

## THE SHYLOCK OF ENGLAND

Dies at the Age of Thirty-five, and Thousands Shout for Joy.

Isaac Gordon, money lender, who died in Birmingham last week, was barely 35, yet from one end of Great Britain to the other his name was notorious as a synonym for pitiless extortions and grinding cruelty, and his was the distinction of having wrecked more homes and caused more misery than any other man of his time in England. He was a Polish Jew, but the Jews disowned him for his fendishness, refusing to accept his contributions to their various funds, and so unsavory was his reputation that he was unable to live in any one place for long, meeting with disdainful and abusive treatment even in hotels, and being told, when he appealed to their managers, that his room was preferred to his company.

Although his name was almost constantly in the papers, his personality was practically unknown to the public. It would be safe to say that in half the proceedings against debtors in the courts of the United Kingdom Gordon was the plaintiff, and in those cases there was invariably a pitiful story of soulless brutality and racking usury, always, however, falling just outside the province of the law. In the newspapers accounts of such actions in the newspapers would be headed "Isaac Gordon Again," but his methods were better known than his individuality.

That method was villainously simple. It consisted chiefly of having an immense field of operations, and transacting his business under countless aliases—like without a spark of mercy. A poor man would come to him to borrow money, says a correspondent of the New York Press, which Gordon would advance at a ruinous rate of interest, appearing in the transaction, as say Mr. Jones. In a month or so, if the debtor were in desperate straits, Gordon would communicate by mail or through one of his confidential clerks, and lend him more money on terms even harsher, but in this case the lender would pose as one Smith. Then, spiderlike, he maneuvered until his victim was so entangled that escape was impossible, and when he had him safe, nipped at him like a demon. His rate of interest varied from 30 to 50, or even 100 per cent. To one man he advanced \$250 on a promissory note for \$1,000. Two more loans of \$250 each followed, and for this sum Gordon got in two years \$2,500. This happened in Scotland, and even after receiving that sum, Shylock Gordon demanded \$3,000 more, and by twisting the law of the land and sending bailiffs down on his victim, actually got half that amount out of him to settle the matter. Another man borrowed \$25,000, paid back \$30,000, and became bankrupt. A dressmaker borrowed \$50 from Edwards of Chester. To pay it she got another loan of \$50 from Spencer, Liverpool; had bad luck and took \$500 from Gordon of Birmingham, and then was dragged into court to find that the three were one.

Gordon kept close watch over his accounts, and failed not to remind his debtors a few days before their accounts were due that he would stand no trifling. Debtors who could pay those who couldn't alike received his delicate reminder. It was a pious note that read:

"If you fail to remit per return of post writ will immediately be issued, and you will get the bailiffs, and you may safely depend upon that. You give ten times more trouble than your custom is worth, and we shall be glad to get rid of you."

Prayers, threats, insults alike were thrown away on the lawless financier, sometimes went to plead with him for the wretches that he had in his snare, and he laughed at them. He appeared in court time after time, testified coolly, not to say calmly, and was deaf to the sneers and sibes of the magistrate. He was summoned before a special parliamentary committee, already armed with reams of evidence against him, and smiled while he was being rebuked. The chairman of the committee cited a few of the most repulsive instances of his treachery and asked Gordon if he regarded that as legitimate business. "Yes," he said, "in a way. I risk my money, and I have a certain right to do what I like with it. If I like to risk my money and give it to a lady under forty names I can do it. It's my own money."

Probably he was more touched by the remonstrances of his own race, for when the members of the Birmingham synagogue refused to accept his offering he protested. They stood fast, however, and would have none of him, although they did not turn him out. He pleaded with them in a letter, in which he said: "If I sin against the law of the land, the law will deal with me. If I sin against the law of God, my Maker will deal with me. You have no right to sit in judgment upon me."

He was universally regarded as utterly callous, but there was a heart and conscience in him somewhere. He was lonely in a world where he had made every one hate him, and wrote in a letter to almost his only friend, "Call and see me. I wish to pour out to you the bitterness of my heart." He preferred not to do business with those of his own race, and there have been cases in which he refused to receive interest on the money he had lent. He had a love that amounted almost to adoration for a little boy, the child of an acquaintance, sending him chocolates by mail, calling to see him or sending letters asking about his health almost every day.

