-eight were Russians.[17] A certificate of naturalisation implied residence in the United Kingdom or service under the crown for five out of the last eight years; intention to continue residence or service; a payment of five pounds; and the oath of allegiance.[18] Anti-aliens believed that the privilege of citizenship was too freely available and called for a higher fee.[19]

But even the staunchest advocates of restriction could not deny the historical benefit of migrants. *"That the immigrants in past times made us their debtors cannot be controverted,"* stated the Royal Commission.[20] Both lords and commoners appreciated their worth. They referred especially to the Flemmish weavers and dyers of the fourteenth century[21] and the Huguenots of the seventeenth. A Liberal lord claimed that had restrictive legislation been implemented in the seventeenth century the British nation would not have been so prosperous in the nineteenth.[22] Despite their objections to alien immigration, the Conservatives could find no satisfactory counter to the simple argument that Jews, like their Huguenot forebears, brought with them their own skills and trades. Some noted that the scattering abroad of Israelites would be advantageous to

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17 *The next in order were 156 Germans, 49 Austrians and others; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 29-30*

18 *H 4th, LXXVII, 19 Oct 1899, p. 239*

19 *ibid., CVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 945*

20 *Rep. SPHC, 1903, p. 11*

21 *Introduced by Edward III*

22 *Monkswell, H 4th, LVIII, 23 Mar 1898, p. 281*

other countries.[23] The anti-semite Arnold White himself calculated the direct and immediate loss to the Russian economy, in the event of a Jewish exodus, at ten million pounds sterling a year.[24]

Politicians sometimes cited the names of destitute aliens who in the past had been welcomed by Britain but who, under the proposed legislation, would be classified as 'undesirable' and hence excluded. The French sculptor Dalou[25] who sought refuge in the 1870s, and the 'anarchist' Prince Peter Kropotkin of Russia[26] would both have been rejected. An anti-alien policy could, the traditionalists argued, lead to great national shame.[27]

But the question which emerged with the growth of immigration was: *"Can the Alien Immigrant of today claim to be our creditor, because our ancestors incurred a debt to the foreigners who sought asylum here?"*[28] Pro-aliens answered by rebuffing legislation as *"offensive, unnecessary, and un-English."*[29] Conservatives countered that the acceptance of Huguenots implied neither a high standard of civilization nor belief in the rights of conscience. It was mere political expediency, whereby England welcomed the dissident subjects of an enemy monarch. Eventually urged by the necessity to enact an

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23 *Major C. Conder in RR, IV, Aug 1891, p. 151*

24 *RR, V, May 1892, p. 481*

25 *1838-1902, noted for extravagant, allegorical compositions, and for unaffected studies of common people*

26 *1842-1921, developed theories of Bakunin and stressed collectivist principle*

27 *H 4th, CXXXII, 29 Mar 1904, p. 994*

28 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 11*

29 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1141*

Aliens Bill, Prime Minister Balfour invoked the House to *"put aside this fancy picture"* that from time immemorial Britain has so favoured the religiously persecuted of all nations, for it has *"no historical basis in fact."*[30] The traditional view nevertheless prevailed. The Conservative *Times* — which favoured restriction — described Britain as *"the first and most generous asylum of the oppressed, the first and most constant champion of the rights of conscience."*[31]

ANTI-SEMITISM

In the nineties the majority of Jews lived where they were most oppressed. Of the world Jewish population of about eight to nine million, over a third, approximately three and a half million, resided under Russian or Roumanian rule.[32] More than two million lived amid the anti-semitism of Austria-Hungary and Germany. In France over eighty thousand were affected by the insidious echoes of the Dreyfus scandal. In Britain alone they were relatively free from the outright anti-semitic attack of Continental Europe.

The most violent persecution occurred in Russia, the pivot of the world's Jews. In some respects this was part of an overall policy against all the non-Orthodox. The government instigated hard labour and banishment for Methodists, Baptists and other Protestants.[33] In the mid-nineties officials hunted

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*30 ibid., CIVIX, 10 Jul 1905, pp. 156-7*

*31 PO, LIX, 19 Jul 1891, p. 770*

*32 Leroy-Beaulieu in RR, III, Mar 1891, p. 264*

*33 Known as Stundists*

down and tortured Quakers[34] for their opposition to compulsory military service. Anti-semitism was officially enshrined in the Police Constitution or 'May Laws' of 1882, renewed in the 1890s. They regulated settlement, ownership, occupation and religion. Jews were forbidden to live outside towns and hamlets except in already existing Jewish colonies. Their claims to property and ownership were suspended, and their professional and trade practices restricted in various ways: they were refused business rights on Sundays, although compelled by religion to close on Saturdays; while actors were prohibited from performing outside the Pale.[35] A congregation of fewer than thirty families could not worship in public. Specific rites were also prohibited; for example, the administration levied taxes on animal food obtained through the Jewish method of slaughter and on candles for sacrifice.

These restraints and petty exactions were complicated by the lack of uniformity in administration. Repression altered in temper and severity from one area to the next, depending upon the erratic personality of individual officers. Intolerance reached the point where for instance the government suddenly announced its intention to build a church next door to a synagogue. It simultaneously advised the Jews to remove their synagogue, as Hebrew places of worship

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34 *Known as Dookhobortsy*

35 *The Jewish Pale comprised fifteen provinces, altogether 313,608 square miles.*

were not permitted within seven hundred feet of a church.[36] On another occasion, a wrongful accusation of ritual murder resulted in a massacre at Kischineff, and when the Jews tried to defend themselves before their assailants, they were assaulted with the loss of a hundred lives.[37]

As previously noted, the reaction of the British press, people and politicians to this affliction was horror, shock and sympathy. Even the anti-aliens expressed indignation at this obvious manifestation of prejudice. They recoiled at the suggestion that through restrictive legislation Britain would enact a form of anti-semitism. Whilst denouncing European racial discrimination, they refused refuge to Russian Jews fleeing from persecution during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5.[38] Since Jewish conscripts, unlike their Russian counterparts, received no pension in the event of death or incapacity, they were menaced by the prospect of leaving their families destitute. Under these circumstances pro-aliens considered it "odious"[39] to hinder the escape of such men; and despite the Conservative Act of 1905, the new Liberal Government of 1906 made special concessions to relieve them.[40]

As the Anglo-Japanese alliance had been formed in 1902, in the case of refugees from the Russo-Japanese War, it was possible to

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*36 PO, LXX, 4 Sep 1896, p. 306*

*37 H 4th, CXXII, 19 May 1903, p. 1093*

*38 Similar to restrictions imposed upon entry of Jews from Europe in 1930s*

*39 H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 705*

*40 See "Liberal Victory" in Chapter 9*

invoke Balfour's claim that British tolerance in 1906 was pure political expediency. But the charge could be refuted on two grounds: firstly, the Conservatives themselves made the defensive pact yet persisted in their anti-alien attitude; and secondly, the Liberals upheld the tradition of asylum irrespective of foreign treaties. That neither side raised the issue in this instance underlined the sham of Balfour's argument.

Contemporaries questioned the personal responsibility of the Russian Tzar. Even during the reign of Alexander III,[41] today reputed with the reversal of his father's liberalism, the Tzar's knowledge of the Jewish affliction was sometimes doubted. Having met Alexander, Lord Tennyson in 1891 told the Russo-Jewish Committee: *"I can scarcely believe that he is fully aware of the barbarities perpetuated with his apparent sanction."*[42] The liability of his successor, Nicholas II,[43] was also disputed. Many writers attributed the pogroms to the friend and adviser to Alexander III, Constantine Pobedonostzeff. In fact Nicholas himself made minor attempts to curb persecution, and obliged Pobedonostzeff to command a relaxation in regulations. He had to issue a mandate reading: *"Assimilation of western frontier populations with core of Russia being accomplished — therefore Minister of the Interior may refrain from taking extraordinary steps."*[44] Nicholas also encouraged the progress of

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*41 1881-94*

*42 PO, LX, 16 Oct 1891, p. 502*

*43 Reigned 1894-1917*

*44 RR, XII, Dec 1895, p. 480*

Finnish Jews by according the necessary imperial assent to the Jewish disabilities bill of Finland.[45]

The attitude of the ordinary Russian was also difficult to assess. Was he conscious of the rampant anti-semitism? Censors certainly proscribed most foreign newspaper comment even faintly tinctured with criticism of the regime. From St. Petersburg a subscriber to *Public Opinion* complained of the constant blackening out of the journal's reports of famine for example. In one issue alone three entire segments were censored. According to the subscriber, this was all part of the policy of keeping Russians in the dark.[46]

Germany has played a distinctive role in the history of anti-semitism. The German Wilhelm Marr invented the term itself,[47] while Bismarck initiated its practice in the nineteenth century.[48] In his *Review of Reviews* W.T. Stead reprinted what he described as *"an elaborate practical joke,"* an article by Arnold White on "Prince Bismarck as Moses Secundus."[49] Here White presents the preposterous theory that Bismarck aroused anti-semitism solely to unite the world forces of Jewry in wealth, tradition, intelligence and ambition, so that they might realise a new fatherland. Only in extreme stress and torment could they recognise their irresistable powers. With nothing but hatred for European statecraft, they could lay the foundations of the

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*45 PO, LXXIII, 25 Feb 1898, p. 243*

*46 ibid., LXI, 10 Jun 1892, p. 742*

*47 Pulzer, P.G.J., p. 49*

*48 PO, LXXIII, 7 Jan 1898, p. 26*

*49 RR, VII, Jun 1893, p. 627*

national Jewish home. But with Bismarck's premature retirement, the patter lay incomplete and his actions misunderstood.

The depth to which anti-semitism infected many Germans was revealed by the petition of butchers in the Palatinate town of Landau, where they unsuccessfully sought council permission to establish "an anti-semitic public-house."[50] Relating the failure, a correspondent to the *Jewish Chronicle* lamented: *"The Landau community will not enjoy the blessing of imbibing beer and other beverages free from any taint of Semitism. How they will survive the cruel decree of their municipal authorities remains to be seen."*

At first the British press reported official opposition to Austrian anti-semitism, in particular the tolerance of the Minister for Public Worship and Instruction.[51] As the decade passed however, they observed the electoral success of the avowed anti-semite Dr Lueger. When he was selected as Burgomaster of Vienna for the fifth time in two years, the pro-alien *Morning Post* saw his victory as *"another indication of the ominous power of reactionary and Separatist forces in Austria."*[52] Viennese anti-semitism actually had a unifying effect, fusing together all professions — artisans, soldiers, lawyers, traders and loafers — in the one cult of Jew-baiting.[53] But Stead believed the agitation was directed not so much against Hebraism as

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*50 PO, LXXII, 6 Aug 1897, p. 178*

*51 Dr von Gautsch; PO, LVII, 14 Feb 1890, p. 205*

*52 PO, LXXI, 16 Apr 1897, p. 480*

*53 ibid., 19 Mar 1897, p. 355*

against "the man with the shekels."[54]

Accusations of ritual murder found no sympathy in the British papers, which treated such rumours with extreme mistrust. *Public Opinion* recounted a case in Posen, a town with a large Hebrew population.[55] A Christian, Max Przychalla, was simply taking a three-year-old relative to his home, and because the child tired and began to cry he took him in his arms. As Passover was approaching and the man was somewhat Jewish in appearance, passers-by in the street grew suspicious until a large crowd eventually engulfed him, while rumour spread that the Jews were kidnapping a Christian child for sacrifice. Only after he had been viciously assaulted, was he recognised and freed by police. A similar incident in which a German-Jewish butcher was arrested on a religious murder charge was derided as "ridiculous."[56]

The press also covered the growth of French anti-semitism. In particular they reviewed the political vicissitudes of "the redoubtable Edouard Drumont,"[57] who founded the Anti-Semitic League in 1889, and the anti-Jewish paper, *La Libre Parole* in 1892. From 1893 the Dreyfus affair held the stage and as elsewhere, Britain revolted against this explosion of injustice. Papers reported the progress of the Jewish Syndicate, in which Emile Zola and others worked to prove the innocence of Dreyfus,[58] and expressed relief at his pardon

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54 *RR, XI, Jun 1895, p. 494*

55 *PO, LXIII, 31 Mar 1893, p. 405*

56 *ibid., LXI, 15 Jan 1892, p. 86*

57 *ibid., LVII, 2 May 1890, p. 557*

58 *ibid., LXXII, 3 Dec 1897, p. 710*

by French ministers.[59]

ENGLISH OUTLOOK

The public outcry against anti-semitism included the voice of ordinary people. When they learnt of the pogroms in Russia they gathered in their thousands to protest at the Guildhall.[60] They applauded diverse speakers,[61] received letters of support from distinguished men throughout the country[62] and passed resolutions condemning the Russian atrocities with acclamation. So excited was the meeting that an anti-alien publication called: *"Hands off!...Russia is not an English colony."*[63] But when the scene changed from overseas to the domestic front, was this liberal attitude maintained? How did ordinary Englishmen regard Jews in their midst?

According to the contemporary study of Russell and Lewis, a tolerance prevailed among the working class, where they note *"the complete absence of anti-semitic feeling."*[64] Anti-alienism, they contend, was more common and bitter in political than in industrial circles.[65]

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59 *ibid., LXXVI, 22 Sep 1899, pp. 348-9*

60 *ibid., LVIII, 12 Dec 1890, p. 756*

61 *Duke of Westminster, Bishop of Ripon, Earl of Meath, Sir Joseph Pease, Sir John Colomb and others*

62 *e.g. Archbishop of Canterbury*

63 *Novoe Vremya, which claimed that the protest would achieve as much as a Russian convention promoting Home Rule for Ireland; PO, LVIII, 19 Dec 1890, p. 789*

64 *Russell, C. & Lewis, H.S., The Jew in London A Study of racial character and present-day conditions, London (T. Fisher Unwin), 1901, p. 41*

65 *ibid., p. 86*

Outside of London, in the Manchester Midland Hotel, a public meeting demanded asylum for the victims of religious persecution.[66] In seeking modifications to the proposed Aliens Bill of 1905, the meeting asserted the right of appeal to rejected immigrants. The intellectual leaders of the working class, the Socialists and Trade Unionists, in fact supported tradition.

Anti-semites nevertheless endeavoured to claim Trade Union support. James Lowther, Conservative M.P. for Kent, pointed to alleged moves for restriction in Trade Union Congresses, Trade Councils, forty-three labour organizations, fourteen metropolitan boards of guardians, the National Union of Conservative Associations and the London Reform Union.[67] He also cited the views of Joseph Arch,[68] founder of the Agricultural Union who, he maintained, accused alien immigrants of displacing native workers.[69] Similarly, the acknowledged leader of anti-alien legislation, Evans-Gordon, quoted the resolution of the Stockton Trades Council in Yorkshire, which appealed for a cessation in alien immigration.[70]

Such examples made little impact however, as the Labour M.P.s themselves voted with the Liberals against restriction. Keir Hardie

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66 *Meeting supported by both Government and Opposition Members but detached from party politics; H 4th, CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, pp. 790-1*

67 *H 4th, VIII, 11 Feb 1893, pp. 1167-8*

68 *1826-1919, self-educated labourer, founded National Agricultural Union 1872, Radical M.P. for N.W. Norfolk 1885-61, 1892, 1895-1900 but did not feature in aliens debates*

69 *H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 963*

70 *ibid., CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1266*

for example, who initiated the Independent Labour Party, was a foremost pro-alien. He agreed that the first duty of the Government was to its own people but added that, if the British Commons proceeded from this basis, the spurious Aliens Bill would be replaced by a measure of genuine social reform such as the Unemployed Workmen Bill.[71] He clearly enunciated his opposition to *"this fraudulent measure,"* and asserted that *"the records of the Trade Union Congress will be searched in vain for any sign of approval for a measure of this kind, and the Congress, and not honourable Members opposite, is the mouthpiece of the trade union movement."*

In his *Review of Reviews*, W.T. Stead anticipated a time when British socialism might adopt the guise of anti-semitism.[72] German and French socialists had already used racial and religious rancour to further the sacred cause of the disinherited people. As European anti-semitism usually took the steamer to Dover, he suggested that Keir Hardie might eventually be compelled to raise the ancient cry 'Hep! Hep!'[73]

Stead also contended that British anti-Jewish agitation may have come from the circuitous route of South Africa. A weighty article, "A Grave Protest...the Tyranny of the Modern Jew,"[74] implied that the Kaffir boom and slump had made people wonder about their

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*71 ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 788*

*72 RR, XI, Jun 1895, p. 495*

*73 Anti-Jewish slogan with Crusade origins, derived from the initials 'Hierosolyma est perdita' — 'Jerusalem is lost'*

*74 RR, XIII, Mar 1896, p. 239*

indebtedness to astute Hebrew financiers. A similar reaction echoed in Australia, where colonists resented the sacrifice of Australian life for possible Jewish gain in the Boer War.[75] In the House of Commons a half-Jewish M.P. observed that in the debates on South African affairs, Members frequently denounced German Jews whose main offence seemed to have been their Jewishness. Interrupted by a shocked response of "No!" the speaker continued: *"Otherwise, what was the point of raising the religion* (Hear! Hear!) *except to excite prejudice."*[76]

Observers continued to recognise anti-semitism in Britain, despite affirmations to the contrary. The pro-alien Charles Dilke believed that anti-Jewish feeling had been aroused among the people: *"It is impossible to close our eyes to that fact. Those who read the newspapers cannot help seeing what the tone is."*[77] Another Liberal spoke of *"a frankly anti-semitic movement,"*[78] excited by the political manoeuvres of anti-aliens. With the Dreyfus affair resounding throughout Europe, he declared that *"there is no use saying that there is no danger of this kind in our own community."*

In Ireland too anti-Jewish issues erupted. Dublin Jesuits apprehended the increase of "gombeening propensities" among Irish Jews.[79]

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75 *Penny, B.R., "Australia's Reactions to the Boer War — a Study in Colonial Imperialism" in* <u>*The Journal of British Studies*</u>*, vol. VII, Nov 1967, pp. 97-130*

76 *Anti-alien Lawson, H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 735*

77 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1063*

78 *Trevelyan, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1082*

79 *RR, VIII, Aug 1893, p. 150*

In their monthly publication, *Lyceum*, they propagated a stereotype image of the Jews as the salesmen of cheap wares, making enormous profits from selling pious pictures and religious emblems to unsuspecting Christians. They warned their readers of a possible transfer of land ownership, and promised to present an account of the Jew *"as he appears among the civilised nations of the 'Aryan' races."*[80]

This undercurrent sometimes revealed itself openly, forcing politicians to raise the matter in Parliament. One complained that Limerick shopkeepers used intimidation, violence and finally starvation, by refusing to deal with Jewish customers.[81] The authorities repeatedly investigated such cases of discrimination, and in early 1904 instigated ten prosecutions. Though the Irish M.P.s were predominantly tolerant and pro-alien,[82] at least one Nationalist injected a Shylockean note into the House, by seeking protection from "extortionate usurers" who allegedly reaped two to three hundred percent profit.[83]

If anti-semitism thrived in Britain, its logical breeding-ground was not Limerick but the East End of London, the occupational and domestic centre of most Jews in Britain from the eighteenth century. Here the Hebrew population almost doubled between 1891-1901 from 58,000 to 100,000.[84] The percentage of aliens — mostly but not

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80 *ibid., Sep 1893, p. 270*

81 *Sloan, H 4th, CXXXIII, 14 Apr 1904, pp. 202-3*

82 *Especially Flynn*

83 *Joyce, who received no explanation despite a request to Chief Secretary Wyndham*

84 *Pelling, H., Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910, London (Macmillan), 1967, p. 42*

entirely Jews — to the rest of the Whitechapel population rose from 24.1% to 31.8%. Corresponding figures for St. George's-in-the-East were 16.2% in 1891 and 28.8% in 1901.

From personal experience in the East End, the Liberal Lord Monkswell nevertheless denied the existence of anti-semitism. On two occasions he addressed a packed working class audience at Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel, but on each occasion they voted 2:1 against *"any restriction whatever to the immigration of destitute aliens."*[85] Steadfastly opposed to Lord Hardwicke's Bill of 1898, Monkswell was convinced that the majority of East Enders placed no value in the proposed legislation.

But as the aliens question assumed importance, Conservatives stressed the growth of anti-semitism among workers of the East End. The confirmed anti-alien, Forde Ridley, told how two foreign Jews were hounded down the street by *"hundreds of working men."*[86] Lord James of Hereford, chairman of the Royal Commission into alien immigration, spent two days collecting evidence in the East End Borough of Stepney, which housed more than 40% of the total alien population of London.[87] He quoted a native inhabitant with threatening: *"If you do not take care there will be bloodshed here, for it is an intolerable condition of things."*[88]

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*85 H 4th, LVIII, 23 May 1895, p. 282*

*86 ibid., CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 951*

*87 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 22*

*88 H 4th, CL, 28 Jul 1905, p. 768*

RESTRICTION

Despite the open door tradition, inaugurated by the Great Charter of 1215,[89] the 1890s was heir to a series of immigration Acts.[90] But although statutes affecting alien immigrants were passed in almost every reign since Richard II, they were nearly all abandoned by the General Repealing Act of 1863.[91] And the principal alien legislation of the nineteenth century, the Aliens Act of 1836 which simply stipulated registration, had fallen into disuse. The House of Commons Select Committee of the 1880s claimed it would be distinctly advantageous to implement this Act, but admitted that it was impossible to verify the statements made by sea captains and hence confirm statistics.[92] As a result of their Report however, the William IV Act was partially enforced from 1890, though with little rigour or effect.

The two major provisions of the Act, Sections 2 and 3, obliged shipmasters to declare the number of aliens on board, and aliens to present a passport on arrival.[93] The statement furnished under Section 2 constituted the Board of Trade Alien Returns, but the abolition of passports prevented a revival of Section 3.[94]

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89 *Granted free ingress and exit for foreign merchants;* Law Quarterly Magazine *in RR, I, Feb 1890, p. 131*

90 *Especially Aliens Act 1793 (33 Geo III c. 4), Aliens Act 1826 (7 Geo IV c. 54), Aliens Act 1836 (6 Will IV c. 11)*

91 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 10*

92 *Rep. Sel. Cttee. on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners), SPHC, XI, 27 Jul 1888 (Cd. 305), p. 747*

93 *Penalty for master under Section 2: £20, plus £10 for each undeclared alien; and for aliens without passports: £2*

94 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 15*

Moreover Section 2 was only imperfectly applied, and at only twenty-nine ports of the Kingdom.[95] At five of the twenty-nine ports, the lists showed only deck passengers and those who, after landing, proceeded by third-class rail.

Most East European immigrants of the 1890s arrived in London from four ports, three German — Rotterdam, Bremen, and Hamburg — and one Russian — Libau.[96] Upon arrival of the vessels, a Customs House Officer boarded them to receive the Alien Lists required by the William IV Act; and to seek information on the means, arrangements and destination of steerage class aliens. The ships were also subjected to a cursory medical examination, in which officers issued certificates of health on the personal word of the captain. Under special circumstances, when vessels arrived from ports with the plague, yellow fever or other diseases, passengers were examined individually and where necessary detained or prohibited from landing.

Contemporaries compared this relatively complaisant system with the rigid code of the United States, where the complaints against aliens echoed those in Great Britain. But they were more forcible as the United States received about ten times as many aliens as her neighbour.[97] This led Parliament to instigate an intensive inquiry into the American experience in 1893.[98] It was also examined by the

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95 *"...which, it is believed, include all the ports of the Kingdom at which Alien Immigrants arrive from Europe."*

96 *Four weekly services from Hamburg, three from Rotterdam and Bremen, and one from Libau; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 16-7*

97 *H 4th, IX, 9 Mar 1893, pp. 1400-3*

98 *Burnett & Schloss; Rep. SPHC, 1893, pp. 37-427*

Royal Commission of 1902. They learnt that within the six years between 1888-93 the United States government had established at least five major committees to investigate the problem,[99] and that an Aliens Act was passed as early as 1847. Many others followed, including four in the 1880s and five in the 1890s.[100]

While the early measures were directed more at sanitary standards, the later ones were prompted by economic considerations. In general they excluded those under contract to labour — and hence likely to displace native workers[101] — those who might become a public charge and those either mentally or physically diseased.[102] The Commissioner-General of Immigration levied a $2 poll tax on new arrivals,[103] and held shipowners responsible for the return of rejected passengers. The regulations proved so stringent that the Hamburg-American Shipping Company found it expedient to establish an expensive institution for the reception and treatment of intending emigrants from Europe, and so enforce their own method of selection before confronting the United States' laws. Only those who met the Company's health standards were permitted to sail.[104] Apart from the govern-

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99 *Ford Cttee. 1888, Owen (Chinese) Cttee. 1891, Lehlbach (Chinese) Cttee. 1891, Stamp Cttee. 1892, Chandler Cttee. 1893*

100 *1882, 1885, 1887, 1888; 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895*

101 *Especially during a labour dispute; See "Elections" and "Liberal Victory" in Chapter 9*

102 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 40-1*

103 *50 cents till 1894, $1 till 1903*

104 *At the Company's 'depot' each immigrant was inspected daily by a doctor who marked the individual's progress on a card. Eventually the card might be exchanged for the ship's ticket, but only where the doctor's report was satisfactory; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 15*

ment, private bodies such as the Immigration Restriction League in Boston dedicated themselves to control.[105]

On the Continent, the admission and expulsion of aliens generally fell under police supervision.[106] The French Minister of the Interior could order the immediate departure of foreigners who, from 1893, were obliged to register if they proposed to engage in any livelihood. Hungary also maintained alien files and expelled those who might prove dangerous to the state or public safety. While Austria, Italy and Russia had only minor regulations affecting immigrants, they shared and exercised with other European countries the right to expel 'undesirables'. In Russia where the law permitted the free flow of aliens with passports, police supervision was so strict and their powers so extensive that expulsion presented no difficulty. International Law, treaties and informal agreements provided governments with considerable authority over aliens. Britain too entered into these arrangements. Under the 1897 Agreement with Belgium, within six years sixty-seven British nationals were deported 'in a state of vagabondage'.

Strict regulations also governed immigration in the Colonies. The Dominion of Canada[107] excluded paupers, criminals and the diseased; and in certain cases held shipping companies responsible for the first three years' maintainance of aliens who might prove a

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105 *Benson, L., Turner and Beard American Historical Writing Reconsidered, Illinois (Free Press of Glencoe), 1960, p. 74*

106 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 37-9*

107 *Under Immigration Act 1886, Amending Immigration Act 1902; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 44-5*

public charge. For any breach of regulations, the master was liable to forfeit $1,000 plus $100 for each individual immigrant who committed an offence during the vessel's arrival or departure.

Rigorous legislation was enforced elsewhere in the Colonies,[108] which excluded varying classes of 'undesirables'. The Cape of Good Hope prohibited the entry of *"any person who from information officially received...is deemed by the Minister to be undesirable."* Many Colonies restricted Asiatic immigration by imposing an education test, which consisted of writing in a European language. Australia[109] specifically banned those under contract to perform manual labour, though power was reserved to exempt those with special skill required by the country. Throughout the Colonies, penalties for infringement ranged from £100 to £5,000.

Learning of this vast programme of restriction in other parts of the world, anti-aliens in Britain were understandably incensed by their own Government's inaction. They believed that only the worst types remained in Britain, the rejects from elsewhere. An M.P. complained of the pauper aliens who, refused entry into America, were dumped on the docks of Liverpool, at an annual cost of £350 to the Borough of Bootle.[110] And Members throughout the land made similar allegations. While the Government might counter with claims of

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108 *Acts of Natal 1897, Cape of Good Hope 1902, Commonwealth of Australia 1901, New Zealand 1899; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 45-7*

109 *Apart from the Commonwealth 1901, most states had statutes of their own from an earlier date.*

110 *Sandys, H 4th, IV, 26 May 1892, p. 1916*

exaggeration, or defend itself with proof of the immigrants having been repatriated, they could not deny that generally speaking, the better immigrants looked first to the United States and then to the United Kingdom.

Ironically, much of the anti-alienism in America was directed not at the Jews, Italians or other foreigners, but at the English themselves. The move for restriction grew as Americans became increasingly aware of the strength gained by foreign, especially English capitalists.[111] Natives sought to protect their new land from the sort of absentee landlordism that beset Ireland.[112] They denounced the predominantly English "foreign land grabbers" with "insidious designs", and advocated discriminatory taxation against those who refused to become naturalised citizens.

More important than the terms of restriction however were its effects. And most evidence indicated that the elaborate machinery of the United States for instance was out of all proportion to the results. In 1892 only 2,000 were rejected out of half a million immigrants,[113] though this figure increased somewhat over the next decade. Of the half a million who sought entry in 1900 and again in 1901, four and a half thousand and under four thousand respectively were either debarred or returned.[114] In 1902 about 13% were reject-

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*111* *Troy Daily Times in PO, LVII, 18 Apr 1890, p. 496*

*112* *New York Tablet in PO, LVII, 11 Apr 1890, p. 452*

*113* *Pall Mall Gazette in PO, LXIV, 22 Sep 1893, p. 352*

*114* *1900: 448,572 immigrants — 4,246 debarred and 856 returned, 1901: 487,918 immigrants — 3,516 debarred and 363 returned; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 42-3*

ed; out of more than 600,000 prospective immigrants, almost 5,000 were excluded and over 400 returned.[115] Amongst the 'undesirables', most were excluded for actual or probable pauperism. But of these the far largest proportion were the Southern Italians, of whom more than a thousand were debarred in each year between 1900-1902.[116] During the same period, only 444, 243 and 228 Hebrews were excluded on this ground.[117] Though more Jews than any other group failed to meet health requirements, the actual figures were in fact small.[118]

Despite the complicated security precautions against convicts and prostitutes, altogether only twenty and thirteen respectively were excluded in the three years between 1900-1902. This proved to be the most serious evidence of the relative futility of restriction. Moreover, although the Royal Commission recognised the deterrent effect of the United States' legislation, it noted *"some unsatisfactory features"* such as the inadequacy of qualifications and blackmail among inspectors. It stated in fact *"that the condition of administrative action... is such that no sufficient discrimination had been exercised in that country between the desirable and the undesirable immigrant."*

Pro-aliens therefore asked what was the point of all the fuss?

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*115 648,743 immigrants — 4,974 debarred, and 465 returned*

*116 1900: of 84,346 Southern Italian immigrants, 1,011 debarred for pauperism; 1901: of 115,704, 1,292; 1902: 152,915, 2,049*

*117 Hebrew immigrants in 1900: 60,764; 1901: 58,098; 1902: 57,688*

*118 Jews 1900-2: 114, 49, 107; Southern Italians: 32, 30, 74*

They also observed that despite the British tradition of asylum, the United Kingdom had a minute percentage of aliens, less than 1%.[119] In 1903 the proportion of aliens to the total population in the United Kingdom stood at 0.69%, compared with 1.03% in Hungary, 1.38% in Germany, 2.66% in France, 2.82% in Belgium, 3.26% in Denmark, 9.58% in Switzerland and 13.71% in the United States.[120]

If alien immigration was the evil depicted by the advocates of reform, then Britain suffered from it less than any of her commercial rivals — despite their elaborate and expensive schemes of control.

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At a time of rampant persecution elsewhere in the world, Britain's tradition as the sanctuary of refugees came increasingly under attack. Although ordinary Englishmen deplored reports of intolerance abroad, their attitude to immigrants in their midst was difficult to assess. While some pro-aliens denied racial and religious antagonism, anti-aliens, in a persistent campaign for restriction, upheld and indeed promoted popular anti-semitism within Britain. They badgered the Government for its leniency and failure to perform its "obvious duty".[121] By closing the door, Britain would simply be doing in the twentieth century what all other countries had done in the nineteenth. After all, why should the British alone suffer assault from the 'undesirables' of the world?

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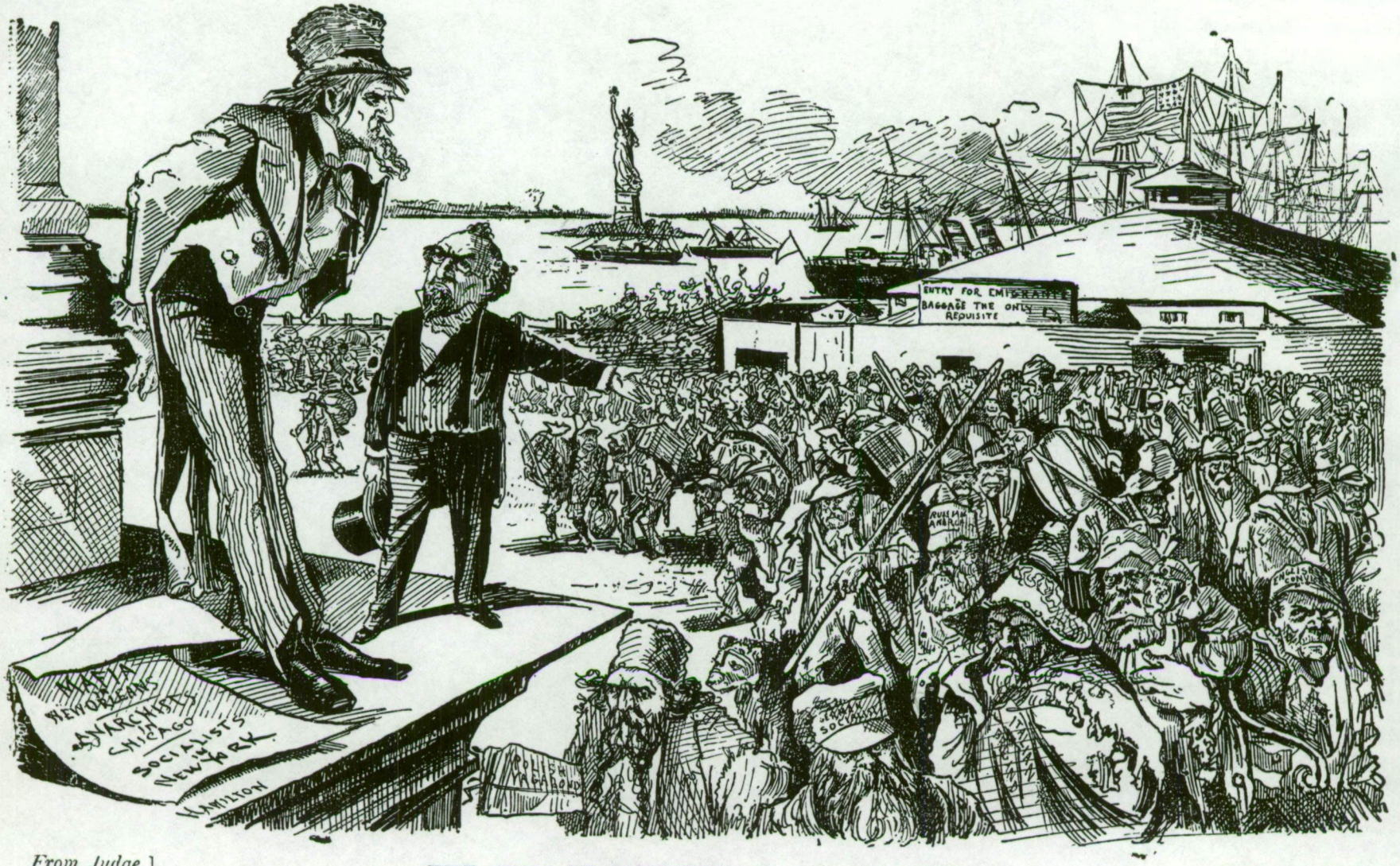
119 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 29*

120 *Only Spain with 0.20% and Sweden with 0.21% had a smaller proportion of aliens; See "Swarming" in Chapter 4*

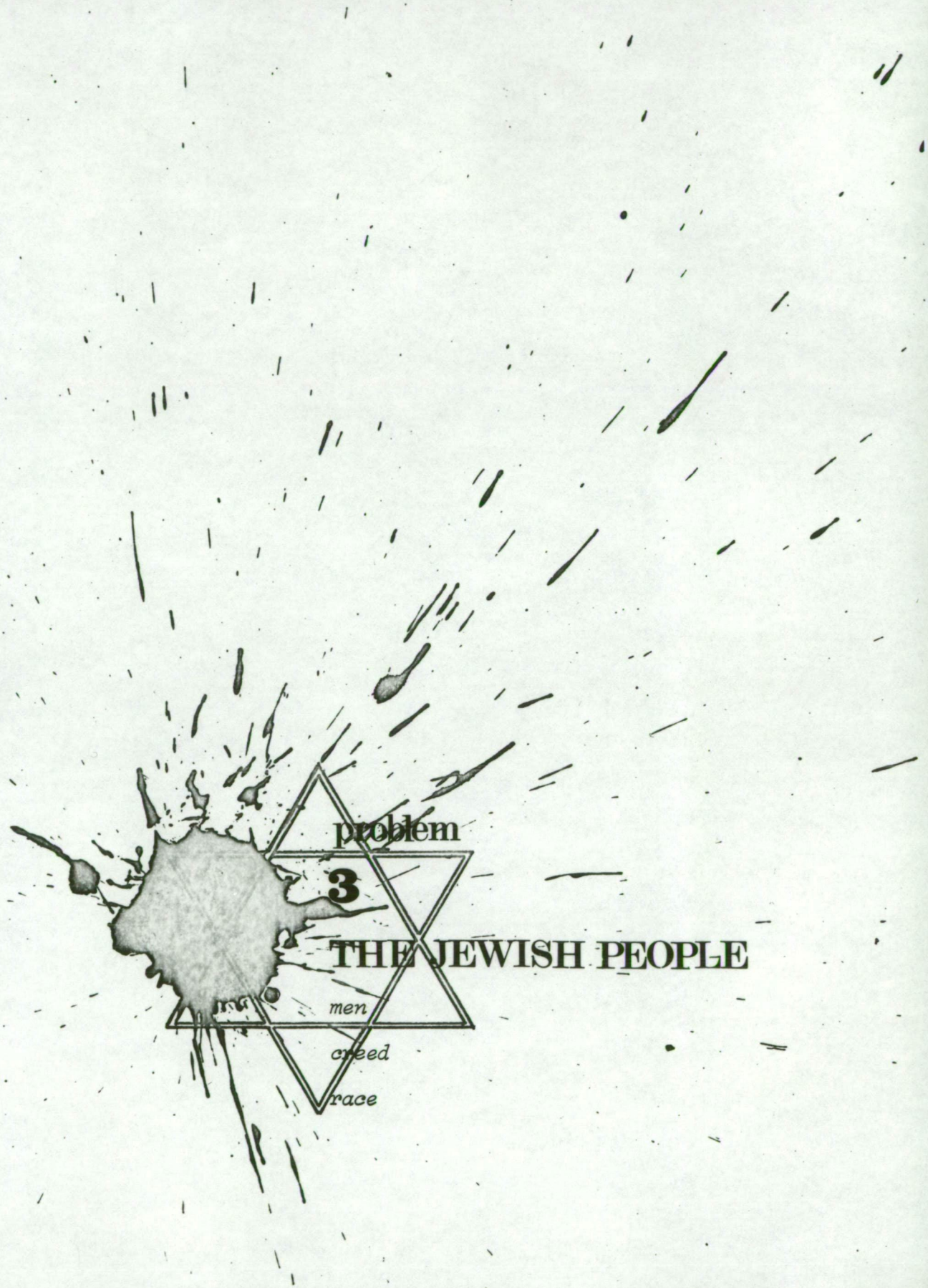
121 *H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 964*




*From Judge.*]

THE EVILS OF UNRESTRICTED IMMIGRATION.

[March 28, 1891.


problem
3
THE JEWISH PEOPLE
men
creed
race

MEN

Jews fell broadly into two main groups, the English and the immigrant. Generally Liberal in politics, the former were usually of at least second generation British parentage. Many had penetrated the higher social strata and held professional or financial positions of influence. Though the English themselves may have denied the ability of any foreigner to become English, the assimilated Jews lost no opportunity to declare themselves: *"We have not merely become sojourners with full civil rights, instead of sojourners with partial civil rights. We have become Englishmen."*[1]

The Anglo-Jews were predominantly of the Sephardim type — from the Mediterranean or Levantine area — and mostly descendants of Spanish exiles. Their immigrant co-religionists who arrived at the end of the century were Ashkenazim[2] — from Germany, France, Poland and Russia. With notable exceptions,[3] they came from lower social and financial backgrounds, spoke Yiddish,[4] observed different religious customs and rarely intermarried with the Sephardim. The bond between the two was strong, though sometimes fraught with perplexity.

Most newly arrived immigrants were extremely poor. And those with a few meagre possessions were frequently prey to dockside profiteers who, under false pretence, sought their goods or honour. To

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1. *Jewish Chronicle in PO, LXXI, 25 Jun 1897, pp. 818-9*
2. *Term derived from 'Ashkenaz' — 'Germany'*
3. *e.g. Herman Landau*
4. *Judaeo-German, written in Hebrew characters, and with strong admixture of the sacred tongue in its vocabulary*

overcome these difficulties the established Hebrew community helped in innumerable ways. The officers of the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter in particular provided an invaluable service. Founded in 1885 as a transitory refuge for immigrants proceeding to America, the Shelter gradually extended its operations until, in the 1890s, it assisted ninety-five percent of the immigrants arriving at London. Some were merely conducted to friends or relatives but others were actually accommodated for up to two weeks.[5] Between 1889-1902 over 29,000 stayed at the Leman Street Shelter, a yearly average of more than 2,000, both Jew and Gentile.[6] The Shelter's President was Herman Landau, the first immigrant from Poland to become part of Anglo-Jewry. Arriving in Britain at the age of twenty in 1864, Landau succeeded in finance — as a banker, a member of the Stock Exchange — and in a number of Jewish organizations. Among other practical suggestions, he proposed a system of licensed porters to combat criminals on the waterfront.[7]

Two other major institutions were the Jewish Board of Guardians, founded in 1859; and the Russo-Jewish Committee, specifically dedicated to the relief of persecuted Jews in Russia, and supported by both Hebrews and Christians. Jews alone contributed to the Board of Guardians' programme of social amelioration among the Jewish poor. In 1902 it spent more than £14,000 in relieving poverty.[8] It also

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5 *Maximum allowable period: 2 weeks; average stay: 6 days*

6 *Of the 29,511: 18,237 stated they were 'en route'; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 17*

7 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1888, p. 774*

8 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 18*

endeavoured to lessen the pressure of alien immigration upon Britain by warning 'undesirables' in Europe not to migrate and in assisting their repatriation where necessary after arrival.[9] Contrary to anti-alien assertions by Arnold White and others, the Board in no way attracted pauper immigrants. In fact by refusing to aid them during the first six months, they discouraged immigration, and hence worked somewhat against the policy of both the Leman Street Shelter and the Russo-Jewish Committee.

