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When, free as an eagle,
 My spirit her pinions
 Hath spread, and is flown
 To other dominions,
 The home of the stars,
 Where youth's fadeless flowers
 Still perfume the shore,
 Where this world's false treasures,
 Her tears and her pleasures,
 Are heard of no more! . . .

MY EPITAPH.

YES, many songs of bitterness and tears
 I've sung for you, my friends, in bygone years,
 And, with my last remaining tooth outworn,
 The hapless jargon have I bit and torn,
 And chewed the dear, old speech that was our mother's
 Some parts with rhyme I salted, peppered others
 With verse, and tried to make it soft and nice,
 Essayed to smother something of the spice
 That now and then too vividly recalls
 The Düneburg and Wilna market stalls,
 The flavour spreading ten miles round a place
 Where once the jargon left, if but a trace . . .
 Yes, eight long years, dear brothers, have I sung
 And much devised in this pleasing tongue.
 Some praised, and others blamed me (not a few),
 I heard—and took my fiddle up anew! . . .

But Israel is a very stiff-necked nation,
 A bitter folk, peculiar, separate.
 From Egypt's sea to Horeb's desolation,
 And from Mount Horeb to the present date,
 God knows, he knows! you tear yourself in pieces,

You stroke, bless, praise them, flatter all you can,
 In vain you reckon on their next caprices!
 God knows, I say!—then what is one poor *man*
 To make of them—a jargon writer too?

You mean to write then, neighbour? (says a Jew)
 Well, write by all means, only—have a care,
 And recollect with whom you have to do:
 That we are Jews, and so—no vulgar fare!
 Write—how shall I explain? why, you can tell
 How best to please them all, you know quite well,
 You understand! . . .

Dear friends, you are too good!
 Alas, but one thing have I understood!
 In pity, tell me, is it this you ask,
 Is this, and this alone, the writer's task:
 To make the people laugh?

—That's it! That's right!

You see, you are too serious by half,
 Dear Mr. Frug!—do be amusing, bright!
 We only ask of you to make us laugh.

Write stories, anecdotes, things wise yet witty,
 With verses and with rhymes to make them pretty!

—I cannot do it, cannot—woe is me!
 I cannot leap and caper, cannot make
 Strange antics, cannot laugh! for pity's sake—
 I cannot laugh, I tell you—let me be!

And some day your revenge you all may take,
 (But I shall absent be, I shall not know it),
 And write upon my tomb for all to see:

Here lies a strange, wild thing, a crazy poet.
 His name ran thus—so many were his years—
 He spent them ev'ry one in tears! . . .