

**Kosher Meals.**

AS one who was brought up in a strictly orthodox Jewish atmosphere, I am amazed at the lack of observance of Jewish Dietary Laws in the average Jewish home in South Africa. I do not speak of the indifferent and assimilated type of Jew, but of homes in which there is quite a definite Jewish atmosphere, yet in which the *Kashruth* is extremely doubtful. There would appear to be an eagerness on the part of the Jewish housewife not to be accused of being an adherent of "kitchen Judaism," and the whole subject of *Kashruth* is belittled and pooh-poohed.

It does seem that the Jewish housewives in this country have no appreciation of the hygienic principle underlying the Jewish Dietary Laws. Perhaps it is asking too much to expect them to have heard of the castigation of the Zohar. It says, "Whoever eats forbidden foods becomes imbued with the spirit of impurity, and is cast out of the realm of Divine Holiness."

Outside of the hygienic principle involved in connection with *Kashruth*, there is the spirit of self-abnegation strongly evident in the observance. Rambam said, "The dietary laws train us in the mastery over our appetites; they accustom us to restrain both the growth of desire and the disposition to consider the pleasure of eating and drinking as the end of man's existence."

It is in this connection that an essential principle is to be found which our dietary laws help to foster and which it should be a pride to uphold.

**Confessions.**

ONE of the ablest journalists in Fleet Street for many years has been the editor of the London *Daily Express*. He has always been popularly known as "R.D.B.," which hides the personality of Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld.

I often used to wonder when residing in England whether this brilliant journalist and editor was a co-religionist. I assumed that even if this were so, he was of so assimilated a type that he could be looked upon as being entirely lost to the community. It was, therefore, of interest to learn that since his recent retirement from his arduous labours, the thoughts of Mr. Blumenfeld have returned to his people. It appears to be his innate desire to identify himself in some way or another with his race and with Jewish traditional sentiment. He recently stated openly at a Jewish gathering that he would like to "die in the sanctity of the synagogue." This was said by Mr. Blumenfeld in a simple and spontaneous way which deeply moved his audience. Again do we see a man, who, brought up in a Jewish atmosphere as a child and then living the whole of his active life away from his own folk, returning when old to secure peace in the folds of our ancient religion.

# Current Communal Comments

By  
'Hamabit'

**Prisoners.**

THOSE of my readers who are interested in criminology, may find some special interest in the statement made by Father McCaffrey, the Catholic Chaplain of the Sing Sing Prison. He states that the Catholic prisoners outnumber the combined Protestant and Jewish population of the prison. Here are his recent figures:—

Catholics . . . . .	855
Protestants . . . . .	518
Jews . . . . .	177
Christian Scientists . . . . .	20
Buddhists . . . . .	1
Mohammedans . . . . .	2
No religion . . . . .	8

The Roman Catholic priest says as a general thing most of the men in prison have given up their active practice of their faith, before they face the judge for sentence. A good Catholic practicing his religion rarely comes into conflict with the law on a major issue. The same is true of a devout Jew who is practising his faith. The indictment is not so much against the church as against the men who cut themselves off from the influence of the church or the synagogue.

It would be interesting to learn the religious denomination the majority of prisoners in this country represent!

**No Champion.**

A correspondent is writing a paper on European monarchs who have been friendly to the Jews. He asks me for aid in telling him how Francis II. of Austria gained the reputation of being the champion of Israel.

I would say that if Francis II. has been credited with the reputation of being the champion of Israel, he gained it erroneously, because he abolished the tax on *ethrogim* in Austria. It was in 1774 that Maria Theresa established a tax on the importation of the *ethrog*—a fruit necessary to the observance of the Jewish festival of *Succoth*. Several years after the law was passed, some unscrupulous Jews saw an opportunity to amass a fortune, and offered to pay to the Treasury each year a certain sum for the purpose of exacting this tax on *ethrogim* from their fellow Jews. In 1799, Francis II. demanded that this interference with Jewish religious observance be stopped, but outside of the fact that Francis II. made an admirable gesture in this specific instance, he was known otherwise to be extremely narrow.

**Pulido.**

HAVE any of my readers heard of Don Angel Pulido? The gentleman died in Madrid a few weeks ago at the age of eighty. He was one of the most picturesque figures in a small group of Christian friends of our people in Spain. It was the late Max Nordau who described Pulido as a "direct descendant of Don Quixote, from whom he inherited both his idealism and his chimerical plans." It was he who put forth a strenuous effort to induce the late Spanish Government to issue an invitation to Spanish-speaking Jews in all lands to return to Spain.

The invitation of the Spanish government did not bring many Spanish-speaking Jews to modern Spain. But there is a small Jewish settlement now domiciled in that country, who looked upon Pulido as a friend and were grateful for his unselfish struggle on their behalf at a time when their cause was unpopular and almost unknown.

**Ninety-One.**

A few weeks ago the London *Jewish Chronicle* entered upon the ninety-second year of its existence. This is an extraordinary record for a publication which has endeavoured to report accurately the salient events of the life of the Jewish people for a period of more than four score years and ten. The history of the foundation of the journal would make an interesting volume and I hope one day such a work will be written.

The last editor, Leopold J. Greenberg, left a deep impress on the journal and during his regime the paper reached a very high standard of influence and importance. There has been a notable change of treatment of public events under the new editorship, but it is evident that the journal will always sustain its renown for accuracy of news service and honest comment upon Jewish events of the day.

**Caprice.**

A lady whose wealth had been but recently amassed, approached Zimbalist—the celebrated violinist—about giving a recital in her newly-acquired sumptuous abode, before her circle of newly-acquired "swell" friends.

She could not conceal the shock caused by Zimbalist's statement that his fee for such a performance would be two hundred pounds. To put the mere artist in his place she thereupon said:—

"You know, Mr. Zimbalist, I never allow professional performers at my affairs to mix socially with my guests."

"Oh, in that case," replied Mr. Zimbalist, "my fee will be only one hundred pounds."