The repatriation of aliens by Jewish charities themselves placed pro-aliens in an extremely delicate position, as their opponents seized this as 'evidence'. The situation involved the conflicting loyalties of Anglo-Jews, torn between their duty as Englishmen and their custom as Israelites. Obviously they could not meet unlimited demands upon their resources. At the United Synagogue in 1891 Lord Rothschild expressed anxiety when he forecast an invasion of Russian refugees but insisted that it would not attain the proportions some feared. In the very confidence with which he assured his audience that the Jews would find sanction elsewhere, he betrayed the Jewish predicament.[10]

The use of international Jewish finance could also cause embarrassment and provide anti-semites with ammunition. In 1891 the French Rothschilds refused to provide Russia with financial aid, yet a series of pogroms ensued.[11] Two years later the *Jewish Chronicle*

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9 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1888, p. 763*

10 *PO, LIX, 5 Jun 1891, p. 706*

11 *RR, III, Jun 1891, pp. 540-1*

appealed to the financiers of Holland, Germany and France to again refrain, as a religious duty, from supporting Russia, and thus help mete a deathly blow to the Tzar's credit.[12] The failure of all Jews to follow this advice enabled Arnold White to label wealthy European Jews anti-semitic, for they provided the government with power to continue oppression.[13] He observed that *"Jews are not likely to consider or treat the English with greater tenderness than they have considered and treated their own brethren under dire persecution."*

Aid and cooperation nevertheless remained the keynote to Anglo-immigrant relations. Stuart Samuel, a pro-alien Jewish M.P., spoke for most of the Hebrew fraternity when he rejected Parliamentary protection from *"the congenial task of succouring those not so fortunate."*[14] He drew attention to the non-religious basis of many Jewish institutions. As in the case of the Leman Street Shelter, the Jewish donation of new operating theatres at the London Hospital was for patients of all creeds.[15] The donor's sole stipulation was that he remain anonymous.

The Jews consciously maintained a distinctive unity. Apart from charitable organizations, numerous other societies dedicated themselves to the perpetuation of the Jewish way of life. Hebrews appealed to the Beth Din, a court with wide powers of jurisdiction,

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*12 PO, LXIV, 18 Aug 1893, p. 207*

*13 White, A., p. xiii*

*14 Distinguish S.M. Samuel from both H.L. Samuel and H.S. Samuel; H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1274*

*15 PO, LXXXI, 21 Mar 1902, p. 372*

and sought assistance from the Chevras, which combined the functions of religious observance with those of a benefit club. Following the example of the United States, women too began to emerge as leaders in community affairs. The first Conference of Jewish Women Workers throughout the United Kingdom was hailed as an outstanding success.[16] Sometimes the status of Jewishness over-intruded into public life, as when Sir Marcus Samuel, Lord Mayor of London at the time of the Roumanian atrocities, excluded the Roumanian minister from an official function.[17] Whilst the *Jewish Chronicle* commended his action, a non-religious paper[18] considered it *"a little ill-advised,"* for Sir Marcus had taken a course more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Unlike the Sephardim, the Ashkenazim — as migrants from a backward country to a developed one — were predominantly wage-earning employees rather than commercial employers. Clinging to their traditional practices, they often preferred the independence of barely remunerative occupations, such as umbrella mending in private attics, to employment in the burgeoning mass society. But where they carried their crafts into modern industry they excelled, both in business acumen and in technical skill. Britain's development in tailoring, boot and shoe- and cabinet-making was almost entirely due to the Russian and Polish Jews of the late nineteenth century.

Despite material privation, immigrant Jews followed the example of Anglo-Jews in their emphasis on education. In the East End alien

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16 *ibid., 23 May 1902, p. 658*

17 *ibid., LXXXII, 21 Nov 1902, pp. 643-4*

18 *The Sun*

school children gradually outnumbered English. At the Baker Street Board School in Stepney, the enrolment of non-English boys increased four-fold between 1895-1901, while the English fell seven-fold.[19] In 1902 the entire male and female population was eighty-six English and nearly a thousand aliens. Headmasters found them regular and punctual pupils, persistent in their efforts and frequently more successful than the native children.[20] In fact their industry, initiative, scholarship and numerous prizes were envied. One master admitted: *"They show better knowledge of English history than the English children. They are proud to become English."*[21]

Yet Jews still faced the charge of exclusiveness, of being *"suspicious, self-contained, unapproachable and disliked."*[22] Arnold White dreaded the growth of a *"Jewish island in the sea of English life."*[23] Another anti-semite, 'Philo-Judaeus', fell victim to the physical stereotype of the Jew.[24] He claimed that their failure to intermarry with Gentiles resulted in the retention of *"those facial and physical peculiarities which we dislike more than black blood or red skin, or even yellow complexion. And the strange thing is,"* he continued, *"that the Jews, otherwise open-eyed, are so blind to the disastrous effect of these transmitted peculiarities."* Together

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19 *Non-English: 72 to 280, English 206 to 29; H 4th, CI, 29 Jan 1902, p. 1274*

20 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 30*

21 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1073*

22 *PO, LIX, 5 Jun 1891, p. 76*

23 *White, A., p. xii*

24 *PO, LXXVI, 29 Sep 1899, p. 392*

with a prominent academic and commentator of the day, Professor Goldwin Smith,[25] they argued that hostility arose primarily from Jewish separateness rather than from Gentile intolerance. Arnold White believed that the nineteenth century proved the inherent inability of Hebrews to amalgamate with their neighbours.[26] Unlike other ethnic groups, they remained isolated, detached from the community. Although conceding that a few exceptional families in England had availed themselves of Western tolerance to become assimilated, he insisted that history pointed to their steadfast refusal to integrate with their environment.

History also pointed in another direction which suggested that persecution had forced Jews into exclusiveness.[27] National decrees had emphasised their difference, compelled them under penalty to wear distinctive garb, the special cap of the Middle Ages, the badge of shame and the barefootness of Morocco. Christian prejudice likewise accounted for the Jewish tendency to avoid intermarriage with non-Jews.[28] The practice was initially prohibited under pain of death by the Roman Catholic Council of Orleans in 533 A.C.E. Only then, purely in self defence, was the Jewish hierarchy forced to forbid such unions. *The Spectator* offered a further explanation.[29] It acknowledged that the Jews generally marry among themselves, but

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25 *Smith, G., pp. 241-82*

26 *White, A., p. 274*

27 *Leroy-Beaulieu in RR, VII, Mar 1893, p. 305*

28 *PO, LXII, 17 Dec 1897, p. 782*

29 *ibid., LXXII, 17 Dec 1897, p. 782*

observed that this is the custom of all aristocratic castes and the Jews can no more arrest this national characteristic than others, especially as theirs is a history of three thousand years.[30]

Though anti-semites insisted that Jews could not become patriotic Englishmen, the Jews themselves showed otherwise, by combining what the Liberal M.P., James Bryce, termed their *"peculiar 'solidarity'"* with their *"remarkable 'adaptability'."*[31] Whilst maintaining traditional links with the past, they adapted themselves to present circumstances and stood for the land in which they lived. Unashamedly anti-Jewish, *The British Man* pronounced that they aroused anti-British sentiment and so stimulated wars.[32] It denounced them for their lack of patriotism, avoidance of military service and parasitic ways. The *Jewish Chronicle* urged its youth to dispel this sort of prejudice by voluntarily submitting themselves to defensive warfare.[33]

They were impelled by the example of Joshua Montefiore, the first Jew to hold a commission in the British Army;[34] as well as by the action of Hebrew soldiers who so distinguished themselves in the war with Greece, that the Sultan of Turkey rewarded them with a considerable donation towards Jewish charities.[35] In the South African war the Anglo-Jews lost a greater percentage of men than the English

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30 *By the 1960s however, Anglo-Jews were to be biologically on the decline.*

31 *Russell, C. & Lewis, H.S., p. x*

32 *PO, LXXIV, 2 Sep 1898, p. 292*

33 *ibid., LXIV, 22 Dec 1893, p. 793*

34 *1762-1843, soldier and author, uncle to Sir Moses*

35 *PO, LXXI, 4 Jun 1897, p. 722*

themselves.[36] Reporting the display by the Jewish Lads Brigade before members of the British Army, the *Jewish Chronicle* assured the sovereign that his Jewish subjects would never be wanting in *"the sternest obligations of British citizenship."*[37]

The Jews' patriotism was formally incorporated in their prayer to the Royal family.[38] That a 'New Form' was published alongside the 'Old Form' indicated a lively, vigorous sense of loyalty. Addressed to Victoria in 1897, the 'New Form' read: *"May the supreme King of Kings in His mercy preserve the Queen in life, guard her and deliver her from all trouble, sorrow and hurt....that they may uphold the peace of the realm, advance the welfare of the nation, and deal kindly and truly with all Israel. In her days and in ours may Judah be served and Israel dwell securely; and may the Redeemer come into Zion. O that this may be His will, and let us say, Amen."*

CREED

Anti-semites based their cry of exclusiveness on the Jews' devotion to distinctive social and religious habits. They refused to reconcile the adherence to traditional tribal rites with the claim to be assimilated. Jews should either *"return to Jerusalem or forget it,"* pronounced Goldwin Smith, for so long as they remain aloof from, whilst absorbing the wealth of other nations, they will be detested.[39]

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*36 H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 731*

*37 PO, LXXXVIII, 24 Nov 1905, p. 630*

*38 ibid., LXXI, 30 Apr 1898, p. 563*

*39 Smith, G., pp. 241-82; Smith, G. in RR, IV, Sep 1891, pp. 266-7*

The controversy surrounding Jewish behaviour was illustrated by the protest aroused by a letter from 'Philo-Judaeus' to *Public Opinion* on "The Uselessness of Israelite Formulas."[40] This outspoken critic maintained that, as the Lord has already deserted the Jews, it is senseless to try and perpetuate old customs and a discredited literature. The indignant response from other subscribers to the compendium eventually forced the editor to insist: *"Letters on this subject must now cease."*[41]

The most contentious issue was Sabbath observance which, for Jews, falls on a Saturday. The *Jewish Quarterly Review* described the main objects of Sabbath home services and synagogue attendance as: religious — for spiritual development — an attempt to make the Sabbath different from other days and as a day of rest and happiness.[42] The *Christian Age* merely viewed the Jewish Sabbath as *"a vexatious burden."*[43] Though many Jews passed both Saturdays and Sundays in religious activity, some kept only the Hebrew Sabbath and thus excited the hostility of Christian neighbours for their violation of Sunday, the Lord's day of rest. This constituted one of the specific complaints of witnesses before the Royal Commission in 1902,[44] for by conducting business on Sundays, it was alleged that Jews compelled their Christian competitors to follow suit.

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*40 PO, LXVII, 3 May 1895, p. 549*

*41 ibid., 17 May 1895, p. 613*

*42 Ed. I. Abrahams & C.G. Montefiore; RR, I, May 1890, p. 410*

*43 PO, LXX, 16 Oct 1896, p. 499*

*44 Rev. W.H. Davies & Rev. A.E. Dalton; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 14*

The Jews' Sabbath occasionally complicated everyday affairs, as when the Registration Bill included a Saturday voting clause: would religious Jews be precluded from going to the polls?[45] This possibility drew a fine distinction from the Chief Rabbi, Dr Adler, who advised that voting itself would be permissible, though other acts such as writing or drawing would be prohibited. Referring to the Ballot Act, he noted that the actual marking of papers at the booths could be performed for Jews by election officers. This naturally incensed the anti-aliens: after all, if Jews wanted to live in Britain, why should they present such complications? But Sabbath observance raised no problem for most of the Hebrew population for the 1890s experienced something of a decline in both synagogue attendance and in religious practice generally.

Jewish orthodoxy demands that meals be 'kosher', i.e. all meat must be obtained through a method of slaughter known as 'shechita'. Otherwise the food is pronounced 'trefah' or inedible. The importance of 'shechita' in this period was shown by the reaction of the *Jewish Chronicle* to an attempt by Swiss anti-semites to abolish the custom through referendum. Usually tolerant in the face of bigotry, the journal for once failed to maintain its balanced tone and denounced the move as *"a grotesque illustration of the self-deceit to which the inherent tendency to religious persecution impels the animal side of human nature."*[46] Almost at the same time in Britain, the

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*45 PO, LXV, 25 May 1894, p. 656*

*46 ibid., LXIV, 25 Aug 1893, p. 239*

Aberdeen Court charged a Jew with having cruelly slain a bullock.[47] Though the case was judged 'not proven', and an onlooker[48] acquitted as 'not guilty', a member of the Athenaem Club[49] complained to *The Times* of the barbarous, savage means of animal slaughter. On another occasion, a representative of the Humane Diet Committee suggested that the Board of 'Shechita' reform the *"blundering methods of past generations."*[50]

The Jews nevertheless justified the process on hygienic and humanitarian grounds. They recalled that a Hebrew had been identified with the founding of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and added that if mankind heeded the Biblical laws on the treatment of creatures, such an institution would be unnecessary.[51] The *British Medical Journal* agreed with the correspondent to *The Times* that a blow on the head is the most immediate and painless manner but refuted his other assertions as inaccurate. In supporting 'shechita', it contended that the sudden arrest of the blood supply to the brain cannot fail to reduce consciousness very quickly, especially when effected by the sharp instrument used by Jews. *"The pain of such a wound is momentary."*[52]

Such practices as the Jewish Sabbath and 'shechita' went un-

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*47 Rev. James Littman; PO, LXIV, 20 Oct 1893, p. 479*

*48 Alexander Zamek*

*49 'M.D., F.R.S.'*

*50 Joseph Collinson; PO, LXXV, 19 May 1899, p. 616*

*51 PO, LXIV, 8 Sep 1893, p. 313*

*52 ibid., 27 Oct 1893, p. 525*

questioned by the Orthodox. Accepting that the Creation occurred in 3760 B.C. they recognised 1890 as the year 5661[53] and celebrated the New Year each September. On the Day of Atonement they assembled with co-religionists throughout the world to implore Divine mercy.[54] Though they no longer invariably commemorated all feastdays in the traditional manner that still prevailed in Germany for example, they frequently paraded in motley groups along Whitechapel Road, a colourful testimony to *"Israel in London."*[55]

As with Sabbath observance however, these customs could conflict with the conventional Christian ways of the West. How should Jews remember Christmas for instance? Should they send cards? While Orthodox opinion allowed individual discretion, it suggested that whereas the exchange of cards with non-Jews is courteous, between Jews it is indecorous.[56] In general Jews were counseled not to go to extraordinary lengths to keep the season, nor to be childish and refuse outright to join in festivities.

The use of the electric light also perturbed the Hebrew conscience, for the Orthodox obeyed a law forbidding them to kindle fire or flame on the Sabbath. They abstained from lighting or touching fire, striking matches and smoking, and from using any sort of gas or oil lamp. Could they therefore benefit from the modern electric light? Fortunately, according to an electrician, the his-

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53 *ibid., 15 Sep 1893, p. 336*

54 *ibid., LX, 16 Oct 1891, p. 494*

55 *ibid., LXXVIII, 17 Aug 1900, p. 204*

56 *Jewish Chronicle in PO, LXIV, 20 Dec 1893, p. 823*

torical sacredness of fire and flame derive from a process now known as combustion and hence associated with purification, whereas the modern glow lamp or electric light has no connection, direct or indirect, with fire, flame or combustion.[57]

A public controversy in the mid-nineties raged over the use of organs in synagogues.[58] Opponents pointed to its prohibition in the Talmud,[59] for it involved work for the organ-player. Overseas experience — in the United States, Austria and Germany — suggested that where the organ was introduced, congregations dwindled; whereas in Holland which lacked organ-worshippers, synagogues still attracted large assemblies. When English synagogues accepted organ-playing in 1895, several American papers lamented the end to Judaism in England.[60]

These differences of opinion indicated a gradual diminution in Orthodox habits. The neglect of Hebrew studies concerned the hierarchy, who believed that prayers lost force in translation, and that the general religious welfare of their people consequently suffered.[61] Others regretted the decay of Yiddish,[62] as well as the decline in Jewish denominational schools.[63] In the twenty years

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57 *Prof. Crookes in PO, LXI, 15 Jan 1892, p. 79*

58 *PO, LXVI, 28 Sep 1894, p. 400*

59 *A heterogeneous collection of Rabbinical writings, second only in influence to the Bible*

60 *Jewish Gazette, Haibri and others in PO, LXVII, 5 Apr 1895 p. 433*

61 *PO, LXXIX, 17 May 1901, p. 624*

62 *ibid., LXXX, 30 Aug 1901, p. 276*

63 *ibid., LXIX, 17 Apr 1896, p. 497*

between 1876-96 not a single Hebrew religious school was built in London. The reduction of those entering the ministry and the occasional practice of cremation further illustrated this easing of tradition.[64] In 1891 history was recorded when an Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi delivered an inaugural sermon in English for the first time.[65] But reports sometimes exaggerated this tendency away from Orthodoxy, as when an article denied the centuries-old attachment of Jews to the Bible as *"an immense delusion."*[66]

Rather than spiritual decadence, these changes reflected a reorientation in religion. The questioning outlook merely disclosed the vitality with which the faithful tried to adapt Judaism to a modern age. By the 1890s four major sects had emerged: Orthodox, which diligently exercised the ancient Mosaic code of the Talmud; Reform, which followed only the spirit of the code, discarding the literal authority of the Bible and the Talmud to conform with contemporary standards; Conservative, a Moderate Reform; and Radical, which clung only to the ethical basis of Judaism.[67] They upheld certain common beliefs such as the unity and spirituality of God, the efficacy of religious regeneration for ethical improvement, the universal law of compensation, the final triumph of truth and fraternity of all men, and the constitutional priority of the Decalogue.

Not only the content of Judaism underwent innovation but also

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64 *ibid., 22 May 1896, pp. 657-8*

65 *ibid., LX, 3 Jul 1891, p. 22*

66 *Quarterly in RR, XIII, Mar 1896, p. 239*

67 *PO, LXV, 23 Mar 1894, p. 360*

its external relations with Protestantism, the process being not unlike that of Roman Catholicism in the 1960s. According to Arnold White, approximately a dozen societies dedicated themselves to the conversion of Jews, their work being so extensive that many Hebrews were more familiar with the New Testament than the Old.[68] Herman Landau testified that the only society that attracted Israelites to Britain was not Jewish, but one for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews.[69]

A number of prominent men advocated a closer association between Jew and Gentile. The Biblical scholar, C.G. Montefiore,[70] asked: *"Are Jews becoming Christians — or the Christians Jews?"*[71] Considering the religious problems unearthed by modern Biblical research, he maintained that Judaism could accept and assimilate the results of criticism as well as the freest Unitarian Christianity, for *"because Judaism changes, it abides."* He called for friendly rivalry between a *"purified Christianity"* and a *"purified Judaism"* in their concerted claim to Jesus Christ.[72] At Manchester New College he

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68 *States that English Christians spent £130,000 on the attempt to convert Jews, but does not disclose the period represented; White, A., p. 255*

69 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1888, p. 765*

70 *Probably Charles Joseph Goldsmid-Montefiore 1858-1938, identified with educational and philanthropic work, ed. with I. Abrahams Jewish Quarterly Review, Pres. Anglo-Jewish Association 1896-1921, Pres. Liberal Jewish Synagogue, Pres. University College of Southampton 1915-34, author Truth in Religion, The Bible for Home Reading, Religious Teaching of Jesus and others, awarded British Academy Medal for Biblical Studies*

71 *Jewish Quarterly Review in RR, V, Feb 1892, p. 159*

72 *RR, IX, Feb 1894, p. 165*

spoke of an alliance between *"Unitarianism and Judaism."*[73] With but faint official support, he hoped for a Hebrew College at Oxford alongside Manchester, with an interchange of religious teaching. *The American Hebrew* typified official reaction to such views, by discarding the suggestion as impractical, on the grounds that whereas Jews might be prepared to meet Christians, Christians would not concede to Jews.[74]

An increasing minority nevertheless continued to support compromise, if not union. Some stood for a universal Judaic religion that embraced all men regardless of petty, historical nationalism.[75] Others stressed the common root held by Christians and Jews in the Old Testament, despite their divergence on the Talmud[76] and the New Testament.[77] They maintained the distinct possibility of cooperation between Jew and Gentile,[78] and optimistically hailed the Jewish Reform Movement.[79]

Oswald John Simon heralded a new era in Jewish thought with his plea for a Missionary Judaism i.e. a Jewish English Theistic Church, to be restricted by neither ritual Judaism nor Christian

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73 *ibid., XV, Mar 1897, p. 256*

74 *PO, LXV, 11 May 1894, p. 591*

75 *RR, I, Feb 1890, p. 116*

76 *The Jews adhere to the Babylonian rather than the Jerusalem version.*

77 *RR, III, Mar 1891, p. 264*

78 *ibid., IX, Feb 1894, p. 165*

79 *This permitted individual congregations to determine their order of service and decide whether or not to admit girls to membership through confirmation; PO, LVII, 21 Feb 1890, p. 237*

Unitarianism.[80] This would inject fresh life into Judaism whilst attracting Christians unattached to any particular denomination.[81] He proposed that whilst maintaining the traditional value of Saturdays, Sundays would be reserved for public worship. Rites such as circumcision would no longer be obligatory, faith alone being required.[83] The author Israel Zangwill[84] insisted that specifically Jewish characteristics be preserved in any attempt to transform Judaism. As Jews themselves unanimously disagreed as to what are basic Jewish features, this particular aspect of religious innovation failed to mature.

On an official level the Hebrew community enjoyed cordial relations with Christians. When Cardinal Manning[85] celebrated his silver jubilee, a large, influential deputation of Jews presented a congratulatory address at the Archbishop's House.[86] At the death of Professor Huxley, the Chief Rabbi paid tribute to the eminent scientist in a sermon at St. John's Wood Synagogue.[87] In 1904 a hospital for

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*80 RR, VIII, Jul 1893, p. 48*

*81 PO, LXX, 23 Oct 1896, p. 522*

*82 RR, XIV, Oct 1896, p. 335*

*83 ibid., XV, Mar 1897, p. 256*

*84 1864-1926, born of poor Russian parents in London, author Children of the Ghetto, Ghetto Tragedies, Ghetto Comedies and others, active in suffragette and pacifist movements, enthusiastic Zionist from 1895*

*85 Henry Edward 1808-92 succeeded Wiseman as Archbishop of Westminster in 1875*

*86 Speakers included Dr Adler, Lord Mayor Sir Henry Aaron Isaacs, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Sir John Simon and Mr Lebag-Montefiore; PO, LVIII, 7 Nov 1890, p. 589*

*87 PO, LXVIII, 19 Jul 1895, p. 81*

consumptives provided special wards and a kitchen for the Jewish community, in the belief that forcing patients to eat against their conscience retards their recovery.[88] The rabbi of the East London Synagogue publicly upheld the *"perfect cooperation with Christians for the common good."*[89]

RACE

An insoluble bond united Jews scattered throughout the globe. With the resurgence of Zionism in the 1890s this nationalism assumed new dimensions. Although the Zionist movement had existed throughout history, late nineteenth century anti-semitism injected it with revived strength. European politics revealed that contrary to public opinion, the Jewish problem had not been solved.

When the Viennese Jew, Theodor Herzl, together with Max Nordau summonsed a World Zionist Congress at Basle in 1897, they encountered a mixed reaction, for *"never in the history of Israel were the chosen people led through the wilderness by such strange guides."*[90] A highly assimilated Jew, Herzl knew little Judaism and no Hebrew. But as a journalist in Paris, he was compelled by the Dreyfus affair to muster his resources in defence of the Jewish people.[91] His co-leader, the author and medical practitioner, Max Nordau[92] of Budapest,

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*88 Brompton Hospital for Consumption, following example of London; PO, LXXXV, 27 May 1904, p. 686*

*89 J.F. Stern; PO, LXXX, 25 Oct 1901, p. 531*

*90 RR, XVI, Oct 1897, p. 336*

*91 1860-1904, author* *The Jewish State*

*92 1849-1923*

was equally improbable a candidate for the direction of Hebrew nationalism. An authority on European culture, Nordau was as critical of Judaism as of other religions, but was drawn into Zionism through Herzl.

The objects of Zionism were threefold: in a spiritual sense it sought to solve the Jewish question by enabling all Jews to participate freely in religious worship; in a political sense it hoped to overcome the restrictions of Eastern Europe, as well as to realise the dream of national restoration; and commercially it anticipated the development of Palestine. One scheme alone envisaged the foundation of a Jewish Colonial Bank with a capital of £20,000,000 to be raised within fifteen years.[93] Agricultural colonies were established from the 1880s and by the mid-nineties, when Herzl and Nordau convened at Basle, about thirty communities existed, each with a population of from one to seven hundred, the entire settlement totalling about ten thousand.[94]

Scepticism surrounded the possible outcome of Zionism. Objective commentators noted the difference between patriotic and cosmopolitan Jews: while the former were repelled by the movement's comparative disregard for religious Judaism, the latter objected to its blatant nationalism.[95] At least one intellectual, cosmopolitan Jew, namely the novelist Israel Zangwill, lent his support.[96] His

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*93 PO, LXXV, 3 Feb 1899, p. 146*

*94 RR, XVI, Oct 1897, p. 386*

*95 Nineteenth Century in RR, XVI, Jul 1897, p. 169*

*96 PO, LXXII, 10 Sep 1897, pp. 327-8*

enthusiasm eventually led him to urge public meetings to cooperate fully with Herzl's plan on racial, international and economic grounds.[97] But the weight of public opinion was pessimistic, since the realisation of Zionism depended upon the wealth of established Western Jewry, those least likely to inhabit Palestine. Moreover legal difficulties arose: had Jews forfeited ownership? and what was the relationship between Jews and the non-Jewish inhabitants?

As history has shown, political complexities were to heighten. At the time, the vagaries of Turkey proved most trying. In 1891 the Ottoman government restricted the entry of Jews to Palestine to those on a pilgrimage of limited duration.[98] Seven years later, despite the Jews' loyalty to the Sultan, Turkey again posed difficulties so that the *Christian Commonwealth* warned of a conflict between the Sultan and wealthy European Jews.[99] At the same time the Arabian traveller and scholar, Herr Eduard Glaser,[100] condemned Zionism as *"nothing but an English catspaw"* for the partition of Turkey and for the creation of a petty state to secure the road to India.[101] He rejected the movement as anti-Turkish, anti-Russian and anti-French; above all as one which harboured the danger of raising the Eastern Question.[102]

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97 *ibid., LXXXIV, 30 Oct 1903, p. 552*

98 *ibid., LX, 17 Jul 1891, p. 84*

99 *ibid., LXXIV, 21 Oct 1891, p. 530*

100 *1855-1908*

101 *PO, LXXIII, 21 Jan 1898, p. 87*

102 *Max Nordau derided this interpretation as nothing but a series of "Arabic Fables".*

The *Jewish Chronicle*, the organ of established Anglo-Jewry, initially urged caution, but gradually showed more open opposition, regretting the widespread publicity of the press.[103] As the Jews' reputed ostentation was one cause of anti-semitism, the journal suggested that Zionists should avoid undue prominence. By their stress upon nationalism they played into the hands of anti-semites like Evans-Gordon and his racist British Brothers' League, which ardently supported Zionism.[104] Becoming more outspoken in its criticism, it claimed national restoration an impossible hope, for Jews could never emerge victorious from a clash with Russian Tzardom: *"The golden dream of Zionism is a vision haunted by the Cossack's jack-boot and the Holy Synod. It threatens to exchange an oppression with its centre in Eastern Europe for an oppression with its lever in Asia Minor...to plant a feeble, impoverished little Jewish State in the centre of fierce European rivalries and make it a shuttlecock between German and Russian ambitions."*[105]

Anti-semitism of the 1890s stimulated another large-scale immigration scheme, the transfer of Russian Jews to the Argentine Republic, Canada and Australia. This was envisaged by Baron de Hirsch, described as the *"Millionaire Moses"*,[106] and the *"Napoleon of the great exodus"*.[107] In his fifties at the outbreak of the Russian

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*103 PO, LXXVIII, 31 Aug 1900, p. 275*
*104 ibid., LXXXI, 3 Jan 1902, p. 27*
*105 ibid., 13 Jun 1902, p. 755*
*106 RR, III, May 1891, pp. 422-4*
*107 ibid., XIV, Aug 1896, p. 132*

pogroms of the eighties, Hirsch realised the obligations placed upon him by wealth. He immediately marshalled his strength, trying at first to aid Jews within Russia itself. When this failed he initiated a massive programme of transmigration, primarily to South America, to the Argentine Colonies, where individual families were granted allotments of land together with stock and basic agricultural equipment. Despite opposition, Hirsch upheld the Jews' ability to exist on the land and cited the example of Russian Jews, exiled in the past to Argentine where they quickly transformed themselves from wandering tradesmen to thrifty farmers.[108]

Press reaction varied. The *Jewish World* showed restraint. It noted the difficulty of transferring from one occupation to another and cautioned that success might be slow.[109] But the *Jewish Chronicle*, viewing the Baron's plan with greater optimism than it viewed Zionism, recalled the sociological history of the Jews: how it took ages to force them from agriculture into commerce; and how Medieval law later chained them to the urban life of ghettos.[110]

Some papers criticised Hirsch the man. A provincial daily questioned the reputation of *"this great man...who is to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land,"* and intimated that he was prompted by sheer lunacy.[111] W.T. Stead also took a critical stand. He compared Hirsch to American robber barons and

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*108 ibid., IV, Aug 1891, p. 150*

*109 PO, LXIV, 28 Jul 1893, p. 110*

*110 ibid., LX, 13 Nov 1891, p. 620*

*111 Birmingham Daily Gazette in PO, LIX, 1 May 1891, p. 548*

dubbed him an *"unscrupulous speculator."*[112] But Arnold White, who had travelled on the Baron's behalf to investigate the Russian scene, upheld the character of Hirsch after his death in 1896 and publicly denied allegations against him.[113] It was estimated that in his life the Baron donated about £5,000,000 to charity.[114]

Having personally examined the state of persecution in Russia, Arnold White advocated neither Zionism nor the South American scheme. Instead he proposed that Jews be transferred to Armenia, an idea which Russian ministers already entertained.[115] He suggested this as an area controlled by the Tzar, inhabited by non-Slavs and separated from Russia proper by natural barriers. As the Armenians themselves share a Semitic background and similar racial characteristics with Jews, Arnold White was convinced that he had discovered the ideal solution, especially as it harmonised with his demand for restriction.

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At once attracted yet repelled by their immigrant co-religionists, Anglo-Jews faced a question of identity, a conflict between their English environment and upbringing and their heritage as part of a world community of Jews. Proud of the nineteenth century progress towards assimilation, they experienced a dilemma both in their religious practice and in their relationship with resurgent Hebrew national-

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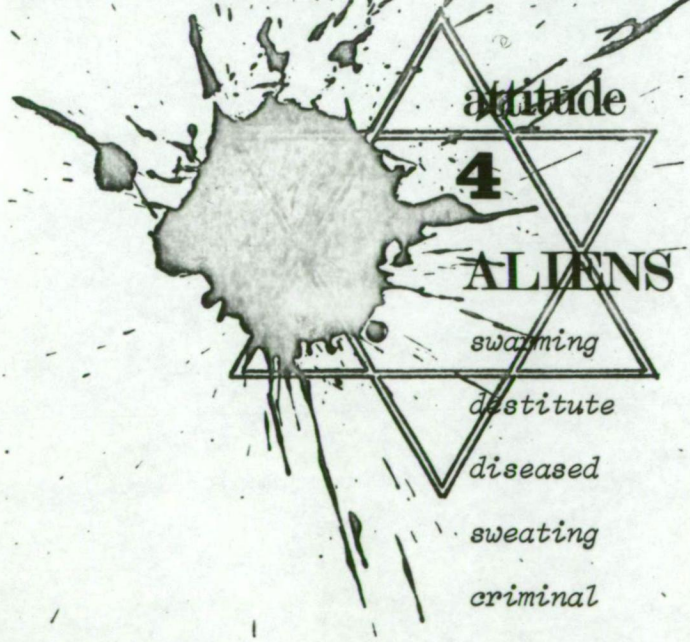
*112 RR, III, May 1891, pp. 422-4*

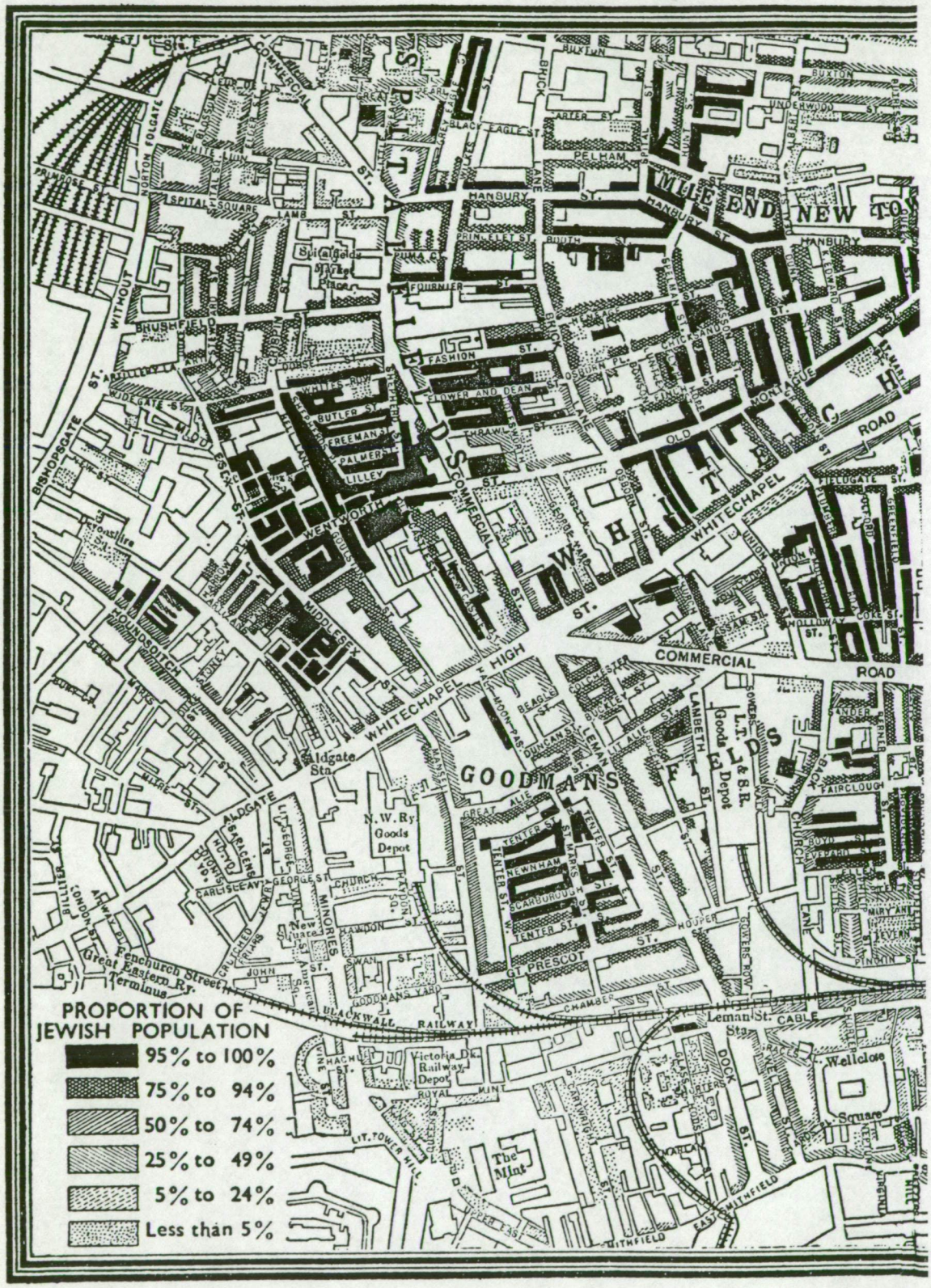
*113 ibid., XIII, Jun 1896, p. 524*

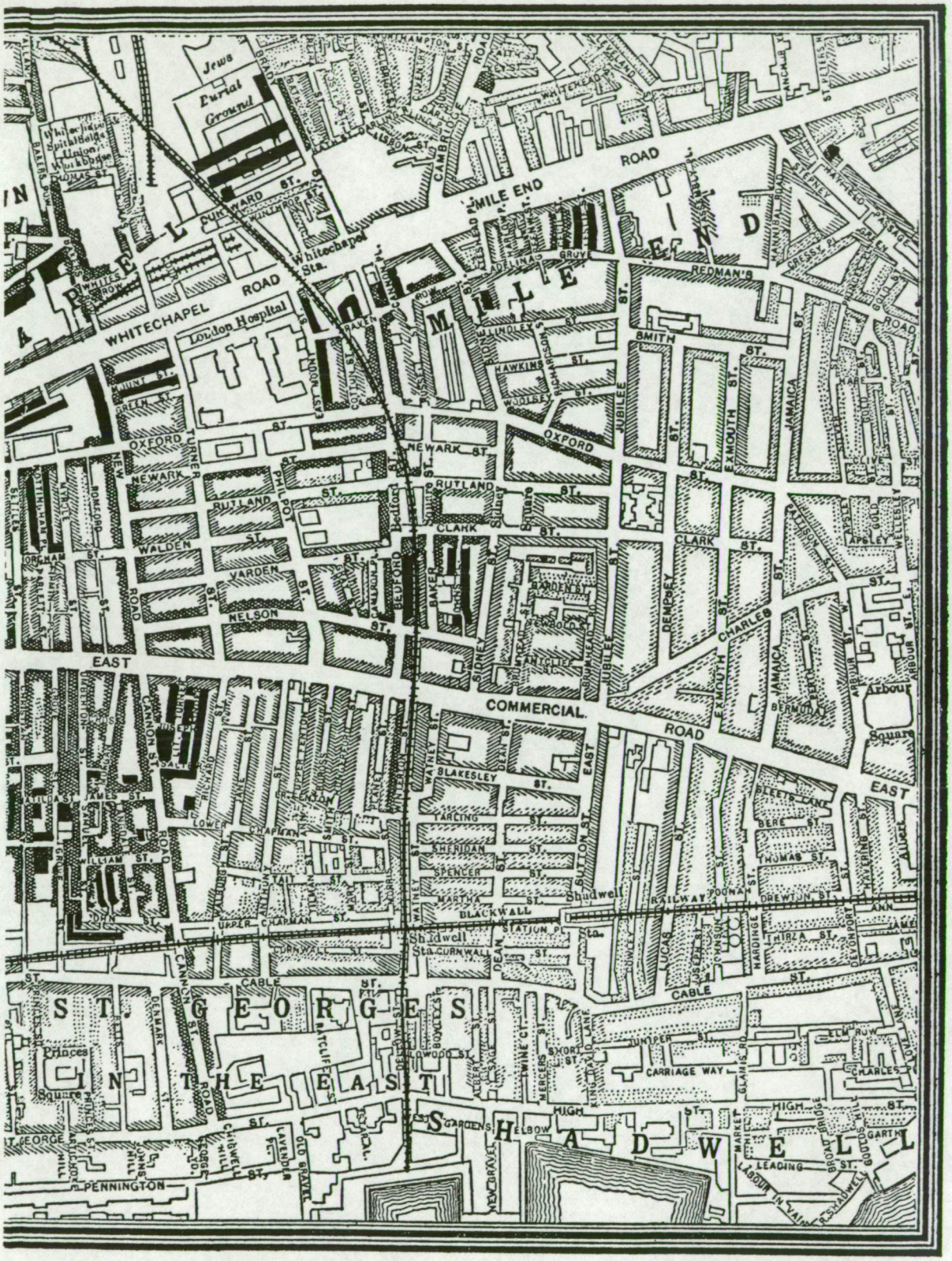
*114 ibid., XIV, Aug 1896, p. 132*

*115 Especially M. De. Giers; White, A., pp. 274-6*

ism. The abundance of plans to aid Russian refugees revealed the perplexity of the Jewish question as well as compulsion on the part of Anglo-Jews and British statesmen to overcome the problem. Would they continue the tradition of asylum? The contest in attitude between Conservative reformers and Liberal traditionalists determined the outcome.


attitude
4
ALIENS
swarming
destitute
diseased
sweating
criminal


PROPORTION OF JEWISH POPULATION
95% to 100%
75% to 94%
50% to 74%
25% to 49%
5% to 24%
Less than 5%
MILE END NEW TO
WHITECHAPEL
GOODMANS
COMMERCIAL ROAD
WHITECHAPEL HIGH
Aldgate Stn.
N.W.Ry. Goods Depot
L.T. & S.R. Goods Depot
Fenchurch Street Great Eastern Ry. Terminus
Leman St. Stn.
Victoria Dk. Railway Depot
The Mint
Wellclose Square
BISHOPSGATE ST.
ALDGATE
MINORIES
BLACKWALL RAILWAY
CABLE
DOCK ST.
LIT. TOWER HILL
EAST MITHFIELD
WITHFIELD
HOUNDSDITCH
SPITAL SQUARE
BRUSHFIELD
WHITE LION
PRIMROSE ST.
NORTON FOLGATE
WITHOUT
WIDEGATE ST.
BUTLER ST.
FREEMAN ST.
PALMER ST.
LILLEY
WENTWORTH
MIDDLESEX
PETTICOAT
HANBURY
PELHAM
BUXTON
UNDERWOOD
FASHION
SLOWER AND DEAN
THRAWL
OLD
MONTAGUE
ROAD
FIELDGATE ST.
GREENFIELD
COLE ST.
HOLLOWAY ST.
SANDER
FAIRCLOUGH
BOYD
LAVERAD ST.
MIRY AND SEVEN
PINCHIN ST.
LANBETH ST.
BOWERS
HOPPER
BOWERS ROW
GT. PRESCOT
CHAMBER
GOODMANS YARD
SWAN ST.
HAYDON ST.
CHURCH
ST. JOHN
CARLISLE AV.
GEORGE ST.
ALDGATE
ARMS PL.
LONDON ST.
BILLITER
GREAT ALIE
TENTER ST.
NEWNHAM
SCARBOROUGH
ST. MARYS
DUNCAN ST.
LEMAN ST.
BEAGLE
COLCHESTER
MOORFIELDS
CROUCHED FRIARS
ROYAL MINT
ROYAL
DOCK
WATER
NORTH
PORT
EAST MITHFIELD
WITHFIELD
COMMERCIAL
BRICK
BLACK EAGLE ST.
ARTER ST.
BOUTH
PRINCELEY ST.
FOURNIER
BEELMAN ST.
CHICKSANDS
MOSSOON PL.
OSBORN ST.
LANDRAKE
MOORE
HANBURY ST.
BRICK LANE
WHITE HORSE
CHURCH ROW
UNION
BROWN
ROSE
ROSEMARY
ROSEMARY LANE
CHURCH LANE
SANDER
BLACK




The East End of London about 1900 showing distribution of Jewish Residents.

