

of France were offered full emancipation in one stroke. This absence of an emancipation based on principles inscribed in law heightened the community's eagerness to demonstrate their worthiness for the emancipation they nonetheless were able to enjoy in practice in their socio-economic activities. Engaging in the host society, whilst seeking to maintain their religious identity intact, members of the Anglo-Jewish community were keen to establish their credentials as English gentlemen and women whose religious differences presented no barrier to engagement and interaction with members of the host society. It was in endeavouring to demonstrate this suitability that they looked around them for models of true Englishness and identified the Church of England as a suitable paradigm. As Michael Goulston has, persuasively, argued in his study of the development of the Anglo-Jewish rabbinate, for Anglo-Jewry:

The image of the English gentleman, the bourgeois ethic, and the hierarchical nature of institutions, including the church, were all factors with which the Jew, wishing to be English, had to reckon ... Casting around for behaviour patterns and institutional models, they found the established Church of England an adequate example. The vertical and centralized authority structure of the community, from Parliament to the Board of Deputies and through them to the Jewish ecclesiastical authorities, bears a strong resemblance to the English ecclesiastical structure ...

The United Synagogue as 'the church', the rabbinate as the 'clergy' and, by implication if not writ, the Chief Rabbi as someone akin to an Archbishop, may have produced an acceptable image to the outside world.<sup>7</sup>

Significantly, Anglo-Jewry did not experience numerous conversions to the Church of England from its upper classes. Jews remained adherents of their religion. Instead of converting they simply adapted the structures of their religious institutions. They endeavoured to make them appear more presentable, more English, and in that way justify both their sustained Jewishness and demonstrate their worthiness as Englishmen. Stephen Sharot has explained that:

the upper-class Jew's acculturation to the life-style of the 'gentleman', which was an essential prerequisite for membership in the English upper class, did not involve accepting the religious beliefs or imitating the religious practices of the Church of England. In the sphere of religion the English upper class was tolerant and pluralistic ... There was Jewish acculturation in the religious sphere, but it was only in the form, as opposed to the content.<sup>8</sup>

The Federation of Synagogues provided a means of adjusting the *hebroth* to the physical standards required of Anglo-Jewish places of worship and associating the immigrants with the main religious institutions of the community, notably the Chief Rabbinate.<sup>56</sup>

In bringing the immigrants affiliated to the Federation under the overall umbrella of Anglo-Jewry, Montagu insisted that the authority of the Chief Rabbi be accepted in the organization. Its chief minister was expected to exercise his religious authority under the overall control of the Chief Rabbi and when Avigdor Chaikin was appointed to fill this role, Hermann Adler's approval was sought. The Federation also decreed that the examination of pupils in the *chedarim* under its supervision should be 'under the sanction of the Chief Rabbi'. The difference was that Montagu effected reform in the religious lives of the immigrants from within the world of the *chevrot*, without seeking to weaken the religious intensity that characterized their worship.

Notwithstanding the successes of Montagu and the Federation, there were some immigrant groups that remained outside the religious umbrella of the native community. They were concerned not only by the external Anglicization they observed in the practice of Judaism by Anglo-Jewry, but at the laxity that was permitted in this practice under the supervision of the Orthodox religious authorities. The focus fell specifically on the Chief Rabbi's superintendence of the provisions for kosher food, in particular, the practices surrounding the ritual slaughter of animals. Bernard Homa has examined the concerns of some elements of the immigrant community in his *A Fortress in Anglo-Jewry*, which records the activities of members of the 'Machzike Hadath Society', formed in 1891.<sup>57</sup> This society was created through an amalgamation of the Machzike Shomrei Shabbat in East London and members of the North London Beth Hamedrash in Canonbury, which was primarily a community of Jews of central European origin. Its title was associated with a grouping of Orthodox Jews in Galicia who in 1878, led by Simeon Sofer and Joshua Rokeach, established a society with this name to join Jews together to defend Orthodox practices and beliefs. As Homa has explicitly stated, it was created in England in order to provide an organization that would 'function as vigilantes within the Community'.<sup>58</sup> Their intention was not to create a separatist community but rather to improve conditions for religious observance throughout the Anglo-Jewish community.

It was noted that many butchers openly desecrated the Sabbath; it was also discovered that it was possible to obtain unpurged hindquarter meat as well as kidney suet. Both are Trefa and may not be eaten ... As for 'Petticoat Lane', the position there was also

most unsatisfactory. Jewish stall-holders in that famous street market sold allegedly kosher-killed poultry without any visible sign to indicate that Shechita had been performed ... other breaches of the kashruth laws were soon discovered ... Yet all these infringements were taking place ostensibly under the eyes of the Board for the Affairs of Shechita which, in turn, was under the religious control of the Beth Din ...

