

DAVID MYER ISAACS.

On the morning of May 1st, 1879, at Southport, a Summer resort near Liverpool, England, Rev. Professor David M. Isaacs, Minister of the old Manchester Synagogue, breathed his last, at the age of sixty-nine years. His name and fame were not confined to Great Britain. His bold and manly utterances, his independent bearing, his unswerving and uncompromising adherence to the Judaism of his fathers, his matchless eloquence and power as a pulpit orator, were themes of admiration in all countries where English Jews or their descendants had residence, and the tidings of his death will evoke general manifestations of regret and grief.

The youngest of five brothers, of whom four embraced the ministry, the deceased was the most distinguished for his attainments. He officiated for a few years in Bristol, beginning his ministry over forty years ago; thence he removed to Liverpool, where he remained twenty years, and finally he settled in Manchester. For some years he preached on alternate Sabbaths in Liverpool and Manchester; both congregations were unwilling to lose his services; and it was only after much persuasion and the assurance that he would contribute his services from time to time to his old flock that he was induced to reside permanently in Manchester.

Dying in the same month as his lamented brother, Rev. Samuel M. Isaacs, of New York, and within the year of mourning, the loss of these veteran champions of Judaism it is not for us to enlarge upon. The one made Judaism and the Jews respected in the New World, by his honesty of thought, action and expression, winning the love of all who knew him,—the other built a glowing reputation for himself, and conferred lasting dignity on his religion by his steadfastness and eloquence, his public services to people of all creeds, in the mother country.

SAMUEL and DAVID—closely resembling each other in voice and manner, as well as in physical build and genial social characteristics—labored faithfully for the cause they loved. With them, the ministry was a solemn duty no less than a sacred profession, and the welfare of their congregants was their first study. With them, their Judaism was not confined to the synagogue; but ever ready as they were to aid all causes that tended to the improvement of their people, they never shirked their duties as citizens of the commonwealth, and advocated and substantially furthered all public institutions.

It is difficult to separate the two brothers in this brief sketch. The ocean divided them, but their hearts were akin and their fraternal greetings crossed each other at regular intervals. What rejoiced the one, was communicated to the other: the grief of either won the prompt sympathy of the other—it is no wild conception to express the belief that the two are now united for eternity; and in the spirit world are offering their aspirations for the good of Israel and humanity!

The late Dr. Isaacs was born at Leeuwarden, Holland, in 1810, and came with his parents to London in his early infancy. He was always a close student and ready orator. Barely out of childhood, he was placed under the tuition of Solomon Hershell, then Chief Rabbi of the Jews of Great Britain, and it was from his hands that he received his first charge, the Bristol congregation. His title of Professor he received from his many years' connection with the Liverpool College, where he taught Hebrew and oriental literature.—He was an indefatigable and admirable teacher. Hundreds of men and women, residing in all portions of the globe, will recall with sad pleasure the hours they spent under his care, and they will recognize the secret of his success—his unwavering devotion to his duty, his warm interest in all that affected the pupil, his perfect command of himself.

His preaching was the theme of universal praise. He rarely spoke from notes or manuscript—he was at his best when he was called upon suddenly to address an audience. His sermons were models of earnestness and rhetorical finish—clear, concise, elegant. He did not always weigh his words, condemning the faults of certain members in so pointed a fashion as to wound the more susceptible; but he was so full of honesty that he cared not what people thought of his words so long as they were true. His charity sermons were unexceptionably popular and successful—his addresses before learned audiences scholarly and profound. He was the first Jewish preacher to deliver English sermons at regular intervals in Great Britain, and to the last he remained the most eloquent.

The deceased married early in life, and leaves his disconsolate widow, five daughters and three sons to mourn their irreparable loss. He was universally esteemed in Manchester, where his patriarchal form and cheery manner were familiar to all classes. The Jewish community have lost a staunch champion; and intelligent Christianity will join in the regret that our brethren must feel at the death of this veteran guide.

One by one, these eminent teachers of Judaism are passing away—melancholy is the reflection that few, if any, arise to take their honored places. Empty pulpits, declining congregations, indifference to all religion, where is the ray of hope for those who do not wish to despair of their future?