The advocates of restriction not only decried the Jews' aloofness and alleged refusal to assimilate with society, but hurled against their opponents all the conventional weapons of anti-alien warfare. Back in the reign of James I the weavers of London had complained to the Privy Council *"that Aliens injure trade — employ men younger than allowed by Statute — live more cheaply — and therefore sell more cheaply and engross the trade of foreigners."*[1] Protectionist lobbies of the 1890s made similar assertions. In the first place, Britain was swarming, overcrowded with the immigrants. Secondly, they were almost all destitute, the term 'alien' being interchangeable with 'pauper'. They were thirdly diseased and unhealthy. Fourthly, they perpetuated the sweating system and displaced native workers. Finally, they increased the rate of crime and introduced an element of anarchism.

SWARMING

When anti-aliens cried "too many!" they usually pointed to the alarming statistics of the Board of Trade. These showed that between 1893-1902 the United Kingdom received an annual average of 44,000 aliens not stated to be 'en route' elsewhere:[2]

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1 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 10*

2 *ibid., p. 947*

| | *Russians & Poles* | *Total Aliens (not stated 'en route') from all ports of United Kingdom* |
|---|---|---|
| *1893* | 8,194 | 31,056 |
| *1894* | 7,482 | 26,682 |
| *1895* | 10,204 | 30,528 |
| *1896* | 12,773 | 35,448 |
| *1897* | 14,775 | 38,851 |
| *1898* | 15,248 | 40,785 |
| *1899* | 20,266 | 50,884 |
| *1900* | 25,633 | 62,505 |
| *1901* | 20,914 | 55,464 |
| *1902* | 28,511 | 66,471 |

These figures constituted the Alien Returns, collected under the 1836 William IV Act. But as the Board of Trade exercised no control over their collation, the Royal Commission questioned their reliability. They stated that these returns *"do not afford any accurate information as to the number of Alien Immigrants arriving in this country."*[3] If an *"Alien Immigrant"* meant "one who comes to this country with the object of residing here", the statistics represented a grave distortion of fact. They failed to make allowance for those travelling on pleasure or business, those repatriated shortly after arrival, or those proceeding elsewhere though not actually stated to be 'en route'.

The Board of Trade distinguished between those 'en route' and

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3 *ibid., p. 21*

those not stated to be so. But the latter classification referred merely to those who bore no 'through' ticket, nor were passing through certain, specified ports — as arranged by the Board of Trade with the shipping companies. It did not differentiate between those who eventually stayed and those who were in transit. In the seven years between 1895-1901 the Russo-Jewish Conjoint Committee in association with the Board of Guardians repatriated almost 9,000 individuals — an average of 1,270 each year.[4] In 1902 the Jewish Board of Guardians alone repatriated 260 of the 380 newly-arrived immigrants who sought relief.[5] The Jewish Shelter estimated that about 10,000 to 11,000 aliens officially not 'en route' in 1902 actually passed on to America or elsewhere.[6] A witness before the Royal Commission claimed that 8,000 of these had definitely been traced outwards.[7] This confusion in the calculations of those who stayed and those who were in transit[8] arose from the fact that many immigrants found it more economical to travel from Europe to the United States via Britain, rather than directly from the Continent.[9]

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4 *ibid., p. 35*

5 *ibid., p. 18*

6 *ibid., p. 21*

7 *H. Llewellyn Smith, Board of Trade representative, whose evidence was highly regarded by the Roy. Com.*

8 *Home Secretary Akers-Douglas demonstrated this confusion in an embarrassing situation in 1904, when he presented the House with figures multiplied by ten. He was immediately attacked for his "unpardonable" mistake, which dogged him throughout the 1904 Session and into the next; H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1066-76*

9 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1888, p. 755*

This was especially so in 1904 when the 'rate war' resulted in a greatly increased alien 'traffic', accompanied by an actual decline in alien intake.[10]

Both anti- and pro-aliens agreed upon the lack of reliable statistics, a factor emphasised by all enquiries into the immigration question. The Report of 1876 stated: *"These records of emigration and immigration are most incomplete"*; the following year: *"It is important, of course, to remember that these statistics are incomplete"*; and twelve months later, the Report referred to *"the incompleteness of the statistics themselves"*.[11] In 1889 the Select Committee affirmed: *"It is impossible to state with accuracy the number of aliens at present in the United Kingdom"*.[12] Fourteen years later, after an exhaustive investigation, the Royal Commission concluded: *"We have no accurate guide as to the number of Alien Immigrants in this country"*.[13]

Apart from the Alien Returns, the Census provided the other principal source of evidence. And this too was defective: because of carelessness on the part of officials, the inability of aliens to understand the forms, and their alleged conscious misrepresentation.[14] Moreover, like the Alien Returns, the Census included passing travellers and all aliens who happened to be in Britain at the date of

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10 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 691-4*

11 *Memorandum on the Immigration of Foreigners, SPHC, LXXXIX, 18 Apr 1887 (Cd. 112), p. 233*

12 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1889, p. 274*

13 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 21*

14 *ibid., p. 20*

calculation. Although the Royal Commission recognised that *"positive accuracy is not to be found in the Census Returns"*, it noted the extraordinary care taken by Jewish authorities in helping to compile the statistics of 1901.[15] On this occasion the Board of Guardians issued a circular in Yiddish prepared by the Chief Rabbi, together with directions on how to compile the forms, and provided personal, house-to-house assistance. No one suggested that the figures were therefore accurate, but the Royal Commission nevertheless rejected the Alien Returns of the Board of Trade as *"of little value"* as a guide to the number of foreigners remaining in Britain, and accepted the Census as *"the nearest approach"* to accuracy.[16]

According to the Census the total alien population of the United Kingdom increased by more than 151,000 in twenty years:[17]

| | *Aliens* | *Total Population United Kingdom* |
|---|---|---|
| *1881* .. .. | 135,640 .. .. .. | 34,884,848 |
| *1891* .. .. | 219,523 .. .. .. | 37,732,922 |
| *1901* .. .. | 286,925 .. .. .. | 41,458,721 |

But the total alien addition fell in the second decade of the period. While this indicated an annual average increase of 8,388.3 aliens between 1881-91, it showed a decline of 6,740.2 per annum between 1891-1901. Within England and Wales — England and especially London being the scene of most dispute — the figures fell from 8,009.2 to 4,964.5.[18] Throughout the nineties, the average gross total of all

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15 *ibid., pp. 20-1*

16 *ibid., p. 21*

17 *ibid., p. 22*

18 *ibid., p. 1004*

aliens entering England and Wales each year was fewer than 5,000. And this included aliens 'en route' officially and unofficially at the time of the Census.

Other statistics, those collected by Jewish authorities, also indicated the relative smallness of the alien immigrant population. Between 1889-1902 the Temporary Shelter, which offered its services to all those in need, housed altogether 29,511 immigrants — an annual average of 2,270 — of whom more than 18,000 were actually stated to be 'en route'.[19] According to calculations based on a combination of birth and death rates with the Trade Returns, Lord Rothschild in 1903 stated categorically that the entire native and alien Jewish population of London did not exceed 110,000.[20]

Anti-aliens, disregarding the corrected raw figures, also cited the enormous proportional increase of aliens in the United Kingdom. Whereas between 1881-1901 the total population rose by 18.84%, that for aliens soared by 111.58%.[21] It grew from 0.39% in 1881, through 0.58% in 1891 to 0.69% in 1901. But the percentage of aliens still remained considerably smaller than that elsewhere e.g. 1.38% in Germany, 2.66% in France, 9.58% in Switzerland and 13.71% in the United States.[22] Moreover, emigration continued to outweigh immigration. Official statements constantly showed an 'excess outwards' from the United Kingdom.[23] Surely this infinitesimal alien populat-

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*19 ibid., p. 17*

*20 ibid., p. 60; See "Minority Report" in Chapter 7*

*21 ibid., p. 22*

*22 ibid., p. 29*

*23 ibid., pp. 943-4*

ion of less than 1% — smaller than that of all her commercial rivals — was *"a very small matter on which to defend a great departure"* from the tradition of Great Britain.[24]

Aliens nevertheless contributed to a problem out of all proportion to their size — overcrowding. By living together in certain 'alien' areas, they aggravated an ever-increasing state of congestion. Almost half the aliens in the United Kingdom congregated in the County of London. Of these more than 40% crowded into the East End district of Stepney. Thus of the 287,000 aliens in the United Kingdom in 1901, 135,000 lived in London — 54,000 in Stepney alone.[25] Within Stepney the alien population growth far exceeded the general:[26]

| | *Alien* | *General* |
|---|---|---|
| *1881* | 15,998 | 282,676 |
| *1891* | 32,284 | 285,116 |
| *1901* | 54,310 | 298,600 |

Within the Borough of Stepney the alien concentration varied. In the registration district of Whitechapel in 1901, they constituted 37.06% of the general population; in St. George's-in-the-East 28.02%; and in Mile End Old Town 8.44%.[27]

In 1901 Russians and Poles composed nearly 33% of the total alien population. Of the 95,000 in the United Kingdom, more than 53,000 resided in London — over 42,000 in the Borough of Stepney i.e. 56.2%

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24 *Earl Grey, HL, H 4th, LIX 20 Jun 1898, p. 731*

25 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 22*

26 *ibid., pp. 30-1*

27 *All registration districts within the Borough of Stepney*

of all Russians and Poles were in London — 77.7% of whom lived in Stepney. At the same time they constituted 77.7% of the total number of aliens in Stepney. The aliens question thus resolved itself into the Jewish question of East End Stepney.

This intense concentration of foreigners was accentuated by the fact that much of the East End was in a state of transition, from a predominantly residential to a developing industrial zone. In this process comparatively few residential houses were substituted for those demolished as sites for factories, warehouses, breweries, offices, railway extensions and schools. As workers in the new industrial premises sought accommodation, they added to the natural native expansion and to the alien immigrant increase.

With this competition for a diminishing living area by a growing population came overcrowding, high rents and 'key' money. The London County Council estimated that overcrowding in the Borough of Stepney rose by 12.23% during 1891-1901.[28] On the basis of *"more than two persons living night and day in one room"*, the Council classified 99,533 residents as living in overcrowded conditions in 1901. The worst instances occurred in the registration sub-districts:[29]

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28 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 32*

29 *Charles Booth also classified these and other East End areas under 'Poor' and 'Crowded', though he applied a different formula; Booth, C., Life and Labour of the People in London, London (Macmillan), final vol., 1902, passim*

| | *Population Overcrowded* | *Percentage Population Overcrowded to total population* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Spitalfields* | 15,400 | 55.1 | |
| *St. George's-in-the-North* | 19,682 | 48.0 | *St. George's-in-the-East* |
| *St. John* | 2,730 | 33.7 | |
| *Mile End New Town* | 12,974 | 45.2 | |
| *Shadwell* | 3,806 | 35.4 | |
| *Goodman's Fields* | 7,418 | 33.6 | |

While rents tended to rise throughout London in the 1890s, evidence suggested that the East End suffered most.[30] Prospective tenants here faced not only higher rents but a racket of 'key' money — a premium payable to the landlord or the outgoing tenant or both — exacted before they could take possession of the dwelling.[31] As native Englishmen, intent upon preserving an accustomed minimum standard, could not meet these demands, they were allegedly displaced by foreigners, prepared to make a greater sacrifice to secure tenement. Able to cover expenses only through subletting and lodgers, the aliens thereby aggravated the overcrowding.

Resentment arose as foreign ways and customs replaced the usual English habits. An alien character permeated public notices, theatre bills, timetables and newspapers, as Jews gradually occupied whole streets in Stepney. In some districts between Whitechapel and Spitalfields, all shops and stalls were run by Hebrews. Foreign

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30 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 33*

31 *The sum varied from an average of £7.17.0 paid by some British tenants to an average of £11.17.0 paid by some aliens.*

languages, especially various forms of Yiddish, substituted the native tongue and *"but for the street architecture one might easily imagine the place to be a busy quarter of an eastern town"*.[32] As remarked by a Conservative, Stepney was, after all, *"not Palestine, and these undesirables might find their promised land elsewhere"*.[33]

The Royal Commission nevertheless admitted that *"even if there had been no increase of alien population"*, the Borough of Stepney would probably still be overcrowded.[34] Due to the prevailing conditions of the East End as a zone of transition, overcrowding would have intensified irrespective of alien migration. While foreigners undoubtedly contributed towards congestion, two factors indicated that in no case were they the primary cause — in the East End or elsewhere in London.[35]

Firstly, some metropolitan districts experienced an increase in proportional alien intake, accompanied by a decrease in overcrowding. In the registration district of St. Giles, Bloomsbury, the percentage of aliens rose from 2.63% through 5.10% to 12.53% from 1881-1901. At the same time the percentage of overcrowding fell from 29.8% in 1891 to 20.6% in 1901. The City of Westminster recorded a similar pattern, in which foreigners increased from 2.89% through 4.21% to 6.46% in the twenty years between 1881-1901, while the percentage of overcrowding dropped from 19.5% in 1891 to 13% in 1901. Secondly,

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32 *Memo., SPHC, 1887, p. 233*

33 *Fisher, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1093*

34 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 31*

35 *ibid., pp. 33-4*

the worst cases of overcrowding in 1901 existed in areas almost totally free from aliens: namely 52.1% in parts of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster;[36] 56% in parts of St. Giles, Bloomsbury;[37] and 60.1% in parts of Holborn.[38]

While anti-aliens erroneously blamed immigrants for the appalling state of urban overcrowding, pro-aliens suggested a positive remedy. Rather than discriminate against harmless refugees, they advocated the simple implementation of existing laws against overcrowding. The bye-laws of the Public Health Act of 1891 not only stipulated certain spacial dimensions for each occupant of a house, but required medical, health and sanitary inspection at any time, under penalty of up to £5 for the first offence.[39] As administrative laxity had rendered these existing regulations ineffective, until they had been tried, no case could be established for new legislation. The Royal Commission stated that *"many responsible and experienced witnesses"* believed the current statutes, if properly and systematically enforced, would overcome the problem.[40]

Thus they confirmed the opinion of pro-aliens throughout the period, for whenever the question of overcrowding arose, Liberals reminded Members of existing laws, to be obeyed by aliens and natives

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36 *One of the enumeration districts of the registration sub-district of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster*

37 *One of the enumeration districts of the St. Giles registration district*

38 *One of the enumeration districts of the Holborn registration district, where the alien population throughout was only 3.29%*

39 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 34*

40 *ibid., p. 35*

alike. Should these prove inadequate, then fresh legislation, with added penalties, would be justified. *"But do not,"* pleaded one, *"let us legislate for the exclusion of the foreigner on the ground that our administration is so hopelessly incompetent that we are unable to force the handful of foreigners who live in the United Kingdom to obey our laws. I should be very sorry if the House were to make itself a party to a confession of such ineptitude."*[41]

DESTITUTE

No one denied that the majority of immigrants arrived in a state of comparative poverty. What they disputed was the effect of this near-destitution. The facts showed that most Jewish aliens landed with very limited financial resources, and thus immediately depended upon their own labour for a meagre livelihood. Between 1895-1902 37% of the immigrants arrived in Britain with less than ten shillings per head, of whom 22% stated that they possessed nothing.[42] But did this relative destitute state render them 'undesirable'?

This vital question underlines the entire aliens debate, as the policy of restriction referred exclusively to 'undesirables'. Whereas there was a general agreement in designating as 'undesirable' both the diseased (including lunatics and idiots) and the criminal (other than political, but including anarchists and prostitutes), sharp division occurred over the classification of those without ostensible

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*41 Earl Grey, H 4th, LIX, 20 Jun 1898, p. 730*

*42 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 20*

means of support and hence likely to become a public charge.[43] Though this group were broadly discussed as either 'destitute' or 'pauper' aliens, no satisfactory definition existed as to what constituted 'destitution' or 'pauperism'. Some considered anyone likely to become a public charge as a 'pauper'; *"The initial want of money is the test."*[44] But others rejected this type of probability and contended that *"a 'pauper' is a person who has already become a public charge."*[45] The fact that all third class passengers were sometimes tabulated as 'pauper' demonstrated the lack of any criterion.[46] As politicians failed to agree on the meaning of pauperism, they found it impossible to decide whether or not pauperism amounted to 'undesirability'.

While anti-aliens campaigned to exclude paupers as 'undesirable', pro-aliens presented the case for their admission. Firstly, alien destitution on arrival was not so widespread as reported. Secondly, despite the initial lack of resources, most aliens were skilled workmen capable of earning a decent living. And finally, alien pauperism made relatively little inroad upon the rates.

Despite the prevalence of poverty among newly-arrived immigrants, the Royal Commission found that *"destitution is by no means the rule."*[47] A Custom-House official estimated that in the year 1901-2

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43 *ibid.*

44 *Dudley, H 4th, LIX, 20 Jun 1898, p. 741*

45 *Salisbury, H 4th, LVIII, 23 May 1898, p. 279*

46 *Goldsmid, H 4th, VIII, 11 Feb 1893, p. 1198*

47 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 19*

each alien —two children counting as one person — possessed twenty-four marks, equivalent to about twenty-four shillings.[48] One migrant had a cheque for £500 and another had one for £1,000. He maintained that the statements made by aliens as to the amount in their possession could not be verified, but observed their general tendency to *"understate"* the sum.

Although many aliens arrived in a state of apparent destitution, they brought with them both brain-power and industrial expertise, 60% arriving as skilled workmen, often with their own tools.[49] After a period of struggle, *"these men enter upon a different phase of existence"*, acquire more knowledge and increased earnings.[50] At this stage of their immigration, most evidence before the Royal Commission was *"favourable"*. As, of the 40% without skills, half were women and children and while a large number of the residue were business dealers, very few unqualified aliens competed with natives on the labour market.

Because of the extensive system of Hebrew charity organisations, Jews rarely fell upon the public rates. And applications for aid to these Jewish societies declined in the mid-nineties.[51] From 1893-97 the Board of Guardians and the Russo-Jewish Committee experienced a 58% decrease in applications, from 1,409 to 587; while its cases of relief fell by 61%, from 1,202 to 469.

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*48 Hawkey; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 20*

*49 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 20*

*50 ibid., p. 30*

*51 H 4th, LIX, 20 Jun 1898, p. 734*

In Whitechapel, where Russian and Polish Jews constituted 18% of the population in the early 1890s, they accounted for less than 1% of the pauperism.[52] The Whitechapel Workhouse of 1893 had over 5,000 inmates of whom only forty were Jews, while the local Infirmary housed fewer than sixty Jews out of a total of almost 6,000. The Borough of Stepney in 1902 recorded 521 cases of Poor Law relief; but whereas the general rate of pauperism was 7.9%, that for aliens was only 3.7%.[53]

Between 1870-1900 Britain as a whole underwent a decline in Poor Law relief; but while the figures for England and Wales fell by 23% and those for the metropolis by 19.5%, those for Whitechapel — the centre of aliens — decreased by 60.8%.[54] At the same time, whereas the mean rate of pauperism per 10,000 of the population throughout the United Kingdom stood at 268 in 1888 and 260 in 1889, the highest figure throughout the nineties was 255 in 1898.[55] By 1902 it fell to 239. The general populace of the London County recorded 7.9% pauperism, while aliens scored but 2.4%.[56] The entire cost of alien relief amounted to £29,000 in 1904, but as the proportion of alien paupers to the whole alien population was only a quarter the proportion of native paupers to the whole native population, alien ratepayers in fact contributed disproportionately to the support of

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52 *ibid., p. 733*

53 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1118*

54 *ibid.*

55 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 960*

56 *ibid., p. 25*

British paupers. The exclusion of aliens on grounds of destitution was hardly valid.

DISEASED

Anti-aliens decried the dirty, uncleanly habits of immigrants, who allegedly contaminated the British with their alien diseases. The small-pox epidemic was attributed to *"the scum washed on to our shores from dirty water coming from foreign drainpipes"*.[57] A great number undoubtedly arrived in a filthy condition, but this resulted more from the voyage itself than from personal preference. Moreover, most evidence suggested a high standard of health despite the overall uncleanliness and the isolated instances of disease. The Jews in particular, due to both history and religious custom, revealed an immunity to infection and a remarkable degree of physical fitness.

The state of aliens arriving on vessels from the port of Libau received the *"strongest condemnation"* from the Royal Commission.[58] They landed in *"a filthy verminous condition — their clothes and bodies infested with lice and fleas."* But this referred only to those embarking from Libau, for from 1895 most German shipping companies, which carried the bulk of the alien immigrants, made extensive improvements in steerage class accommodation. The Custom-House official testified that most passengers, after their long voyage,

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57 *Pro-alien Trevelyan quoting press, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1077*

58 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 19*

arrived *"in fairly good condition....clean."* They in no way differed from the average Englishman after two or three days' travel by sea.

The question however applied not only to their situation at the time of arrival but to their general hygiene standard as accepted immigrants within Britain. Arnold White believed that of all the Jews' faults, the worst was dirt.[59] He noted the evidence of a factory inspector before the Sweating Commission: *"The habits of these people are very, very dirty: they seem to almost revel in dirt rather than cleanliness....You find a filthy bed...children perfectly naked...all sorts of dirty utensils...everywhere."*[60] Realists nevertheless observed that the only real distinction between the impoverished alien and the impoverished native was that whereas the English swept the dirt under the bed the Jew threw it out of the window.[61]

Excited by rumours of foreign disease, the advocates of restriction claimed that the country's leniency in immigration could result in the contamination of the people. With some justification during the cholera epidemic of Eastern Europe in the nineties, they demanded greater port precautions, their pleas being echoed by the *British Medical Journal.*[62] The illustrated scientific journal, *Nature,* assured subscribers that the Local Government Board was indeed pro-

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59 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1888, p. 776*

60 *Lakeman; White, A., p. 143*

61 *Trevelyan quoting Canon Barnett, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1081*

62 *Weekly publication of British Medical Association; PO, LXII, 23 Dec 1892, p. 823*

tecting Britain from the disease.[63] Though alien victims of cholera were not rejected, they were isolated in hospital.[64] A stringent policy of exclusion was nevertheless exercixed against immigrants suspected of the plague, and the Government guaranteed anti-aliens that the prospect of infection was remote.[65]

At least one case of genuine grievance occurred during the period. It was disclosed only after three separate references in Parliament, which finally revealed that a female passenger suffering from leprosy had been admitted by Britain, though subsequently rejected by the United States. The health inspectors had regarded her complaint as lupus, not leprosy, until further examination after her return from the port of Boston. In defence of their neglect, the official spokesman[66] maintained that the woman was rejected after twelve days in America not so much because of the disease but because her husband, already in the States, could not afford her medical expenses. But the Government could not escape from this *"perfectly notorious"* incident.[67] Ten years later the prospect of tuberculosis caused alarm. The most persistent of all anti-aliens, Howard Vincent, claimed that the United States intended to exclude all aliens infected with the malady: what was Britain's policy?[68] The

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*63 PO, LXVI, 31 Aug 1894, p. 272*

*64 H 4th, XCV, 25 Jun 1901, p. 1406*

*65 ibid., XCIII, 10 May 1901, pp. 1317-8*

*66 Hicks-Beach*

*67 H 3rd, CCCXLV, 5 Jun 1890, p. 65; 12 Jun 1890, pp. 695-8; 16 Jun 1890, p. 1004*

*68 H 4th, XCV, 25 Jun 1901, p. 1406*

Government declined to follow the American example.

Despite the agitation of protectionists, evidence before the Royal Commission vindicated the moderate immigration policy.[69] The medical officer for the port of London described the health of most aliens as *"fairly good"*, and denied that they had introduced much infectious disease into the country. His opinion found support from Herman Landau of the Jewish Shelter. In the six years ending 1903 27,000 aliens passed through the Shelter with only one case of illness.[70] According to the Report: *"This statement was so remarkable that we sought for, and obtained, corroboration for it."*[71]

The only ailment affecting immigrants appeared to be examples of an eye inflammation, known as 'granular ophthalmis', which prevailed among poor children generally. Even this however was not invariably contagious and *"no instance was alleged of the disease being communicated by them to others."* On the other hand, a doctor maintained that Britain certainly exported diseases, and cited the case of phthisis or consumption carried to the Riviera by Englishmen.[72]

History has shown Jews to be more resistant than other ethnic groups to disease.[73] In Roman days the plague hardly touched the Hebrew ghettos; in more recent times Jews have suffered from epidemics less than other populations; whilst at the turn of the century

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69 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 18-9*

70 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1077*

71 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 19*

72 *Hutchinson, H 4th, CXLIV, 10 Jul 1905, p. 147*

73 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1138*

they showed remarkable resistance to cholera. Religious custom accounted for much of their good health. Jews generally not only abstained from alcohol but adhered to a high social morality and to the strict code of Mosaic Law.[74] With its prohibition of certain foods and its regulations regarding others, this anticipated many of the dictates of modern science and, according to contemporary theories, contributed to the infrequency of tuberculosis among practising Jews.[75] This belief extended to both non-Jewish physiologists and to Christian churchmen. In 1894 the Chief Rabbi was invited to address clergymen of the Church of England on "Sanitation as Taught by the Mosaic Code".[76]

Their traditional ways constantly resulted in a longer life expectancy than for the non-Jewish community throughout the world. In fact with the changed style of living by American Jews came an increase in the death rate i.e. assimilation meant a lowering of health standards.[77] But Jews still retained their lead over the Gentile population.[78] A survey of New York residents between 1884-90 attributed the highest annual death rate to the Irish who died at the rate of 2.8%. Next were the English at 2.1%, the German at 1.7%, the American at 1.6%, the Italian at 1.2% and finally Russian and Polish Jews at only 0.6%. Investigations in Germany and France re-

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*74 RR, IX, Jan 1894, p. 34*

*75 PO, LXII, 30 Sep 1892, p. 430*

*76 ibid., LXV, 19 Jan 1894, p. 72*

*77 ibid., LXIV, 28 Jul 1893, p. 107*

*78 ibid., LXVII, 18 Jan 1895, p. 83*

vealed a similar low death rate among Jews. In the Jewish area of St. George's-in-the-East, within the Borough of Stepney in Britain, the 1905 birth rate was 5.2%, almost double that of London, yet the death rate was only 1.2%, the lowest ever recorded in the district.[79] Jewish immigrants could scarcely be accused of lowering the standard of life.

SWEATING

The term 'sweating' referred to a system of sub-contract, in which middlemen squeezed a profit through the difference between the contract price they received and the wages they paid. The word originated among journeymen tailors in their description of those who worked at home, out of hours, aided by their family in specifically overtime work.[80] These men gradually began to complete all their work privately, and so developed a whole new system of labour in their own homes or small workshops. Employing members outside the family, they became 'sweaters' in another sense, deriving their income through the 'sweat' of others, who varied in number from one to fifty. Among tradesmen themselves, the term was without reproach, being applied to both the good and the bad; but to the public, it simply meant anyone whose employees were overworked, ill-paid and poorly accommodated.

Anti-aliens alleged that Jews in particular added more sub-

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*79 H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, pp. 1273-4*

*80 Booth, C. (ed.), Labour and Life of the People, London (Williams & Norgate), 1889, pp. 481-2*

divisions and contracts, thus flooding the labour market and forcing competitors to destitution. But the sub-divisions themselves gave rise to the high quality of Jewish craftsmanship, as each worker became a perfectionist within his division. *"If that is competition with skilled workmen — which they themselves do not say it is,"* commented Lord James, chairman of the Royal Commission, *"I say that to my mind that is a benefit to the consumers of this country."*[81] Even though the appalling consequences of the system could not be denied, an investigation into sweating could suggest no alternative.[82] Reporting on the tailoring industry, an enquiry[83] in 1887 confessed that no other method could meet the demand for cheap clothing; that without the supply of inexpensive foreigners, Britain's export trade would be severely retarded; and finally, that middlemen contractors were not unduly rewarded for their labour.

Sweating moreover occurred at least fifty years before immigrants dominated the industry. Their influx towards the end of the century and the adaptability of tailoring to the system merely resulted in its growth not its creation. The evils in fact prevailed in trades unaffected by aliens.[84] According to the Board of Trade Report in 1894, the worst problem confronting labour was not the struggle between Englishmen and Jews but the contest between English

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*81 H 4th, CL, 28 Jul 1905, pp. 771-2*

*82 Rep. on the Sweating System at the East End of London, SPHC, LXXXIX, 12 Sep 1887 (Cd. 331), pp. 269-70*

*83 Conducted by John Burnett*

*84 H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1069-70*

male and female labour, especially the introduction of married women at lower than conventional rates. As explained by a young Liberal, sweating existed among both native and foreign workers: *"Some thrive by it and rise out of the condition; others stick there; others sweat it out and die there"*; but under no circumstances would he stand by and see aliens made *"the scapegoat for our own neglect."*[85]

In preference to the negative course of immigration restriction, pro-aliens proposed a positive solution. Supported by the leaders of the Labour movement, they aimed to combat sweating through the implementation of existing legislation, such as the Public Health Acts and the Factory and Workshop Acts. As the 1887 Report confirmed: *"There can be little doubt that a rigid enforcement of the Acts...would do much to make life more tolerable to the workers, and tend to improve also the general conditions of the trade."*[86]

Allied to the charge of sweating was that of displacement, for by the acceptance of lower standards and wages, aliens could outbid their English rivals. Conservatives considered it a *"disgrace...to see so many unemployed able-bodied men walking through the streets of London...because destitute aliens were allowed to come into our midst in thousands to labour at a price which English workmen could not accept."*[87] The Royal Commission in some ways justified their fears.[88] It found that many newly-arrived unskilled aliens produced *"a glut"*

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85 *Trevelyan, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1080*

86 *Rep., SPHC, 1887, p. 259*

87 *Maple, H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 970*

88 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 19*

in the labour market as well as *"a very severe competition in the lower grades of alien labour itself."*

A number of complaints were aired in Parliament. In 1892 an M.P. from Lancashire claimed that foreigners, mainly destitute Poles, had replaced chemical workers at Widnes.[89] He alleged that they both worked for starvation wages and burdened the rates. But the president of the Local Government Board[90] showed how distress arose not from alien competition, but from the closure of a number of alkali works. He rebuffed the report as exaggerated and misleading: the various chemical operations employed altogether no more than fifty aliens — most of whom had resided in Britain for some time; no single native worker could positively state that he had been displaced by a foreigner; according to at least one of the largest organizations, uniform wages were paid to British and non-British alike; and finally, not only did aliens rarely fall upon the rates, but not a single Pole received relief from the Union.

Conflict sometimes centred on the language problem, as when immigrants allegedly delayed hearings before police, because of the lengthy process of interpretation.[91] A Nottinghamshire Member maintained that the inability of Polish Jews to speak English while working in British coalmines endangered the life of native miners.[92] In reply, the Home Secretary[93] assured the House that the aliens had

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89 *Edward-Moss, H 4th, II, 24 Mar 1892, pp. 1661-2*

90 *Ritchie*

91 *H 4th, CXIX, 17 Mar 1903, p. 998*

92 *Markham, H 4th, CXXX, 19 Feb 1904, p. 446*

93 *Akers-Douglas*

indeed been instructed in their duties, and that there was no such evidence against them.

Although unskilled immigrants may have displaced natives, the Royal Commission, after an exhaustive investigation, concluded that *"it has not been proved that there is any serious direct displacement of skilled English labour."*[94] This partly echoed the Select Committee of 1889: *"It is urged that no injury is done by English labour, since the trade in which foreign immigrants are engaged has been mainly created by themselves, and is of a class which English workmen would not do."*[95] Like the Huguenots before them, Jewish aliens of the nineteenth century, far from being destitute, arrived with their traditional crafts and skills.[96]

Jews particularly excelled as tailors, shoe- and cabinet-makers. By the late 1880s they had become recognised as leading tailors throughout Britain, in London, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne and Glasgow. In St. George's-in-the-East 80% of the tailoring trade was in non-English hands, and John Burnett[97] contemplated the time when the entire industry would be under foreign control. Of 25,000 tailors in England in 1903, 19,000 were Russians and Poles; of 5,000 cabinet-makers 3,000 were Russians and Poles; and of 5,000 boot- and shoe-makers 4,000 were Russians and

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94 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 28*

95 *Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1889, p. 273*

96 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 20*

97 *Labour correspondent and witness; Rep. Sel. Cttee., SPHC, 1889, p. 272*

Poles.[98]

Although anti-aliens lamented the fact that, of the thousands engaged in these three industries, so few were *"of the Anglo-Saxon race"*,[99] most contemporaries noted the advantages gained by the country. Were Jews expelled, the trade would pass, not to native Englishmen, but to their keenest rivals, the Germans.[100] British tailoring firms spoke highly of their Jewish staff, whose excellent standard both permitted the use of home-produced material rather than that formerly imported from Berlin, and reduced the need for garments from abroad. While the German press regretted their loss of trade to British competitors, a local business testified: *"Our experience shows that these foreign tailors do a class of work which our workers cannot undertake with success, and that they earn a high rate of pay."*[101]

Other examples also refuted the charge of unfair alien competition. In Leeds for instance, although the Union stipulated fivepence an hour, competent Jewish tailors seldom earned less than sixpence an hour and frequently eightpence.[102] Despite the influx of allegedly 'cheap' immigrant labour from the 1880s, wages in the United Kingdom

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98 *Tailors: 24,786 — 19,076, cabinet-makers: 4,615 — 3,022, boot- and shoe-makers: 4,671 — 3,577; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 23*

99 *Lawther, H 4th, VIII, 11 Feb 1893, pp. 1160-1*

100 *PO, LX, 7 Aug 1891, p. 167*

101 *Spencer quoting Messrs Hitchcock, Williams, & Co., H 4th, CL, 28 Jul 1905, p. 758*

102 *RR, XVII, Jan 1898, p. 35*

tended to rise.[103] Between 1888-1902 the average level of General Wages increased, with minor fluctuations, by 16.2%.[104] The occasional unemployment in industries such as shipbuilding, engineering and iron works could not be attributed to foreign migration, but purely to shortage of trade. Rather than penalise prospective, hard-working aliens with restriction, the spokesman for Labour, Keir Hardie, advocated the establishment of a Department of Labour.[105]

Even if not directly employed in tailoring, the average Englishman received its immediate benefit, for the cheap clothing trade, innovated by the Jews, placed new clothes in reach of ordinary people for the first time in history. No longer were the working class obliged to sport the cast-off wear of their superiors.

Alien industries made a valuable contribution to the export trade. Between 1893-1902 the value of British-manufactured apparel rose by £2,000,000 from £425,000,000 to £625,000,000.[106] Over the same period the export value of leather boots and shoes increased by almost £200,000. The 1888 export figure of 600,000 pairs of boots was tripled in 1902 with over 1,800,000, the result of foreign labour and initiative.[107] According to the Report of the Royal Commission, the development of the three main industries by aliens *"has undoubtedly been beneficial in various ways: it has increased the demand for,*

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*103 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 23*

*104 ibid., p. 960*

*105 H 4th, CXXX, 19 Feb 1904, pp. 451-3*

*106 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 971-2*

*107 H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 791*

*and the manufacture of, not only goods made in this country (which were formerly imported from abroad), but of the materials used in them, thus indirectly giving employment to native workers."*[108]

CRIMINAL

Allegations of crime among aliens intensified with the passage of the nineties. While the anti- and pro-aliens vied each other with remarks like: *"I should have thought we had enough criminals of our own"*,[109] followed by the denial that *"the home-made thief had much to learn from the alien"*,[110] foreign criminal statistics showed a definite upward trend.

Colonel Sir Howard Vincent, the most tenacious of all Conservative reformers, justified his opposition to aliens by his background as a former Director of Criminal Investigation to the Metropolitan Police. This experience, he maintained, had convinced him of the detrimental effect of foreigners upon the native population. He systematically plied the Commons for statistics or presented figures of his own, citing for example the number of aliens charged at the North London Sessions,[111] or the percentage of foreigners currently before the London Sessions,[112] or the thousands arrested by the Metropolitan Police.[113] Having lost no opportunity to harass the

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*108 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 27*

*109 Evans-Gordon, H 4th, CI, 29 Jan 1902, p. 1278*

*110 S.M. Samuel, H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, pp. 961-2*

*111 280 in 1902; H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, pp. 942-3*

*112 20% in Jun 1903; H 4th, CXXIV, 22 Jun 1903, p. 70*

*113 5,000 in year ending Oct 1902*

Government in almost every year since 1890, by 1903 his questions had exhausted them. To his incessant demand for facts, the Home Secretary, Akers-Douglas, could merely reply: *"All trustworthy information on this matter in my possession will be given to the Royal Commission."*[114]

The problem of criminal aliens worsened about the turn of the century, when the statistics steadily increased. Between 1899-1903 over 13,000 foreigners were committed to prison in England and Wales:[115]

| | *Alien Prisoners* | *Percentage of Total Criminal Population* |
|---|---|---|
| *1899* | 2,181 | 1.36 |
| *1900* | 2,139 | 1.39 |
| *1901* | 2,465 | 1.66 |
| *1902* | 2,880 | 1.72 |
| *1903* | 3,449 | 1.98 |

This represented a 58% increase within five years.[116] Alien criminality grew both absolutely and relatively to population. In 1901 the percentage of native-born criminals in England and Wales stood at 0.52%, while that for the foreign-born was 1.16%.[117] At the same

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114 *Also undertook to provide Vincent with a private copy; H 4th, CXVIII, 3 Mar 1903, p. 1234*

115 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 1021*

116 *Between 1899-1903 crime among alien males rose by 53%, but that among alien females by 104%, although the number of criminal males continued to exceed that of females. In 1903 the ratio of male to female alien prisoners was 2,984:465*

117 *Native: 166,579 out of 32,280,085, foreign: 2,880 out of 247,758; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 25*

time the degree of habituality multiplied. Whereas in 1899 231 aliens convicted in the metropolis had been sentenced previously, in 1903 this figure rose to 409.[118] Within London itself, at the Clerkenwell Sessions, aliens constituted 7% of all those charged in 1892, 11% in 1900 and 13% in 1902.

