

**ELEAZAR AND
NAPHTALY, AN
HEBREW TALE**

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Eleazar and Naphtaly, an Hebrew Tale by H. H. Young

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H. H. YOUNG

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ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALY,

AN

Hebrew Tale,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY

H. H. YOUNG.

London :

**JOSEPH JOHN LEATHWICK, 24, HART STREET,
BLOOMSBURY SQUARE.**

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1827.

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PREFACE.

DURING my travels some years ago in the ancient province of Avignon, I was desirous, in passing near the little city of Isle, of visiting the fountain of Vaucluse. On my return from that celebrated spot, somewhat early one morning, I perceived a young man and woman seated upon the grass, under the shade of two mulberry trees planted upon the bank of the Sorgue. The simplicity of their apparel announced neither riches nor poverty. The young man, without being handsome, had an engaging physiognomy; the young woman was tall and pretty, and her beauty was rendered the more striking by its foreign character. Her oval face, her large black eyes, bespoke at the same time dignity and misfortune. I stopped to observe her; she was lis-

tening with great attention to the voice of her companion, who was reading a manuscript. I drew near to them without being perceived, and soon discovered that the subject of their attention was not in the French language. It seemed to interest them both, for they interrupted each other several times, speaking apparently in the language in which the manuscript was written, then clasped each professed hand with eyes beaming tenderness, and I even fancied I could perceive that their cheeks were bathed with tears.

Although unable to understand a single word of that which they were reading, I should have listened a much longer time, if the young woman, observing me, had not made a sign to her companion to retire. "It is for me to withdraw myself," said I, advancing forwards, "since my presence is disagreeable. I am a stranger in this

neighbourhood, and returning from Vaucuse have lost my way, and seeing you reading in this delightful spot, where Petrarch has perhaps repeated his verses to his beautiful Laura, am come to ask you to point out to me the road that leads to Isle."

At these words the young woman blushed. Her companion replied to me in French, and pointed out the path which I ought to pursue. I asked him if he were returning to Isle, and as he answered me in the affirmative, I begged his permission to accompany him: he did not refuse, and we began our journey together.

As we had nearly a mile and a half to walk, I had time to prepare and hazard several questions. The young lady did not utter a word, but proceeded on with her eyes fixed upon the earth, giving her arm to her protector. He, more confident, did not appear averse to my conversation, and

among other themes I introduced the subject of the manuscript. "In what language is it," said I, "In my native one," he replied, "for I am a Jew." "You belong then to a nation extremely old and renowned, and to which every Christian owes respect." "We would dispense," said he, "with the respect, if they would grant us that toleration which humanity commands." "Like you," I rejoined, "I would that every community and every religion enjoyed it, and I hope that in my country, philosophy will soon accomplish that desirable end; but, without pretending to palliate the cruelties you have undergone, without still less wishing to insult your nation, allow me to recal to you its own intolerance, and the quantity of blood shed on that account; and that we are obliged, at every page of your history, to recollect that its origin is divine, not to be shocked at the massacres narrated in every portion of it."

“I do not know,” replied my youthful combatant, “if unbiassed descriptions of the people of Europe do not sometimes present pictures not less terrible; and I can assure you, that if you were acquainted with the histories of our neighbours the Syrians, the Phœnicians, and the Idumeans, you would find in them as many massacres as in our Chronicles. God forbid that I should thereby pretend to diminish the horror of them! I only mean to observe, that the numerous nations of Asia, especially those who lived near the burning deserts of the Red Sea, appear to have been greater destroyers than others more distant; although, to speak sincerely, I do not know to which, in point of barbarity, I should award the palm. We are no better than our brothers the Arabians, nor are they better than ourselves; but we have held the foremost rank among