

## Tabernacles.

THE *Succah*, as erected for the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles by orthodox Jews, is nowadays only a symbol. In Bible times it had a practical use. It was a crude erection intended for watchmen in gardens and vineyards, for cattle, and as a temporary protection against the sun for workers in the field. The dwelling in *Succahs* is an actual reminder of the agricultural economy of Jewish life as lived in the Holy Land. When that agricultural life ceased it is easy to understand how the *Succah* was linked up as a reminder of Israel's journey through the wilderness in particular and as a symbol for all times of God's protection of his people from the dangers that beset them in their loneliness amongst the nations of the world.

## The Four Plants.

THE Four Plants *Lulav* (palm branch), *Esrog* (citron), *Hadassim* (myrtle branches) and *Arovoth* (willow branches), which play so prominent a part in the Feast of Tabernacles ceremonial, have also been given various symbolical interpretations. A Jewish Rabbi has pointed out their resemblance to parts of the human body. The *Lulav*, the palm branch, with its leaves issuing from the trunk, are like the human frame. The *Lulav* must be perfect, straight and upright just as we must be in our behaviour and conduct. The *Esrog* is in shape like the human heart. According to the Law it must be flawless, stainless and perfect; even so must our hearts be without a flaw, perfect and pure. The *Hadassim*, the myrtles, with their small, almond-shaped leaves, resemble the human eye. The myrtle stands for kindness and gentleness; even so must our outlook be kindly and gentle. The *Arovoth*, the longer but narrower leaves of the willow, have the appearance of the human mouth. The willows, growing by the river side, draw their nurture from its refreshing waters, and even so must our mouths drink deep of the waters of the *Torah*.

## A Kosher Tax ?

REFERRED last week to the project for the establishment of a Board of Shechita in Johannesburg. In view of the serious position in which a number of local Jewish institutions find themselves, there is some talk of recommending the imposition of a tax of a half-penny on a pound of Kosher meat sold.

The idea is that such a tax would prove a source of funds for charitable institutions. In theory the idea is not an illogical one, but there are practical

# Current Communal Comments

By  
'Hamabit'

difficulties in establishing such a tax, enforcing it, and in administering it in a large community like Johannesburg. In the first place the administration of the tax would necessitate a communal authority invested with such legal powers as is normally only given to the local municipality. The possibilities of controversy over the personnel of such an authority is obvious. The definition of what is kosher meat and what are kosher shops; the method of collection; the distribution of funds after collection, are but a number of will nigh endless difficulties.

Then there is the question of submission of individuals to the imposition of a half-penny on every pound of meat they buy, and the reluctance of some shops to increase the price of their products to their customers in, what is after all a competitive market. There would also have to be some form of compulsion to prevent dealers from selling meat without a tax, and consequent litigation involving interference with the free exercise of trade.

The idea, therefore, must be voted as impractical as far as the Johannesburg Jewish community is concerned. It is one thing to appeal to the generosity of the Jewish individual to support an institution on the basis of the necessity for the continuation of Jewish communal life, but it is quite another thing to force every Jew to pay for an institution which he may consider he has a right to refuse to maintain. Any compulsion or force is repugnant to the spirit of Jewish life in this country.

## "A Jewish Mother."

ONE of the favourite leaders of the Nazis in Germany was Herr Wolfgang Zahlfeld. He enjoyed the friendship of Hitler himself because there was no more uncompromising anti-Semite among the Hitlerites than this Herr Zahlfeld. A bright future was predicted for him.

Then one fateful day Adolph Hitler was informed that Herr Zahlfeld had a Jewish mother. "But he is one of my best Jew-haters," exclaimed Hitler who bowed to the inevitable and ejected Zahlfeld from the Nazi camp. In this manner has Zahlfeld's political future been punctured.

The farce of this little tale, however, lies in the fact that Herr Zahlfeld's mother was not a Jewess at all, but that this "terrible" accusation was concocted against him by his enemies in order to eliminate him as a rival for promotion.

I am rather afraid that if ever the Nazis got into power, they will order the expulsion of Jesus Christ from the German translation of the Bible, because he happened to belong to the race, which every good Nazi must hate.

## Bruno Walter.

I note that Bruno Walter has been invited to go to America to conduct the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in a series of guest-concerts. In Walter the world has one of its greatest conductors and he is the dean of all German leaders. In spite of the prejudice against Jews in Germany to-day, Bruno Walter's position in the musical world is unassailable.

A well-known critic has recently said of him that he has a German devotion for strict classicism, for clearly defined forms, for preciseness and sharpness and clarity, which make all his performances authentic, scholarly and penetrating. Bruno has also a Jewish tenderness and warmth and passion which infuse into all of his classical performances a tempestuous vigour, a passionate beauty, an electricity and fire. A rare combination this indeed!

When in Germany some three years ago I saw Bruno Walter conduct a famous orchestra in Berlin and realised that his stature is a tremendous one. Walter is considered to-day the logical successor to the crown of Karl Muck.

Bruno Walter was born on September 15th, 1876, in Berlin, of strictly Jewish parents. Although they did not give him a rigorous Jewish training, he lived from his earliest days in a Jewish atmosphere and absorbed Jewish culture. He was ardently encouraged by his parents in his bent for music.

## Nothing in It.

A JEW was summoned some time ago to appear before the Russian Commissars.

"How old are you, Taverisch Cohen?" asked the Commissar.

"Forty," replied the Jew.

"Have your birth certificate with you?" rejoined the Commissar.

"Yes, here it is," replied Cohen.

The Commissar looked. "Why according to this, you were born fifty-two years ago."

"Yes, I know," replied Cohen, "but *die letzte zwelf jöhr heisst auch bei euch gelebt?*"