The types of crime varied from area to area within the metropolis, though burglary, house-breaking and stealing showed the greatest upsurge. On one occasion Vincent referred to foreign burglars equipped with elaborate tools and implements whereupon Gerald Balfour, President of the Board of Trade, commented: *"I have always understood that a burglar's outfit cost, at the very least, £100, and I should like to ask my honourable and gallant friend how he thinks that any man with that amount of capital would come to this country as a pauper alien."*[119] Though Vincent himself merely replied: *"I cannot accept my right honourable friend's statement as correct"*; *The Times* observed: *"We should have thought that any burglar worthy of the name could enter three-quarters of the houses in London on a capital of one hundred pence."*[120]

The number of aliens charged with crimes of violence in Stepney rose from seven in 1892 to twenty-nine in 1901; with burglary and housebreaking from four to eighteen; and with robbery and larceny from 135 to 181. Soho revealed a similar pattern, though prostitution rose from 150 in 1892 to 347 in 1902; and for drunkenness from

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*118 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 26*

*119 H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 958*

*120 PO, LXXXIII, 6 Mar 1903, p. 292*

130 to 237. Prostitution also prevailed in the Jewish area of Whitechapel, where the British-born offenders decreased while the alien-born increased. Alien convictions nevertheless remained much lower than the native, an increase from thirteen to fifty-two compared with a decrease from 331 to 220 for the British-born.[121] Other alien crimes were gambling, the illicit distillation of spirits and bankruptcy, especially among Germans, Russians and Poles.[122]

The cost of this crime perturbed both anti-aliens and pro-aliens, though the Government rarely gave satisfactory figures on expenditure. They usually evaded questions on the ground that such facts could be obtained only after elaborate calculations that would eventually serve no useful purpose. Moreover, from 1902 they explained that all salient facts were being laid before the Royal Commission.[123] Under extreme pressure however the sum of £30,000 per annum was mentioned at least twice.[124] Politicians also enquired about the cost of alien crime prevention but this too remained unanswered. Although Home Secretary Akers-Douglas admitted that in areas such as Soho, Whitechapel and other places with a large foreign element, a proportionately larger police force was maintained than in districts with relatively few aliens, he emphatically denied that this

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121 *The Roy. Com. nevertheless stressed that the alien prostitute was generally more sober than the English.*

122 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 26-7*

123 *H 4th, CXXIII, 8 Jun 1903, pp. 219-20; but the Roy. Com. gave no statistics on the cost either.*

124 *ibid., CXIX, 18 Mar 1903, pp. 1103-4; CXXIII, 8 June 1903, p. 220*

was because of a greater tendency towards crime among immigrants.[125]

The position of political anarchists also came within discussions of criminal 'undesirables'. In fact the policy of restriction in the nineteenth century assumed added significance with the Extradition Act of 1870, by which Britain agreed to deport aliens wanted by foreign powers with whom she had an extradition treaty. Though most of the aliens debate between 1890-1905 centred around the question of numbers, poverty, health, employment and straight-forward non-political crime, it included political anarchism on one memorable occasion. And in the twentieth century this subject was destined to play an ever-increasing role in the immigration issue.[126]

The controversy over the first Aliens Bill of the period, proposed by Lord Salisbury in 1894, resulted mainly from its nihilist allegations against foreigners. A storm erupted in the House of Lords when Salisbury, during the three-year Liberal interlude, suggested that legislation be passed to protect Britain from becoming the hatching-ground for political anarchists.[127] He proposed that the Home Secretary be empowered to expel *"any foreigner whose presence in this country is either dangerous to the public peace here or is likely to promote the commission of crimes elsewhere."* Prime Minister Rosebery immediately opposed the motion as *"disastrous"*, for no t other statement, inside or outside Parliament, could possible complicate foreign relations more *"than the fact that the late Prime Minister*

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*125 ibid., CXVIII, 5 Mar 1903, p. 1563*

*126 Especially after Peter the Painter incident in 1911*

*127 H 4th, XXVI, 6 Jul 1894, pp. 1054-7*

*and Secretary for Foreign Affairs has risen in this House and impeached his own country as a harbour of foreign assassins. I regret it — I deplore it."*

Thereafter most anti-aliens, including Salisbury when again Prime Minister, allowed the matter to rest. As a prelude to the future importance of the anarchist element in British international politics, Howard Vincent nevertheless raised the question in 1903. Having been a delegate to a recent Anti-Anarchist Conference in Rome, he maintained that the deportation of criminals from one country to another was a subject of general complaint.[128] He also cited the discovery of an anarchist plot in America to assassinate rulers throughout the world as a warning to Britain to forego her tradition, and so preclude the possibility of such conspiracies occurring on native soil.[129]

Despite the mounting toll of alien crime, and the sporadic interest in anarchists from abroad, evidence partially exonerated from blame the group of aliens against whom most agitation was directed i.e. the Russian and Polish Jews. Though the most numerous of the alien population, they made a relatively small contribution to the criminal statistics. Between 1899-1903 24½% of all foreign-born prisoners were Americans, 19% Germans and 17% Russians and Poles.[130]

Although all groups joined in their opposition to criminality of

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128 *ibid., CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 943*

129 *ibid., p. 947*

130 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 25*

any sort, and advocated the exclusion of criminals from abroad, the Liberal traditionalists claimed that the proportion of crime among Jews was insufficient to legislate against them as a whole. Even Arnold White contended that Jewish criminal tendencies could not justify restriction.[131] In Russia itself, the percentage of Jewish crime was only 0.26%, as against 0.43% for the rest of the community. Lord James stated that most alien criminals resided in Soho, and other non-Jewish areas of the metropolis.[132] His Report praised the industry and thrift of East End aliens and affirmed: *"They certainly are sober in habit, and are as law-abiding as the natives around them."*[133]

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Faced with the urban-social problems of industrialism at a time of increased alien immigration, agitators saw in the Jews a target for their assault. Though many of their allegations of overcrowding, destitution, disease, displacement and crime among foreigners had slight basis in reality, their claims were exaggerated, misleading and sometimes utterly unfounded. Their weapons were nothing but the conventional slogans of anti-alien propaganda, employed in the mid-nineteenth century against the Irish and in the mid-twentieth century against the coloured immigrants of London's East End. In their demand for restriction, the anti-alien minority sought reform of an

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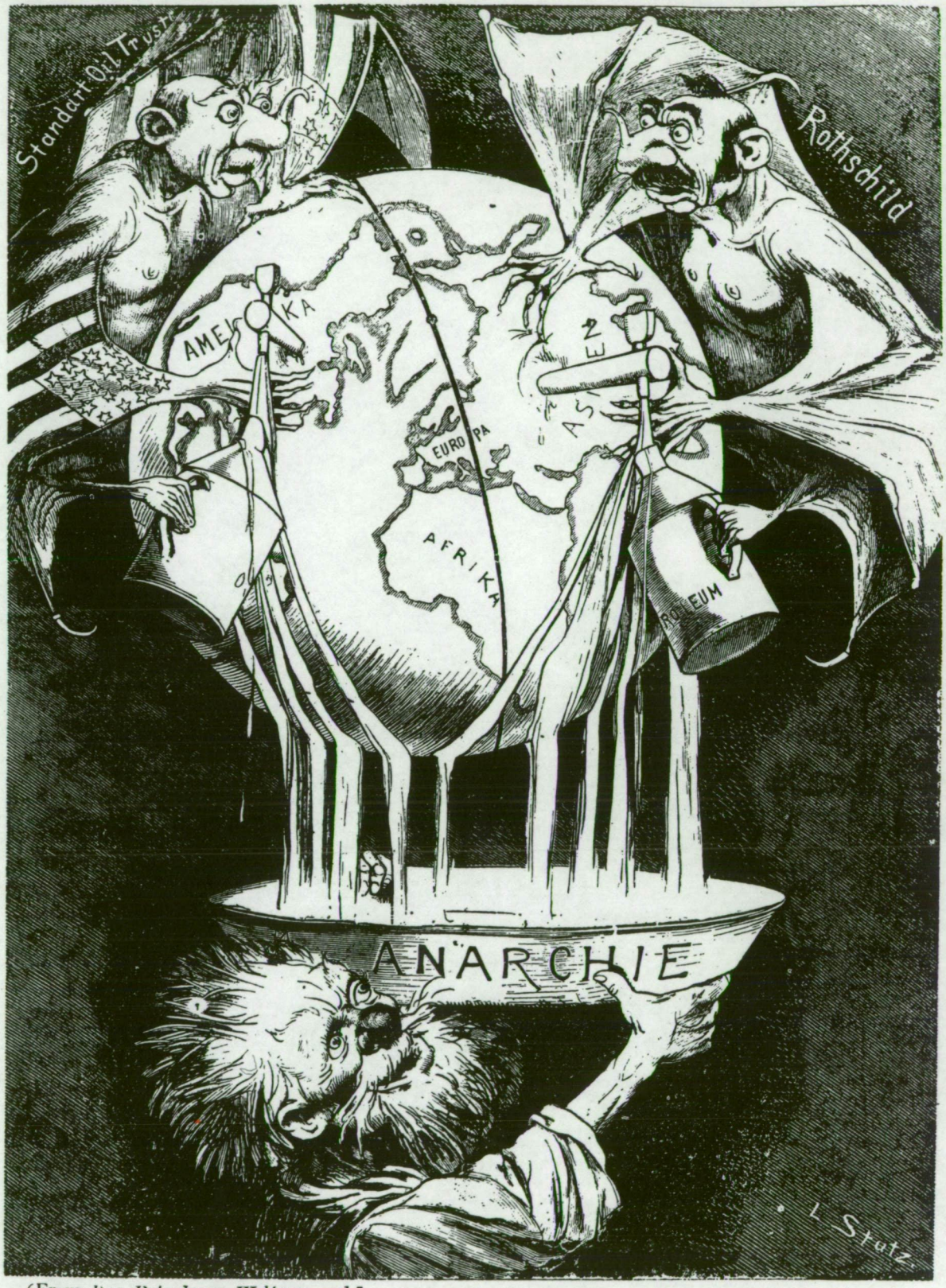
*131 RR, V, May 1892, p. 481*

*132 H 4th, CL, 28 Jul 1905, p. 769*

*133 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 30*

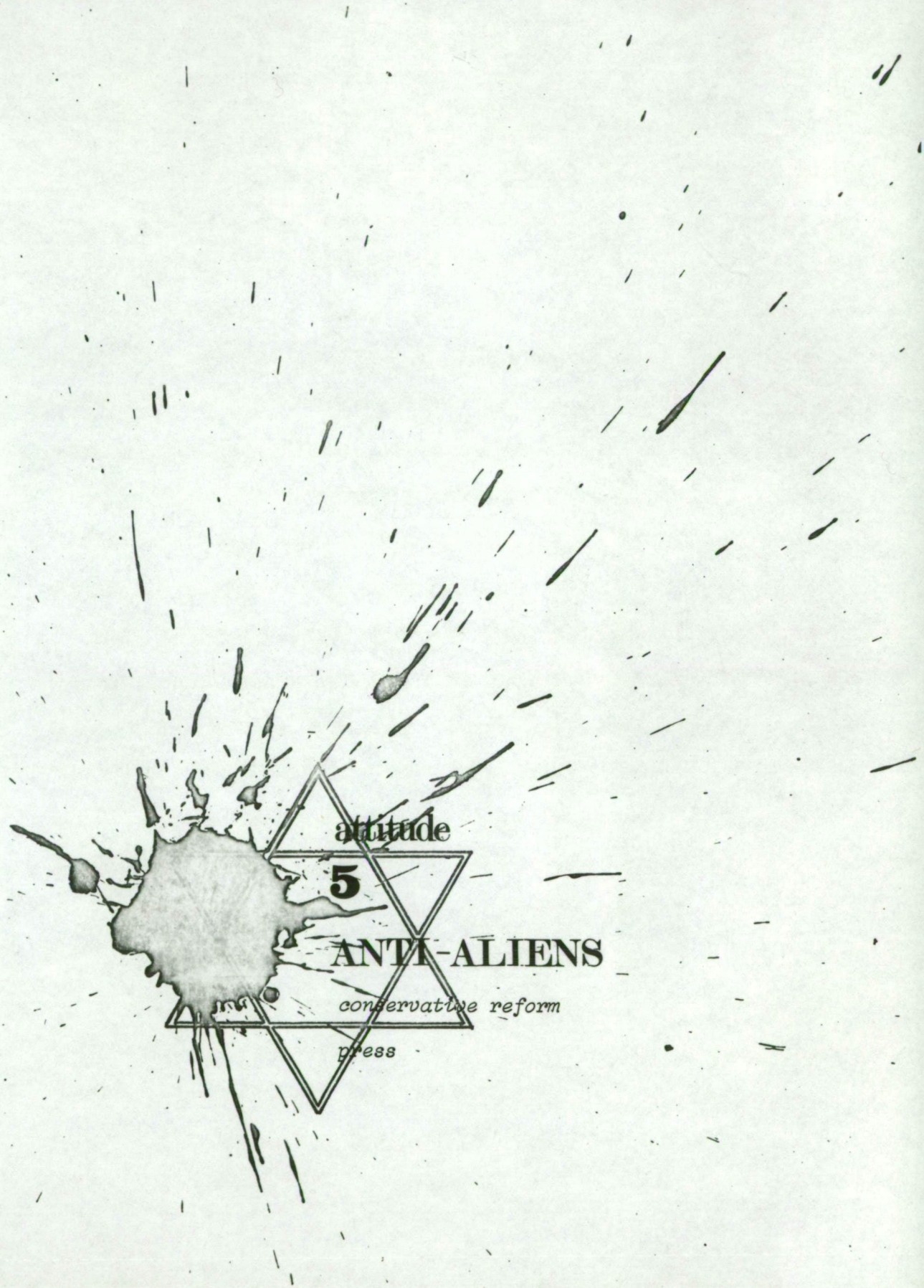
entirely negative character. Their opponents, arguing from the facts of the case, denied the Jews' responsibility for social ills and propounded a simple yet positive programme of remedy through the enforcement of existing legislation.




(From *Das Petroleum-Weltmonopol.*]

HOW THE MONOPOLIST HELPS THE ANARCHIST.

A Voice from the Deep: Press hard, and when your measure is full it is my turn.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5
ANTI-ALIENS
conservative reform
press

CONSERVATIVE REFORM

The Jewish question being a party question, most anti-aliens belonged to the Conservative ranks. Although the stand of East End Conservatives was frequently the most noticeable, demand for immigration reform came also from non-East End Members, including Prime Minister Balfour and Home Secretary Akers-Douglas. Outside of the Government party the two principal exceptions were the Radical Sydney Buxton and the Liberal Henry Norman. Of the four Jewish anti-alien M.P.s — all Conservative — three represented the East End. The greatest non-political support for restriction derived from the scholar Professor Goldwin Smith, the social activist Arnold White and the correspondent 'Philo-Judaeus'.

The course of anti-alien legislation received new impetus in 1898, when Major William Evans-Gordon succeeded the Jewish Tory Member for Stepney, F.W. Isaacson. Describing him under the title "Men Who Make Public Opinion", the compendium *Public Opinion* acclaimed his *"personal magnetism"*, and paid tribute to his efforts towards army reform during his military career from Sandhurst to the Madras Staff Corps.[1] Until Evans-Gordon appeared at Westminster the aliens question had been but fitfully considered.

Thoroughly committed to restriction, he began to contribute anti-alien articles to magazines and later published the result of personal enquiries in Russia, Poland and Roumania in a book en-

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1. *PO, LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 232*

titled *The Alien Immigrant.*[2] In this portrayal of the industrious Jew alongside the native worker in Stepney, the author contends that the aliens question is beyond race, creed or party. Yet Evans-Gordon founded the militant, racist British Brothers' League; and in 1902 moved an Amendment to the King's Speech, in which he urged the necessity for action: *"I do not wish to appear as an alarmist, but I can solemnly assure the Government and the House of Commons that a storm is brewing which, if it be allowed to burst, will have deplorable results."*[3]

Evans-Gordon justified his stand by the evidence of his own constituency, Stepney, which bore the greatest burden of aliens. He recalled the history of the immigration problem within Parliament since 1888 and hurled forth all the anti-alien arguments at his command. Although he denied the existence of anti-semitism, he claimed unanimous local support. Following his motion, the Government appointed a Royal Commission, including Evans-Gordon as one of its members. Three years later the press and the public deemed him responsible for the Aliens Act and he was knighted for his efforts.

Dedicated to his mission, he knew no restraint. During the controversy of the 1904 Aliens Bill, he submitted what a Liberal[4] described as a *"monstrous statement"* to *The Times*, in which he advised that all London newspapers under British control publish the names of *"the traitors in Parliament who vote*

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2 *1903; Review in* <u>*The Lancet*</u>*, 7 Nov 1903, pp. 1304-5*

3 *H 4th, CI, 29 Jan 1902, p. 1281*

4 *Dilke*

*against this measure."*[5] Advocating the exclusion of religious refugees from Russia, he maintained that they could be considered victims of persecution only in the broad sense that everyone under Tzardom was oppressed according to British terms of freedom, for *"what we sometimes call persecution"* constituted an entire system of government in Eastern Europe.[6] Anti-semitism being merely incidental to a whole order of repression, Britain should remain detached from a problem that ultimately required the complete redirection of a foreign power.

The other three East End Conservatives were Forde Ridley,[7] Thomas Dewar[8] and Sir John Colomb.[9] Forde Ridley, in seconding the motion of Evans-Gordon, purported to be *"the representative of British working men in a working class constituency in East London."*[10] Neither he nor his associates made any original contribution to the debate, contenting themselves with the stereotype propaganda. Despite the fact of Hebrew assimilation, Ridley for example stressed the distance of Jews from the rest of society, a reality *"universally admitted"* by Jew and Gentile alike![11]

The bulk of anti-alien agitators held seats outside the East End. James Lowther represented the Isle of Thanet, Kent. A past

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5 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1063*

6 *ibid., p. 1085*

7 *S.W. Bethnal Green*

8 *St. George's, Tower Hamlets*

9 *Bow & Bromley, Tower Hamlets*

10 *H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 950*

11 *ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 785-6*

Parliamentary Secretary to the Poor Law Board, Under-Secretary for the Colonies and Chief Secretary for Ireland, he battled for legislation throughout the period. After an unsuccessful bid for restriction in 1893, he continued to harass the Government ten years later, when he scorned the Royal Commission as a *"put-up"* affair to cause delay.[12] He found support from Members like Claude Hay[13] who criticised the *"absolutely limp attitude"* of his leaders,[14] and Colonel Pilkington[15] who *"rejoiced"* at the Aliens Bill of 1905.[16]

Two Government Members of vital importance were Arthur Balfour and Aretas Akers-Douglas who, as Prime Minister and Home Secretary respectively, guided the controversy from the appointment of the Royal Commission to the eventual Aliens Act. As Leader of the House of Commons during Salisbury's premiership and as Prime Minister from 1903, Balfour's attitude revealed a strange ambiguity.[17] A nephew to Salisbury on his mother's side, he appeared at first to disagree with his uncle's anti-alienism. He both doubted the fears of Arnold White and dismissed Lowther's plea for legislation.[18] Yet in 1905 his Cabinet completely reversed the traditional immigration policy while he himself boasted that restrictive measures in the past had

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12 *ibid., CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, pp. 963-4*

13 *Hoxton, Shoreditch*

14 *H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 974*

15 *Newton, S.W. Lancs.*

16 *H 4th, CXLI, 14 Feb 1905, p. 146*

17 *See following discussion on Chamberlain as well as "Politics" in Chapter 9*

18 *H 4th, III, 1 Apr 1892, pp. 475-6*

been carried only during Conservative rule.[19] Twelve years later as Foreign Secretary, his Declaration laid the foundation for the Jewish national home in Palestine.

Balfour's young brother, Gerald, also figured in the aliens controversy, mainly through his position as President of the Board of Trade from 1900-5.

Like Arthur Balfour, Akers-Douglas featured throughout the period. He had the distinction of moving two significant motions in British immigration history. As Patronage Secretary to the Treasury in 1889, he moved that the Select Committee into Alien Immigration be reappointed; and as Home Secretary in 1905, he introduced the Aliens Bill that found its way to the Statutes.

Joseph Chamberlain occupied a unique position in the aliens question. Elected for West Birmingham, his party allegiance moved from Tory to Republican, to Radical, to Home Rule to Radical Unionist and back to Tory. By the time he held his first position in the Conservative Cabinet as Colonial Secretary in 1895, the Government feared him while the Opposition loathed him.[20] Regarding himself as *"the apostle of the Anglo-Saxon race"*, Chamberlain confessed: *"There is, in fact, only one race that I despise — the Jews"*.[21] He nevertheless opposed religious persecution and through the post of Colonial Secretary in 1902-3 played an important role in the Zionist move-

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*19 ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 794*

*20 RR, XII, Aug 1895, p. 114*

*21 Amery, J., The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, vol. IV 1901-3, London (Macmillan), 1951, pp. 256-7*

ment. In his meetings with Herzl and negotiations with other Zionists, he sought at once to end the Jewish question and advance the British empire.[22] Though his East Africa or 'Uganda' scheme failed to materialise, he initiated the policy to be continued with more success by Balfour in 1917.

Chamberlain's acknowledged dislike of Jews may have prompted his anti-alienism in domestic politics. Despite the official pro-alien stand of the Labour party, he persistently argued that the aliens question was a Trade Union rather than a race issue. He maintained that aliens affected his own constituency, though the number of foreign paupers in Birmingham actually fell from a hundred and twenty-one in 1902 to only eighty-nine in 1904.[23]

In 1905 Chamberlain embarrassed his colleagues by letting the *"cat out of the bag"* and proclaiming the protectionist purpose behind the Aliens Bill, designed to *"protect the working man in his employment"*.[24] As the Government had officially pledged that no protectionist measure would be included in the current Session, Liberals immediately pounced upon this revelation while Conservatives seemed to stiffen in distress. Balfour himself offered no explanation. But a week later, when a determined Liberal[25] asked whether the Government intended to proceed with the Bill, in view of its former announcement alongside Chamberlain's claim, the Prime Minister evaded

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22 *ibid., pp. 256-70*

23 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 780*

24 *ibid., pp. 767-74*

25 *Lough*

the issue, merely stating that the exclusion of 'undesirables' is not *"a branch of the fiscal question"*. Undeterred, the Liberal persevered: what was the Government's intention? And again Balfour eluded the challenge. Finally unable to escape, he agreed to answer the Opposition after formal notice.[26]

Although the general public attributed the Aliens Act to the East End Member, Evans-Gordon, Parliamentarians themselves ascribed it to Colonel Sir Howard Vincent of Central Sheffield. Through his constant questions and unrelenting pressure throughout the period on every conceivable aspect of the debate, he *"bluffed the Government into carrying out his views"*, and ought to have been Prime Minister, remarked a pro-alien in 1904.[27] A barrister and author,[28] Vincent founded the United Empire Trade League, chaired the National Union Conservative Associations, was a member of the London County Council and British delegate to the Anti-Anarchist Conference in Rome in 1898. He accounted for his extraordinary interest in immigration as the outcome of his term as Director of Criminal Investigation for the Metropolitan Police.[29] This contact with foreign criminals made him realise his responsibility to his own people when elected M.P. from 1885.

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*26 H 4th, CXLV, 10 May 1905, pp. 1485-6*

*27 Burns, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1150*

*28 Law of Criticism and Libel, Law of Extradition, Howard Vincent Map of the British Empire, Round the Empire in Ten Minutes and others*

*29 1878-84, during which he published Police Code and Manual of Criminal Law; See "Criminal" in Chapter 4*

In March 1889 Vincent enquired about the reconstitution of the Select Committee of the previous year.[30] His reference on that occasion to *"expatriated pauper foreigners"* who deluged Britain unchecked sounded the note he was to repeat for the next sixteen years.[31] Henceforth, he not only sat on the Select Committee but played the leading role in anti-alien agitation until accompanied by Evans-Gordon towards the end of the decade. Apart from his systematic questioning, Vincent moved two unsuccessful Aliens Bills[32] and one Amendment to the Address.[33] Despite the evasive attitude of the Government, who tended to excuse their inaction by lack of time, the weight of other business and the relative unimportance of the immigration matters raised, his resolute zeal never waned. Excelling all other reformers in his stubborn determination, he lost no opportunity to defy Ministers and harass the Government generally. While he used all the arguments against migrant intruders, he emphasised their alleged criminality, calling attention for instance to the recent *"further murders by aliens"*.[34]

Howard Vincent favoured protectionism in all forms, having advocated the policy long before Chamberlain.[35] His opponents cited

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*30 H 3rd, CCCXXXIV, 25 Mar 1889, p. 726*

*31 He raised the aliens question in every year till 1905, with the exception of 1895, when this subject received only one brief mention; H 4th, XXXII, 9 Apr 1895, p. 1256*

*32 1897 and 1898*

*33 1903*

*34 H 4th, CXXIII, 15 Jun 1903, p. 948*

*35 ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1150*

his past protectionist measures as examples of utter futility. They claimed that his Foreign Prison-made Goods Bill failed in its purpose to prevent competition from overseas.[36] The entire value of products excluded by the Act amounted to only £183.4.0 and was, like immigration restriction, hardly worth the trouble.[37] They also criticised his Merchandise Marks Act on the grounds that rather than reject foreign manufactures, it boosted them through publicity.[38] Similarly, the Aliens Bill, whilst excluding a few refugees, would seriously jeopardise a flourishing shipping industry, as the various travel companies, responsible for the transhipment of aliens who proved 'undesirable' would probably redirect their route to other non-British ports.

Vincent tended to weaken his campaign by the naivity of some of his assertions e.g. when he mentioned *"a new kind of offence...coming into vogue — viz. larcenies by German and other foreign waiters."*[39] He then proceeded to describe in detail how these aliens stole headed notepaper from a hotel, obtained a character reference in *"fluent English"* and thus secured employment with the sole intent of robbery. He also testified that many prisoners at first appeared for trial with *"very strong foreign names"*, there being no doubt as to their European origins, but later reappeared under distinctly native names like *"Smith"* and seemed to *"thoroughly understand all evidence given*

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*36 Bryce, H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 910*

*37 Spencer, H 4th, CL, 28 Jul 1905, p. 760*

*38 Seely, H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 758*

*39 H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 947*

*in the English language."*[40] This type of naive generalization, rather than heightening the anti-alien propaganda in the House, diminished its significance.

In his attack upon foreign immigrants, Vincent realised that any legislation would necessarily affect Jewish refugees in particular, but he insisted that his motivation was neither religious nor racial. He regarded the subject entirely as *"one of British interest."*[41] With unbounded confidence in electoral support for restriction, in 1905 he boldly challenged the Opposition with an appeal to the country. He knew what the answer would be.[42] Although another M.P. from Sheffield, Samuel Roberts, also adopted anti-alienism, neither could justify the policy from the experience of their own constituency. Vincent claimed that the interests of his electorate motivated his stand, but the number of alien paupers in Sheffield rose by but three in three years, from twenty-one to twenty-four between 1902-4. When Keir Hardie asked the House whether the rate of increase of one pauper per year justified a wealthy city's support for restriction, Vincent for once failed to reply.

As in the House of Commons, most anti-aliens in the Upper House belonged to the Government side, and as the lords were traditionally more Tory than Whig, they as a group leaned more heavily towards restriction. As Unionist Prime Minister during the nineties, Salis-

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40 *ibid., p. 941*

41 *ibid., p. 939*

42 *But history was to call his bluff; H 4th, CXLI, 14 Feb 1905, p. 139*

bury mirrored the anti-alienism of his party. In 1894 he moved the first Aliens Bill of the period, only to have it rejected by the Liberals led by Rosebery. His mission was nevertheless continued by Hardwicke who, four years later, introduced a measure almost identical to that of Salisbury — though with greater success. It passed every stage in the House of Lords. Their most vocal support came from Dunraven, Dudley, Lansdowne and Meath, who variously distinguished themselves by the absurdity of their pronouncements. Dudley for example stated that nobody could claim that the type of Russian and Polish Jew then entering the country — destitute and undercutting British labour — bore any comparison to the ordinary political refugee.[43]

Prominent during the final years of the debate was Lord James of Hereford, chairman of the Royal Commission. A barrister and former Attorney-General, he represented Taunton and then Bury as a Liberal till 1886 when he became affiliated with the Liberal Unionists until being created a peer in 1895. Like the Report bearing his name, Lord James took a contradictory stand. He assured the House that Jews rarely fell upon the rates and that they were not the perpetrators of crime.[44] Yet he voted for their exclusion.

Associated with Lord James was Alfred Lyttleton,[45] who succeeded Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary in 1903. A member of the Royal

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43 *H 4th, LIX, 20 Jun 1898, p. 743*

44 *ibid., CL, 28 Jul 1905, p. 769; See "Royal Commission" in Chapter 7*

45 *L.U. — Warwick & Leamington 1895-1906, C. — St. George's, Hanover Sq. 1906-13*

Commission, he had previously been Legal Private Secretary to Lord James[46] and from 1894 Recorder of Hereford. He also seemed to lack political constancy, for whilst being partially instrumental towards the influx of cheap Asian labour into the Transvaal, against the wishes of colonials, he opposed the open door at home.[47]

The Liberal Henry Norman and the Radical Sydney Buxton deserted their party colleagues on the immigration question. Educated in France and the United States, Sir Henry was a journalist and highly esteemed public figure. He initiated the public demand for the national preservation of Niagra Falls which were eventually purchased by the New York State; belonged to the editorial staff of the anti-alien *Pall Mall Gazette* and the pro-alien *Daily Chronicle;* and published several books.[48] Whilst Liberal M.P. for South Wolverhampton, he joined Lord James, Evans-Gordon and Secretary Lyttleton as a member of the Royal Commission. Though he signed the majority Report, he maintained the existence of varying viewpoints among the Commissioners, but upheld the necessity for individuals to suppress personal opinion in the interest of the group effort.[49] Imperfect though he considered the Aliens Bill, he believed that it provided the best available solution.

Sydney Charles Buxton, Radical M.P. for Poplar, Tower Hamlets in

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46 *When Attorney-General 1882-6*

47 *See "Elections" in Chapter 9*

48 *The Preservation of Niagra Falls, The Real Japan and All the Russians*

49 *He himself objected to the 'prohibited' areas proposal; H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1107-13*

the East End, held a number of Government posts between 1892-1920 as Under-Secretary for the Colonies, President of the Board of Trade and later Governor-General of South Africa. Initially restrained in his views, he protested against the flow of migrants yet refused to vote for Vincent's Amendment in 1903.[50] He realised that he was *"in a minority"* on his side of the House, but felt compelled to censure the Government for its failure to protect the working class. Although his own constituency housed few aliens, he argued that their prevalence elsewhere in East London was a matter of *"great magnitude"*.[51] As the controversy grew he became more definitely anti-alien until in 1905 he resorted to typical slogans and suggested that a public notice read: *"In future no rubbish will be allowed to be shot here."*[52]

Of the fourteen Jewish M.P.s during 1890-1905, four advocated restriction — all Conservative and three from the East End. Benjamin Louis Cohen, who represented a non-East End constituency, East Islington, argued with an unconvincing logic. President of the London Orphan Asylum and a former President of the Board of Guardians, he was identified with charitable work throughout his life. In Westminster he favoured the objects of the Aliens Bill as an attempt to exclude both the criminal and the destitute but doubted that it would achieve these ends.[53] He referred to the British tradition of

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*50 H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, pp. 967-9*

*51 ibid., p. 976*

*52 ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 762-3*

*53 ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1113-7*

asylum as *"the brightest jewel in its crown"* and hoped it would be continued. Though he disagreed with several aspects of the 1904 measure, he refused to vote against it. The following year he again defended Jewish aliens and vindicated religious refuge yet would not oppose the Bill.[54] Like Evans-Gordon he was knighted in 1905.

As with Cohen, Isaacson and Harry S. Samuel[55] appeared to vote according to party rather than ideological dictates. F.W. Isaacson, Evans-Gordon's predecessor in Stepney,[56] offered little comment in Parliament and escaped the most controversial years after the turn of the century. Harry Samuel, representing Limehouse, East End, combined all the trappings of traditional Anglo-Jewry, being a descendent from Montefiore on his mother's side, but was firmly committed to reform. The most rabid anti-alien of this group was the half-Jew, H.L.W. Lawson, who claimed to have been elected principally on his restrictionist platform. He nevertheless dismissed anti-semitism as an obsolete concept, totally unrelated to his fierce anti-immigrant agitation. Men such as these prompted Evans-Gordon to anticipate with confidence *"the support of the leaders of Jewish opinion in this matter."*[57]

The most outspoken non-Parliamentary anti-aliens were Goldwin

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54 *ibid., CXLIX, 10 Jul 1905, p. 162*

55 *Distinguish from pro-alien Jews: Herbert L. Samuel and Stuart M. Samuel*

56 *1885-98*

57 *H 4th, CI, 29 Jan 1902, p. 1279*

Smith, 'Philo-Judaeus' and Arnold White. As a barrister and an academic, Smith was a Doctor of Civil Law and both Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, then later Honorary Professor of English and Constitutional History at Cornell University. A prominent social reformer, he published a vast range of material on Ireland, the empire, slavery, Canada, literature and other contemporary themes.[58] His ideas on the Jewish question appeared in various articles throughout the nineties but particularly in his *Essays on Questions of the Day*. Citing the works of writers who depict Jews as money-lending parasites and maggots, he argues that the problem was economic rather than religious.[59] As Russia is not traditionally prone to persecution, he attributes the pogroms of the late nineteenth century to the Jews' own parasitism. The only solution lay with them — their de-rabbinisation, de-nationalisation and the termination of the rite of circumcision.

'Philo-Judaeus' was the anti-semitic correspondent to *Public Opinion*. He wrote from the Albemarle Club but gave no other information as to his identity.[60] Frequently a controversial figure who

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58 *Irish History and Irish Character, Three English Statesmen, The Empire, Does the Bible Sanction American Slavery? The Civil War in America, The Political Destiny of Canada, Cowper, Jane Austen, The United States and others*

59 *Smith, G., pp. 241-82*

60 *Correspondence with E.J. Clarke, proprietor of the present Albemarle Club, opened in 1954, revealed little information. The original Albemarle Club, formed in 1875 at Albemarle Street, has moved its site twice: once before the turn of the century and again during the Second World War, when it amalgamated with the Curzon House Club and ceased to exist under its own name. The Curzon Club has since changed hands and "is now one of London's popular gambling Clubs"; 12 New Burlington Street, London W.I., 12 Sep 1969*

disturbed the pages of the compendium, 'Philo-Judaeus' made no attempt to conceal his attitude. Claiming support from Trade Unionism and Socialism, he believed that to the new schools, *"all the virtues of the Jews are vices...very anti-social vices."*[61] He observed the growth of European and British anti-semitism and equated the Conservative policy of exclusion with anti-Jewishness.[62] In 1898 he anticipated the anti-semitism of the twentieth century, arguing that a sentiment with a four thousand-years' history was bound to impregnate scientific and socialist feeling in the future.[63]

An incongruous note sometimes emerged from 'Philo-Judaeus', as when he derided the concept of a specifically Jewish 'race' or 'nation' as nothing but a *"vanity"*.[64] At the very height of imperialism and race consciousness, he maintained that terms like 'race' and 'nation' were unfashionable. He nevertheless used the expressions himself. In a reply to another correspondent, 'Anti-Humbug', 'Philo-Judaeus' disagreed with a theory propounded by Mark Twain: *"No, sir, the prejudice is something more than trade rivalry. The dislike to this alien race is ingrained in us, and in my belief will never be eradicated."*[65]

Unlike 'Philo-Judaeus', Arnold White appeared to approach the Jewish question with a critical mind, devoid of outright anti-semitism. Though he vigorously fought against the entry of Jews into

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*61 PO, LXV, 26 Jan 1894, p. 102*
*62 ibid., LXXII, 17 Dec 1897, p. 782*
*63 ibid., LXXIII, 28 Jan 1898, p. 105*
*64 ibid., LXV, 26 Jan 1894, p. 102*
*65 ibid., LXXVI, 22 Sep 1899, p. 360*

Britain and justified Russian pogroms on the grounds of Hebrew superiority, he described the persecution as almost *"suicidal crime"*.[66] Enjoying the confidence of a foremost Jewish philanthropist, Baron de Hirsch, he undertook the personal task of examining the Russian scene before the Baron devised a plan for relief. Perhaps the knowledge acquired during this mission genuinely convinced him of the unsuitability of Jewish migrants to settle in the United Kingdom. Yet he urged his countrymen to help solve the question by announcing an international conference: *"It is for England to take the lead."*[67]

A stereotype anti-alienism nevertheless pervades his writing. Confronted by the indisputable fact of Jewish assimilation in Britain, he constantly stresses the inability of Jews to become absorbed into the Gentile world. Jewish aloofness, he claims, has conclusively proven the impossibility of their assimilation. A dedicated and much travelled social commentator,[68] like Goldwin Smith he has a list of publications on topical subjects — democracy, imperialism and efficiency. His views on the Jewish question are covered in a number of articles and in his book *The Modern Jew*.[69] Convinced of the inherent, irrepressible energy of the Jews, Arnold White felt compelled to transmit his anxiety to others, and so contributed to the

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66 *RR, V, May 1892, p. 481*

67 *PO, LXXIII, 11 Mar 1898, pp. 292-3*

68 *Apart from his mission to Russia, he travelled to the United States, made repeated visits to Canada as well as a number to South Africa in connection with colonization.*

69 *1898; Other books include* *Problems of a Great City*, *Tries at Truth*, *English Democracy*, *Efficiency and Empire*, *For Efficiency*, *Is the Kaiser Insane?*

anti-semitic panic of the 1890s.

PRESS

The political attitude of the press changed during the final quarter of the nineteenth century when Liberal representation declined.[70] Whereas in 1880, out of seventy-one penny morning papers in London and the provinces, forty-seven were Liberal; by 1902 this was reduced to only twenty-eight out of sixty-five. Of the most influential dailies, *The Times*, the *Standard*, the *Morning Post* and *The Daily Telegraph*, only the last sanctioned the open door. The other three, especially *The Times*, advocated restriction and Conservative policy in general.

In the 1890s *The Times* maintained its position, acquired at the beginning of the century, as the leading British newspaper and probably the leading paper in the world. It's circulation had been overtaken by other papers, at first by *The Daily Telegraph* and then by the *Daily Mail*, but these lacked the authority of *The Times*. Predominantly Conservative and High Church, it attracted an educated middle to upper class. It was anti-Home Rule and to that extent

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70 *For this and the "Press" section of Chapter 6, see Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature; Encyclopaedia Britannica (especially 10th ed.); Oxford Companion to English Literature; Roy. Com. on the Press 1947-9; Altick, R.D., The English Common Reader A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900, Chicago (Uni. of Chicago Press), 1957; Ellegard, A., "The Readership of the Periodical Press in Mid-Victorian England" in Goteborgs Universitets Arsskrift, vol. LXIII, 1957; Williams, F., Dangerous Estate The Anatomy of Newspapers, London (Longmans), 1957; Williams, R., The Long Revolution, Harmondsworth (Penguin), 1965 (1st pub. 1961)*

anti-Gladstone and hence anti-Liberal. As a pro-Boer paper, it was Conservative. In 1890 it published a letter from Arnold White on "The Invasion of Pauper Aliens",[71] and for the next fifteen years ardently supported the cause of anti-aliens.

When Lowther moved his fruitless Amendment in 1893 *The Times* acknowledged that the scheduled programme for the Session precluded any further Bills. But it noted an awareness among Members of *"the lively interest felt in this subject by a large and influential section of the working class community"*.[72] It assured Lowther that the wishes of such powerful bodies as the Trade Union Congress would not remain ignored. The following year it attributed industrial unrest to the irrational tactics of Trade Unions and admitted that pauper aliens contributed less than one-tenth to the problem of labour.[73] At the same time it hailed the new powers embodied in Salisbury's measure as *"neither uncalled for nor excessive"*.

As the aliens debate assumed political intensity, *The Times* adopted a more anti-immigrant posture. It was reduced to the propagation of stereotype. On the occasion of Vincent's Amendment in 1903 it proclaimed: *"These hordes of foreign paupers work and live in conditions of overcrowding and bestial filthiness, which could not be paralleled in the worst of unregulated British slums....They bring new diseases and new crimes, which mock our elaborate improvements, yet the thing goes on, year after year, unchecked, and the*

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*71 H 3rd, CCCXLVII, 17 Jul 1890, p. 71*

*72 PO, LXIII, 17 Feb 1893, p. 192*

*73 ibid., LXVI, 13 Jul 1894, p. 36*

*British ratepayer pays."*[74] In 1903 it observed that the Royal Commission at least served *"to define the evil and to indicate some steps that might be taken to abate it"*, but forecast disappointment for the advocates of restriction: *"So the thing goes on, and so, we fear, it will go on until larger reforms are insisted upon than any that the Commissioners have ventured to suggest."*[75]

Diverging from the conventional anti-alien line, *The Times* recognised the ability of Jews to assimilate. Where they have enjoyed complete liberty and equality with Gentiles as in England, *"their tendency has been towards amalgamation...and towards what may be described as a softening down of the salient points of their national character."*[76] Though the paper stood for restriction, though it realised the Jews would be most affected by legislation, it denied anti-semitism. It regretted the fact that the Jewish question as such had been raised in the Commons, but warned the Liberal Opposition that *"if they had their way and could prevent legislation of this kind, there would very shortly be plenty of the spirit they deprecate among the people in this country."*[77]

The *Standard* sought to be a cheaper version of *The Times*. Appearing within three years of the removal of the last newspaper tax, it was the same size as its established model, and in some respects appealed to a similar audience, though its readers were usually

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74 *ibid., LXXXIII, 6 Mar 1903, p. 291*

75 *ibid., LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 227*

76 *ibid., 11 Sep 1903, p. 323*

77 *ibid., LXXXV, 2 Apr 1904, p. 536*

the lower-middle to middle Conservative class. It criticised Prime Minister Rosebery as *"unpatriotic"* and *"immoral"* for having supposedly withheld a confession that anarchists from abroad abounded in London to conspire against foreign countries.[78] *"Every candid person knows that it represents the fact at the present moment"*, it claimed in Salisbury's support. It attacked Gladstone[79] for having observed the difficulties in defining 'undesirability' and pointed to the American example: *"In plain words, they will not allow rubbish to be shot upon their shores, and why should England do so either?"*[80]

Readers of the *Morning Post*[81] were principally upper class Tories, many living in the country and affiliated with the High Church. Though usually for the status quo, they demanded immigration reform. Their paper considered Salisbury's Bill an important duty and reproached Rosebery for his opposition.[82] It regarded the 1905 Aliens Bill as *"a simple, commonsense measure, and lenient in comparison with restrictive legislation which has been adopted elsewhere."*[83]

In contrast to the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Advertiser* appealed to a lower-middle class public of shopkeepers and innkeepers with little educational background. One of the oldest London newspapers, it was founded in 1794 as the organ of the

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78 *ibid., LXVI, 20 Jul 1894, p. 61*

79 *William Ewart*

80 *PO, LXIII, 17 Feb 1893, p. 192*

81 *Amalgamated with* <u>*The Daily Telegraph*</u> *in 1937*

82 *PO, LXVI, 20 Jul 1894, p. 61*

83 *ibid., LXXXVII, 21 Apr 1905, p. 486*

Licensed Victuallers. Though politically Liberal in most attitudes, its trading interests prompted an anti-alien policy. It expressed concern over the delay in the Commission's Report. In early 1903 it contended that, after forty-nine sittings and a hundred and eighty-four witnesses, the Commissioners must surely have been saturated with the subject.[84] If they intended to meet the expectations of Parliament and the people, they should hasten to present *"a business-like document, offering a proper solution of a very pressing problem."* Three months later it criticised the Commission's *"precious recommendations"*, as expensive and ineffective.[85] It therefore offered its own solution: refuse entry to all migrants unless they either have a contract to labour or sufficient means of support. In many ways a reasonable suggestion, this reflected the commercial bias of the *Morning Advertiser*, more representative of the employer than the employee.[86]

Both the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* took an anti-alien stand. The attitude of the *Mail* was of particular importance since from the mid-nineties it sold more than any other English daily. Beginning as a halfpenny paper in 1896, it revolutionised the world of journalism, both in appeal and management. Unlike the older, established papers, it was not a private, family concern, but a public company inviting investment in shares as a commercial proposition.