He seems to have been able to soothe his own conscience about his malpractices. When he spoke of his transactions he always was the one misused.

never putting himself on the defensive. He was proud of his reputation for sternness and cruelty. He believed, or professed to believe, that only a man who had dishonest intentions if he could put them into practice would ever consent to the terms that he imposed. He said that people came to him only when they were "on their last legs," through their own dishonesty. He defended his action in assuming false names by saying that he found it easier to keep track of his debtors in that way, to keep them from "skedaddling," he told the parliamentary committee.

Some of his clients lied to him, others tried to outwit him in other ways, but usually failed. He felt that he was fighting them with their own weapons, and it is only fair to say that he showed no favor, but treated every man alike. He had another unbroken record in the courts, and he was having revenge against humanity for the wrongs, as he said, that it had done to him. About twelve years ago, still as a money-lender, he went too far and was sentenced to prison with hard labor for eighteen months. His health gave out under the toll, and he was released by the home secretary when only about half his term had expired. The doctors told him that he could live more than a few months, but he went to the south of France, recuperated and came back again hugging to his breast the thought that he had a debt of vengeance to pay to mankind, and set about paying it while he could, for he did not hope to live many years. He was a glutton for work and had only a few trusted assistants. He was no eager for the business day to begin that he could get in the morning for the regular delivery, but walked around to the postoffice to get his letters. The same energy made him work, even after his final attack of laryngitis, up to within a few hours of his death, settling his affairs with the help of his confidential clerk. He died with his clothes on. When first he was



seized the manager of his hotel sent for a nurse, but Gordon refused to engage her, saying that her fee—\$10 a week—was too high, and he declined to let a physician examine him until the medical man had paid the amount of his professional charge. Curiously enough, the following day a case of Gordon's was tried in the London bankruptcy court in which the money-lender appeared as "Robert Dean." He came to England without a penny and started in business as a money-lender's clerk at 17. He soon branched out for himself, however, and it is thought that his fortune at his death amounted to \$3,000,000. When he died he had \$20,000 in his pockets and over \$100,000 in his office, banks usually refusing to have dealings with him. He once had an account with the Bank of England, but they requested him to withdraw it. He has a brother, also a money-lender, in England, and a brother and sister in Poland who will make a claim against his estate, but as yet his will has not been found. He always said that he would leave a liberal allowance to the little boy whom he loved with such curious fondness, and it was a whimical fancy of his that he would leave the rest of his fortune to charity and to endowing a home for, as he termed them, "old maids who had been laid on the shelf."

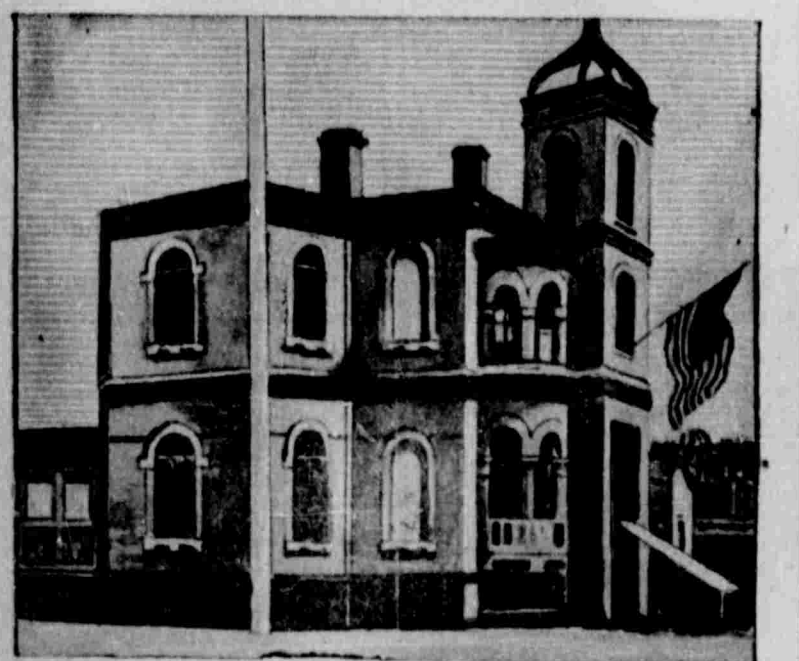
As a beginning in the direction of putting his affairs in order, Gordon set about becoming naturalized. So universal was the feeling against him that it was weeks before he could find five British subjects to attest his respectability, and even after he found them and presented his papers the home secretary refused to admit him to citizenship, which refusal, it is said, stung him more than any rebuff ever had before. He was buried with scant ceremony, his body being removed from his hotel in a rough, unpainted wooden coffin, carried by four ill-dressed men.