The sole purpose for which the Machzike Hadath Society was established was to secure an improvement in the facilities for religious observance particularly in regard to kashruth, and every effort was made to achieve this objective by peacefully reminding the Chief Rabbinate of their responsibilities and duties in this direction.<sup>59</sup>

Alderman has suggested that it was no coincidence that the creation of the Machzike Hadath and their appointment of Rabbi Aba Werner as their leader coincided with Hermann Adler's confirmation in the office of Chief Rabbi as successor to his father.<sup>60</sup> Hermann had been educated in England before being sent back to Continental Europe to continue his studies and receive his rabbinical training. In 1862 he received his doctorate from the University of Leipzig and obtained *semikhah* (rabbinical ordination) from Solomon Judah Rapoport, the Chief Rabbi of Prague, the following year. In many ways he could be viewed as an archetype of the English Jew in the Victorian age, as he had acknowledged in his Installation sermon when he acceded to the post of Chief Rabbi:

I have grown up in your midst, I have endeavoured to draw my mental nurture from the rich stores of our dear England's thought and learning. In my paternal home, as a disciple and student, and subsequently, during a period of gradually increasing responsibilities, every detail has become familiar to me of the exalted office which I have been called, by the Providence of God and the voice of the community, to occupy.<sup>61</sup>

It was with this full awareness of the duties of his office and the ideals of the community that Adler, in this sermon, issued an appeal: 'Let not your divergence of opinion lead to schisms and divisions, to discord and disruption.'<sup>62</sup> The inherent temperament of the native community, to maintain an image of unity, was well known to Adler and it was a principle that he sought to uphold whilst Chief Rabbi. Like his father he viewed himself as the sole religious authority of the community, regardless of the other prominent rabbinical leaders that had arrived in the country with the immigrant influx. This perhaps explained Alderman's suggestion that:

## A Chief Rabbi for 'East and West'

A few months before he died, Hermann Adler, Chief Rabbi between 1891 and 1911, had written a letter that was to be opened after his death; it contained his advice on the priorities that should be taken into account when the lay leadership came to consider appointing his successor. Printed in the *Jewish Chronicle*, it declared his firm belief that someone had to be chosen 'who will be equally acceptable to the East and to the West, the native and immigrant'.<sup>1</sup>

On 14 January 1912, the Chief Rabbinate Conference met for the first time to discuss the appointment of a new chief rabbi. If we examine the advice offered by the United Synagogue president on this occasion, we discover a rather different sentiment regarding the qualifications that the lay leadership of Anglo-Jewish Orthodoxy deemed essential for a chief rabbi. Lord Rothschild, in his opening Presidential Address, whilst acknowledging the importance of religious learning, firmly asserted his opinion that the new Chief Rabbi must be 'acquainted with English life, English laws and able to speak English'. According to the *Jewish Chronicle* report of this meeting, Lord Rothschild

enforced this argument by adjuring the meeting that the circumstances of Anglo-Jewry demand that its Ecclesiastical representative shall be fervid in his Judaism of course but fervid too in his English predilections. And it was this nice balance of loyalty to Judaism and loyalty to the land of their birth or adoption which Lord Rothschild commended strenuously to the community at large.<sup>2</sup>

Rothschild's inclination to appoint a chief rabbi suitably acquainted with English life, language and mores derived from those very influences, identified in the previous chapter, as pivotal to the native Jews' perception of the office of Chief Rabbi; it was hoped the religious leader would fill a role somewhat akin to an archbishop. His reference to 'the circumstances of Anglo-Jewry' represented Rothschild's attempt to convince the immigrant community of the validity of this inclination. In referring to Anglo-Jewry's circumstances, Rothschild sought to redirect the attention of the immigrants onto the role that the Chief

# THE JEWISH PRAYER BOOK

## I.

### ITS PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE

The Jewish Prayer Book, or the *Siddur*, is of paramount importance in the life of the Jewish people. To Israel's faithful hosts in the past, as to its loyal sons and daughters of the present, the Siddur has been the Gate to communion with their Father in Heaven; and, at the same time, it has been a mighty spiritual bond that united them to their scattered brethren the world over. No other book in the whole range of Jewish literature that stretches over three millenia and more, comes so close to the life of the Jewish masses as does the Prayer Book. The Siddur is a daily companion, and the whole drama of earthly existence—its joys and sorrows; workdays, Sabbaths, historic and Solemn Festivals; birth, marriage and death—is sanctified by the formulæ of devotion in that holy book. To millions of Jews, every word of it is familiar and loved; and its phrases and Responses, especially in the sacred melodies associated with them, can stir them to the depths of their being. No other volume has penetrated the Jewish home as has the Siddur; or has exercised, and continues to exercise, so profound an influence on the life, character and outlook of the Jewish people, as well in the sphere of personal religion as of moral conduct.

FOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE JEW Surely the story and nature of such a book should be known not only to Jews, but to all who are interested in the classics of Religion. Yet the Jewish Liturgy is the one branch of religious literature that is generally neglected by Christian scholars; and as to Jews of Western lands, a well-known theologian not so long ago wrote, "it would be well for the Jewish religion if the beauty and emotional power so largely manifested in its prayers were more intelligently appreciated by its adherents to-day". As it is, they know that the Shema and the Reading of the Torah constitute the central portions of the Synagogue Service, and are also vaguely aware of some differences between Sephardim and Ashkenazim as regards pronounciation and rendering of their Hebrew Prayers. For the rest, they do not know their bearings in the realm of Jewish Devotion, and move "in worlds not realized". It is a most regrettable fact. For none can truly know the Jew—the Jew cannot know himself—without a clear grasp of the religious truths enshrined in his Prayer