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84 *ibid., LXXXIII, 20 May 1903, p. 675*

85 *ibid., LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 228*

86 *The working class opposed aliens arriving under contract to labour; See "Elections" in Chapter 9*

Among the first of the sensational 'yellow' press in Britain, it sold below production costs and placed new emphasis on the value of advertising. Aiming always at increased circulation, by the 1920s and 30s it literally bought its readers through grandiose insurance schemes, competitions with up to £5,000 prize-money and the lavish distribution of gifts. Its sales skyrocketed. For forty years from 1856 *The Daily Telegraph* led the dailies in sales. But in 1896 it was overtaken by the new *Daily Mail*, which maintained its position till the mid-thirties. Within only two years its circulation doubled from two hundred thousand in 1896 to four hundred thousand in 1898. In 1900 its sales exceeded nine hundred thousand, more than twice the combined total of any other two dailies.[87]

Directed towards the white collar lower-middle class with the buying power to attract advertisers, the *Daily Mail* introduced the concept of press interpretation. In the past newspapers had merely presented facts; now they were interpreted for readers. Favouring Vincent's Amendment, the *Mail* explained to its audience of businessmen, clerks and artisans: *"It is not to the national interest to exclude an alien simply because he is an alien, but it is very much to the national interest to exclude him if he is an 'undesirable'."*[88] Pro-aliens agreed but the failed to elicit the paper's support.

The *Daily Express* also made newspaper history, as the first British paper to print news on its front page. Founded in 1900, it

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87 *Though the Sunday press, with its different audience, continued to sell more than the dailies.*

88 *PO, LXXXIII, 6 Mar 1903, p. 291*

combined political comment with magazine miscellany. Its sales grew until they overcame the *Mail* in 1932.[89] The *Express* published the number of aliens charged with offences in every North London Session for 1902. According to Vincent, it devoted considerable attention to the aliens question *"with great public spirit."*[90]

In Vincent territory itself, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* declared: *"This unrestricted and ever-increasing import of foreigners, mainly destitute and largely criminal, is a positive scandal."*[91]

The bi-weekly *East End News* expressed similar hackneyed views. It decried alien immigration as a *"dangerous evil."*[92] It regarded the Report of the Royal Commission as a personal triumph for Evans-Gordon: *"He boldly championed East London's demand, and we unhesitatingly bear testimony to the self-sacrificing energy with which he has pursued the matter."* To enable him to complete his task of legislation, it suggested that it might be *"a graceful act"* for both Liberal and Conservative competitors to stand aside at the next Elections and thus in no way jeopardise his political career.

*The Pall Mall Gazette* began in 1865 as a Conservative organ written *"by gentlemen for gentlemen"*, the educated middle to upper class of the West End. It combined the features of both newspapers proper and literary reviews. Though it became Liberal- and even Radical-orientated under the editorship of W.T. Stead

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*89 But was later overtaken by the* <u>*Daily Mirror*</u>

*90 H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 942*

*91 PO, LXXXIII, 6 Mar 1903, p. 291*

*92 ibid., LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, pp. 227-8*

in the 1880s,[93] it revealed a distinct anti-alien bias in the nineties. *"The fact remains,"* it contended, *"that many thousands of pauper aliens are shot upon the East End rubbish heaps every year, that these immigrants live in squalor and poverty, and that they degrade the industrial conditions of the East End."*[94]

Whilst the anti-alien newspaper press outweighed the pro-alien, most journals of the period tended to favour the open door. Only two specialised publications, the *Law Journal* and the *Army and Navy Gazette*, and two noteworthy monthlies supported anti-alienism. A disinterested publication, the *Law Journal* defended Jewish usurers and condemned rigid legislation such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of the United States;[95] but as Spain had recently exiled alleged anarchists to the United Kingdom, the journal noted the country's vulnerability in the event of a crisis. Without moderate reform, it observed, Britain would remain powerless against any possible abuse of her tradition.[96]

The *Army and Navy Gazette* voiced a blatant anti-alienism. It proudly noted that the navy deliberately discriminated against the employment of foreigners.[97]

In an article on "The Invasion of the Alien",[98] the *New Century Review*[99] drew attention to unfair competition on the labour market,

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*93 Assistant editor 1880-3, editor 1883-8*

*94 PO, LXVI, 20 Jul 1894, p. 61*

*95 ibid., LXIX, 31 Jan 1896, p. 147*

*96 ibid., LXXII, 6 Aug 1897, p. 179*

*97 ibid., LXXV, 20 Jun 1899, p. 819*

*98 By Maltman Barry*

*99 Monthly between 1897-1900*

and suggested that prospective immigrants be required to present a bill of good health and assurance of moderate means before being admitted. Claiming Trade Union and working class support, it demanded immediate reform.[100]

The most obvious anti-semitism issued from *The British Man*, a monthly journal which began as *The Young Man and Woman* in 1888. Its editor, a prolific writer, F.A. Atkins, contributed to many journals and published a number of works that reveal a concern with morality and the spirit.[101] *The British Man* directed its assault primarily upon the rich established Jewish community, rather than the poor newly-arrived immigrants. With all the prejudice of tradition, it denounced Jews as parasites and traitors.[102] It accused them of avoiding probate duty on inherited income, paying only a quarter to one-tenth the appropriate amount. It disparaged the Jewish press as anti-British, and Jews themselves as unpatriotic aliens who dodged military service. The journal bitterly assailed *"the Chosen Ones that live so luxuriously upon the British aborigines."*

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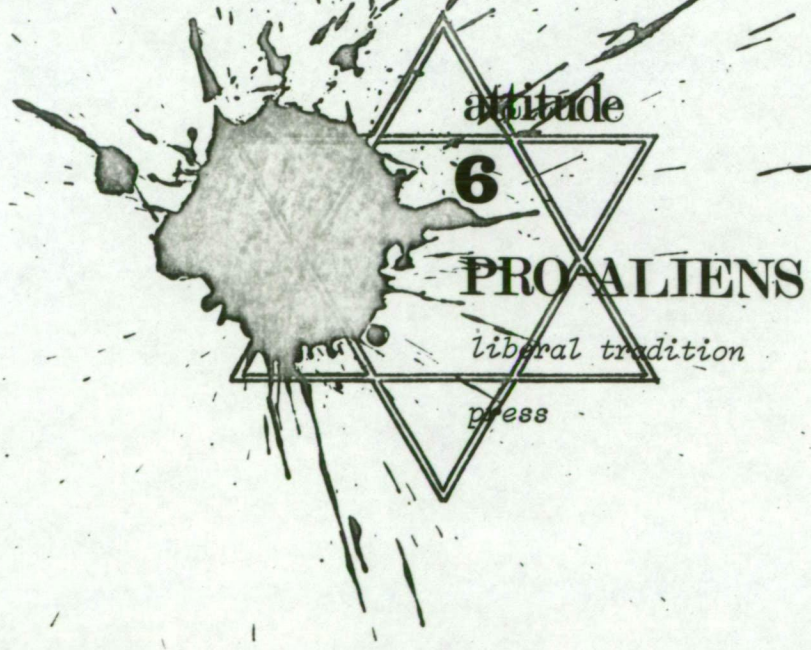
100 *Yet wanted to retain asylum for refugees; See "Press" in Chapter 6*

101 *Moral Muscle A Book for Young Men, First Battles and How to Fight them — Some Friendly Chats with Young Men, Aspiration and Achievement, Life Worthwhile, The Durable Satisfactions of Life, Who Laughs Last and others*

102 *PO, LXXIV, 2 Sep 1898, pp. 291-2*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PRO-ALIENS
liberal tradition
press

69/11/84

LIBERAL TRADITION

Liberals adopted a pro-alien stand, defying Conservative attempts at reform. Whereas the Boer War sharply divided Liberal opinion, the aliens question gained virtual unanimous support for tradition. Both the pro-Boer Campbell-Bannerman and the 'Liberal Imperialist' Lord Rosebery advocated the open door, aided by other leaders such as Gladstone and Asquith as well as forthright speakers like Charles Dilke. An Irish M.P., the then Conservative Winston Churchill and the Labour party also opposed restriction, while the small group of Liberal lords joined in the cause. Of the fourteen Jewish Members, ten — seven Liberal and three Conservative (including a Liberal Unionist) — favoured the tradition of asylum.

Campbell-Bannerman, as Liberal leader from 1899, made no dogmatic pronouncement on the subject yet left no doubt as to his attitude. In 1904 he observed that the Aliens Bill had been introduced *"to the great delight of the honourable and gallant Member for Central Sheffield."*[1] He also pointed to the incongruity between the Government's colonial and home management of foreign immigrants.[2] The following year both Evans-Gordon and Lawson mentioned a non-party appeal by East End Members, seeking Campbell-Bannerman's withdrawal of official opposition to the measure.[3] The only Liberal response

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1 *H 4th, CXXIX, 2 Feb 1904, p. 128*

2 *See "Elections" in Chapter 9*

3 *Lawson referred to "all" East End Members except one, but Evans-Gordon to only "two" East End Members; H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 706-7, 738*

to this reference came from William Cremer[4] who claimed that he, as one of the petitionees, actually opposed the Bill, but had simply wanted it discussed so as to *"show the hollow mockery of the whole thing."*[5] Though Campbell-Bannerman himself offered no explanation, his later administration of the Tory Act, as Prime Minister from 1906, revealed a positive pro-alienism and suggested that he had ignored the petition.

Herbert Asquith noted the reversal of conventional party roles in the aliens question, in which Liberals rather than Conservatives defended a national institution.[6] A former Home Secretary[7] and statesman destined to lead one of the most momentous Liberal Ministries in British history,[8] Asquith was criticised by a Conservative Member as one who, *"not in office"*, naturally considered the task of Government more simple than it is.[9]

William Ewart Gladstone's years of office, as Prime Minister for the fourth time between 1892-4, did not coincide with the most vital periods of the immigration issue, though his views were reflected by his Parliamentary successors and by his son, Herbert John. Urging restraint, Gladstone himself regarded the question in terms of

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4 *Haggerston, Shoreditch in North East London; Received Nobel Peace Prize 1903, knighted 1907*

5 *H 4th, CXLIX, 17 Jul 1905, p. 931*

6 *Stated at a public meeting at Leicester; PO, LXX, 27 Nov 1896, p. 673*

7 *1892-5*

8 *1908-16*

9 *Long, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1099*

free trade, contingent upon international treaties.[10] He emphasised the difficulties of restrictive legislation, in particular of arriving at a satisfactory definition of 'undesirability'. Indeed, his discretion called forth the scorn of the anti-alien press.[11]

Herbert Gladstone, representing West Leeds, held office during his father's premiership as Under-Secretary for the Home Office. From 1899 he was Chief Liberal Whip until appointed Home Secretary in 1905. In this capacity he personally relieved the severity of the Aliens Act, carried against his will, and tried to retain some measure of religious asylum.[12]

Atherley-Jones and James Bryce also voiced strong pro-alien views. Atherley-Jones[13] agreed with other Liberals in the exclusion of the diseased and the criminal but argued for the admission of healthy aliens with a skilled trade. When the passage of the Bill seemed imminent, he unsuccessfully sought to have the proposed Board of Appeal replaced by a tribunal or judicial authority.[14]

A foremost man of his time, James Bryce believed that the proposed remedy far exceeded the evil. At various times Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, President of the Board of Trade, chairman of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education and Chief Secretary for Ireland, he received many honorary doctorates from

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*10 H 4th, VIII, 11 Feb 1893, pp. 1180-1*

*11 Standard in PO, LXIII, 17 Feb 1893, p. 192*

*12 See "Liberal Victory" in Chapter 9*

*13 N.W. Durham*

*14 H 4th, CXLVIII, 28 Jun 1905, pp. 459-70*

universities throughout the world, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Michigan, Buda Pest, Harvard, Oxford, Buenos Aires, Adelaide and Brisbane. Between 1907-13 he was His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington. As an Opposition Member for Aberdeen till 1905, he stressed the prejudice behind Conservative designs[15] as well as the futility of their legislation, which embraced only steerage class immigrants arriving in groups of twenty or more.[16]

Other pro-aliens included Mundella and Trevelyan. While Anthony Mundella, President of the Board of Trade under Gladstone, like his leader adopted a free trade approach to the question,[17] the youthful Trevelyan[18] opposed what he termed indiscriminate *"panic legislation"*,[19] and seconded two Amendments for the retention of religious asylum.[20] Against the anti-alien cry of sweating among immigrants, he argued that Britain should control her own monopolists rather than *"bully aliens"* in order to conceal their own *"neglect, indifference and bad laws."*[21]

The outstanding pro-alien of the period was the veteran statesman Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, who entered politics at the age of twenty-six in 1868. He held the posts of Foreign Under-Secretary between 1880-2, President of the Local Government Board between

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15 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1138-42*

16 *ibid., CXLIX, 17 Jul 1905, p. 906*

17 *ibid., VIII, 11 Feb 1893, p. 1212*

18 *1870-1959*

19 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1075-82*

20 *Moved by Dilke in 1904 & 1905*

21 *H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1263*

1882-5 and chairman of the Royal Commission into the Housing of the Working Class between 1884-5. Though one of the most prominent Liberals of his time, the divorce case Crawford v. Crawford and Dilke in 1886 virtually denuded him of political influence.

Five years later a number of journalists refused to accept Dilke as a possible candidate for the Forest of Dean.[22] From the moral pen of W.T. Stead: *"Sir Charles Dilke stands accused of monstrous crimes against nature and against the law...now he is asking you, not merely to condone his offences, but to give him a certificate that he is an innocent man. Since the days of the Tichborne Claimant there has been no such impudent imposture practised on the British public. Before you send him to the House of Commons let him at least prove in court that his proper place is not in the House of Correction."*

Undeterred, Dilke continued life at Westminster where he distinguished himself as both realist and idealist. As a realist, he observed that the Conservatives had raised *"a devil which they will find it difficult to lay."*[23] The Government's apparent change in attitude in 1904-5 had occurred without *"a change in facts. There is no increase in danger, but a change in the way in which that supposed or apprehended danger is regarded."* He demonstrated how restriction would retard the shipping industry, at a time when Britain's 'through' traffic had attained its highest recorded figure. He noted also that what had begun as a Socialist measure was now repud-

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22 *PO, LIX, 13 Mar 1891, pp. 320-1*

23 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1063-7*

iated by Socialists.

As an idealist, he fought valiantly for the case of *"a hopeless minority."*[24] When he moved the first of his two Amendments for the retention of religious asylum, the admission that he was *"not going to divide the House"* gave rise to an uproar of ironical laughter. He provided an easy target for anti-aliens. According to Evans-Gordon: *"It is all very well for the right honourable Gentleman, safe in the sylvan seclusion of the Forest of Dean, to philosophise on the traditions of England and extol the beauties of free and unrestricted asylum to all and sundry....the open door is a very fine thing so long as it is someone else's."*[25]

The Irish Nationalist, James Christopher Flynn,[26] categorically denied any demand for legislation in Ireland. As a former Secretary to the Evicted Tenant's Association and an ex-prisoner under the Coersion Act in 1888, he represented the Irish people who opposed the Aliens Bill. They saw it as a threat to the unimpeded flow of Irish Americans back to their homeland.[27] The only class of 'undesirables' in Ireland were *"British Ministers and British place-hunters."*

Conservative support came from Major Seely and Winston Churchill. Seely opposed the inherent class discrimination of the Bill, aimed *"to keep out a Jew when he is poor, and to admit a Jew*

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24 *ibid., CXXXII, 29 Mar 1904, pp. 992-5*

25 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1088*

26 *Cork Co.*

27 *H 4th, CXLVIII, 28 Jul 1905, pp. 403-6*

*when he is rich."*[28] Churchill, first elected in 1900, stressed the controversial nature of the aliens debate, which bristled with subjects like police, race and religion — *"questions of prejudice and passion."*[29] He unsuccessfully sought modifications to the Aliens Bill, to conform with the resolutions passed at a non-party meeting in Manchester. These urged the maintainance of religious refuge, the right of appeal to Courts of Law and the exemption of shipping companies from the responsibility of rejected aliens.[30] Both Seely and Churchill became officially associated with pro-alienism in 1906, when they transferred to the Liberal party.[31]

From the ranks of Labour, Hardie and Burns championed the open door. The founder of the Independent Labour party, James Keir Hardie[32] of Scotland, pledged unanimous Labour opposition to restriction and denied support from the Trade Union Congress. He rejected the Aliens Bill as a *"fraudulent, deceitful and dishonourable"* measure, dangled before the electorate as a sham remedy to labour ills.[33] Though free trade offered no viable alternative, he considered it preferable to protection, which would diminish rather than increase employment.[34] As the spokesman for the working class, he

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28 *ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 757-8*

29 *ibid., CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1109-10*

30 *He received no answer as the Speaker ruled that the question was raised at an inappropriate time; H 4th, CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, pp.790-1*

31 *Though Churchill reverted to Conservatism in 1924*

32 *Merthyr Tydfil*

33 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 778-82*

34 *ibid., CXXX, 19 Feb 1904, p. 453*

fought especially for the Contract Labour clause, but without success.[35]

An outspoken advocate of tradition was the Labour M.P. for Battersea, John Burns. Described as *"the modern Tory"* who *"out-Krugered Kruger"*,[36] he proved himself a practical man of *"uncompromising severity"*,[37] an intellectual compound of *"the terrier and the bull-dog."*[38] An early member of the Social Democratic Federation, and leader of the Dock Strike in 1889, he moved from Socialism to Liberalism. Though he waged a fierce battle against the Aliens Bill and favoured the average Jewish immigrant, he held an undying hatred for the rich Jew, whom he denounced with an almost anti-semitic fervour. So vehement was his onslaught that a Conservative accused him of suffering from *"Jew on the brain."*[39]

Of the Liberal minority in the House of Lords, Rosebery, as Prime Minister from 1894-5, furnished the most memorable defence of the status quo. Related by marriage to the Jewish family of Rothschild,[40] he rebuffed Salisbury's proposal in 1894. *"What I want to point out,"* he explained, *"is that the whole case is exceedingly small, far too small for legislation now, and not likely to become great enough for legislation in the future....No one can say*

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35 *See "Elections" & "Liberal Victory" in Chapter 9*

36 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1152*

37 *RR, XI, Mar 1895, p. 215*

38 *ibid., Apr 1895, p. 352*

39 *Rasch, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1159*

40 *He married Hannah (1851-90), only daughter and heiress of Mayer Amschel de Rothschild (1818-74) and Juliana Cohen (1831-77)*

*that the influx of a few thousand aliens can do any harm to the population of this country, either in the way of competition or of association, or even of degradation."*[41]

The other pro-alien lords included Mendip, Kimberley, Spencer, Stamford, Monkswell, Hobhouse, Ripon and Reay — all of whom voted against Hardwicke's Bill in 1898.[42] Lord Ribblesdale considered it *"a bad and unsavoury"* measure,[43] while Lord Thring emphasised the industry of Jewish immigrants admitted to Britain.[44] He refuted the allegation that *"immigration was injurious,"* for as a member of the Select Committee into Sweating, he claimed: *"We drew exactly the contrary conclusion."* Lord Herries observed that while a small section of London might favour restriction, other areas such as Lancashire and Yorkshire might be retarded by the loss of foreign artisans.[45] As the problem belonged not to Westminster but to the local authorities, he denounced the aliens measure as nothing but *"a County Council Bill."*

The majority of Jewish M.P.s supported the Liberal tradition and so evoked Balfour's disapproval: *"I do not think they are behaving with wisdom in ranging themselves in opposition to this Bill, as if we had wholly different aims from those which they have."*[46]

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41 *H 4th, XXVII, 17 Jul 1894, pp. 211-2*

42 *ibid., LVIII, 23 May 1898, p. 290*

43 *ibid., LIX, 20 Jun 1898, p. 735*

44 *ibid., pp. 745-6*

45 *ibid., LX, 5 Jul 1898, p. 1091*

46 *ibid., CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1283*

Whether their stand arose from party, racial or pure disinterested ideology, the fact remained that of the ten pro-alien Jews, seven were Liberals. In the House of Lords, Herschell upheld the cause of religious asylum and voted against Hardwicke's proposal.[47]

The most prominent of all Hebrew statesmen was Lord Rothschild, whose father, Lionel Nathan,[48] became the first Jewish M.P. in 1858. Nathan Mayer himself[49] entered as the Liberal representative for Aylesbury in 1865 and retained his seat for twenty years until created the first Jewish peer in 1885. The leader of Anglo-Jewry, Lord Rothschild held innumerable posts in organizations such as the Jewish Board of Guardians and other non-Jewish institutions such as the British Red Cross Society. As such, he experienced the dilemma of established English Jews, faced with the possible conflict between loyalty to their co-religionists and to their fellow countrymen. Just as the Board of Guardians would not encourage wholesale migration yet aided aliens in an extensive philanthropic programme, Lord Rothschild made no violent protestations against anti-aliens but quietly supported the open door.

In 1904 Rothschild led a deputation which objected to the Aliens Bill *"in moderate but powerful terms."*[50] As a member of the Royal Commission, he disagreed with the Majority Report and with

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*47 ibid., LVIII, 23 May 1898, p. 290*

*48 1808-79*

*49 1840-1915*

*50 H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1110*

Kenelm Digby submitted a Memorandum.[51] *"I am opposed to the adoption of restrictive measures,"* he stated, *"because even if they are directly aimed at the so-called 'undesirables' they would certainly affect deserving and hard-working men, whose impecunious position on their arrival would be no criterion of their incapacity to attain to independence. The undoubted evil of overcrowding can, in my opinion, be remedied by less drastic measures."*

In 1885 Nathan Mayer was succeeded in Aylesbury by his Conservative cousin, Baron Ferdinand James,[52] who sat on the House of Commons Select Committee of 1888/9. After his death in 1898, the seat was taken by Lionel Walter,[53] the son of Lord Rothschild. As Government Members, neither the Baron nor Lional Walter made significant, individual contributions to the debate though Lionel Walter voted against restriction in 1905.[54]

The third Government Member was Sir Julian Goldsmid,[55] President of the Russo-Jewish Committee and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. Direct in the cause of pro-alienism, he petitioned Parliament on behalf of persecuted Jews in Russia.[56]

The Liberal Jewish commoners — Isaacs, Montagu, S.M. Samuel, H.L. Samuel and Straus — all stood for the retention of asylum.

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51 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 60*

52 *C. — 1839-98*

53 *L.U. — 1868-1937*

54 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 808*

55 *C. — S. St. Pancras*

56 *PO, LXV, 19 Jan 1894, p. 72*

Rufus Isaacs[57] and Bertram Straus,[58] as new Members elected in 1904 and 1906 respectively, were less vocal than the others. Sir Samuel M. Montagu,[59] a financier and Orthodox Jew active in communal affairs, adopted a resolute stand. As M.P. for Whitechapel, Tower Hamlets in the East End, he stressed the relative low rate of pauperism among aliens.[60]

In 1900 his seat was taken by Sir Stuart Montagu Samuel,[61] a member of the Board of Guardians and a J.P. for London. A determined pro-alien during the most contentious years of the discussion, he argued with ease and conviction.[62] Having successfully disposed of the stock anti-alien arguments, he maintained that the Jewish community were perfectly willing to undertake the burden of supporting their less fortunate brethren.[63] Just as the Labour Members repudiated the Aliens Bill on behalf of working men, he renounced it on behalf of the Jewish community.[64]

Herbert Louis Samuel not only opposed restriction but actively supported Zionism. The first professing Jew to be a member of a British Cabinet, he held office in the Liberal Government of 1905-16. His Memorandum to the Cabinet in 1914 on a British trust for the

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*57 1860-1935, cr. Lord Reading 1914*

*58 Defeated Lawson for Mile End, Tower Hamlets in East End*

*59 1832-1911, cr. Lord Swaything in 1907*

*60 H 4th, VIII, 11 Feb 1893, pp. 1218-9*

*61 1856-1926*

*62 H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 117-8*

*63 ibid., CXLIX, 10 Jul 1905, p. 161*

*64 ibid., 19 Jul 1905, p. 1274*

Jewish Home prepared the way for the Balfour Declaration three years later.

Outside of Parliament, no advocate of tradition compared with either Arnold White or Goldwin Smith, though several correspondents to *Public Opinion* attacked the anti-semitism of 'Philo-Judaeus'.[65] And at the beginning of the nineties, with the renewal of Russian pogroms, pro-aliens pleaded: *"Humanity must overcome prudence; and heretofore, England must welcome the victims of persecution; her shores must still be a safe and reliable asylum for those who have no alternative."*[66]

PRESS

Most of the British press held a liberal attitude towards Emancipation and the Jews' right to equality. Almost all papers sympathised with Dreyfus and denounced Continental anti-semitism. But this did not necessarily indicate a pro-alien stand on immigration. *The Times*, the *Standard*, the *Morning Advertiser* and the *Daily Mail* in particular demanded restriction. Their views were nevertheless counter-balanced by a comprehensive range of pro-alien publications, embracing both popular dailies and the more circumspect reviews.

*The Daily Telegraph* led the pro-alien dailies. The first London penny paper and the first to accept Reuter's telegraphic service, it was born of the abolition of the last newspaper tax in 1855.

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65 *Including W. Fletcher & Jesse Thomas in PO, LXXIII, 7 Jan 1898, p. 15*

66 *PO, LVIII, 8 Aug 1890, p. 166*

Its liveliness inaugurated a new era in popular journalism. Appealing to a lower-middle to middle class audience, within a year it surpassed *The Times* in circulation. It held its precedence till the mid-nineties when it had multiplied sales to three hundred thousand. Although typographically conventional compared with the Sunday papers, among dailies it was vigorous, fresh, novel.

Founded by Joseph Moses Levy,[67] *The Daily Telegraph* was managed by his son Edward Levy-Lawson[68] from 1888. Neither Edward nor his successors were professing Jews and the paper had no affiliation with the consciously Jewish press.[69] In fact it showed considerable restraint in commenting on immigration. It simply claimed that those who had studied free trade realised that the advantages outweighed any drawbacks, and that if foreigners proved more beneficial than harmful to the country, they too should be allowed entry.[70]

More outspoken in their attack upon anti-alienism were *The Daily Chronicle* and *The Daily News*. In 1894 the *Chronicle* derided Salisbury for his ignorant, unenlightened attitude. It considered his statistics *"inaccurate"* and his facts *"non-existant"*.[71] When the paper changed from pro-Boer to anti-Boer in 1900, it retained its pro-alien views. Though it recognised certain dangers in the current practice of immigration, it affirmed that *"the evils of reaction would*

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*67 1811-88*

*68 Lord Burnham 1833-1916*

*69 The family retains its newspaper interests today but is not associated with the Jewish community.*

*70 PO, LXIII, 17 Feb 1893, p. 193*

*71 ibid., LXVI, 20 Jul 1894, p. 61*

*in the end be more serious both to our national character and resources....it would be a step backward for England to adopt a repressive policy now."*[72] The paper concurred with Digby's dissenting Report in 1903. It supported his belief that existing legislation, if implemented, would solve the problem of overcrowding; and agreed with Lord Rothschild that the majority recommendation of 'prohibited' areas would merely give local authorities an excuse for *"letting things alone."*[73] During the controversial debates on the Aliens Bill, it maintained that foreigners were being made *"the scapegoat for our own neglect."*[74] Without any reserve it upheld the tradition of asylum for refugees.[75]

*The Daily News* began as a Liberal organ, founded by Charles Dickens in 1846.[76] Whereas it appealed to an upper-middle class including Democrats and Radicals, *The Daily Chronicle* attracted a Liberal audience of lower-middle class shopkeepers. The *News* differed from the *Chronicle* in another way. Throughout the nineties it was pro-Milner and hence anti-Boer, but when taken over by a syndicate influenced by Lloyd George in 1900, it reversed its policy and adopted the attitude held earlier by the *Chronicle*.

Though *The Daily News* dubbed Jewish aliens in typical tones as *"bands of destitute refugees"*, and *"pauper*

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72 *ibid., LXXXIII, 29 May 1903, p. 675*

73 *ibid., LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 228*

74 *ibid., LXXXV, 29 Apr 1904, p. 536*

75 *ibid., LXXXVII, 21 Apr 1905, pp. 486-7*

76 *In 1930 it absorbed* <u>*The Daily Chronicle*</u> *and became* <u>*The News Chronicle*</u>.

*immigrants"*,[77] it endorsed pro-alienism. Despite their poverty, the paper argued, Jews were not a public charge. It regarded Salisbury's proposal in 1894 as both useless and dangerous: *"useless"* because it would not lead to the detection of criminals, and *"dangerous"* because it would involve constant recrimination between one state and another.[78] Despite Prime Minister Rosebery's objections to the measure, the paper rebuked him for having given what it termed *"a rather too favourable reception"* to the Bill.

When Vincent moved his Amendment to the King's Speech in 1903, before the Royal Commission had reported, *The Daily News* warned its readers: *"The obvious danger is that the short and easy method of summary exclusion will be preferred to the more difficult policy of distinguishing between various types of immigrants."*[79] It hoped the Commissioners would not concede to *"the prejudices of men like Mr. Arnold White and Sir Howard Vincent, who insist upon treating the Jews as if they belonged to a lower order of beings."*[80] It took a side-glance at Evans-Gordon and his League and continued: *"We have usually found that the poorer Jew takes at least as intelligent a view of statesmanship as his 'British Brother'."*

It assumed a relatively neutral position when the Report was finally presented. Making its own analysis, the *News* considered that the principal problem was urban housing, for which immigrants could not be blamed. Rather the fault lay in the land system itself,

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77 *PO, LIX, 1 May 1891, p. 548*

78 *ibid., LXVI, 13 Jul 1894, p. 36*

79 *ibid., LXXXIII, 6 Mar 1903, p. 291*

80 *ibid., 29 May 1903, p. 675*

which artificially limited the house supply and gave rents a monopoly value. The paper opposed the attempt to meet oppression with oppression. As a possible solution to the Jewish question, it suggested that an international conference draft a charter of common Jewish liberties.[81]

During the Aliens Bill controversy *The Daily News* regretted that Britain might *"join in that unholy sport of closing the door on the poor man which is sensibly increasing the sum of human misery from China to Peru."*[82] It inadvertently forecast the country's political future. The Bill, it wrote, *"will make no difference to the lot of the poor, the sweated, and the overcrowded. If this is all the Conservative Party has to offer in the way of Social reform, then, indeed, it is time to turn for inspiration elsewhere."*[83]

At least three provincial newspapers also supported Liberal opinion. The tri-weekly *Leeds Mercury*, which profoundly affected the political and moral outlook around Lancashire and York, predicted the failure of Salisbury's Bill.[84] The *Nottingham Daily Express* agreed. *"There is no need for panic legislation,"* it calmly stated, *"because there is not a vestige of panic."*[85] But the principal Liberal organ outside London was *The Manchester Guardian*, the one provincial paper to develop an international reputation. Founded as

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81 *ibid., LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 228*

82 *ibid., LXXXV, 29 Apr 1904, p. 536*

83 *ibid., LXXXVII, 21 Apr 1905, p. 487*

84 *ibid., LXVI, 20 Jul 1894, p. 61*

85 *ibid.*

a weekly in 1821, it became a daily in 1855, and was edited by C.P. Scott in the nineties. In 1906 a Tory Lord maintained that the *Guardian "has always been noted no less for its unrelenting hostility to the late Government than for its overpowering affection for aliens of all kinds, from Mad Mullahs downwards."*[86] It regarded the Aliens Act as *"the lowest depths of political depravity."*

More than any other publication, the *Star* censured rural labourers for the depressed labour condition of the towns. Founded in 1888, it was the first modern evening newspaper. It drew upon the lower-middle class with Liberal to Radical sympathies. In advancing the techniques of the cross-heading and the interview, the *Star* widened the scope of the existing press. It defended Jewish immigrants who, unlike their immigrant counterparts from the country, competed only in a very limited market and rarely fell upon the rates. Were politicians really concerned about labour, the paper argued, they would help restore the workers to the land. Instead, they inflated a *"bogus scare about pauper immigrants."*[87]

Many of the leading periodicals published articles that extolled the virtues of Jews and promoted the pro-alien case. Among these was *The Spectator*, the weekly organ of educated radicalism. From its inception in 1828, it appealed to an upper-middle class reader with Whig-Liberal tendencies. Discussing *"The New Hep! Hep!" The Spectator* summarised the wave of anti-semitism sweeping the

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*86 Newton, H 4th, CLIV, 22 Mar 1906, p. 546*

*87 PO, LIX, 5 Jun 1891, p. 706*

Continent.[88] Persecution often arises, it explained, from no concrete reason. Man seems compelled simply through tradition to ostracise Jews. Justice will dawn only with the embrace of Christian morality by all Christian people. The journal rejected the anti-semitic myths of Arnold White. It questioned his supposition that Russian pogroms were motivated by fear of the inevitable and invincible power of Jews who, if unrestricted, would overtake the land and completely displace the native people. *"Could a more weak and impotent pretext for persecution be found,"* it asked, for *"if the Jew is really so terrible a person as he is painted, it would be useless to try to keep him under by disabilities."*[89]

In the Liberal *Fortnightly Review*,[90] Lucien Wolf addressed an educated public on the Dreyfus affair.[91] He claimed that Drumont built up a feeling of insecurity just prior to the accusation of Dreyfus: by conducting a campaign against Jewish commissioned officers in the army; and by warning France of the intrinsic treachery of Jews. According to W.T. Stead, neither Lord Salisbury, Arnold White nor Joseph Chamberlain would appreciate an article in the *Fortnightly* by Geoffrey Drage.[92] In a succinct manner, it disposed of anti-alien objections and painted the positive features of immigration. The author extolled the Jews' ability to suit their idea of comfort to

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88 *ibid., LXXII, 17 Dec 1897, pp. 781-2*

89 *ibid., LXXVI, 15 Sep 1899, p. 328*

90 *Began as a fortnightly in 1865, but subsequently published monthly*

91 *PO, LXXIII, 14 Jan 1898, p. 40*

92 *RR, XI, Jan 1895, p. 33*

material circumstance, but noted that the virtue of seizing every opportunity for self-betterment was despised as a Jewish vice.

Other monthly publications also carried essays on the Jewish question. Rabbi S. Singer summarised the pro-alien case in an article[93] in the *English Illustrated Magazine*.[94] The *National Review*[95] included a paper by C.B. Roylance Kent who favoured immigration and explained "Why They Leave Russia".[96] The Countess of Desart, in the *Nineteenth Century*,[97] advocated the protection of the labouring poor, but her article, "Tzar v. Jew",[98] was basically a protest against the *"revival of medieval barbarism."* In a similar vein Maltman Barry, in the *New Century Review*,[99] advocated the preservation of natives from unfair foreign competition but added: *"Of course, care would have to be taken to exempt political refugees from the operation of the measure, but that goes without saying."*[100]

The Jewish press had a threefold role in the aliens question: it championed the tradition of asylum; it stressed the Englishness of assimilated Jews; and recorded the persecution of Hebrew brethren throughout the world. On a more general level, both the *Jewish World* and the *Jewish Chronicle* reported all manner of religious and other

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93 *PO, LX, 7 Aug 1891, p. 167*

94 *Founded 1883*

95 *Also founded in 1883*

96 *RR, IV, Aug 1891, p. 152*

97 *Founded 1877, became* <u>*Nineteenth Century And After*</u>

98 *PO, LIX, 19 Jun 1891, pp. 775-6*

99 *See "Press" in Chapter 5*

100 *PO, LXXII, 8 Oct 1897, p. 453*

Jewish activity. The *Chronicle* in particular sought to present Jewish-Gentile relations in the most favourable light. Its editor was Leopold Greenberg, who acted as Herzl's representative in London.[101] His paper took every advantage to express optimism and the possibility of improvement in any predicament. When Pobedonoszeff denied responsibility for Russian anti-semitism on the grounds that it was a social rather than a religious problem, the *Chronicle* reported the statement with sceptism; but hastened to interpret the fact that Pobedonoszeff had offered any explanation at all as symptomatic of *"the powerful influences at work on the side of right and justice."*[102] Also with but slight evidence, it enthusiastically noted the *"strenuous efforts"* being made to remove Jewish disabilities in the Transvaal.[103]

An impartiality prevailed in the *Jewish Chronicle*, in that although directed at a Hebrew public of both assimilated English and newly-arrived immigrant Jews, it was not a narrow, sectarian publication. It exercised restraint in the cause of religious refuge. It discreetly avoided party association. In answer to political propaganda, it denied the existence of a special 'Jewish' vote, claiming that like other citizens, Jews voted according to their judgment and views as Englishmen. As a hypothetical case it predicted with accuracy that restrictive legislation would find supporters *"even among Jews, though the feeling of the bulk of the community would be as*

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*101 Amery, J., pp. 256-70*

*102 PO, LXX, 14 Aug 1896, p. 209*

*103 ibid., LXXII, 13 Aug 1897, p. 210*

*decidedly opposed to it....At the present juncture,"* it continued in 1892, *"the elements of this exceptional conflict between racial sympathies and civic responsibility are entirely absent."*[104] The operative words were *"exceptional conflict"*. They epitomized the Jewish dilemma.

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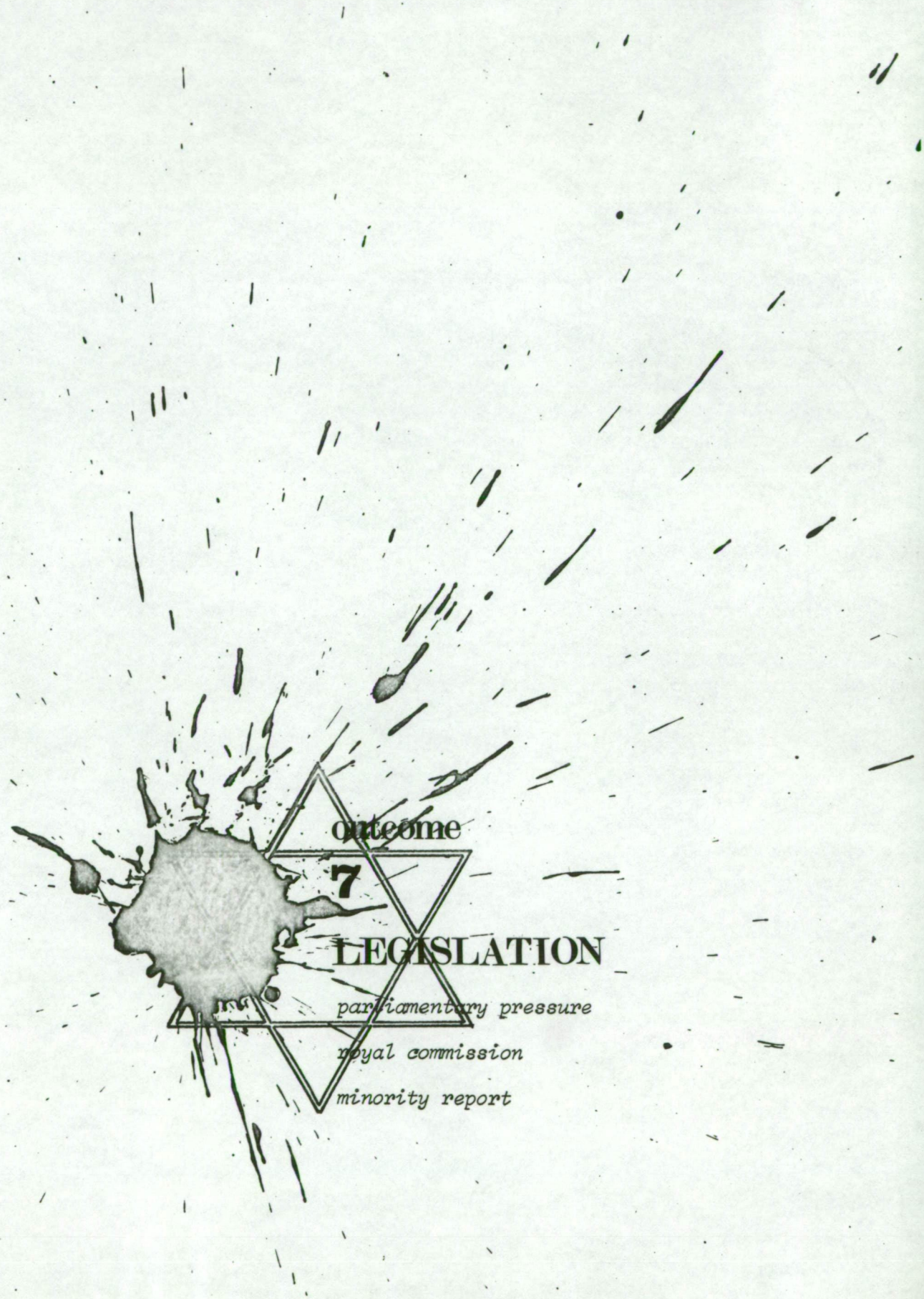
*104 ibid., LXI, 24 Jun 1892, p. 804*


outcome
7
LEGISLATION
parliamentary pressure
royal commission
minority report

*House of Lords, Friday.*—Peers not habitually given to tears. To-night the MARKISS plunged them (especially Ministers) into condition of abject woe. Only said that England was the head-quarters of the Anarchist operations, the laboratory in which all their contrivances were hatched. ROSEBERY jumped at opportunity with intuition of Old Parliamentary Hand. Enlarged upon it with skill of born debater. MARKISS saw his mistake. Hadn't meant anything; only his way of putting a case. But here was ROSEBERY pitilessly making it clear how the Leader of the Patriot Party had given his country away to the Paris gossips; how he had assumed a state of things which, set forth on authority of ex-Prime Minister and ex-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, would be made much of by the enemy abroad.