The government is preparing to make a claim for death duties from his estate; but if, as is suspected, he made no will, this will be difficult, as it will be hard to discover where Gordon's money was invested. He had \$250,000 worth of Birmingham corporation stock, but how much can be realized from his countless debtors without employing his own methods is extremely questionable.

A NEW STORY OF EDISON.

In the March "Success" a hitherto unpublished incident is given of the way Thomas A. Edison introduced himself

### THREATENED BY CHINESE MOBS.



The United States consulate at Tien Sien which Edwin M. Conger, a minister to China, cables any day threatened by the violence of mobs. The "Boxers," an active secret organization, is especially active in arousing sentiment against Americans and all other foreigners, and trouble is looked for at any moment.

to a telegraph manager in New York: A tall young countryman, looking as guileless as a "buttercup" child, and a slouch hat could make him applied for work in the Broad street, New York, office of Maury Smith, in 1871. Mr. Smith was manager of the consolidated telegraph lines then in opposition to the Western Union. Like all other managers, he could make room for an expert operator, and told the young rustic that an engagement depended altogether upon his skill.

"Try me," I can keep up with the best of 'em," said the stranger. Mr. Smith noticed that the applicant appeared to be quite deaf; but, out of curiosity, and possibly with the idea of having some fun with him, he gave him a table and told him to "receive" a message then due from Washington.

"You will have to work pretty fast," he warned him, "for our Washington man is in the habit of rushing things." As a matter of fact, there was no message expected from Washington, nor did the wire lead there. Mr. Smith connected the receiver with a "sender" in another part of the same operating room, and put his fastest operator, "Dick" Hutchinson, at work sending a two-thousand-word message. Edition, for it was he, grasped a pen and, as soon as the instrument began to click, dashed off the copy in a large, round, legible hand. While deaf to all other sounds, he could catch the faintest metallic clink.

On came the message, faster and faster, twenty, thirty, forty words a minute. A crowd of operators gathered around, curiously and then amazement depicted on their faces. The message was rolled off, with never a break, and with the last click of the instrument the forty-minute message had been received perfectly, and lay in a heap of manuscript on the table. The telegraph man's triumph was complete. Hutchinson rushed up and shook hands with him, and Mr. Smith gave him a job on the spot.

### MOHAMMEDAN PAULINARITIES.

Mohammedans differ from the rest of mankind even in regions inhabited by wild tribes alone. A long and close what intimate acquaintance has given me admiration and respect for many Mohammedans as friends. Many of their finest qualities may be traced to scriptural teaching. The religious teachings with Mohammedans are not so much a matter of belief as of action, and they bring one into contact with their essential peculiarity. They cannot avoid

### FEARFUL OF CHINESE REVOLT.

This is a picture of Hon. Edwin M. Conger, this country's minister at Tien Sien, China. A cable received from him by the Washington authorities states that the Chinese are organizing in mobs and Americans are threatened with violence. The natives, noted for their antipathy to foreigners, are being stirred up by that secret band, the "Boxers."

regarding others from a religious standpoint; and they cannot set aside permanently the fact that God has commanded them to subjugate or exterminate all who refuse to believe in Mohammed. This divine command shapes their conduct toward aliens, even when they themselves would like to forget it. It classes all of alien faith as blasphemers, and this fact to minor details is needless in their eyes. A blasphemer (kafir or gair) is a blasphemer. Wherefore call whether he be an American or Spaniard? It leads also to endless quarrels in the use of words of ethical importance. Not only does "peace" mean something different to the Muslim than from what it means to the other party to a reconciliation, as will be seen below, but such words as "honesty," "kindness," "pity," and "piety," do not, in the mind of the Mohammedan, have the sense which the Christian gives them.

