

## Synagogue Dues.

I am not aware of the exact circumstances which prevailed upon a leading Hebrew Congregation in South Africa to sue a certain individual for non-payment of synagogue fees. It is an extraordinary procedure and one can only come to the conclusion that the congregation concerned had found the neglect by certain of its members to have become almost intolerable.

Owing to the present depression there has been a considerable falling off in synagogue income. This has placed many a congregation in serious difficulty. A heavy burden has fallen upon the shoulders of honorary officers. Much indignation has therefore, been felt at the consistent lack of consideration on the part of certain members, who although taking every advantage of synagogue privileges and able to pay their dues, continually keep back any evidence of settlement.

The fact that a congregation can sue at all in a matter of this kind has come as a surprise to many. I wonder if the same procedure can be adopted in connection with the promise of a Zionist donation. One hears of instances when at a Zionist banquet in a given locality a donation of a fairly substantial sum has been announced for the Keren Hayesod under the inspiration of the presence of a "distinguished visitor," and of such a donation not being paid. Is a promise to a Zionist fund—sacred as that promise must be—also a legal obligation in the same way as membership to a congregation?

It is an interesting point indeed.

## Prejudice in Music.

THE extent to which racial discrimination is developing in such cultural centres as Vienna and Berlin is indicated by the action of Nazi conductors actually refusing to play music by Jewish composers, even of Jewish converts like Mendelssohn and Mahler. Such numbers have had to be cut out also from the programmes of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation, which is controlled by the Government. Jews are also being excluded from concerts given by the official concert societies.

This boycott, which is conducted systematically but silently, is supported by the official musical societies. The Academy of Singing, however, which has many liberal elements among its membership, has refused to give way to the Nazi campaign.

The introduction of anti-Semitic discrimination in art, however, appears now to have become an accomplished fact. All a tremendous pity indeed!

Such procedure makes the genuine music lover hold his hands up in despair as to the future of music in two countries in which it has hitherto received ideal inspiration.

# Current Communal Comments

By  
'Hamabit'

## Seamanship.

I have just heard of a movement being set on foot to establish a Jewish maritime school in Tel Aviv. The object is to train Jews for seafaring. Boys entering the school will be taught seamanship in all its branches from the very beginning. The subject of instructions will include navigation, harbour work, and the berthing of vessels, boat making and fishery.

It is felt that in these days, when so many careers are barred to Jews in all parts of the world there is great need for developing openings in Palestine, which a training in seamanship will make available for the Jewish youth. Imports and exports are increasing in that country. The Haifa Harbour is likely to be opened in the spring—probably by the Prince of Wales—and a general impetus will be given to seafaring activity in Eretz Israel.

The idea is an excellent one indeed and adds but a further facet to the development of Jewish national life in the homeland. It may be of interest for my readers to learn that there is in Tel Aviv a Marine Life Saving Station, as well as a Federation of Marine Sporting Clubs.

## A Dying Sect.

THE Samaritan High Priest who died a few weeks ago at Nablus at the age of seventy, was the ruler of what is now left of an ancient Jewish sect, numbering only one hundred and fifty souls. In spite of the tenacity this group has manifested throughout the ages, its doom is apparently close at hand. The proportion of males to females is about two to one and since they do not intermarry with outsiders it is only a question of a few generations before this most interesting sect will entirely disappear from the page of history.

It is fortunate that the records have been saved from oblivion through the careful study of a number of outstanding Jewish and Gentile scholars during the past three centuries. The late Samaritan High Priest will probably be succeeded by a *Shamos* or understudy, who has been drawn for the office of the *Kohan Gadol* and who receives his emolument from occasional gifts from visitors, to whom he shows the ancient synagogue and other places of interest to the sect.

There is a friendly relation existing between this small Samaritan colony and the new Jewish settlement in Palestine. This was evidenced by the fact that representatives of the Vaad Leumi and the Jewish Agency attended the funeral of the deceased High Priest.

Dr. Johnson and Shechita .

AN effort is being made to organise our *Kashruth* matters on a firm basis. I have already pointed out the seriousness of our local position regarding Shechita.

But here I will jot down an opinion respecting the method of slaughtering an animal—quite favourable to the Jewish side—which I have recently discovered in an unexpected source. Dr. Samuel Johnson, as many of my readers know, is one of the great figures in English literature, and whatever he wrote must be taken into serious consideration. This Dr. Johnson had a unique secretary, Boswell. The following is taken from Boswell's "Journal of a Tour in the Hebrides."

Boswell once spoke to Dr. Johnson on "Butchery," and attempted to test his knowledge on unusual matters. And this is what Dr. Johnson remarked:

"An ox is knocked down, and a calf is stunned; but a sheep has its throat cut, without anything done to stupefy it. The butchers have no view to the ease of the animals, but only to make them quiet for their own safety and convenience. A sheep can give them little trouble—Hales is of opinion that every animal should be blooded without having any blow being given to it, because it bleeds better."

Boswell: "That would be cruel."

Dr. Johnson: "No sir; *there is not much pain if the jugular vein is properly cut.*"

Dr. Johnson was correct in his standpoint. As an intelligent person, he realised that killing without pain is impossible, that stunning involved much greater cruelty than the rapid severing of the jugular vein. The latter immediately destroys communication between the different parts of the body.

## Not Her Type.

A LADY teacher at the Talmud Torah School had been talking about Moses and telling the children all about his greatness. She noticed a little girl in the back row paying but slight attention and talking to those around her. Whereupon the teacher reprimanded the child and ended by saying:

"I am sure that Moses would not have liked a little girl like you," to which the youngster responded in a disdainful tone:

"Oh, well, he's not my type, either."

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