MARKISS for once so singed by his own blazing indiscretion that he did not wait for SCHOMBERG MACDONNELL'S convenient correspondent, but forthwith endeavoured to explain away his remarks. This led only to tears coursing more rapidly down ROSEBERY'S pained face, whilst SPENCER forlornly shook his beard as if it were the flag of England drooping under the shamed skies, and KIMBERLEY dolefully dropped his head. A pretty scene, admirably staged and acted.

*Business done.*—The MARKISS puts his foot in it.

PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE

Between 1890-1905 anti-aliens waged a campaign in both Houses of Parliament. Confronted by vacillating, unresolved and even pro-alien leaders, this dedicated minority fired all the conventional weapons of anti-immigrant warfare. Plying the Government with innumerable questions, they refused to be silenced and demanded an answer. In the House of Commons the issue erupted in each of the sixteen years. In the Lords a restrictive measure passed every stage of legislation.

Howard Vincent commanded the batallion. Referring to an increase in immigration in the past twelve months, in April 1890 he promised: *"I shall take a further opportunity of calling attention to this question."*[1] Thereafter he sought the implementation of the William IV Act,[2] cited an alleged case of leprosy,[3] queried the fate of American alien rejects[4] and upheld the views of Arnold White.[5]

The 1891 Session opened with a further enquiry from Vincent about the 1836 Act.[6] At least ten others, mainly Conservative, subsequently raised the question on at least thirteen separate occasions. In April Vincent specifically asked the President of the Board of Trade, Michael Hicks-Beach, to consider the possibility of legislat-

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1 *H 3rd, CCCXLII, 9 Apr 1890, p. 128*
2 *ibid., CCCXLIV, 16 May 1890, p. 1107*
3 *ibid., CCCXLV, 16 Jun 1890, p. 1004*
4 *ibid., CCCXLVI, 27 Jun 1890, p. 216*
5 *ibid., CCCXLVII, 17 Jul 1890, p. 71*
6 *ibid., CCCXLIX, 27 Jan 1891, p. 1145*

ing against *"the importation of pauper and destitute aliens."*[7] In the face of Government inaction, anti-aliens accelerated their efforts. They drew upon American and Colonial examples of restriction[8] and pointed to the *"strong feeling"* within Britain for similar laws against *"foreign paupers"*.[9] With the renewal of Russian anti-semitism, fear of invasion grew. When a Russian paper[10] circulated the rumour that a Baltic steamship company might carry so many passengers from Libau and Riga to London that sixty thousand Jews were likely to land together on the Thames, panic overcame them.[11] Although investigations disclosed the report as unfounded, agitation continued.[12]

By 1892 a tacit agreement existed between the Conservative Government and its extremists. References in Parliament suggested that a Bill hung in the air. In answer to Lowther, Arthur Balfour as Leader of the House, announced that legislation was in *"an advanced state of preparation."*[13] Yet ten days later, when Lowther again enquired about the Government's assurance to deal with immigration, the Home Secretary[14] could name no precise date for *"it was thought necessary to institute inquiries not only at home, but abroad, before*

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7 *ibid., CCCLII, 9 Apr 1891, pp. 127-8*

8 *ibid., CCCLIII, 28 May 1891, pp. 1190-2*

9 *ibid., 4 Jun 1891, p. 1617*

10 *Vedomosti*

11 *H 3rd, CCCIII, 4 Jun 1891, p. 1617*

12 *ibid., 5 Jun 1891, p. 1722; ibid., CCCLIV, 9 Jun 1891, p. 22*

13 *H 4th, IV, 20 May 1892, p. 1447*

14 *Matthews*

*giving definite shape to the measure,"* an explanation somewhat contradictory to that given by Balfour.[15] Next month the Home Secretary repeated that the flow of migrants did not warrant immediate action and again refused to designate a day for introducing *"the measure dealing with this subject."*[16]

Unable to accept the Government's apathy, Lowther took the earliest opportunity to move an Amendment demanding restriction. In the Queen's Speech of 1893 he aroused a lengthy, involved debate which finally rejected his Amendment by 234:119.[17] This fierce contest between anti- and pro-alien factions[18] included all the arguments that were to be reiterated throughout the period. In response to Lowther's reference to official promises of 1892, Charles Dilke rebuffed the idea *"that any Bill on the subject was ever drafted, or if it was, that it was submitted to the Government."*[19]

But some concern was shown by the appointment of the Burnett and Schloss commission to investigate policy in the United States. As Chief Labour Correspondent to the Board of Trade between 1893-1907, John Burnett was a former General Secretary to the Amalgamated Society

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15 *H 4th, V, 30 May 1892, pp. 215-6*

16 *ibid., 13 Jun 1892, pp. 892-3*

17 *ibid., VIII, 11 Feb 1893, pp. 1154-70*

18 *Anti-aliens: Vincent, Wilson, Stock, Marriott and Labouchere; Pro-aliens: W.E. Gladstone, Goldsmid, Mundella, Montagu and F.J. Rothschild*

19 *H 4th, VIII, 11 Feb 1893, p. 1185; It is difficult to know whether or not an Aliens Bill was in fact drafted in the Parliamentary Session of 1892. An enquiry at Whitehall has revealed that after "a careful search of the Home Office records for the period...in the papers still available," no further information can be traced; ESG/69 404/1/63 6 Oct 1969*

of Engineers and had already reported on the sweating system in the East End. David Frederick Schloss, a barrister, was active in both industrial and Jewish circles. A member of the Board of Guardians and of the Anglo-Jewish Association, he was the first Director of the Census of Production for the Board of Trade and one of the British Commissioners to the International Congress on Unemployment in Paris in 1910. His publications included treatises on the labour question as well as contributions to Charles Booth's study of London.

Though at least one Conservative objected to the Jewish background of Schloss,[20] most dissatisfaction arose from the delay in the actual Report.[21] When finally presented, its outline of the vast programme of restriction in the United States excited anti-aliens to attack the comparative ineptitude of their own system, and undoubtedly influenced the action of Salisbury in 1894.

In introducing his Bill to the lords, Salisbury relied heavily upon the American example, claiming that protectionism elsewhere resulted in an increased proportion of 'undesirables' likely to enter Britain.[22] His proposal differentiated between destitute prospective immigrants and dangerous resident aliens. His latter classification provoked vehement controversy, as Salisbury virtually indicted his fellow countrymen with harbouring foreign criminals who, on English soil with English instruments, plotted anarchist operations

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20 *Lowther, H 4th, IX, 21 Feb 1893, pp. 49-50*

21 *H 4th, XIV, 3 Jul 1893, p. 674; ibid., XV, 4 Aug 1893, p. 1339; ibid., 8 Aug 1893, p. 1552*

22 *ibid., XVI, 6 Jul 1894, pp. 1047-51*

detrimental to peace abroad.

Appalled by this arraignment, Prime Minister Rosebery rejected the measure. In particular he demonstrated how immigration in 1894 had fallen below the figures earlier in the decade when the Conservatives themselves, as the Government party, had denied the need for restriction.[23] From their own arguments then, legislation was even less justified now. Though the Bill passed its Second Reading by 89:37 it progress no further.

Anti-alienism had no more success in the Commons. In 1895 it received only a brief mention when a copy of statistical tables was ordered.[24] But the following year, under Salisbury's premiership, the Queen's Speech promised a measure *"for checking the importation of destitute aliens."*[25] After this initial flourish however, the Government again disappointed its extremists and nothing eventuated.

In January 1897 Vincent resolutely introduced an Aliens Bill, only to have its Second Reading repeatedly deferred.[26] Undiscouraged, he then suggested the resurrection of Salisbury's lost measure, to be further frustrated. The Conservative President of the Board of Trade, Charles Ritchie, merely replied: *"I am afraid that I cannot hold out hope of the Bill referred to being introduced during this Session."*[27] Anti-aliens then lobbied to move yet another

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23 *ibid., XXVII, 17 Jul 1894, pp. 117-8*

24 *ibid., XXXIII, 9 Apr 1895, p. 1256*

25 *ibid., XXXVII, 11 Feb 1896, p. 6*

26 *ibid., XLV, 26 Jan 1897, p. 304*

27 *ibid.*

motion for restriction until Ritchie hastened to claim that the Government indeed *"pledged"* itself to *"some legislation on the subject"* and intended to uphold the promises already made.[28] After this *"very satisfactory assurance"*, the agitators agreed to withdraw their proposed motion.

But their confidence gradually waned as the Government continued to neglect them. Unable to abide official delay, Vincent once more tried to force the issue and so initiated yet another Bill in 1898.[29] And again, after constant deferment, it failed to be read a second time. Meanwhile the Tory lords had greater success, as an Aliens Bill from Hardwicke passed all stages. Although substantially the same as that proposed four years earlier by Salisbury when Leader of the Opposition, it stressed economic rather than political injury and received overwhelming support.[30] The vital Second Reading gained 81:19 votes.[31]

The most controversial aspect of Hardwicke's measure revolved around the definition of 'undesirability', an issue that later perplexed the Commons when they debated their own Bills in 1904 and 1905. While all the lords advocated the exclusion of criminals and idiots, a small group of Liberals led by Earl Grey[32] questioned the

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28 *Vincent & Lawles, H 4th, XLVI, 10 Feb 1897, p. 67*

29 *SPHC, I, 11 Feb —8 Jul 1898, pp. 91-9*

30 *H 4th, LVIII, 23 May 1898, p. 268*

31 *Those opposed were Ripon, Carrington, Chesterfield, Kimberley, Spencer, Stamford, Aberdare, Herschell, Hobhouse, Leigh, Mendip, Monkswell, Reay, Ribblesdale, Wandsworth, Crewe, Barnard, Burghclere and Welby.*

32 *Distinguish from both C. — anti-alien E. Gray and L. — pro-alien E. Grey (later Viscount Grey of Falloden)*

rejection of those *"likely to become a public charge"*[33] and those *"without means of support"*.[34] But though they lost their Amendments, their Government opponents ultimately fared no better as their Bill was not debated in the Lower House. Despite Vincent's requests that Hardwicke's measure be introduced into the Commons, A.J. Balfour persistently declined on the grounds that, due to an agreement already made, no *"controversial"* Bill could be presented without previous notice.[35] Though he refused to promise legislation for the next Session, he still maintained that the subject engaged *"the earnest attention of the Government."*[36]

Though Ministers furnished such encouraging replies to the torrent of queries posed by anti-aliens, they failed to commit themselves unequivocably to restriction. Ritchie, dogged by his promise of 1897, evaded reformist pressure by pointing to the insurmountable difficulties surrounding legislation. As Home Secretary in 1900 he refused absolutely to deal with the subject, ignoring references to his pledge as former President of the Board of Trade.[37]

By 1901 the hopes aroused by the Queen's Speech of 1896 and by Ritchie's declaration the following year still remained unfulfilled, while anti-aliens continued to seek action in vain. The new Secretary of the Board of Trade, Gerald Balfour, merely stated that the

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33 *H 4th, LIX, 20 Jun 1898, pp. 747-8*

34 *ibid., LX, 5 Jul 1898, pp. 1088-99*

35 *See "Politics" in Chapter 9*

36 *H 4th, LXI, 8 Jul 1898, p. 337*

37 *ibid., LXXXI, 26 Mar 1900, p. 321*

absence of the matter in the Address for the Session in no way indicated the Government's policy.[38] When Vincent therefore enquired about the date for introducing the long-awaited measure, he received no reply. Similarly Lowther elicited a negative response from the President of the Local Government Board, Walter Long, who simply said: *"I have nothing to do with aliens, except so far as they touch the public health."*[39] Requests for statistics also miscarried, as Long perpetually provided excuses for delay.[40]

But the following year achieved one positive move even though it entailed actual postponement of any legislation, for in January 1902 Evans-Gordon emerged as the leader of Conservative reform. In an Amendment to the King's Speech, he considered the *"urgent necessity"* for restriction, outlining the years of vacillation since Ritchie pledged the Government to action.[41] *"Nothing could have been more definite than that promise,"* he argued, *"yet five years have elapsed ...and we are still waiting."* Though Gerald Balfour denied the need for control in view of the country's small percentage of aliens and indeed refuted the effect of restriction elsewhere, he agreed to institute an investigation on behalf of the Government.[42] Next month he announced: *"It is proposed to entrust this inquiry to a*

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38 *ibid., LXXXIX, 15 Feb 1901, p. 178*

39 *ibid., XCIII, 10 May 1901, p. 1318*

40 *ibid., p. 1317; ibid., XCV, 13 Jun 1901, p. 281; ibid., CXVIII, 26 Jul 1901, p. 224*

41 *ibid., CI, 29 Jan 1902, pp. 1269-83*

42 *ibid., pp. 1287-8*

*Royal Commission.*"[43]

ROYAL COMMISSION

Evans-Gordon withdrew his Amendment on the understanding that an enquiry would lead to immediate legislation. But not all anti-aliens were satisfied with the Government's response to their demands; nor were they convinced of the need for an exhaustive examination before the introduction of an appropriate measure. Vincent in particular wearied of the lengthy time taken by the Commission, criticised its proceedings and accused the Government of intentional delay.

He believed that past enquiries into the subject made a further investigation totally unwarranted. When finally forced to accept the decision, he attempted to limit the study to the question of time: had the date foreseen by the Select Committee of 1888/9 now arrived?[44] Thwarted in this effort, he continued to barrage Ministers about aliens and the progress of the Commission but without success, as the Government usually evaded the issue by claiming that the matter was probably being currently examined. As the Session passed, Vincent's impatience mounted. He noted the irregularity of meetings by the Commissioners as well as the indisposition of the chairman, Lord James of Hereford: perhaps he should be replaced?[45] But Gerald Balfour consistently pleaded his inability to comment until a Report was presented. As to the chairmanship, he was reluctant to

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43 *ibid., CII, 13 Feb 1902, p. 1250*

44 *ibid., 4 Feb 1902, p. 363*

45 *ibid., CXIV, 5 Nov 1902, pp. 140-1*

interfere.

When nothing had eventuated by February 1903, Vincent renewed his attack. With Forde Ridley he moved an Amendment demanding legislation to overcome the *"grave national danger, seriously affecting the employment, the welfare, and the housing of the working classes."*[46] After the promises of 1895-7 he *"expected something better"* than a Royal Commission *"to hush up the whole thing."* In defence of the enquiry, Gerald Balfour upheld the competence and sense of public duty of the Commission's chairman, informed the House that it had held more than twenty sittings and examined over eighty witnesses. Such a grave problem necessitated a full and impartial investigation. He observed that Vincent's attitude differed from that of Evans-Gordon and other reformers who appeared to realise that until a Report was made, under no circumstances could the Government make a decision.

Unsilenced, Vincent insisted that they had not asked for a Royal Commission but had demanded legislation and wanted action. Henry Norman, the Liberal Commissioner who later voted for restriction, tried to resist the onslaught.[47] He claimed no authority to speak for the Commission as such, but felt bound to reveal Lord James' concern to terminate the enquiry and report as soon as possible. He repudiated the suggestion that it was in any way a *"put-up job"*, for the members in fact devoted their own time and conven-

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*46 ibid., CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, pp. 938-77*

*47 ibid., pp. 694-5*

ience in the Commission's service.

Vincent and Ridley finally agreed to withdraw their motion on the understanding that, as soon as the Commission reported, the Government would seriously consider legislation. They received some consolation from the Board of Trade Secretary, Bonar Law, who confided that they *"fully realised the evils referred to"* and were *"most anxious to be in a position to consider the matter."*[48] *"Hurry up"* then commented an anti-alien.[49]

Till mid-year the agitators bided their time by constantly seeking information until, in June, they learnt that the Commission had completed its evidence.[50] But two months later when the Report was finally presented, further dissatisfaction arose. In the first place, the press published extracts before M.P.s themselves had access to it; and secondly, the Government still hesitated to commit themselves to immediate action.[51] Home Secretary Akers-Douglas assured the House that the Home Department was not responsible for the leakage to the press, but irate Members demanded a searching investigation into what they regarded as an infraction of their Parliamentary privilege. At the same time, Akers-Douglas reasoned that as he himself had only received the Report two days ago, he could not as yet indicate the Government's intentions.[52] Vincent

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*48 ibid., p. 977*

*49 Bartley, H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, pp. 970-1*

*50 H 4th, CXXIII, 15 Jun 1903, p. 948*

*51 ibid., CXXVII, 12 Aug 1903, pp. 1017-8*

*52 Gerald Balfour claimed that he himself had not seen the Report at all.*

nevertheless pressed for a definite promise of legislation during the autumn Session, but received only a curt retort: *"Most certainly not."*

The twelve hundred-page Report examined the character and extent of alien immigration in Britain, reviewed the legislation in foreign countries and the Colonies and made seven major recommendations. Altogether the Commissioners had held forty-nine public sittings and questioned a hundred and seventy-six witnesses, while Evans-Gordon had visited Russia and Poland for information. Although the early sections of their Report virtually disproved the anti-alien charges,[53] the latter part suggested rigorous restriction.

In forming their recommendations, the Commissioners realised that Russian and Polish Jews constituted the bulk of alien immigrants. At the same time they sought to reject 'undesirables'. But when they proposed the establishment of elaborate machinery to exclude these 'undesirables' they acted against their own conclusions; for whilst the *"immigrants...from Eastern Europe"*, due to their numerical preponderance, would necessarily be affected by legislation more than any other group, they, according to the Report, were not 'undesirable'.

Noting the increase in alien immigration over the past twenty years, the Commission stated: *"The excess is mainly composed of Russians and Poles who belong for the most part to the Jewish faith."*[54]

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53 *See Chapter 4 "ALIENS"*

54 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 48*

It continued: *"We do not think that any case has been established for the total exclusion of such Aliens, and it would certainly be undesirable to throw any unnecessary difficulties in the way of the entrance of foreigners generally into this country."* The Report then drafted seven stringent recommendations to regulate the entry at once of *"'undesirables'"* and *"certain classes of Immigrants...from Eastern Europe."*

According to the Commission's own arguments, East European Jews fell into neither of the two categories of 'undesirables'. The first class were those about whom witnesses agreed in designating as 'undesirable'.[55] They included 1) criminals other than political — and Russians and Poles committed 17% of alien crime as against 19% by Germans and 23½% by Americans;[56] 2) prostitutes and those living from its proceeds — and foreign prostitutes predominated in the non-Jewish Soho area rather than in the Jewish Whitechapel;[57] 3) anarchists and other persons of notoriously bad character — and Jews were considered as *"sober in habit, and as law-abiding as the natives around them"*;[58] 4) those with infectious or contagious disease — and witnesses observed their health and immunity to disease;[59] and 5) lunatics and idiots — Jews were remarkable for their mental health. Thus, although both pro- and anti-aliens agreed that this

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55 *ibid., p. 20*

56 *ibid., p. 25*

57 *Soho 1892/1902: 150/347, Whitechapel 1892/1902: 13/52; Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 26*

58 *Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 30*

59 *See "Diseased" in Chapter 4*

class of 'undesirable' should be excluded, the evidence before the Royal Commission exonerated Jews from the classification.

The second group were those about whom witnesses disagreed in classifying as 'undesirable', those without ostensible means of support and thus likely to become *"a charge upon public funds or private charity"*.[60] Within the actual recommendation section of the Report, the Commissioners referred merely to those *"likely to become a charge upon public funds"* as 'undesirable'.[61] As Jews rarely fell upon the rates, while alien pauperism as a whole was substantially less than that for the general population, Jews could not be termed destitute, without means of support and hence 'undesirable'.[62]

Yet in an attempt to control the entry of 'undesirables' into Britain, the Royal Commission outlined an elaborate and expensive scheme that would inevitably affect the majority of immigrants, the East European Jews.[63] The first recommendation merely referred to the regulation of *"certain classes of Aliens"*. The second called for the establishment of a Department of Immigration, either as part of the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board, or of an independent character. The third suggested the replacement of the 1836 Aliens Act by a new Statute, enabling the Board of Trade to secure correct statistics and other information. The fourth covered

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*60 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 20*

*61 ibid., p. 49*

*62 See "Destitute" in Chapter 4*

*63 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 48-51*

eight points on the role of the proposed Immigration Department:

Section (a) empowered the new Department to make and impose regulations governing immigration generally; Section (b) called for *"a sufficient staff of officers"*; Section (c) authorised the officers to determine the 'desirability' of immigrants on arrival; Section (d) both required the Department to *"act upon"* information of 'undesirables' and provided for a Court of Summary Jurisdiction to determine proceedings; Section (e) made transport companies responsible for the trans-shipment of aliens who proved 'undesirable' within two years of arrival; Section (f) called for compliance with international agreements in deportation; Section (g) required a medical examination on arrival and again held shipping companies responsible for rejected aliens; and (h) bound immigrants to give accurate information under penalty and the threat of repatriation.

The fifth recommendation concerned overcrowding: (a) more stringent enforcement of existing laws; (b) enquiries into the prevalence of overcrowding in certain areas; (c) the declaration of 'prohibited' areas — where aliens had substantially contributed to overcrowding and where therefore no further newly-arrived immigrants could settle; (d) public notification of 'prohibited' areas; (e) the circulation of such lists in foreign languages; (f) the registration of aliens and notice of their address for two years after arrival; and (g) the removal and charge of aliens settling in areas within two years of their having been declared 'prohibited'.

The sixth recommendation embraced the deportation of aliens convicted of a felony or misdemeanour; whilst the seventh suggested

control of regulations and accommodation on immigrant vessels.

In submitting their Report, the Commissioners realised that their recommendations might not necessarily exclude the 'undesirables' as intended, but they emphasised the deterrent effect of legislation, especially in the form of greater care in selection by the shipping companies themselves. Though some suggestions such as number (3) relating to more accurate information and number (6) concerning convicted criminals aroused little opposition several stirred heated controversy.[64] In particular, sections of the fourth and fifth recommendations, on the role of immigration officers and the problem of overcrowding, gave rise to endless debates.

Signed by all seven Commissioners, the Report reflected their political bias towards Conservatism and the inconsistency of their chairman. Of the five members with distinct party affiliation, three belonged to the Government — chairman Lord James, Colonial Secretary Alfred Lyttleton and Evans Gordon — and two to the Opposition — pro-alien Lord Rothschild and anti-alien Henry Norman.[65] Just as Lord James declared in Parliament: *"I do not think there is much in the case either for crime or for pauperism"*,[66] yet then voted for the Aliens Bill, the Report refuted anti-alien charges yet upheld restriction.

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*64 See Chapter 8 "LEGISLATION"*

*65 The two 'non-party' members — without a vote in Parliament — were Sir Kenelm E. Digby, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office and William Vallance, Clerk to the Guardians of Whitechapel.*

*66 H 4th, CL, 28 Jul 1905, p. 769*

MINORITY REPORT

But accompanying the Majority Report was an eight-page Memorandum of sound logic from Kenelm E. Digby and Lord Rothschild.[67] A barrister and former Vinerian Law Reader at Oxford,[68] Sir Kenelm Digby was a County Court Judge[69] and from 1895 Permanent Under-Secretary at the Home Office until 1903, when he submitted his Minority Report.

His Memorandum opened: *"I regret that while agreeing in the main with the conclusions of fact arrived at by my colleagues, I am unable to concur with some of the recommendations made by the majority of the Commission."* He maintained that these recommendations received no support from either the evidence placed before the Commission or the conclusions *"unanimously"* reached by its members. While he upheld the object of excluding 'undesirables', he believed that legislation carrying out the recommendations in question would prove *"impracticable"* and *"fail to accomplish"* their purpose.

Digby then systematically related the evidence of fact with the Commission's recommendations. Referring to aliens classified as 'undesirable' on grounds of health, crime or poverty, he defended Jews by claiming: *"No strong case is made for legislation excluding any of the above classes so far as concerns the bulk of immigrants from Eastern Europe."* Firstly, as there was little illness among them, as they introduced no contagious disease and included no lunatics, no case existed for special measures to exclude them at

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*67 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, pp. 53-60*

*68 1868-74*

*69 1892-4*

port. Secondly, he showed how the criminal element infiltrated *"through channels entirely different from those through which the great tide of immigration from Eastern Europe flows."* Thirdly, he dealt with those likely to become a public charge, *"where the enquiry is only as to what may probably happen in the future."* From the experience of the United States, he thought that *"the test of the possession of money would probably work unjustly."* He submitted that, apart from the problem of crime, the evils of alien immigration could be overcome *"by less elaborate machinery than is suggested in the recommendations."*

Though he recognised the grave question of criminal aliens, Digby regarded the attempt to arrest them at the port of entry as *"wholly futile"*, for neither criminals nor prostitutes would be likely to make admissions whilst the process of interrogation might prove extremely difficult. Moreover, a system of identification would perhaps benefit the criminal class, who, more than others, could obtain certificates by surreptitious means. Drawing again from the American example, the numbers who would be rejected on proven grounds of criminality at the time of entry hardly justified the proposed legislation.

The only effective way to meet alien crime was outlined in recommendation (6) — the deportation of convicted criminals as part of their sentence. Both the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police[70] and the Chief Magistrate of the Metropolis[71] favoured this as the only

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70 *Sir Edward Bradford*

71 *Sir Albert de Rutzen*

possible solution. It would both eliminate the foreign criminal population and act as a deterrent

Digby objected too to the clauses on 'prohibited' areas for: (1) it would be almost impossible to prevent or detect those about to enter a congested zone; (2) actual vacancies within the area would increase difficulties; (3) the large staff of officers needed would be a financial burden even if they failed in their task; and (4) the new plan had little advantage over the thorough administration of existing regulations. He maintained that no witness invited to comment favoured the proposal. According to the highest authorities before the Commission, he maintained that the enforcement of the ordinary sanitary law, with certain alterations and additions, would solve the matter.

In concluding his Memorandum, Digby stated his agreement with sections (3), (4f), (5a), (6) and (7) but withheld assent from (4), (5) and (2). Moreover, as the aliens question was essentially a local problem, he considered the establishment of a separate Department unwarranted and regarded the existing Public Departments sufficient. He drew *"the true conclusions"* from the evidence of the Royal Commission:

(1) Existing regulations in the East End had never yet been fully exercised.

(2) Were they implemented, they could control overcrowding, notwithstanding the influx of aliens.

(3) The thorough administration of the existing laws, with the addition of a number of inspectors, would attain

the objects of the Commission without the unnecessary burden of new, elaborate and expensive machinery.

In a brief statement, Lord Rothschild concurred with the reservations expressed by Digby and made two further observations. He both noted that the policy of proscribed areas would discourage local bodies from attempting to solve the housing problem through the erection of superior buildings, and pointed to the stress placed upon the inaccuracy of statistical returns.[72]

Asquith spoke for pro-aliens when he described the Memorandum as *"the only Report which seems to me to be founded upon the evidence."*[73] As viewed by the *Jewish Chronicle*, the recommendations of the Commission were either *"an extraordinary non sequitur, or...a remarkably elaborate remedy for an absurdly small evil."*[74] In the words of *The Daily News: "There is only one remark to be made on Sir Kenelm Digby's minority report. It disposes finally and conclusively of the recommendations of the majority of the Aliens Commission."*[75]

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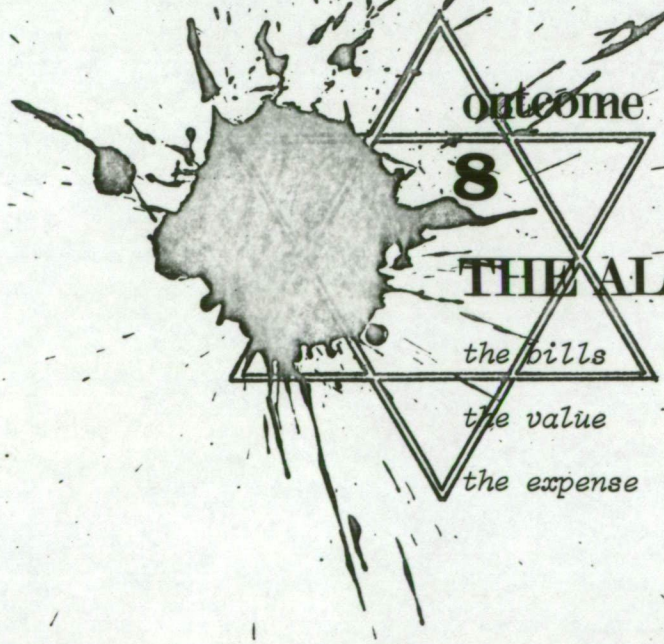
72 *See "Liberal Tradition" in Chapter 6*

73 *H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1097*

74 *PO, LXXXIV, 21 Aug 1903, p. 228*

75 *ibid.*



outcome

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# THE ALIENS DEBATE

*the bills*

*the value*

*the expense*

THE BILLS

After the Report of the Royal Commission in August 1903 and after further pressure in Parliament, the Government entered into the second stage of its pact with anti-alien reformers. In the King's Speech of February 1904 the Conservatives promised to introduce a measure against the *"Immigration of Criminal and Destitute Aliens"*.[1] But as this Bill was lost 'upstairs' in a Grand Committee, renewed agitation forced the Government to initiate fresh legislation in 1905.

Home Secretary Akers-Douglas introduced the first Bill in March 1904.[2] Based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission, it sought to repeal the William IV Aliens Act; and to empower the Home Secretary to appoint officers, regulate the entry of aliens, expel foreign criminals — with due regard to treaty obligations — and to enforce the 'prohibited' areas clauses through Local Government Boards. The progress of the measure was doomed however when a majority voted to send it to a Grand Committee, where the lengthy procedures compelled the Government to abandon hope of its passage that Session.[3] Within Liberal circles this admission of failure intensified speculation about the real intentions of the Conservative party, whilst among Tories there prevailed the belief that Opposition Members of the Committee had employed deliberate obstructionist tactics.

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1 *H 4th, CXXIX, 2 Feb 1904, p. 4*

2 *ibid., CXXXI, 29 Mar 1904, pp. 987-91*

3 *See "Politics" in Chapter 9*

Opening the 1905 Session the King again announced *"A Bill to mitigate the evils arising out of alien immigration into the United Kingdom."*[4] Unlike its predecessor, this measure, after being introduced into the Commons on April 18th, received the Royal Assent on August 11th. But those four months were not unperturbed. Between June 27th and July 18th alone, during the Committee and Consideration stages, Members proposed a hundred and forty-nine Amendments. As the Government or its supporters moved ninety-five Amendments and the Opposition only fifty-four, the original draft appeared to arouse twice as much dissatisfaction among Conservatives as among Liberals.[5]

The Government in fact became alarmed by the time-consuming debates excited by sections of the Bill. Gradually convinced of the political possibilities of restriction as a popular drawcard at the forthcoming Elections, they regarded the long drawn-out analysis of the Bill with apprehension. Should they again fail their party extremists, they began to fear public disfavour. After three sittings of the Committee Balfour consequently used the 'guillotine'.[6] On the basis that this *"uncontroversial"*[7] measure had already occupied a disproportionate amount of the Session, he proposed a procedural motion that restricted further debate to an extremely tight schedule, allocating a number of days for each stage of legislation and stipulating the number of clauses to be considered on each occasion.

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*4 H 4th, CXLI, 14 Feb 1905, p. 4*

*5 ibid., CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1287*

*6 ibid., CXLVIII, 6 Jul 1905, pp. 1255-60*

*7 See "Politics" in Chapter 9*

This motion to restrict debate on the Aliens Bill ironically involved a protracted discussion occupying a hundred and eleven columns in Hansard. While six Amendments[8] were unsuccessfully moved to this long and complicated proposal, the arguments as to the merits and demerits of full, free deliberation dragged from the Afternoon into the Evening sitting. At twenty-two minutes to two in the morning, Balfour's Resolution was eventually carried by 149:113 — an unpopular measure on both sides of the House.[9] Opposition to the Aliens Bill itself was henceforth rendered ineffective.

The 1905 Aliens Bill was composed of two parts: the first concerned prospective immigrant 'undesirables'; and the second, resident alien 'undesirables'. Part one covered only those arriving at specified ports with officers of the Home Department in attendance. It proposed that aliens be examined by at least two officials, including a medical inspector, and provided a Board of Appeal for those rejected. The Bill designated as 'undesirable' those without means of support, lunatics, idiots, the diseased and infirm or those otherwise likely to become a public charge, those sentenced abroad for extraditable crimes and those previously expelled from Britain. But it expressly exempt those avoiding prosecution for political offences.

Referring to resident 'undesirables', Part two empowered the Home Secretary to enact the expulsion order of courts, including a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Grounds for expulsion were criminal

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*8 5 lost and 1 withdrawn*

*9 H 4th, CXLVIII, 5 Jul 1905, pp. 1149-1260*

convictions, destitution, insanitary living conditions and the commission of extradition crimes abroad. The expense was to be borne by the Home Department but recoverable from the shipping company carrying such 'undesirables'.

Whilst the second section provoked relatively little dispute, parts of the first gave rise to prolonged debate. As a recognition of the protest against segments of the 1904 Bill, the 1905 draft was considerably modified. The Government abandoned the idea of 'prohibited' areas, qualified the powers of the Home Secretary and provided for a Board of Appeal.[10]

On the 19th July the House of Commons carried its Third Reading by 193:103.[11] The Bill passed to the Lords the following day to be read a Second time a week later.[12] After its Third Reading, it received the Royal Assent and was incorporated into the Statutes of the Realm on 11 August 1905.

## THE VALUE

In opposition to Conservative reform, Liberals challenged the effect of legislation. Even though the Aliens Bill[13] envisaged a revolutionary change in tradition, it would not, they maintained, ultimately exclude 'undesirables'. Whilst proving ineffective

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10 *ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 740-4*

11 *ibid., CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, pp. 1293-6*

12 *ibid., CL, 28 Jul 1905, pp. 749-75*

13 *As the two Bills of 1904 and 1905 were substantially the same, they are treated as one, except where indicated.*

against the unanimously recognised class of 'undesirables' — criminals — it would operate against the refugees of religious persecution. At a time such as this humanity alone dictated support of the open door.[14] Basing their stand upon the inherent weaknesses of the Bill, they enumerated the loopholes for evasion.

In the first place, an 'immigrant ship' referred only to one with *"more than twenty steerage passengers...to be landed in the United Kingdom."*[15] Consequently any group of up to nineteen aliens arriving together could demand unqualified admission. The Home Secretary himself confessed that *"to be perfectly frank"* the clause did allow the infiltration of a few 'undesirables', but claimed that this did not detract from the principal object of the Bill — to restrict a certain class of aliens arriving in bulk.[16] Yet the fact remained that in a hypothetical case of say fifty immigrants being rejected from a group of five hundred, an enterprising agent could divide them into small parties and land them without question.[17] To overcome the possibility of this evasion, a Tory lord in 1905 suggested that the number constituting an 'immigrant ship' be lowered from twenty to twelve.[18] Though the motion failed the later administrators of the Act adopted his proposal. But this caused unnecessary difficulties as when more than twelve onion-sellers from France encountered com-

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*14 H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1081-2*

*15 Aliens Act (5 Edw VII c.13) 1905*

*16 H 4th, CXLVIII, 27 Jun 1905, pp. 294-5*

*17 ibid., 28 Jul 1905, p. 424*

*18 Newton, H 4th, CLIV, 22 Mar 1906, pp. 543-53*

plicated procedures before being admitted to conduct a trade to which few objected. This type of incident compelled the new Liberal Home Secretary[19] in 1906 to revert to twenty and so arouse new anti-alien protests.[20]

The limited number of ports with inspection provided the second major loophole, as aliens could enter at officially non-immigrant ports and avoid examination. A Liberal ship-owner predicted that the Bill would not only fail to exclude 'undesirables' but would build up trade at non-scheduled ports at the expense of the scheduled ones.[21] But an Amendment to have officers at every port was rejected as an additional financial burden.[22]

The principal fault was the Bill's inability to restrain the majority of criminal 'undesirables' at the port of entry. Before this class even entered the scope of the measure, they had to enter as steerage passengers with at least nineteen others at a specified immigrant port. Then arose all the complications of character detection outlined by Digby.[23] Despite the elaborate provisions of the

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19 *H.J. Gladstone*

20 *In 1909 Hay called for a reduction to five, H 5th, I, 18 Feb 1909, p. 229; and cited examples of evasion, ibid., 25 Feb 1909, p. 970. But Gladstone maintained that he had received complaints from foreign (especially the French) governments which compelled him to stipulate twenty as the number of an 'immigrant ship'; ibid., p. 981. According to Hay: "It is notorious...that shipping agents issued advertisements, according to which they undertook to bring aliens into this country free from inspection.... two-thirds of the alien immigrants...came in non-immigrant ships"; ibid., p. 965*

21 *Bright, H 4th, CXLVIII, 28 Jun 1905, pp. 398-9*

22 *Moved by Hay, H 4th, CXLVIII, 28 Jun 1905, pp. 421-3*

23 *See "Minority Report" in Chapter 7*

measure, it had no accurate gauge of criminality, nor a safeguard against such 'undesirables' pleading political asylum.[24]

Controversy also grew from the executive power granted to the 1904 Aliens Bill, which virtually left interpretation of *"the vague and dangerous...regulations"* to the Home Secretary.[25] It proposed that decisions of 'undesirability' be made by officers appointed by and responsible solely to him.[26] Pro-aliens considered this authority excessive for any single Minister, especially as the Royal Commission had suggested that resolutions be subject to a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. The Government admitted their departure from the recommendation of the Commission, explaining that they had originally incorporated it into their drafted legislation but had eventually abandoned it in the interests of the aliens themselves. Were cases referred to another body such as the local police magistrate the difficulties and delay would cause *"much greater trouble and inconvenience to these people."*[27] Moreover they argued, the powers were not too great for a single Minister as his conduct came under Parliamentary scrutiny.[28]

The issue raised two questions: 'undesirability' and the immigrant's right of appeal. The first query arose throughout the period and automatically prevailed in any discussion of restriction.

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24 *H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1260*

25 *ibid., CXXXII, 29 Mar 1904, p. 992*

26 *ibid., pp. 989-90*

27 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1103*

28 *ibid., p. 1147*

Though the Government guaranteed that its officers would experience no difficulty in distinguishing 'undesirables' as classified by the Bill, the Opposition required more assurance. To prevent haphazard indiscrimination at the port of entry, they insisted upon the Royal Commission's recommendation that decisions be certified by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. They observed the complexities confronting individual officers in having to determine whether or not single aliens in each group, many unable to speak English, fell into any of the 'undesirable' categories.[29]

Conservatives nevertheless minimised the complications. Evans-Gordon for instance claimed to have witnessed a medical examination on board an immigrant vessel, in which three officers thoroughly inspected eighty-five aliens within an hour as the ship sailed from Gravesend to dock.[30] But a doctor in the Commons[31] declared this one of *"the most extraordinary medical histories it had been his lot to hear."* When the 1904 Bill included as 'undesirable' the wide-ranging category of immigrants of a *"notoriously bad character"*, Walter Long casually countered objections to its practicality with: *"I fancy it would not be difficult"* for officers, with police aid,

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29 *Before admitting an immigrant, the officer had to satisfy himself that the foreigner (a) had the means of decently supporting himself and his family, (b) was neither lunatic or idiot nor likely to become a charge upon the rates or otherwise detrimental to the public through disease or infirmity, (c) had not been sentenced for an extraditable crime of a non-political character and (d) had not previously been expelled under the proposed Act.*

30 *H 4th, CXLVIII, 27 Jun 1905, p. 318*

31 *Dr Hutchinson, retired as physician in 1902 to enter Parliament in 1903*

*"to satisfy themselves on that point."*[32]

But the Government subsequently acknowledged the difficulty and sometimes impossibility of determining 'undesirability' by omitting certain classifications from the 1905 Bill. Prostitutes, those living from immoral earnings and those of *"notoriously bad character"* were unnamed in the new draft, not because they were 'desirable' — both pro- and anti-aliens desired to exclude them — but because of the problems of recognition and confirmation.[33] The Conservatives thus acquiesced in the Liberal contention that obvious 'undesirables', especially criminals and prostitutes, would remain comparatively unaffected by restrictive legislation at the port of entry and could be controlled only by expulsion.