Sultan Harold at Rashid of Sulu seems to have liberal views. Apparently he likes the Americans with whom he has had dealings. Perhaps he is as honest and magnanimous as his great namesake of Bagdad. Yet we cannot forget that for purely selfish reasons Haroun of Bagdad killed his best friend, the Veriz Jaffer. And the crime neither disturbed his own conscience nor stained his reign with the people for justice and piety. The Moro Sultan has the same standards of right and wrong. If not the same vast power, as the Caliph of the eight century. For moral conduct has sunk into a room for change among Mohammedans, because the "Thus saith the Lord" of their law book applies to acts so much more frequently than to principles. A better understanding of doctrine is contrary to the whole spirit of the system. And so, whatever their personal gentility or amiability of disposition in dealings with aliens, the Divine command comes into the minds of Mohammedans at every moment of fruition, like the alchemist's suggestion of the fox's tail, to spoil the charm which promised to bring forth a shining virtue.

The full ignorance of this curious trait, can only be gauged by gaining the Mohammedan point of view, as found in any compend of the Holy law now in use in Mohammedan countries. Only by actual study of the books can one get an idea of the deadly earnestness of such expositions of the Divine Will. Yet these books today form the foundation of theological and legal education for the young of Arabia, the hearts of the common people in all of those countries.—March Forum.

### PLANTING AN ORCHARD.

Perhaps every orchardist has his own individual way of planting trees, and some methods are better than others. In this article it is proposed to point out an excellent way which the writer, during his experience as a fruit grower in a neighboring State, practiced with gratifying success. To plant trees in the fall or spring is still, and perhaps ever will be a question for discussion, having two sides, but our trees were set in the spring, soon as the ground thawed out and became a little warm. Large, deep holes were made with spade and shovel, between three and one-half feet square and three feet deep, of course to make the holes this size requires considerable digging and one man will not be able to set very many trees in a day, but when he gets the work done it is thoroughly done, and the trees will grow and have great advantages over those planted in the usual haphazard manner.

Two-year-old trees were set with uncut roots, which were carefully spread over the surface of the bottom of the hole to a depth of nearly three inches, thereby affording a rich supply of plant food for the young of acrobatic to begin feeding on as soon as covered. The rich soil in the bottom of the holes also insures solidity and firmness of the trees, rendering them almost storm-proof. It requires a very hard wind-storm to lift them out because the roots are firmly established in the soil that is so easily to penetrate.

## ENGLAND AND UNITED STATES.

I am asked by my American friends in London, "What did your country expect to get out of ours in return for your concession in the matter of the Nicaragua canal?" Without agreeing to some of the crude suggestions which have been made across the Atlantic, they also call my attention to the question which has been asked there in some quarters as to whether we have any real desire for the friendship of the United States; what the two nations could do together that they could not do separately—and whether there is not danger of our using the government of the United States as a cat's paw? I am also told that one of the parties in the Union intends to make use of any understanding or supposed understanding between the powers as an issue in the presidential campaign.

Other questions which have been put to me are such as this: "Why should we give a thought one way or another to England?" And I have also had an indignant statement made to me, that the United Kingdom may perhaps need the United States, but that the United States has no need of the United Kingdom.

With regard to asking for any specific consideration for the Nicaragua arrangement, I am myself in a peculiar position. For two years in succession—that is, both at the beginning of the session of 1898 and at the beginning of the session of 1899—I called attention to the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and showed that twenty years ago, when it was last discussed, we were in the absurd position of making arrangements with France for thwarting the natural action of the United States in a matter in which we had in fact no common interest with France, in which neither France nor we had any reason for interfering with the United States, and in which it was from every point of view far better that we should come to direct agreement with the United States for the application to this trade canal of principles on which all the traders of the world would be likely to be agreed.

The government have now acted as I would that they should act, and I confess that it seems to me that we need no consideration in return for getting out of an indefensible position which was not in accordance with any existing policy, and I cannot blame our government for not having asked for any.

