

Kol Nidre

THE BEAUTIFUL, appealing melody of Kol Nidre will be heard in synagogues throughout South Africa on Tuesday evening next. The tune will re-echo through Jewish hearts irresistibly drawn together on the holiest of days in the Jewish Calendar. By a magnetic force, unequalled and unexplained, Jews who throughout the year seem divorced from their religion, prove their birthright on this day. Whether it be fear or whether it is contrition, they display their fealty to their Jewishness on this occasion.

Before the destruction of the Temple, *Yom Kippur* was an occasion for special sacrifices on the altar. But the destruction of the Temple meant the end of such customs. Prayer and charity, the rabbis taught, would take the place of sacrifice.

There can be no doubt of the generous disposition of the Jewish community here. Jews in South Africa are most generous-hearted. If there is an earnestness and humility in our prayer also, then, indeed, are we fulfilling the behests of the rabbis of old.

New Year Numbers

I AM intrigued at the number of publications issued in this country during the last week to celebrate the Rosh Hashonah festival. One after another, these enlarged and illustrated publications have reached me. On perusal, I feel we are lucky in having so many talented journalists and compilers. I wonder if it is realised that this year there have been no less than eleven New Year publications. Let me give them here:—

The S.A. Jewish Chronicle (Capetown); *The Zionist Record* (Johannesburg); *The Almanac* (Johannesburg); *The Jewish Guild Magazine* (Johannesburg); *Hasholom* (Durban); *The S.A. Menorah* (Capetown); *The Ivri* (Johannesburg); *The Rosh Hashonah Annual* (Johannesburg).

Besides the above, there are Rosh Hashonah issues of the two Yiddish papers in Johannesburg, the *African Jewish Newspaper* and the *Jewish Express*. Then there is finally a New Year number of the *Basad* (Johannesburg), the only Hebrew paper we have.

Whilst the above publications are a credit to the talent of writers and printers, it is worth while asking whether the production of so many special issues, for a small Jewish community like ours, is of advantage to the community as a whole.

It is in the natural order of things that each journal should convey the impression that it represents the Jewish community. Friendly non-Jews, who support the publications, are somewhat puzzled at the whole position.

I wonder whether it is not possible for some method to be adopted whereby a diminution in the total of Jewish New Year numbers could be effected.

Current Communal Comments

By
"Hamabit"

Max Kohler

A NOBLE son of Israel has been removed by the death of Dr. Max Kohler. He was a scion of a distinguished Jewish family. His father was the late Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, for many years president of the Hebrew Union College in America and foremost authority on Jewish theology of modern times. His maternal grandfather was the late David Einhorn, a great scholar and one of the earliest champions of reform in America. He was also a nephew of the late Dr. Emil G. Hirsch of Chicago Sinai congregation.

From his family Dr. Kohler inherited a profound love for learning and a passionate devotion to principle. He was highly respected and recognised by the legal profession and yet he will be remembered primarily by what he has done on behalf of the immigrants and on behalf of his people. He defended the rights of immigrants to America on all occasions and the newcomers to those shores found in him a solicitous friend and counsellor.

Dr. Kohler has left behind him a significant literary heritage. He wrote numerous essays dealing with American Jewish history—a subject upon which he was probably the foremost authority. He also wrote a number of treatises on the development of Jewish rights in many countries of the world. Only recently he prepared a valuable brochure on "The United States and German-Jewish Persecution—Precedents for Popular and Governmental Action" which was published by the American Jewish Committee.

The Prize Ring

THE OTHER evening I watched a Jewish lad battle his way to victory over a courageous opponent in the boxing ring at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg. Gerry Stone, who only arrived here a few years ago from Lithuania, is a sturdy fighter who is now in line for a South African championship at his weight.

In view of the large number of Jewish boxing fans on the Rand, it is of interest to realise that the greatest Jewish athletic triumphs during the past year have been in the prize ring. Four of the world's boxing titles are now held by our own men: Max Baer, heavyweight; Max Rosenbloom, light-heavyweight, and Barney Ross, lightweight and welterweight. Shasta Rotholz, a mite of 112 pounds from Poland, won the amateur featherweight championship of Europe and then went to Chicago, where he was the only member of the invading Polish team to win a bout in the Polish-Chicago Golden Glove matches.

Harry Mizler captured the lightweight championship of England. Maxie Berger, a 17-year-old Canadian lightweight, carried Canada's colours in the Empire Games in London. The triumphs of Baer and Ross overshadow the doings of the lesser fighters. It is interesting, too, to note that most of the persistent challengers of these two great battlers are Jewish lads.

Inquisition

IN the anxiety felt by every thinking Jew in contemplating the position of our people to-day, the fact has been lost sight of that the month of July last recorded the hundredth anniversary of the end of the Spanish Inquisition. If the Nazis, who are so eager to turn the clock of history backward, would only take a peep at the progenitor of intolerance—old Spain—they might derive from that a lesson which would prove invaluable if they would heed it.

On July 15, 1834, Maria Christina, Queen Mother of Spain, issued an edict finally abolishing the Inquisition and all its powers. Founded three and a half centuries before in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in order to combat Judaism, it had carried on its work with amazing thoroughness. It had become one of the richest corporations in the land; it had magnificent palaces, and it had been responsible for the burning at the stake of some thirty thousand souls, for no other sin than that of secret fidelity to the religion of their fathers.

It worked so effectively that at the end of the eighteenth century there was hardly a trace of Marranoism left in Spain, though it continued strong in Portugal. The institution was suppressed by Napoleon, but on his withdrawal it was re-established. It now displayed, on the whole, a tactful moderation, though it claimed one human victim as late as 1824. Liberalism and reaction succeeded one another in the government of Spain, and their policies were reflected in their attitude towards the Inquisition. For twenty years the struggle continued, until in 1834 the regency finally ruled for its suppression. This was finally put into effect, with a minimum of delay, on July 15, 1834.

So ended one of the most tragic episodes in the history of the Jews, and one of the most disgraceful in the annals of the human race.

No Photograph

A SHADCHAN went to see a prominent young advocate who had intimated that he was ready to consider entry into the state of matrimony. The young lawyer did not show very great interest in the various "attractions" of the clients submitted by the *shadchan*, until the latter said:

"I have a young lady who possesses five thousand pounds."

"May I see the young lady's photograph?" asked the advocate.

"My dear young man," replied the *shadchan*, "for five thousand pounds I never show a photograph."