The immigrant's right of appeal was the second question raised by the Home Secretary's power to pronounce 'undesirability'. Objections to this proved so strong during the 1904 Session that the Government in 1905 conceded somewhat by providing a Board of Appeal, to include a magistrate, a Poor Law administrator and a representative of the Jewish Board of Guardians.[34] But two Amendments to the clause were lost: one to substitute the Board of Appeal by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction,[35] and another to include a Justice of the Peace.[36] The Government also refused to place the onus of proof

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*32 H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1105*

*33 ibid., 29 Mar 1904, p. 980*

*34 ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 745*

*35 Moved by Coleridge 68:16, H 4th, CLI, 3 Aug 1905, pp. 7-12*

*36 Moved by Davey 75:16, H 4th, CLI, 3 Aug 1905, pp. 23-8*

upon inspectors rather than immigrants. Liberals maintained that English legal procedure favoured the practice of officers having to prove aliens guilty before excluding them rather than, as proposed by the Bill, the aliens having to prove their innocence before being admitted.[37]

But the provision of the Board of Appeal in itself indicated the strength of pro-alien opposition to reform. The final draft moreover allowed for notification of both the master of the ship and of the rejected alien himself of the grounds for his exclusion and of his right of appeal. Also in answer to Liberal protests against the unqualified authority of the Home Secretary over resident alien 'undesirables',[38] as envisaged by the 1904 Bill, the new measure made an expulsion order effective only on the certification of a Court of Law, including a Court of Summary Jurisdiction.[39]

Following the recommendations of the Royal Commission, the Aliens Bill made shipowners responsible for the trans-shipment of aliens either rejected on arrival or expelled within six months of settlement.[40] Amendments to relieve the companies of this burden failed in both Houses.[41] Liberals particularly feared the loss of

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37 *Moved by Bowles (C. — 1892-1906, L. — 1906-10) lost 210:161, H 4th, CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, pp. 794-802*

38 *i.e. previously admitted aliens, as distinct from as yet unadmitted aliens at the port of entry*

39 *Aliens Act 1905*

40 *The Report in fact suggested that shipping companies be held responsible for two years.*

41 *Moved by Emmott 221:172, H 4th, CXLIX, 11 Jul 1905, pp. 301-6; and by Spencer 60:15, ibid., CLI, 3 Aug 1905, pp. 4-8*

'through' traffic as vessels, deterred by the expense, trouble and time involved in examination, would take passengers directly to their destination. Though 'through' passengers were outside the scope of the Bill, they had to satisfy the authorities of their intention to proceed elsewhere, while shipowners were held responsible for their conduct on shore. Just as the Merchandise Marks Act[42] proved detrimental to the transport trade in goods, pro-aliens believed that the Aliens Bill would harm the trans-shipment trade in people.[43]

Irish M.P.s not only opposed restriction in general[44] but feared that it might work against Irish Americans in particular, that on their return to Ireland they would be regarded as aliens and hence be subject to the regulations of the Aliens Bill. But a proposal to exclude Ireland from the terms of the legislation ignited a bombshell among Irish Members.[45] Should the Bill apply to *"Great Britain"* only and not the *"United Kingdom"*, they feared that Ireland would become the receptacle of all 'undesirables'. The Government eventually agreed to meet their problem by exempting from the poverty test any immigrant born in the United Kingdom, *"his father being a British subject."*[46]

The definition of the term 'immigrant' provoked constant dis-

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42 *Advocated by Vincent*

43 *H 4th, CXLVIII, 28 Jul 1905, pp. 308-9*

44 *They claimed the only 'undesirables' were the ones who governed them; H 4th, CXLI, 28 Feb 1905, pp. 1491-2*

45 *Moved by Flynn, H 4th, CXLVIII, 28 Jun 1905, pp. 403-12*

46 *Aliens Act 1905*

agreement mainly because legislators blatantly discriminated between rich and poor. In the final form, the Aliens Bill defined an 'immigrant' as *"an alien steerage passenger"* to be landed in the United Kingdom;[47] even though the Royal Commission showed that this *"absurd distinction"* was abolished in the United States where from 1902 the law embraced both steerage and cabin passengers.[48] But Liberal attempts to reduce the class consciousness of the measure failed: a motion to substitute *"immigrant"* by *"passenger"*[49] and another to omit the word *"steerage"*[50] were both lost.

On an extreme level therefore a hard-working intelligent immigrant, likely to become a good, honest citizen was rejected for lack of means at the time of arrival while his complete opposite, an ignorant worthless man of no use to the country, was admitted simply because he had a little money at the port of entry.[51] On a more general level, first and second class passengers could enter without inspection although nothing suggested that they were less diseased or criminal than the steerage. In fact these groups might well include the most 'undesirable', the prostitutes and expert criminals.[52] Liberals thus opposed what they considered *"a Bill for the convenience of the rich, and...the inconvenience of the poor"*, legislation which

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*47 ibid.*

*48 Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 42*

*49 Moved by Dilke 227:196, H 4th, CXLVIII, 27 Jun 1905, pp. 276-306*

*50 Moved by Fuller 144:117, H 4th, CXLIX, 11 Jul 1905, pp. 329-40*

*51 H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1276*

*52 ibid., 11 Jul 1905, p. 332*

penalised the industrious class forced through economic circumstance to travel by steerage.[53]

A Liberal M.P. observed how this distinction extended through to West and East End aliens.[54] While the former provided pleasures for the rich the latter served the poor with cheap clothes. He described a typical evening passed by a man of means. On entering a West End hotel for dinner he is received by a French cashier, a German lift attendant and a Swiss porter. A German waiter serves his dinner prepared by a French chef. He then hires a vehicle with a French chauffeur and visits an Italian opera, where the overture is played by a basically foreign group with only one Englishman — on the triangle. After the evening's entertainment by Continental artists, he has supper at an Italian restaurant. As he strolls home enjoying a Turkish cigarette he is accosted in one street by a French courtesan, in another by an Austrian demi-mondaine and in a third by a German prostitute. The M.P. concluded his illustration with the claim that none of the above aliens would be affected by the proposed Bill with the possible exception of the last — who would displace native labour.

Anti-aliens tried to defend the charge of class discrimination yet rejected attempts proposed in both Houses to remove the poverty test.[55] Similarly a motion to include a member of a working men's

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53 *ibid., CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, p. 865*

54 *Hutchinson, H 4th, CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, p. 869*

55 *Moved by Emmott 215:158, H 4th, CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, pp. 828-73; and by Coleridge 78:17, ibid., CL, 28 Jul 1905, pp. 772-4*

organization on the Board of Appeal was lost by 217:168; even though Liberals showed how such a representative would help administer the Bill, how he in particular could afford the time and how he was in a position to judge fellow working men.[56] *The Daily News* commented: *"The rich Jew can come in and the vicious woman can come in; but the poor man who has nothing but his industry and his misery is shut out."*[57]

The question of religious asylum constituted the major controversy throughout the aliens debate. In 1904 Dilke and Trevelyan proposed an Amendment to retain the tradition of sanctuary whilst recognising the need to legislate against *"low-priced alien labour"* which might extend the sweating system.[58] After a prolonged discussion calling forth seventeen speakers, seven for and ten against the measure, the motion failed by a large majority.[59]

Despite their rejection of the motion, the Government obviously realised the importance of the issue, for the 1905 Bill exempted from the poverty test those seeking admission *"solely to avoid prosecution for an offence of a political character."*[60] But this failed to

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56 *Moved by Cremer, H 4th, CXLIX, 18 Jul 1905, pp. 1145-56*

57 *PO, LXXXVII, 5 May 1905, p. 547*

58 *They moved that "This House, holding that the evils of low-priced alien labour can best be met by legislation to prevent sweating, desires to assure itself before assenting to the Aliens Bill that sufficient regard is had in the proposed measure to the retention of the principle of asylum for the victims of persecution"; H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1082*

59 *241:117; Pro-alien: Dilke, Trevelyan, Asquith, S.M. Samuel, Atherley-Jones, Bryce and Burns; Anti-alien: Evans-Gordon, Fisher, Long, Norman, Cohen, Ridley, Buxton, Peel, Vincent and Akers-Douglas*

60 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 704*

satisfy the Opposition, for they revealed the practical weakness of the clause and again demanded refuge from persecution.[61] When Dilke once more lost his Amendment,[62] he sought to widen the existing terms of exemption to include aliens seeking asylum simply *"for political reasons"*, but again without success.[63]

Immediately after this Opposition failure however, the Government proposed an Amendment in the pro-alien cause. The House agreed to grant refuge to those seeking to avoid *"punishment on religious grounds"*.[64] Conceding even further to contentious Liberal demands, the Home Secretary moved to exempt also those avoiding *"persecution, involving danger of imprisonment or danger to life or limb, on account of religious belief"*.[65] Though Evans-Gordon endeavoured to reduce its effect by inserting the word *"imminent"* before *"persecution"*, and though pro-aliens[66] tried to liberalise the Bill more by exempting aliens whose property was confiscated, whose *"liberty"* was endangered, and who were threatened because of *"political opinions"*, the Amendment passed in its original form.[67]

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61 *Hardie showed how such aliens had to convince the officer and the shipmaster that they desired to enter "solely" to avoid political prosecution, a task made more arduous by the fact that the shipmaster was responsible for any mistake. How would an immigrant suspected of Socialism for example fare? H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 782*

62 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 705-6*

63 *ibid., CXLIX, 18 Jul 1905, pp. 943-56*

64 *ibid., p. 955*

65 *ibid.*

66 *Norman, Dilke and Isaacs*

67 *H 4th, CXLIX, 17 Jul 1905, pp. 955-76*

The Government thus conceded somewhat to the Opposition demand for the preservation of a long acknowledged custom, an implied admission of the validity of the Liberal stand. That this clause was nevertheless insufficient was demonstrated in 1906, when the newly-elected Liberal Ministry explicitly incorporated the continuance of religious asylum in their policy.

THE EXPENSE

The Liberals demonstrated the weakness of the Aliens Bill. They showed how 'undesirables' of any type could enter the country simply by arriving at an uninspected port, by travelling any class other than steerage, or by being in the company of no more than eighteen other prospective immigrants. But if the measure were to attain even its potential value in effect — if it were to exclude those *"alien steerage passengers"* who, despite health, intelligence and industry, could produce no tangible evidence of independence on arrival — if the Bill were to succeed in this limited objective, it had to be rigorously enforced in every detail. Was the financial value of administration worth its potential value in effect?

The compilation of accurate immigration returns required officers to check statistics forwarded by shipmasters as well as to keep general records. As for financial resources, the Report stated: *"There are no means of testing the statements of these aliens as to the amounts possessed by them."*[68] Only officials with great skill and

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68 *In general they tended to understate the sum: Rep. Roy. Com., SPHC, 1903, p. 20*

patience could therefore be entrusted with the complex task of judging desirability on a monetary basis. Qualified medical staff, including experts on mental health, were required to examine passengers to detect the possibility of disease, contagious or otherwise, mental or physical, as well as to ascertain the general health of each patient. Others, possibly policemen or lawyers, had to decide on criminality, whilst upholding both extradition treaties with foreign countries and the exemption clause for political offenders. The claims of 'through' passengers as well as those of destitute British immigrants from abroad had also to be verified, while prosecution for false information and other offences under the proposed Act involved heavy legal expenditure.

The salaried officers of the Appeal Board were another burden on expense. The time demanded of each, if decisions were to be fairly contested, outruled the possibility of their being honorary members. The terms of the Bill needed full-time professional officers. Moreover, as shipmasters were held responsible for accepted aliens during their six months 'probation' period, clerical records were required on the character and circumstance of each individual. The administration of the Bill therefore necessitated a vast number of officials, specialised professional inspectors, lawyers and clerks. As alien pauper relief cost taxpayers no more than £29,000 annually, did restriction warrant this excessive expenditure?

The Government seemed to ignore the colossal staff requirements of the Aliens Bill. Rather than present a carefully prepared estimate for debate, they merely proposed that

the Commons sign *"a blank cheque"*,[69] on the grounds that expense would not be extensive. Either the Conservatives suffered from administrative ignorance or they tacitly confessed to the Liberal charge that they had no real intention of executing the Bill, if passed. As it needed a *"large army of expensive officials"*, Asquith contended that the Government's reckoning was either *"untrustworthy"*, or *"the Bill would be a dead letter"*, simply intended for *"gallery purposes"*.[70] To suppose, as did Akers-Douglas, that a few gentlemen from the Home Office could implement all the regulations was *"a manifest absurdity"*.

A wide sweeping proposal that neither specified sums nor imposed limitations, the Resolution on Expenses sought to authorise Parliament to cover the salaries, expenses and other costs of the proposed Aliens Act.[71] The Opposition both resented the omission of the Resolution from the Agenda,[72] and criticised the Government for failing to supply a financial schedule.[73] Almost all prominent pro-aliens debated the latter issue, as in some respects it called for the most vital vote on the entire aliens question. It embraced the matter of official staff and hence the practical policy of the measure.[74] They desired a detailed estimate of expenses, information on how, where

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69 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1131-71*

70 *ibid., p. 1140*

71 *ibid., pp. 1131-2*

72 *ibid., p. 1133*

73 *ibid., pp. 1138-9*

74 *ibid., pp. 1134-5*

and by whom they would be incurred, and altogether resisted what they regarded as nothing but a *"leap in the dark"*.[75] Even the noted Liberal anti-alien, Sydney Buxton, spoke against the Resolution.[76] He drew attention to the need for female personnel to work among women and children, and strongly censured the Government for having introduced a measure obviously in *"a crude state, not properly thought out"*.

In defence of the Government, Akers-Douglas claimed it was *"impossible to say what the expense would be"*.[77] Though a few additional staff might be required, he envisaged no large, expensive establishment. More specifically, he believed that the experienced personnel of the Home Office, aided by Customs and Police officers together with a small number of extra inspectors, could adequately perform all the duties of the Bill. But as existing legislation on aliens — overcrowding and sweating — had lapsed into disuse partly because of the staff shortage, pro-aliens remained unconvinced.

Other M.P.s nevertheless supported the claims of the Home Secretary. One Liberal maintained that the recently-appointed corn inspectors could transfer their service.[78] Another argued that an exact estimate was impossible at that stage as the Government did not

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75 *ibid., p. 1143*

76 *Also claimed that he would not have voted for the 2nd r. had he known about the Grand Cttee; See "Politics" in Chapter 9; H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1135-6*

77 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1139-40*

78 *C.E.H. Hobhouse; Added that in the United States a large number of officers had proved ineffective; CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1138*

know which clauses would be accepted and which rejected or amended.[79] Moreover he distinguished between resolutions voting a sum of money — unlike this motion — and those which simply authorise the Committee responsible to implement clauses involving expenditure. A third accused the Opposition of being *"too impatient"* in their desire for an entire scheme,[80] while Walter Long simply repeated the claim that *"the Bill could be effectively applied without much cost"*.[81]

In accordance with Conservative pretensions therefore, Lloyd George, future President of the Board of Trade and Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed a £5,000 limit to annual expenditure on the measure.[82] But after only three Members had spoken to the Amendment,[83] and just as a fourth began to speak, Akers-Douglas moved that the question be put.[84] Having successfully arrested debate of vital relevance to his own assertion of smallness of staff and hence of expense, he hastily proposed Lloyd George's Amendment which failed by 187:133.[85] Without more ado, the main question was put, and the House of Commons with a majority of fifty-two virtually signed *"a blank cheque"* for the administration of the Aliens Bill.[86]

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*79 Bowles, H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1136-7*

*80 Powell, H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1148*

*81 H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1152-3*

*82 ibid., pp. 1154-7*

*83 Whitley, Buxton and Fowler*

*84 Carried 179:123, H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1157-64*

*85 H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1165-6*

*86 192:140, H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1166-74*

As the 1904 Aliens Bill itself was abandoned, a new Resolution on Expenses was introduced to cover the 1905 measure. Under pressure to provide some sort of estimate,[87] Akers-Douglas mentioned the sum of £24,000 per annum.[88] This allowed £3,000 at the port of London, £2,000 for each of the other ports included in the scheme and £1,000 for central staff. But this was only a rough estimate mentioned under pressure. The Government at no stage committed themselves to a definite schedule of expenditure, while the 'guillotine' virtually eliminated debate over Expenses in 1905.[89]

The motion was no sooner made than the question proposed that *"it being after Eleven of the clock, the Chairman proceeded to put forthwith the Question."*[90] The following day when the Resolution was Reported, an Amendment to limit expenditure to £10,000 per annum failed.[91] Without imposing any limitation therefore, the House resolved to *"authorise the payments, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the salary and remuneration of any officers, inspectors, or persons appointed under any Act of the present session to amend the Law with regard to Aliens, and of any expenses incurred in carrying such Act into Effect."*[92]

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87 *Especially from Bright, H 4th, CXLIX, 11 Jul 1905, p. 278*

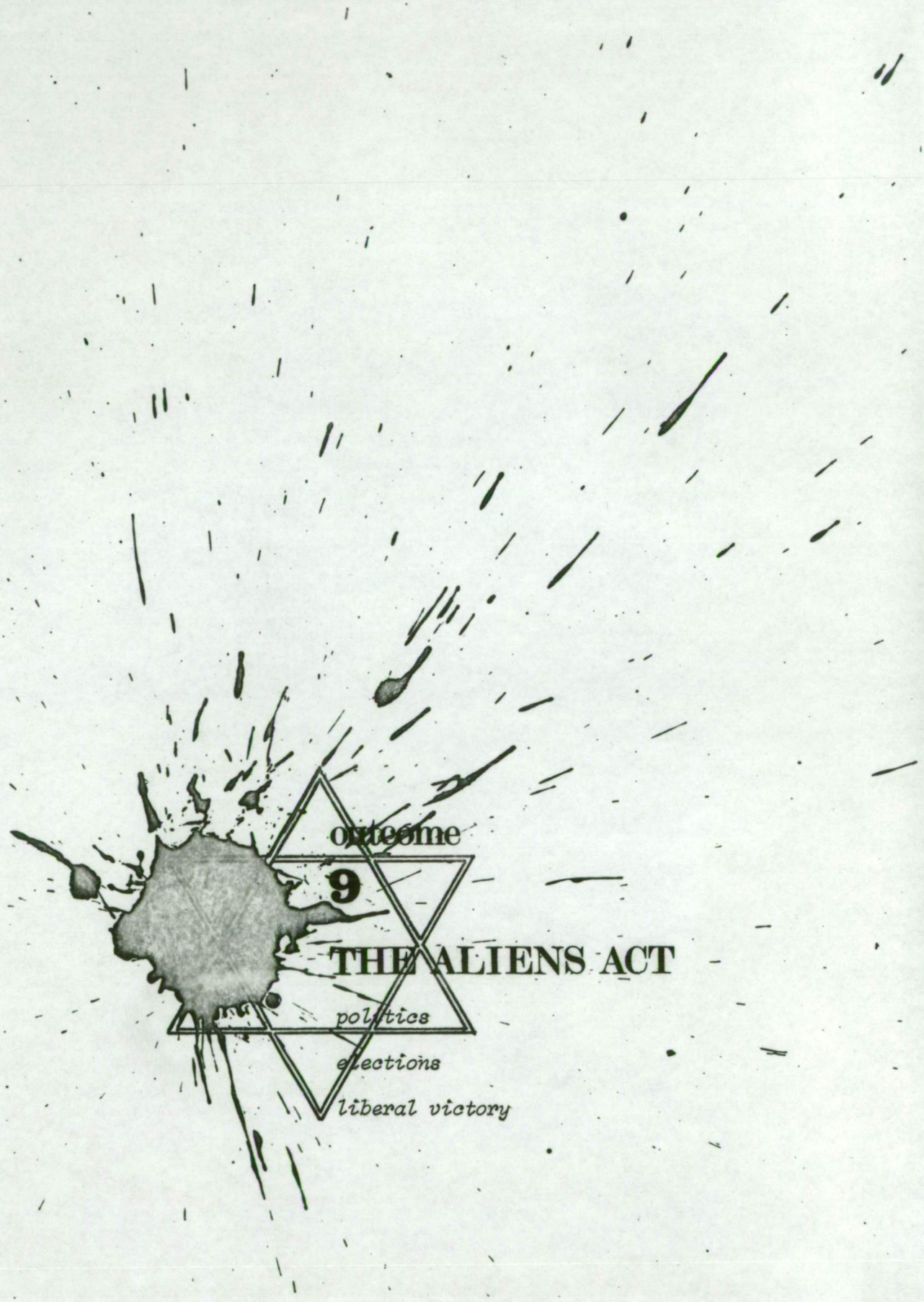
88 *H 4th, CXLIX, 11 Jul 1905, p. 278*

89 *Vincent's suggestion that Britain follow the United States and charge aliens who gained entrance an administrative fee equivalent to $2.00 (U.S.) was not debated; H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1275*

90 *Carried 214:152, H 4th, CXLIX, 10 Jul 1905, pp. 203-8*

91 *Moved by Whitley 244:157, H 4th, CXLIX, 11 Jul 1905, pp. 273-90*

92 *H 4th, CXLIX, 10 Jul 1905, p. 208*


outcome
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THE ALIENS ACT
politics
elections
liberal victory

# CHAPTER 13.

An Act to amend the Law with regard to Aliens.

[11th August 1905.]

BE it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

*Regulation of Alien Immigration.*

Power to prevent the landing of undesirable immigrants.

1.—(1) An immigrant shall not be landed in the United Kingdom from an immigrant ship except at a port at which there is an immigration officer appointed under this Act, and shall not be landed at any such port without the leave of that officer given after an inspection of the immigrants made by him on the ship, or elsewhere if the immigrants are conditionally disembarked for the purpose, in company with a medical inspector, such inspection to be made as soon as practicable, and the immigration officer shall withhold leave in the case of any immigrant who appears to him to be an undesirable immigrant within the meaning of this section.

(2) Where leave to land is so withheld in the case of any immigrant, the master, owner, or agent of the ship, or the immigrant, may appeal to the immigration board of the port, and that board shall, if they are satisfied that leave to land should not be withheld under this Act, give leave to land, and leave so given shall operate as the leave of the immigration officer.

(3) For the purposes of this section an immigrant shall be considered an undesirable immigrant—

(a) if he cannot show that he has in his possession or is in a position to obtain the means of decently supporting himself and his dependents (if any); or

(b) if he is a lunatic or an idiot, or owing to any disease or infirmity appears likely to become a charge upon the rates or otherwise a detriment to the public; or

(c) if he has been sentenced in a foreign country with which there is no extradition treaty for a crime, not being an offence of a political character, which is, as regards that country, an extradition crime within the meaning of the Extradition Act, 1870; or

(d) if an expulsion order under this Act has been made in his case:

61 & 62 Vict. c. 10.

but, in the case of an immigrant who proves that he is seeking admission to this country solely to avoid prosecution or punishment on religious or political grounds or for an offence of a political character, or persecution, involving danger of imprisonment or danger to life or limb, on account of religious belief, leave to land shall not be refused on the ground merely of want of means or the probability of his becoming a charge on the rates, nor shall leave to land be withheld in the case of an immigrant



who shows to the satisfaction of the immigration officer or board concerned with the case that, having taken his ticket in the United Kingdom and embarked direct therefrom for some other country immediately after a period of residence in the United Kingdom of not less than six months, he has been refused admission to that country and returned direct therefrom to a port in the United Kingdom, and leave to land shall not be refused merely on the ground of want of means to any immigrant who satisfies the immigration officer or board concerned with the case that he was born in the United Kingdom, his father being a British subject.

(4) The Secretary of State may, subject to such conditions as he thinks fit to impose, by order exempt any immigrant ships from the provisions of this section if he is satisfied that a proper system is being maintained for preventing the undue landing of undesirable immigrants on those ships, or if security is given to his satisfaction that undesirable immigrants will not be landed in the United Kingdom from those ships except for the purpose of transit.

Any such order of exemption may be withdrawn at any time at the direction of the Secretary of State.

(5) Any immigrant who lands, and any master of a ship who allows an immigrant to be landed, in contravention of this section shall be guilty of an offence under this Act, but an immigrant conditionally disembarked shall not be deemed to have landed so long as the conditions are complied with.

Immigration board and rules.

2.—(1) The immigration board for a port shall consist of three persons nominated in accordance with rules made by the Secretary of State under this Act out of a list approved by him for the port comprising 21 persons having commercial, business, or administrative experience.

(2) A Secretary of State may make rules generally with respect to immigration boards and their officers and with respect to appeals to those boards, and with respect to the conditional disembarkation of immigrants for the purpose of inspection, appeals, or otherwise, and may by those rules amongst other things provide for the summoning and procedure of the board, and for the place of meeting of the board, and for the security to be given by the master of the ship in the case of immigrants conditionally disembarked. Rules made under this section shall provide for notice being given to masters of immigrant ships and immigrants informing them of their right of appeal, and also, where leave to land is withheld in the case of any immigrant by the immigration officer, for notice being given to the immigrant and the master of the immigrant ship of the grounds on which leave has been withheld.

*Expulsion of Undesirable Aliens.*

Power of Secretary of State to make order.

3.—(1) The Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, make an order (in this Act referred to as an expulsion order) requiring an



as expulsion order.

alien to leave the United Kingdom within a time fixed by the order, and thereafter to remain out of the United Kingdom—

(a) if it is notified to him by any court (including a court of summary jurisdiction) that the alien has been convicted by that court of any felony, or misdemeanour, or other offence for which the court has power to impose imprisonment without the option of a fine, or of an offence under paragraph twenty-two or twenty-three of section three hundred and eighty-one of the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, or of an offence as a prostitute under section seventy-two of the Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854, or paragraph eleven of section fifty-four of the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, and that the court recommend that an expulsion order should be made in his case, either in addition to or in lieu of his sentence; and

55 & 56 Vict. c. 35.
57 & 58 Vict. c. 100.
3 & 4 Vict. c. 47.

(b) if it is certified to him by a court of summary jurisdiction after proceedings taken for the purpose within twelve months after the alien has last entered the United Kingdom, in accordance with rules of court made under section twenty-nine of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, that the alien—

(i) has, within three months from the time at which proceedings for the certificate are commenced, been in receipt of any such parochial relief as disqualifies a person for the parliamentary franchise, or been found wandering without ostensible means of subsistence, or been living under insanitary conditions due to overcrowding; or

(ii) has entered the United Kingdom after the passing of this Act, and has been sentenced in a foreign country with which there is an extradition treaty for a crime not being an offence of a political character which is, as regards that country, an extradition crime within the meaning of the Extradition Act, 1870.

42 & 43 Vict. c. 49.

(2) If any alien in whose case an expulsion order has been made is at any time found within the United Kingdom in contravention of the order, he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.

Expenses of return of alien, &c.

4.—(1) Where an expulsion order is made in the case of any alien, the Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, pay the whole or any part of the expenses of or incidental to the departure from the United Kingdom and maintenance until departure of the alien and his dependents (if any).

(2) If an expulsion order is made in the case of any alien (not being an alien who last entered the United Kingdom before the commencement of this Act, or an immigrant in whose case leave to land has been given under this Act) or a certificate given within six months after he has last entered the United Kingdom, the master of the ship in which he has been brought to the United Kingdom and also the master of any ship belonging to the same



owner shall be liable to pay to the Secretary of State as a debt due to the Crown any sums paid by the Secretary of State under this section in connection with the alien, and shall, if required by the Secretary of State, receive the alien and his dependents (if any) on board his ship, and afford them free of charge a passage to the port of embarkation and proper accommodation and maintenance during the passage.

(3) If the master of a ship fails to comply with the provisions of this section as to giving a passage to an alien or his dependents, he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.

*General.*

Returns as to aliens.

5.—(1) The master of any ship landing or embarking passengers at any port in the United Kingdom shall furnish to such person and in such manner as the Secretary of State directs a return giving such particulars with respect to any such passengers who are aliens as may be required for the time being by order of the Secretary of State, and any such passenger shall furnish the master of the ship with any information required by him for the purpose of the return.

(2) If the master of a ship fails to make the return required by this section, or makes a false return, he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act, and if any alien refuses to give information required by the master of the ship for the purpose of the return under this section, or gives any false information for the purpose, he shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months with hard labour.

(3) The Secretary of State may by order exempt from the provisions of this section any special class of passengers or voyages, or any special ships or ports, but any such order may be withdrawn at any time at his discretion.

Appointment of officers, and expenses.

6.—(1) The Secretary of State shall appoint, at such ports in the United Kingdom as he thinks necessary for the time being, immigration officers and medical inspectors, and may appoint or employ such other officers or persons as may be required for the purposes of immigration boards, or for the purpose of the returns to be given under this Act, or otherwise for carrying this Act into effect, and the salary and remuneration of any officers, inspectors, or persons so appointed or employed, and any expenses otherwise incurred in carrying this Act into effect (including such payment as may be sanctioned by the Treasury for the attendance of any person as a member of an immigration board to hear appeals) shall, up to an amount approved by the Treasury, be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament.

(2) The Secretary of State may arrange with the Commissioners of Customs or any other Government department or any port sanitary authority for the appointment or employment of officers of Customs or officers of that department or authority as officers under this Act.

(3) The Secretary of State shall make known, in such manner as he thinks best suited for the purpose, the ports at which immigration officers are for the time being appointed under this Act.



Supplemental provisions.

7.—(1) Any person guilty of an offence under this Act shall, if the offence is committed by him as the master of a ship, be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds, and, if the offence is committed by him as an immigrant or alien, be deemed a rogue and vagabond within the meaning of the Vagrancy Act, 1824, and be liable to be dealt with accordingly as if the offence were an offence under section four of that Act.

5 Geo. 4. c. 83.

(2) Sections six hundred and eighty-four, six hundred and eighty-five, and six hundred and eighty-six of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894 (which relate to the jurisdiction of courts and justices), shall apply with respect to jurisdiction under this Act as they apply with respect to jurisdiction under that Act, and section six hundred and ninety-three of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894 (which relates to the keeping of sums ordered to be paid by distress on a ship), shall apply with respect to any fines or other sums of money to be paid under this Act by the master of a ship as it applies with respect to fines and other sums of money to be paid under that Act.

57 & 58 Vict. c. 60.

(3) Any immigrant who is conditionally disembarked, and any alien in whose case an expulsion order is made, while awaiting the departure of his ship, and while being arrested to the ship, and while on board the ship until the ship finally leaves the United Kingdom, and any alien in whose case a certificate has been given by a court, with a view to the making of an expulsion order under this Act, until the Secretary of State has decided upon his case, shall be liable to be kept in custody in such manner as the Secretary of State directs and, while in that custody, shall be deemed to be in legal custody.

(4) If any immigrant, master of a ship, or other person, for the purposes of this Act, makes any false statement or false representation to an immigration officer, medical inspector, immigration board or to the Secretary of State, he shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months with hard labour.

(5) If any question arises on any proceedings under this Act, or with reference to anything done or proposed to be done under this Act, whether any person is an alien or not, the onus of proving that that person is not an alien shall lie on that person.

(6) In carrying out the provisions of this Act, due regard shall be had to any treaty, convention, arrangement, or engagement with any foreign country.

Definitions.

8.—(1) The expression "immigrant" in this Act means an alien steerage passenger who is to be landed in the United Kingdom, but does not include—

(a) Any passenger who shows to the satisfaction of the immigration officer or board concerned with the case that he desires to land in the United Kingdom only for the purpose of proceeding within a reasonable time to some destination out of the United Kingdom; or

(b) Any passengers holding prepaid through tickets to some such destination, if the master or owner of the ship by which they are brought to the United Kingdom, or by which they are to be taken away from the



United Kingdom, gives security to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State that, except for the purposes of transit or under other circumstances approved by the Secretary of State, they will not remain in the United Kingdom, or, having been rejected in another country, to enter the United Kingdom, and that they will be properly maintained and controlled during their transit.

(2) The expression "immigrant ship" in this Act means a ship which brings to the United Kingdom more than twenty alien steerage passengers, who are to be landed in the United Kingdom, whether at the same or different ports, or such smaller number of those passengers as may be for the time being fixed by order of the Secretary of State, either generally or as regards any special ships or ports.

(3) The expression "passenger" in this Act includes any person carried on the ship other than the master and persons employed in the working or service of the ship, and the expression "steerage passenger" in this Act includes all passengers except such persons as may be declared by the Secretary of State to be cabin passengers by order, made either generally or as regards any special ships or ports.

(4) If any question arises under this Act on an appeal to an immigration board whether any ship is an immigrant ship within the meaning of this Act, or whether any person is an immigrant, a passenger, or a steerage passenger, within the meaning of this Act, or whether any offence is an offence of a political character, or whether a crime is an extradition crime, that question shall be referred to the Secretary of State in accordance with rules made under this Act, and the board shall act in accordance with his decision.

(5) The Secretary of State may withdraw or vary any order made by him under this section.

Application of Act to Scotland and Ireland.

9.—(1) In the application of this Act to Scotland and Ireland the words "be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months with hard labour" shall be substituted for the words "be deemed a rogue and vagabond within the meaning of the Vagrancy Act, 1824, and be liable to be dealt with accordingly as if the offence were an offence under section four of that Act."

(2) Section thirty-three of the Summary Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1864, shall be substituted as regards Scotland for section twenty-nine of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879; and the Lord Chancellor of Ireland may, as regards Ireland, make rules for the purposes of this Act for which rules may be made under section twenty-nine of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879; and all rules so made shall be laid, as soon as may be, before both Houses of Parliament.

27 & 28 Vict. c. 56.

Short title and commencement, and repeal.

10.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Aliens Act, 1905, and shall come into operation on the first day of January nineteen hundred and six.

(2) The Registration of Aliens Act, 1836, is hereby repealed.

6 & 7 Will. 4. c. 15.

POLITICS

After more than fifteen years of frustrated effort, anti-aliens eventually succeeded in forcing an Aliens Bill through Parliament. But several factors suggested that the Aliens Act 1905, far from representing genuine conviction by the Government, was nothing more than a political manoeuvre — part of the Conservative platform in the forthcoming Elections. The Government's procrastination despite constant pressure, its extraordinary treatment of the 1904 Bill — in sending it to a Grand Committee — its rejection of a measure to exclude criminals only and its failure to provide an estimate of expenditure all intimated an underlying intention to maintain the status quo. On the other hand, its apparent reversal of policy in the Election year of 1905 was accompanied by claims of popular support for restriction.

What motivated the outward change in the dominant Conservative attitude? From 1890 the Government encountered agitation for control in every Session except 1895,[1] three Amendments to the Address[2] and five Aliens Bills,[3] yet anti-alien demands remained unanswered till 1905. In the first half of the nineties Conservative Ministers emphatically denied many of the charges alleged by their extremists. In fact Government spokesmen at this period revealed a distinctly pro-alien outlook which persisted in their words and action till the

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1 *Aliens question raised only once, 9 Apr 1895*

2 *Lowther 1893, Evans-Gordon 1902 and Vincent 1903*

3 *Salisbury 1894, Vincent 1897, Vincent 1898, Hardwicke 1898 and Government 1904*

early 1900s. Though pressure occasionally compelled them to compromise by conceding somewhat in principle to the cry for legislation e.g. Ritchie's pledge in 1897, they consistently refused to commit themselves in practice.

The Government's failure to honour promises was one of the major anti-alien complaints. Even when Hardwicke's Bill passed all stages in the Lords it was not debated in the Commons. Only with the appointment of the Royal Commission in 1902 did they seem to acknowledge the possible need for restriction. And to the dismay of reformers this apparently positive move incurred further delay. The Government now had an added excuse to evade questions: they could not discuss the matter while it was being investigated by the Commission.

After these long years of vacillation the Conservatives nevertheless transferred to a policy of reform. But if their decision arose from a genuine conversion by the Report of the Royal Commission, why did they overlook important aspects of the Commission's recommendations? For a Ministry which persistently claimed that immigration did not warrant legislation, the complete reversal of British tradition incorporated in the recommendations must surely have been revolutionary — more revolutionary to a Tory Government than to an innovating Liberal Opposition. Yet the Conservative reformation was so strong that they attempted to legislate beyond the terms of the Report. The 1904 Bill gave the Home Secretary far greater powers than those envisaged by the Commission and also failed to embody the stipulated Court of Summary Jurisdiction. They more than compensated for possible neglect in the past.

The second feature which belied the Conservatives' anti-alien pose was their decision to send the 1904 Bill to a Grand Committee i.e. a miniature Committee preserving relative party strengths of the Whole House. In the fiery debate on the motion, Winston Churchill argued that the proposal to send the Bill 'upstairs' demonstrated how the Government neither expected to carry the measure nor *"even desired that it should eventually take its place on the statute-book."*[4] The Bill was obviously *"not in earnest"* but simply designed *"to deal with certain constituencies in the East End of London, at the next election."*

In moving that the Bill be referred to a Grand Committee, Akers-Douglas stressed its alleged uncontroversial character. He claimed that its Amendments were non-contentious while the measure itself conceded to Liberal opinion by allowing political asylum.[5] He believed that it would be more thoroughly examined in a Grand Committee of eighty-two Members than by a Committee of the Whole House.

Prime Minister Balfour and other Conservatives supported the Home Secretary. But whereas Balfour insisted upon the uncontroversial nature of the 1904 Bill,[6] six years earlier he had cited the *"controversial"* quality of Hardwicke's Bill as an excuse for refusing to have it debated in the Commons, even though it had passed all stages in the Lords.[7] Chamberlain also favoured the motion. And once

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4 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1110*

5 *ibid., pp. 1093-6*

6 *ibid., p. 1094*

7 *ibid., LXI, 8 Jul 1898, p. 337*

again he embarrassed his colleagues — this time by claiming that a Grand Committee would hasten legislation and avoid obstruction.[8]

But Liberals reacted with astonishment. They were *"aghast"*[9] at this *"outrageous"* idea,[10] this *"new and most dangerous proposal"*.[11] Not only Liberal pro-aliens but Liberal anti-aliens objected. Henry Norman urged the *"fullest and freest public discussion"*.[12] Sydney Buxton reasoned that the principal Bill of the King's Speech and thus the most important of the Session deserved better treatment than a Committee of eighty-two Members.[13]

In the first place they considered it an *"abuse of language"* to describe the Aliens Bill as non-contentious.[14] It was *"bitterly and keenly opposed and resented on practical, sentimental, and historical grounds"*.[15] It was far preferable to debate a measure thoroughly and reject it than to hurry it through without thought.[16] If sent to an inferior discussion 'upstairs', the Bill would have only one-eighths chance of improvement.

Secondly, the Opposition claimed that if the House was in fact

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8 *He earlier let "the cat out of the bag" by raising the protectionist aspects of immigration restriction; H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1112-5*

9 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1103*

10 *ibid., p. 1088*

11 *ibid., p. 1118*

12 *ibid., p. 1106*

13 *ibid., CXXXIX, 2 Aug 1904, p. 566*

14 *ibid., CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1109-10*

15 *ibid., p. 1092*

16 *ibid., pp. 1097-9*

congested with business, then some other genuinely non-contentious Bill should be relegated to a Grand Committee.[17] The Scotch Education Bill for example would receive adequate debate under such conditions.[18]

Thirdly, they noted the customary use of Grand Committees.[19] From the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Standing Committees on Law, Courts of Justice and legal procedure as well as on trade, shipping and manufactures had become known as Grand Committees. And as the Aliens Bill fell into neither category the Government's proposal was improper.[20] Although Grand Committees had assumed new meaning from the 1880s when the pressure of Irish obstructionism during Gladstone's rule compelled the House to submit certain other Bills to Standing Committees — some of which were called Grand Committees — a tacit agreement existed that no controversial measure would be referred to them. Liberals therefore protested against the Aliens Bill being *"smuggled out of the House by a dishonest use of a procedure intended for totally different purposes"*.[21]

The stand taken by Prime Minister Arthur Balfour on this question was of the utmost significance. His views on the role of a Grand Committee showed an inconsistent understanding of the term

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17 *ibid., p. 1086*

18 *Since Dec 1957 the Scottish Standing Cttee. in its plenary form has been known as the Scottish Grand Cttee., while a Welsh Grand Cttee. was established in Apr 1960.*

19 *An Encyclopaedia of Parliament, by N. Wilding & P. Laundy, London (Cassell), 1961 (1st pub. 1958), pp. 273, 602*

20 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1084*

21 *ibid., p. 1106*

*"controversial"*. An M.P. quoted him with having said that he had no objection to Grand Committees so long as *"no controversial business"* was submitted to them.[22] Another recalled how in 1902 Balfour had declared: *"Grand Committees were intended for Bills of great detail and of no great controversial character"*.[23]

Balfour himself refused to comment specifically on the Grand Committee as employed for the *"controversial"* or otherwise Aliens Bill. On being bombarded with this *"shot taken from his own arsenal"* he simply disappeared.[24] His *"extraordinary absence"* at a crucial moment when Members sought his personal explanation was considered an *"insult to the House"*.[25] When he eventually returned he failed to reconcile his contradictory position and merely claimed of the Liberals: *"They oppose this Motion because they do not want progress, and I support it because I do want progress."*[26] And the proposal was subsequently carried by a majority of ninety.[27]

The *"progress"* of the Aliens Bill in the Grand Committee nevertheless favoured the Liberals. Belying the predictions of Chamberlain and the apprehensions of the Opposition that the measure would be hurried through, the Grand Committee provided an unequalled opportunity for obstructionism. Within a month there circulated rumours

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22 *Robertson, H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, pp. 1101-2*

23 *McKenna, H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1100*

24 *H 4th, CXXXV, 8 Jun 1904, p. 1107*

25 *ibid., p. 1120*

26 *ibid., p. 1127*

27 *ibid., pp. 1130-2*

that the Bill had been abandoned. Assailed by disconcerting questions in Parliament, Balfour was uneasy, uncertain and uncomfortable while interruptions from Members and Orders from the Speaker prevailed.[28] He was unable to clarify the situation.

Four days later the House was officially notified of the loss. It was now *"absolutely impossible to carry it"* that Session.[29] Anti-aliens immediately turned upon the *"small body"* of Liberal obstructionists[30] whose tactics had been *"gross, open, and palpable"*.[31] By constantly repeating each other's arguments at increasing length, they had retarded the *"progress"* of the Bill to between half a line to two lines per day.[32] In one sense therefore the Opposition succeeded for it thwarted the Government, but in another sense both triumphed over the anti-alien extremist minority. In sending the Bill to a Grand Committee, the Government *"was practically signing its death warrant"*;[33] for after all, it was nothing but *"a shop-window Bill...never intended to be passed"*.[34] Despite initial Liberal opposition to the proposal of the Grand Committee and the Conservative emphasis on *"progress"*, the fact remained that the Grand Committee facilitated obstructionism that resulted in the abandonment of the Bill. As Churchill observed: *"The Government decided*

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28 *ibid., CXXXVII, 7 Jul 1904, pp. 980-2*

29 *ibid., 11 Jul 1904, p. 1220*

30 *ibid., p. 1221*

31 *ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 665*

32 *ibid., CXXXVII, 11 Jul 1904, p. 1221*

33 *Churchill, H 4th, CXXXIX, 2 Aug 1904, p. 570*

34 *Buxton, H 4th, CXXXIX, 2 Aug 1904, p. 566*

*to make a show, and on the very first excuse made haste to drop it."*[35]

In announcing the failure to the House, Balfour agreed to try and re-introduce the Bill in the 1905 Session but added: *"Of course it would be quite impossible for me to go beyond the general terms of that pledge and to give any detailed pledge on the subject."*[36] Only under pressure from Evans-Gordon who asked if the House could interpret that to be *"the definite intention of the Government?"* did the Prime Minister venture more precisely: *"The Government do propose to introduce a Bill on this subject early next Session."* Had Balfour undoubtedly meant to re-introduce anti-alien legislation, why did he hesitate? Aware of the concerted agitation within his party, he must have realised that an announcement of failure of the 1904 Bill could only but be accompanied by a definite promise for the following year — if the Government really intended reform. But as Buxton claimed in 1905: *"Experience shows that at the time the Government did not very much care whether the Bill passed or not."*[37]

The Conservatives moreover refused to take advantage of the limited opportunity for restriction offered by the Liberals. As criminals were unanimously regarded 'undesirable', the Opposition advocated their exclusion at the port of entry. They questioned only other categories of 'undesirability'. But when the 1904 Bill became strangled in the Grand Committee a Bill designed to exclude criminals only was blocked by Government Members.[38] Introduced by

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35 *H 4th, CXXXIX, 2 Aug 1904, pp. 570-1*

36 *ibid., CXXXVII, 11 Jul 1904, pp. 1220-1*

37 *ibid., CXLV, 2 May 1905, pp. 759-60*

38 *ibid., p. 700*

Vincent, it failed to satisfy all anti-alien demands but at least covered one avowed aim and would theoretically prohibit the worst type of 'undesirable'. Despite unanimous support from Liberal Members of the Grand Committee, Conservatives rejected the proposal.