With regard, however, to the larger questions that are raised and to which I have alluded, I admit that it appears to me that some of your American citizens are a little old-fashioned. They take, not unnaturally perhaps, a somewhat Georgian view of the relations of our countries. Mistakes in our policy made in the last century, or in 1812 or in 1814, are brought against us now, and the extraordinary change in the view of the United States which is now taken in England is not met by an equally complete change on the other side of the Atlantic. May I with all apologies, suggest that, while we are looked upon as a conservative people, there seem to be in the United States some survivals of the pigtail generation to be found even in communities which think themselves advanced, mobile, modern?

The change in British opinion with regard to the United States, the frank acceptance of a friendship which goes

beyond mere words, and which is now so warm on this side of the Atlantic that it is not unlikely to lead from time to time to very tangible and very positive results, has no doubt a philosophical basis. The revival in recent years, after an international or cosmopolitan period, of pride in our race and nation and position in the world has been naturally accompanied by an acceptance of the position of pride in the achievements, present and to come, of the great English speaking people on the other side of the Atlantic.

Difficulties in the past which have been caused by Irish feeling and difficulties which have been caused by Canadian feeling, are both of them somewhat lost to sight here at the present moment, and although no one here ignores any just claims of Canada, yet there is a feeling that we ought to be able to live and live as regards even these Canadian questions, and by mutual good feeling to solve any difficulties that they present. The complete change of front here, however, seems not yet thoroughly recognized in the United States among the masses of the people. The suspicions in which they were raised in the past still find more echo there than almost anywhere, or jealousies do now on this side the water, and it will take time, no doubt, before these suspicions are overcome.

When I am asked what we can do together that the nations cannot do singly, I answer at once, above all things maintain the principle of that open door which is all that the foreigner needs of us, and of our requirements for its expansion. As an example, I may point to the fact that at an immense distance from the United States, namely, on the Somali coast, in northeast Africa, there is a British protectorate where the largest items of trade are already entirely in the hands of the United States; and to the converse case of Madagascar, where the French conquest has much reduced a large previously existing American trade.

In China we have already been working together, and everything is possible to us there if we work together in the future. Great common trade interests are growing up with the mother country, when they are frankly recognized as common interests, will be held one, and to interfere. If it were only for China and the Pacific, this would be enough to justify a closer friendship. But it must be remembered also that our Australian English speaking communities must play their part in the South Pacific and in the China seas, and by their friendship with the mother country a friendship between America and Australia will also be promoted which will be infinitely better, for the United States and for Australasia, in the future, than the miserable jealousies which have too often prevailed in the English speaking world in the past.

The British colonies will form no difficulty in the way of a better understanding of the Irish feeling to which I have alluded is always, of course, an enormous difficulty in the way, but those on both sides the Atlantic who are in favor of the most liberal concessions of the privileges of self-government in Ireland will be more likely to prevail if they put their heads together than if only the advances which British friendship offers.—Charles W. Dilke, in New York Herald.

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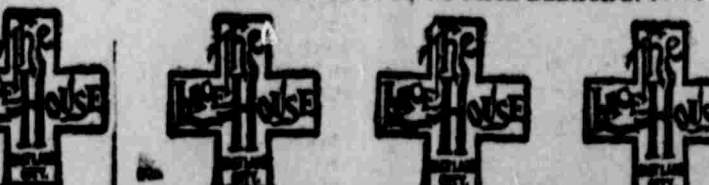
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From Milford, Salt Lake, Provo, intermediate points.	9:35 a. m.
From Ogden, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, Denver and San Francisco.	10:30 p. m.
From Portland, Seattle, Tacoma and Tacoma.	1:30 p. m.
From Tintin, Merced and intermediate points.	6:30 p. m.
From Preston, Logan, Brigham, Salem and intermediate points.	7:30 p. m.

DEPART:

For Ogden, Omaha, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis, Cacho Valley and intermediate points.	7:00 a. m.
For Tintin, Merced and intermediate points.	7:35 a. m.
For Portland, Seattle, Tacoma and Tacoma.	7:45 a. m.
For Ogden, Butte, Helena, Portland and intermediate points.	9:45 a. m.
For Ogden, Omaha, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis and San Francisco.	11:45 a. m.
For Provo, Salt Lake, Merced and intermediate points.	6:30 p. m.
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