Finally, the failure to present a detailed estimate of administrative expenditure on the proposed Aliens Act placed further doubt upon the Government's official policy of restriction.[39] Their entire approach to the problem was unrealistic. They persistently declined to elaborate upon possible costs. Only under compulsion could the Liberals elicit from Akers-Douglas the tentative sum of £24,000. Obviously within such financial bounds, even the limited potential of the Bill in excluding a small number of 'undesirables' could not be realised.

ELECTIONS

The Aliens Act 1905 did not indicate an unqualified anti-alienism on the part of the Government. In forcing legislation through Parliament, Balfour and his colleagues were motivated more by political than by ideological or social issues. They considered the electoral possibilities of restriction. While the Conservatives themselves claimed popular, working class support for the measure, the Liberals accused them of pandering to the prejudice of the East End.

Although anti-aliens referred to working class cries for legis-

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*39 See "The Expense" in Chapter 8*

lation throughout the nineties, after the turn of the century this claim strengthened. In 1902 Lowther maintained that *"the great mass of the people"* demanded reform and were *"getting heartily sick of the delay"*.[40] They would not tolerate much more and despite official vacillation *"public opinion would force its way"*. Commissioner Henry Norman also alleged working class interest in restriction.[41] During the 1905 debate, Forde Ridley predicted that opponents of the Bill would *"stand condemned by the working-men of this country."*[42]

Events seemed to substantiate the theory. Lawson, the half-Jewish anti-alien claimed to have won his East End seat principally through his immigration stand.[43] Though Liberals noted that he had only managed to scramble into the House *"by frantic and desperate efforts"* with a fall of a thousand in the Conservative majority,[44] the indisputable fact was that he represented the Mile End constituency. Election propaganda bills also played on the aliens controversy. A Liberal M.P. reported how in Chichester a huge placard, eight feet by four, was on public display.[45] It had a line drawn down the middle: on one side the Opposition leader beckoned with a

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40 *H 4th, CXVIII, 26 Feb 1903, p. 964*

41 *ibid., CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1113*

42 *Ironically, in view of later events, he said of the Liberals: "They will find when they ask for the suffrages of their working-men supporters that they will get an answer very different from that which they have prophesied in this House"; H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 788*

43 *H 4th, CXLV, 2 May 1905, p. 733*

44 *ibid., p. 701*

45 *Hutchinson, H 4th, CXLVIII, 3 Jul 1905, pp. 863-4*

pleasant smile to a long perspective of aliens, while on the other side the Member for East Fife[46] was depicted with an army of British workers carrying tools on their shoulders. The legend read: *"We have no room for these British working men; we want the men on the other side of the picture."*

Pro-aliens pointed to the ulterior motives behind legislation. They condemned restriction as *"useless and short-sighted...inhuman"*,[47] nothing more than *"pandering to a strong prejudice in certain limited localities."*[48] The Labour Member, John Burns, more specifically denounced *"a front shop window Bill, prepared for the general election, and for the East End constituencies, and perhaps for the East End of Manchester."*[49] In his view, complaints emanated not so much from the working class as from *"factious politicians nervous about their seats."*

Insincerity underlay the Government's forceful passage of the 1905 Bill. Whilst being too small to satisfy the expectations it aroused, it far exceeded justice. If aliens displaced workers and degraded social life the Bill was obviously too lenient; excluding so few could not improve economic or social conditions. But if the accusations were false then the regulations were unnecessarily stringent. To depart from traditional practice on a national scale in

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46 *Asquith*

47 *Trevelyan, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1143*

48 *Campbell-Bannerman, H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, p. 1277*

49 *In 1906 A.J. Balfour lost his seat for East Manchester to a Liberal; See Footnote 83 in "Elections"; H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, pp. 1149-53*

order to meet an essentially local problem, to implement new and expensive machinery to prohibit a small percentage of aliens from entering the country was *"as absurd as engaging an elephant to kill a flea."*[50] This *"sort of scarecrow to frighten alien immigrants"* was neither sapient nor dignified for Britain.[51]

A further discrepancy arose in the Government's attitude to South Africa. On the request of industrial magnates, the Conservatives sanctioned a proposal to import indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal. This made Campbell-Bannerman question the real intentions behind the Aliens Bill.[52] Asian immigration was permitted despite outraged opposition at home, hostility from unemployed British workers on the Rand and the protests of Canada, Australia and New Zealand — all principal contestants in the African victory — who objected from experience to Chinese slavery.

Thus the Government simultaneously formulated an elaborate scheme to exclude refugees traditionally welcomed, whilst organising a new system of Asian serfdom in the Colonies against all informed opinion. Dilke accused Alfred Lyttleton, Colonial Secretary and a member of the Royal Commission, of taking *"advantage of his own wrong"* in supporting the Aliens Bill.[53] Dilke maintained that any possible support for the present measure was due to the excitement aroused over the labour policy of the Rand mines. This was the

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*50 Straus, H 4th, CLIII, 14 Mar 1904, p. 1828*

*51 Bryce, H 4th, CXXXIII, 25 Apr 1904, p. 1142*

*52 H 4th, CXXIX, 2 Feb 1904, p. 128*

*53 ibid., CXXXII, 2 Mar 1904, p. 992*

height of political cynicism.

The rejection of the Contract Labour clause proposed by Labour's Keir Hardie also demonstrated the lack of genuine interest in social legislation. The amendment sought to exclude as 'undesirable' those entering the country under contract to replace workmen during a trade dispute.[54] Without such a provision, employers could always gain the upper hand simply through importing foreign labour. Though not initially incorporated in the United States' legislation, popular demand forced it into later Acts. But as a Liberal observed, it was *"a curious thing"* that the British Government should oppose the one Amendment moved in the interests of labour by Labour Members.[55]

Though leading Government spokesmen made no specific claims to overcome working class difficulties through restriction, they declared it would help alleviate social and economic distress. In defining these evils as overcrowding, labour displacement, pauperism, disease and crime among the lower income group of the East End, they implied working class benefit through the Aliens Bill. And the Government certainly concurred when Conservative reformers advocated legislation in the special interests of the labouring poor. But the basic lack of concern for the workers was manifest by the rejection of the Contract Labour clause, the immigration policy in South Africa and the extremely limited potential of the proposed measure. In encouraging the belief that restriction would protect natives from

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54 *Lost 215:148, H 4th, CXLIX, 10 Jul 1905, pp. 131-42; Lost 230:163, ibid., 17 Jul 1905, pp. 921-42*

55 *Trevelyan, H 4th, CXLIX, 17 Jul 1905, p. 932*

foreign 'undesirables' the Aliens Bill was nothing but a *"Parliamentary manoeuvre for electioneering purposes."*[56]

LIBERAL VICTORY

The Elections of January and February 1906 indicated overwhelming support for Liberal policies. Altogether the Ministerial side gained 512 seats and the Opposition — the former Conservative and Unionist Government — only 158.[57] The Liberal side — composed of 387 Liberals, 84 Nationalists and 41 Independent Labour Members — was thus swept to power with a majority of 76%. Without the added strength of their Nationalist and Independent Labour associates, the Liberals alone held a good working majority of 58%. The total non-Liberal M.P.s constituted 42% and the official Opposition only 24%. After more than ten years, the Liberal party returned to office with a clear majority of 387 seats against 283 non-Liberal.

This outstanding success did not necessarily indicate complete rejection of the Conservative platform. In particular it did not demonstrate an unqualified objection to anti-alienism. But the fact that most anti-alien Conservatives lost their seats to pro-alien opponents denoted that no great demand for restriction existed in the most alien-infected area. To the contrary, results showed a distinct endorsement of Liberal pro-alienism.

In his *Social Geography of British Elections*, Henry Pelling

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56 *Fenwick, H 4th, CXLIX, 19 Jul 1905, pp. 1287-8*

57 *Whitaker's Almanac 1907, pp. 136-47*

places the East End of London in Category C i.e. constituencies with a predominantly poor and working class electorate. In this region, Pelling maintains that the immigration question was of considerable political significance, especially from the 1890s.[58] Between 1885-1910 there was a general tendency towards Liberalism, though the separate Elections of 1886, 1895 and 1900 revealed a slight preference for Conservatism and hence possibly for anti-alienism. But 1906 confirmed that, despite some anti-immigrant encouragement in 1900 and despite the increase in foreign residents over the following six years, reports of anti-alien agitation had been exaggerated and misleading. At the very least, the ordinary Englishman of the East End cannot have regarded alien immigration as detrimental as the former Government had supposed.

Apart from the aliens issue itself, two further factors influenced the Elections. Firstly, the Liberals spent much less on their campaign than the Conservatives. Secondly, the Jews' large residential population belied their small voting voice. As only naturalised citizens were enfranchised, East End Jews made a relatively minor impact upon the Elections. The electorate of the Hebrew area of Whitechapel for example was only 6.4% of its population in 1900 — the lowest figure in Britain.[59] Had the opposition more extensive funds and had the Jews more voting power, the 1906 Elections may have disclosed greater preference for Liberal attitudes.

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58 *Pelling, H., pp. 53-4*

59 *ibid., p. 44*

With but one exception, Liberals either retained or won seats over their East End Conservative competitors. The one exception was Evans-Gordon himself who defeated his opponent by over six hundred votes.[60] This undoubtedly evinced anti-alien support in Stepney but restriction was not his sole drawcard, for Evans-Gordon promised a wide programme of social reform in general.[61] In the similar case of the anti-alien Liberal, Sydney Buxton, who retained his seat in Poplar, Tower Hamlets, by over two thousand votes:[62] in a predominantly Liberal victory, was his success due mainly to his party affiliation or to his unorthodox immigration stand? Apart from Evans-Gordon and Buxton, the six East End anti-aliens were defeated by Liberal pro-aliens. Evans-Gordon was in fact the sole Conservative elected in the East End.[63]

All other East End Conservative candidates lost. The half-Jewish anti-semite, Lawson, was overthrown by Straus in Mile End,[64] while another Jew, H.S. Samuel, was ousted from Limehouse by the Liberal William Pearse by almost a thousand.[65] At the same time Dewer and Forde Ridley, for St. George's-in-the-East and South-West Bethnal Green respectively, unsuccessfully contested against

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*60 D. Stokes, 2490:1853*

*61 Pelling, H., p. 46*

*62 G.O. Berwick, 4546:2235*

*63 Though another C. — anti-alien Hay retained his seat for Hoxton, Shoreditch 7489:2753; this being counterbalanced by L. — pro-alien Cremer returned for Haggerstone, Shoreditch 2772:2371*

*64 2295:2169*

*65 2981:2007*

Liberals, Willian Benn[66] and Edward Pickersgill.[67] The other Liberal M.P.s were S.M. Samuel, the Hebrew Member for Whitechapel,[68] G. Stopford Brooke for Bow and Bromley, Tower Hamlets[69] and Sir Edwin A. Cornwall for North-East Bethnal Green.[70]

Outside of the East End, the advocates of tradition also retained their seats. Sir Charles Dilke was returned unopposed for the Forest of Dean while C.P. Trevelyan defeated his opponent by more than three thousand.[71] Other pro-aliens returned were John Burns,[72] Keir Hardie,[73] Asquith,[74] Atherley-Jones,[75] Bryce[76] and Seely.[77] The successful Jewish M.P.s were Lionel W. Rothschild, a Liberal Unionist,[78] Sir Rufus Isaacs, a Liberal first elected in 1904[79] and Herbert L. Samuel, who was Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office in the new Liberal Government.[80] Among anti-aliens outside

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66 *1685:1064*

67 *3542:2064*

68 *Defeated D.H. Kyd 1925:1569*

69 *Defeated A.P. Du Cros 4596:3974*

70 *Defeated M.M. Bhownaggree 4127:2130*

71 *T.H. Brooke-Hitching for Elland, Yorks W.R. 7609:3962*

72 *Battersea 7387:5787*

73 *Merthyr Tydfil, elected as Socialist 10187, together with L. — D.A. Thomas 13971*

74 *East Fife 4723:3279*

75 *N.W. Durham 9146:3992*

76 *S. Aberdeen 6778:2334*

77 *Abercromby 2933:2734*

78 *Aylesbury, Bucks 5675:4463*

79 *Reading 5407:4710*

80 *Unopposed Cleveland, Yorks*

the East End, Howard Vincent,[81] Akers-Douglas,[82] Arthur Balfour,[83] Joseph Chamberlain[84] — all Conservative — and the Liberal Henry Norman[85] were returned; while Pilkington[86] and Cohen[87] lost.

Although prominent advocates of both restriction and the open door retained seats, the balance clearly favoured the latter. In particular Jewish Conservative anti-aliens lost[88] whereas Jewish pro-aliens gained;[89] while almost all Conservative reformers in the East End were rejected for Liberal pro-aliens. As Trevelyan stated in 1906: *"There was no support for the Bill in the country; and there was no support for its principles among the working-class, and the Government would be perfectly justified in doing everything in their power to mitigate the severity of this first piece of Protectionist legislation."*[90]

In accordance with their 'out of office' principles, the Liberals first attempted to amend the Aliens Act by a Contract Labour clause, again proposed by Labour. Known as the Aliens Bill 1906, this sought to prevent a stream of cheap foreign labour from displac-

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*81 C. Sheffield 4217:3290*

*82 St. Augustine's, Kent 7655:4794*

*83 Elected at Bye-election, City of London 27 Feb 15474:4134; after having lost seat for E. Manchester 6403:4423*

*84 W. Birmingham 7173:2094*

*85 S. Wolverhampton 4823:4137*

*86 C. — Newton, S.W. Lancs 6434:5893*

*87 C. — E. Islington 4477:3710*

*88 Lawson, H.S. Samuel and Cohen*

*89 L.W. Rothschild, S.M. Samuel, H.L. Samuel and Isaacs*

*90 H 4th, CLIII, 5 Mar 1906, p. 136*

ing natives during a trade dispute. Although it passed all stages in the Commons, almost as a *"white Bill without any kind of blot upon it"*,[91] the Lords rejected it *"with scorn"*.[92] And until the Parliament Act of 1911 there was no way to overcome such obstruction.

The administration of the Act itself also concerned the new Government. The Home Secretary, Herbert Gladstone, promised to *"do justice"* to the measure[93] for despite his opposition in principle, he recognised the law of the land and undertook to *"give it a fair trial"*.[94] But confronted by complaints of severity,[95] he endeavoured to liberalise the Act. He admitted the press to meetings of the Immigration Board, circulated terms of the immigrant's right of appeal in foreign languages and insisted upon a form of religious refuge.[96] Officers were instructed to give *"the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists"* to aliens who claimed to be fleeing from religious or political persecution *"in disturbed districts"*.

While Liberals upheld this *"act of justice...popular all over the country"*,[97] Evans-Gordon protested against such *"drastic and fundamental changes"*, which amounted to the repeal of an Act not three months in operation.[98] But although Gladstone's provisions

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91 *ibid., CLVII, 17 May 1906, p. 593*

92 *ibid., p. 702*

93 *ibid., CLIII, 5 Mar 1906, pp. 153-60*

94 *ibid., 14 Mar 1906, p. 1322*

95 *ibid., 5 Mar 1906, p. 141*

96 *ibid., 12 Mar 1906, pp. 916-7*

97 *ibid., 14 Mar 1906, p. 1328*

98 *ibid., p. 1312*

enabled over five hundred aliens to enter Britain on the grounds of political or religious persecution in 1906, this fell dramatically in 1907 to only forty-three.[99] Thereafter twenty in 1908, thirty in 1909 and five in 1910 pleaded asylum. Yet anti-aliens continued to harass the Government for leniency in its administration of this and other sections of the Act. They forecast the day when such evasion would arouse agitation to the point of blatant anti-semitism.[100]

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In the initial years of office the Liberals relaxed the terms of the Aliens Act whilst the Conservatives harangued Parliament with their familiar anti-alien slogans. Although the Tottenham murders of 1909 and the Peter the Painter incident of 1911 intensified the campaign for restriction, neither affair actually resulted in tighter control. But the chauvinism accompanying the outbreak of war in 1914 instigated a hurriedly conceived and executed measure, the Aliens Restriction Act. Absorbing the 1905 Act, it gave the Home Secretary all-embracing powers against foreign immigrants. After the war in 1919, in an atmosphere of bitter anti-German sentiment — with anti-semitism to follow in the twenties and thirties — the Government passed the Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Act, to continue and extend the emergency regulation of 1914, which had become law almost without debate. In each successive year this has been perpetuated through

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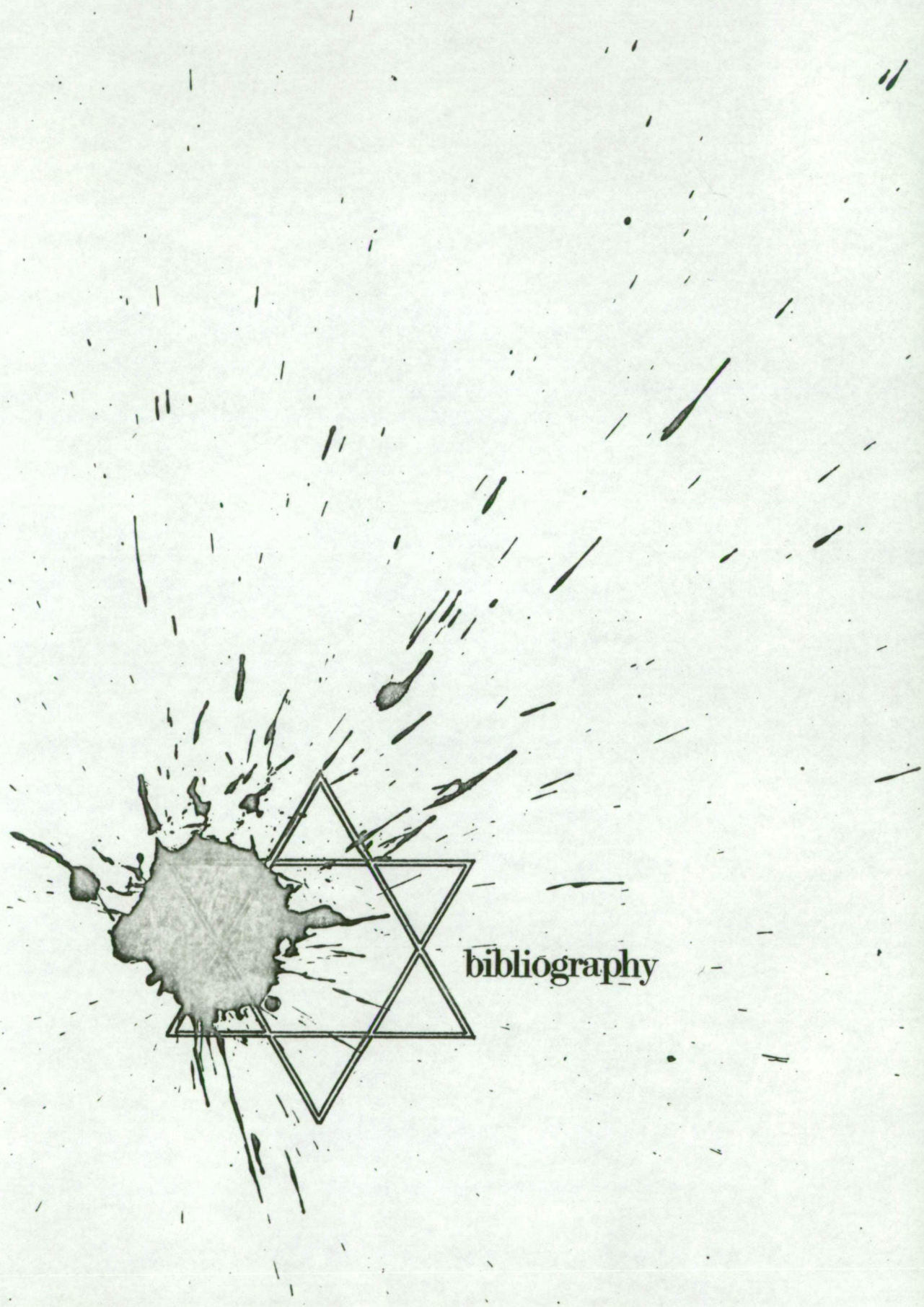
*99 H 5th, XXI, 17 Feb 1911, p. 1511*

*100 Hay, H 5th, I, 26 Feb 1909, p. 970*

the Expiring Laws Continuance Act. While the Jewish question itself seems to have dissolved — a tribute to alien assimilation — the immigration controversy persists in a new form, the 'colour' of Commonwealth countries.



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PRIMARY — Parliamentary

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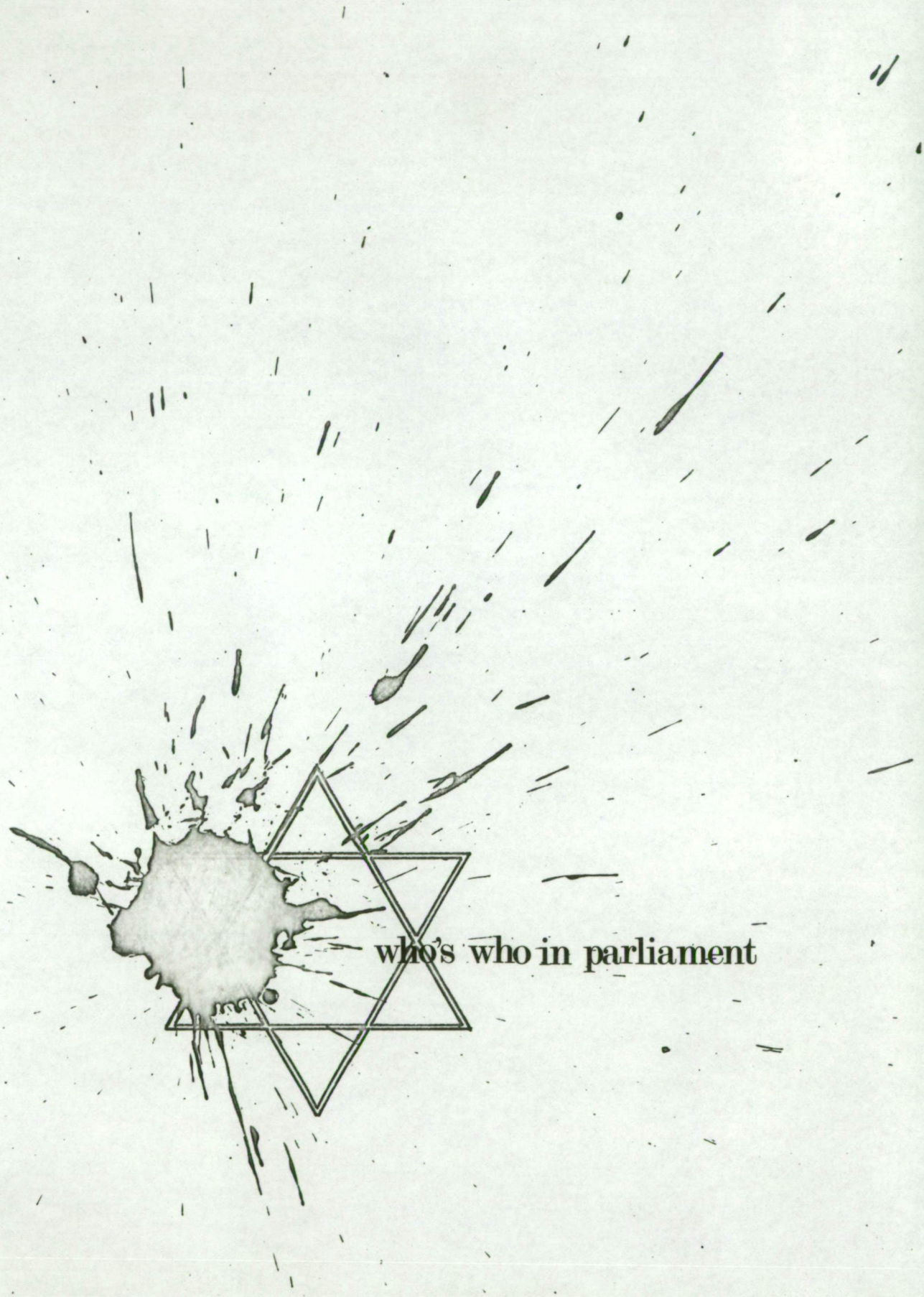

# who's who in parliament

# WHO'S WHO IN PARLIAMENT

ABERDARE, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

AKERS-DOUGLAS, A., anti-alien *(C. - St. Augustine's, Kent) Home Sec. 1902-5*

ASQUITH, H.H., pro-alien *(L. - East Fife 1886-1918, Paisley 1920-4) Home Sec. 1892-5, Chan. Exchequer 1905-8, P.M. & 1st Lord Treas. 1908-16* 1852-1928

ATHERLEY-JONES, L., pro-alien *(L. - N.W. Durham)*

BALFOUR, A.J., anti-alien *(C. - Hertford 1875-85, E. Manchester 1885-1906, City of London 1906-22) nephew Lord Salisbury, Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1885-6, Chief Sec. Ireland 1887-91, Leader HC 1891-2, Leader Opposition 1892-5, Leader HC 1895-1906, P.M. 1902-5* 1848-1930

BALFOUR, G., anti-alien *(C. - C. Leeds) brother A.J. Balfour, Chief Sec. Ireland 1895-1900, Pres. Bd. Trade 1900-5, Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1905-6* 1853-1945

BARNARD, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

BARTLEY, G., anti-alien *(C. - N. Islington)*

BOWLES, T.G., pro-alien *(C. 1892-1906, L. 1906-10 — King's Lynn)*

BRIGHT, A.H., pro-alien *(L. - Shropshire)*

BRYCE, J., pro-alien *(L. - Tower Hamlets* East End *1880-5, Aberdeen 1885-1907) Under-Sec. For. Affairs 1886, Pres. Bd. Trade 1894, Chief Sec. Ireland 1905-7, H.M. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Washington 1907-13* 1838-1922

BURGHCLERE, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

BURNS, J.E., pro-alien *(Lab. & L. - Battersea) Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1905-14, Pres. Bd. Trade 1914* 1858-1943

BUXTON, S.D., anti-alien *(R. - Poplar, Tower Hamlets* East End*) Mb. Roy. Com. Education 1886-9, Under-Sec. Colonies 1892-5, Pres. Bd. Trade 1910-4, High Com. & Gov. Gen. South Africa 1914-20* 1853-1934

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, H., pro-alien *(L. - Stirling Burghs) Chief Sec. Ireland 1884-5, Sec. War. 1886 & 1892-5, Leader L. 1899-1908, P.M. 1905-8* 1836-1908

CARRINGTON, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

CHAMBERLAIN, J., anti-alien *(C. - W. Birmingham) Mayor Birmingham, Pres. Bd. Trade 1880-5, Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1886, Sec. Colonies 1895-1903* 1836-1914

CHESTERFIELD, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

CHURCHILL, W.L.S., pro-alien *(C. 1900-6, L. 1906-22, C. 1924-65 - Oldham) Under-Sec. Colonies 1905-8, Pres. Bd. Trade 1908-10, Chan. Exchequer 1924-9, P.M. 1940-45, 1951-5* 1874-1965

COHEN, B.L. anti-alien Jew *(C. - E. Islington)* 1870-1909

COLERIDGE, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

COLOMB, J.C.R., anti-alien *(C. - Bow & Bromley, Tower Hamlets* East End *1886-92, Great Yarmouth 1895-1906) Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1888/9* 1838-1909

CREMER, W.R. pro-alien *(L. - Haggerston, Shoreditch) f. Inter-Parl. Conferences 1888, Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1888/9* 1838-1909

CREWE, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

DAVEY, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

DEWAR, T.R.D., anti-alien *(C. - St. George's, Tower Hamlets* East End*) Sheriff London 1897-8* 1864-1930

DILKE, C.W., pro-alien *(L. - Forest of Dean, Glos.) Under-Sec. For. Affairs 1880-2, Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1882-5, Chair. Roy. Com. Housing Working Class 1884-5, Chair. Sel. Cttee. Income Tax 1906* 1843-1911

DUDLEY, anti-alien *(C. - HL) Sec. Bd. Trade 1895-1902*

DUNRAVEN, anti-alien *(C. - HL)*

EDWARDS-MOSS, T., anti-alien *(C. - S.W. Widness, Lancs.)*

EMMOTT, A., pro-alien *(L. - Oldham)*

EVANS-GORDON, W.E., anti-alien *(C. - Stepney* East End*) m. Amdt. 1902, Mb. Roy. Com. Immigration 1902-3* 1857-1913

FENWICK, G., pro-alien *(L. - Wansbeck, Northumberland)*

FISHER, W.H., anti-alien *(C. - Fulham)*

FLYNN, J.G., pro-alien *(N. - N. Cork Co.)*

FOWLER, H.H. pro-alien *(L. - Wolverhampton)*

FULLER, J.M.F., pro-alien *(L. - Westbury, Wilts.)*

GLADSTONE, H.J., pro-alien *(L. - W. Leeds) son W.E. Gladstone, Home Sec. 1905-10* 1854-1930

GLADSTONE, W.E., pro-alien *(L. - Midlothian) 4 P.M. 1892-4* 1809-1898

GOLDSMID, J., pro-alien Jew *(C. - S. St. Pancras)* 1838-1896

GOULDING, E.A., anti-alien *(C. - Devizes, Wilts.) Bill 1911*

GRAY, E., anti-alien *(C. - N.W. Ham)* 1857-1932

GREY, E., pro-alien *(L. - Berwick-on-Tweed, Northumberland) Under-Sec. For. Affairs 1892-5, Sec. For. Affairs 1905-16, Viscount Grey of Falloden 1916* 1862-1933

GREY, pro-alien *(L. - S. Northumberland 1880-5, Tyneside Northumberland 1885-6, HL) Admin. Rhodesia 1896-7, Dir. Brit. South Africa Co. 1898-1904, Gov. Gen. Canada 1904-11* 1851-1917

HARDIE, K., pro-alien *(Lab. - S.W. Ham 1892-5, Merthyr Tydfil 1900-15)* 1856-1915

HARDWICKE, anti-alien *(C. - HL) Bill 1898*

HAY, C., anti-alien *(C. - Hoxton, Shoreditch) m. Amdt. 1909*

HERRIES, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

HERSCHELL, pro-alien Jew *(L. - HL)*

HICKS-BEACH, M.E., anti-alien *(C. - W. Bristol) Pres. Bd. Trade 1888-92, Chan. Exchequer 1895-1902* 1837-1916

HOBHOUSE, C.E.H., pro-alien *(L. - E. Bristol)*

HOBHOUSE, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

HUTCHINSON, C.F., pro-alien *(L. - Rye, Sussex)* 1850-1907

ISAACS, R., pro-alien Jew *(L. - Reading, Berks., HL)*

ISAACSON, F.W., anti-alien Jew *(C. - Stepney* East End*) seat taken by Evans-Gordon* 1836-1898

JAMES OF HEREFORD, anti-alien *(L. - Taunton 1869-85, Bury 1885-6, L.U. - Bury 1886-95, HL) Att. Gen. 1873-4, 1880-5, Chan. Duchy Lancaster 1895-1902, Chair. Roy. Com. Immigration 1902-3* 1828-1911

JOYCE, M., anti-alien *(N. - Limerick)*

KIMBERLEY, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

LABOUCHERE, H., anti-alien *(L. - Northampton)*

LAW, A.B., anti-alien *(C. - Blackfriars, Glasgow) Sec. Bd. Trade 1902-6, Leader C. 1911-21, P.M. 1922-3* 1858-1923

LAWSON, H., anti-alien Jew *(C. - Mile End, Tower Hamlets* East End*)*

LEIGH, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

LLOYD-GEORGE, D.D., pro-alien *(L. - Carnarvon Boroughs) Pres. Bd. Trade 1905-8, Chan. Exchequer 1908-15, P.M. 1916-22* 1863-1945

LONG, W.H., anti-alien *(C. - W. Derby, Liverpool 1892-1900, S. Bristol 1900-6) Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1889, Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1900-5* 1854-1924

LOUGH, T., pro-alien *(L. - W. Islington)*

LOWLES, J., anti-alien *(C. - Haggerston, Shoreditch 1895-1900)*

LOWTHER, J., anti-alien *(C. - Isle of Thanet, Kent) Under-Sec. Colonies 1874-8, Chief Sec. Ireland 1878-80, m. Amdt. 1893* 1840-1904

LYTTLETON, A., anti-alien *(L.U. - Warwick & Leamington 1895-1906, C. - St. George's, Hanover Sq. 1903-13) Legal Pr. Sec. Lord James 1882-6, Recorder of Hereford 1894, Mb. Roy. Com. Immigration 1902-3, Sec. Colonies 1903-5* 1857-1913

McKENNA, R., pro-alien *(L. - Monmouth)*

MAPLE, J.B. anti-alien *(C. - Camberwell, Dulwich)*

MARKHAM, A.B., anti-alien *(L. - Mansfield, Nottingham)*

MARRIOTT, W.T., anti-alien *(L. - Brighton 1880-4, C. - 1884-93) Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1888/9*

MATTHEWS, H., anti-alien *(C. - E. Birmingham) Home Sec. 1891*

MEATH, anti-alien *(C. - HL) Alderman London County Coun. 1889-92, 1898-1901, 1st Chair. London Parks Cttee., 1st Pres. Church Reform Ass., 1st Pres. Brit. Inst. Soc. Service, f. Empire Movement, Senator Parl. S. Ireland* 1841-1929

MENDIP, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

MONKSWELL, pro-alien *(L. - HL) Mb. HL Sel. Cttee. 1888*

MONTAGU, S.M., pro-alien Jew *(L. - Whitechapel, Tower Hamlets* East End *1885-1900) Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1888/9* 1832-1911

MUNDELLA, A.J., pro-alien *(L. - Brightside, Sheffield) Pres. Bd. Trade 1892-4* 1825-1897

NEWTON, anti-alien *(C. - HL)*

NORMAN, H., anti-alien *(L. - S. Wolverhampton 1900-10, Blackburn 1910-23) Mb. Roy. Com. Immigration 1902-3* 1858-1939

O'GRADY, J., pro-alien *(Lab. - E. Leeds) Bill 1906, 1911, 1912 later Gov. Tasmania*

PEASE, J.A., pro-alien *(L. - Tyneside 1892-1900, Essex Saffron Walden 1901-10, Rotherham 1910-7)*

PEEL, W.R., anti-alien *(C. - S. Manchester)*

PILKINGTON, R., anti-alien *(C. - Newton, S.W. Lancs.)*

PLUMMER, W.R., anti-alien *(C. - Newcastle-on-Tyne)*

POWELL, F., anti-alien *(C. - Wigan)*

RASCH, C., anti-alien *(C. - S.E. Chelmsford, Essex)*

REAY, pro-alien *(C. - HL)*

RIBBLESDALE, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

RIDLEY, M.W., anti-alien *(C. - N. Northumberland 1868-85, Blackpool 1886-1900)*

RIDLEY, F., anti-alien *(C. - S.W. Bethnal Green* East End*)*

RIPON, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

RITCHIE, C.T., anti-alien *(C. - St. George's, Tower Hamlets* East End *1874-92, Croydon 1895-1905) Pres. Local Gov. Bd. 1886-92, Pres. Bd. Trade 1895-1900, Home Sec. 1900-2, Chan. Exchequer 1902-3* 1838-1906

ROBERTSON, E., pro-alien *(L. - Dundee)*

ROBERTS, S., anti-alien *(C. - Ecclesall, Sheffield)*

ROSEBERY, pro-alien *(L. - HL) Home Under-Sec. 1881-3, Com. Works 1883-5, Lord Privy Seal 1885, Sec. For. Affairs 1886 & 1892-4, P.M. 1894-5* 1847-1929

ROTHSCHILD, F.J., pro-alien Jew *(C. - Aylesbury, Bucks 1885-98) cousin Lord Rothschild, Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 188/9* 1839-1898

ROTHSCHILD, L.W., pro-alien Jew *(L.U. - Aylesbury, Bucks 1899-1910) son Lord Rothschild* 1868-1937

ROTHSCHILD, N.M., pro-alien Jew *(L. - Aylesbury, Bucks 1865-85, HL) 1st Jewish peer, Mb. Roy. Com. Immigration 1902-3* 1840-1915

SALISBURY, anti-alien *(C. - HL) Sec. For. Affairs 1878-80, P.M. 1885-6, 1886-92, 1895-1902, Bill 1894* 1830-1903

SAMUEL, H.L., pro-alien Jew *(L. - Cleveland, Yorks N.R.) Memo on Brit. Trust for Jewish Home 1914, Leader L. HC 1931-5, Leader L. HL 1944-55* 1870-1955

SAMUEL, H.S., anti-alien Jew *(C. - Limehouse, Tower Hamlets* East End*)* 1853-1934

SAMUEL, S.M., pro-alien Jew *(L. - Whitechapel, Tower Hamlets* East End *1900-16)* 1856-1926

SANDYS, T.M., anti-alien *(C. - Bootle, S.W. Lancs.)*

SEELY, J.E.B., pro-alien *(C. - Isle of Wight 1900-6, L. - Abercromby, Liverpool 1906-10)*

SLOAN, T.H., pro-alien *(C. - S. Belfast)*

SMITH, S., anti-alien *(L. - Flintshire) Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1888/9*

SMITH, W.H., anti-alien *(C. - Strand, Westminster) 1st Lord Treas. & Leader HC 1886-91*

SPENCER, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

STAMFORD, pro-alien *(L.U. - HL)*

STOCK, J.H., anti-alien *(C. - Walton, Liverpool)*

STRAUS, B.S., pro-alien Jew *(L. - Mile End, Tower Hamlets* East End*)* 1867-1933

TANNER, C.K.D., anti-alien *(N. - Cork. Co., Mid.) Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1888/9*

THRING, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

TREVELYAN, C.P., pro-alien *(L. - Elland, Yorks W.R 1899-1918, Lab. - C. Newcastle 1922-31)*

VINCENT, C.E.H., anti-alien *(C. - C. Sheffield) Dir. Crim. Investigation 1878-84, f. United Empire Trade League 1891, Chair. Nat. Union Con. Ass. 1895, Mb. London County Coun. 1889-96, Del. Anti-Anarchist Con. Rome 1898, Mb. HC Sel. Cttee. 1889, Bill 1897 & 1898, m. Amdt. 1903* 1849-1908

WANDSWORTH, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

WELBY, pro-alien *(L. - HL)*

WHITLEY, J.H., pro-alien *(L. - Halifax)*

WILSON, J.H., anti-alien *(L. - Middlesborough)*

WYNDHAM, G., anti-alien *(C. - Dover)*

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# CHRONOLOGY

## PARLIAMENT, PRESS AND PREJUDICE

*'The Jewish Question'*
*in Britain 1890-1905*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1793 | Aliens Act |
| 1826 | Registration of Aliens Act |
| 1836 | Registration of Aliens Act |
| 1858 | Removal of Jewish Disabilities Act |
| 1870 | Extradition Act |
| 1887 | Memorandum Immigration Foreigners |
| | Report Sweating System (Burnett) |
| 1888 | HL Select Committee Sweating |
| | HC Select Committee Immigration Foreigners |
| 1889 | HC Select Committee Immigration Foreigners |

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|---|---|
| 1892 | A.J. Balfour claims measure in preparation |
| 1893 | Lowther's Amendment Queen's Speech — lost |
| | Report Alien Immigration (Burnett & Schloss) |
| 1894 | Salisbury's Bill (HL) — 2r HL |
| | Trade Report Effect Alien Immigration on Labour |
| 1896 | Promise legislation in Queen's Speech |
| 1897 | Ritchie pledges Government to legislation |
| | Vincent's Bill — 1r HC |
| 1898 | Vincent's Bill — 1r HC |
| | Hardwicke's Bill (HL) — 3r HL |
| 1902 | Evans-Gordon's Amendment King's Speech — withdrawn |
| | Appointment Royal Commission Alien Immigration |
| 1903 | Vincent's Amendment King's Speech — withdrawn |
| | Report Royal Commission Alien Immigration |
| 1904 | Aliens Bill — 2r HC, Grand Committee |
| 1905 | Aliens Bill/Act |

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|---|---|
| 1906 | O'Grady's Bill — 3r HC, 1r HL |
| 1909 | Hay's Amendment King's Speech — lost |
| 1911 | Churchill promises legislation |
| | Goulding's Bill — 2r HC, Standing Committee |
| | Aliens Bill (Criminals) — 1r HC |
| 1912 | O'Grady's Bill — 1r HC |
| 1913 | O'Grady's Bill — 1r HC |
| 1914 | Aliens Restriction Act |
| 1919 | Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Act |
| 1923 | Crook's Bill — not put |
| 1925 | Yerburgh's Bill — withdrawn |
| 1938 | Ramsay's Bill — withdrawn |
| 1962 | Commonwealth Immigration Act |
| 1969 | Expiring Laws Continuance Act |

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