

MATTERS COMMUNAL

By Maimonides Junior.

MATZOTH FOR RUSSIA.

At the moment it is impossible to say whether or not the Jewish population of Soviet Russia were able to procure proper supplies of matzoth for the Festival of Passover. The last advices, per the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's correspondents, state that owing to the heavy customs tolls imposed by the Soviet authorities, only limited supplies could be sent into that country. It would therefore appear as if, owing in the first place to a shortage of flour in Russia, for baking the matzoth inside the country, and then the heavy dues on imported matzoth, our co-religionists would be deprived in large measure of the essential Passover fare. The movement, commenced some time back, outside Russia, to try to meet the needs of Jewry of the Soviet, so far as matzoth is concerned, has been condemned in violent language by the Yiddish Communists, and has sent the Yiddish Communist organ "Emess" into ecstasies of fury against the Jews outside the Soviet, as well as against the Jewish communities of Moscow and Leningrad, who dared to appeal for assistance. "They are counter-revolutionaries," shrieks the "Emess" in a leading article, in which it continues with greater energy than ever the offensive started some time ago by the Jewish Communists against the "importation of matzoth" movement.

FURIOUS COMMUNISTS.

The "Emess" vents its anger particularly upon the Yiddish Press of America, the "Day" and the "Jewish Morning Journal," which have been raising contributions from among their readers for the Russian matzoth fund. "They start with this pretended religious pity for the Jews of Russia," the "Emess" complains, and they pass on to open and unashamed incitement against Soviet Russia. "But the movement," it says, "is not confined to the Jews abroad. The counter-revolution is fed from Moscow, Leningrad and other Jewish communities. It is the leaders of the Jewish communities in Russia, Broide, Clemens and the rest who keep the foreign Press informed of the conditions in the Soviet countries, slandering our Government and aiding our enemies."

"We have to do here with uninvited benefactors and intermediaries meddling in our affairs," the "Emess" concludes, "with people whose faces always contrive to appear kosher and gentlemanly, while their sleeves are rolled up ready to assist in the vilest activities of the Jewish counter-revolution." The

movement to provide matzoth for the Jews of Russia is denounced as violently in many other Jewish Communist quarters, and the "Kommunist" Club has adopted a formal resolution criticising the Soviet authorities for giving permission for the import of matzoth into Russia, and demanding that the permission should be withdrawn.

POLISH RITUAL MURDER OUTCRIES.

With the approach of Passover, ritual murder allegations cropped up in various parts of Poland, but in every case the end was the same. It shows, however, how easily the peasant is gulled into believing the "blood ritual" stories which are spread among them by anti-Jewish propagandists, but, notwithstanding the manner in which it is shown how utterly ridiculous are the stories, the agitation crops up regularly, always with the possibility of serious consequences for the Jewish communities. The incidents which I am able to quote occurred in Vilna and in Pluk, in the district of Siedlice. In both cases things looked extremely ugly for a time. In the one, however, strong police action in dispersing the mob which had gathered, and in the other the appearance of the ritual murder "victim," had saved the situation. The Vilna incident was started by a Jewish hairdresser, named Fillel Nigus, who was walking along the Wolsks Street, unintentionally jostling a little Christian girl, who fell on the pavement and cut herself, so that some blood came. A mob collected, and Nigus was accused of having attempted to draw blood from the child for ritual purposes. Nigus managed to escape into a neighbouring restaurant, but the mob besieged the restaurant and demolished the furniture, hunting everywhere for Nigus, who had concealed himself in the cellar. He lay hidden there for two hours until the police came and dispersed the mob. No arrests were made.

"VICTIM" RETURNS.

In Pluk the local estate owner, Pogowski, dismissed a number of his agricultural workers, and they obtained employment with the Jews of the village, who number in all seven families. One of the workers who was employed by a Jew named Abraham Dvosh, suddenly left the village. The Christian population immediately spread a story that Dvosh had sold him for 20 zlotys to the town Jews to be killed for ritual purposes for Passover. The police refused to take action against Dvosh, de-

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Our London Letter.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

Fleet Street,
April 12, 1929.

PRAISE FOR HEBREW UNIVERSITY.

During his tour of the Middle East to investigate the educational and cultural institutions there, Sir Denison Ross, Director of the School of Oriental Studies in London, paid a visit to the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus. On his return here a few days ago he was interviewed by the "Observer" and in the course of his "talk" he said his main interest in Palestine was the Hebrew University. He had, he said, nothing but the highest admiration for that institution. All that it lacked at present was students. But its potentialities were enormous. It boasted professors of immense learning as well as an excellent library. (It contained, for example, all Goldzieher's books.) The work that it was doing in forming a concordance of Arabic poetry up to the end of the Ummayyad period was splendid. It was an astonishing experience for his wife and for himself to hear, when sitting with young and old of both sexes, Arabic literature explained in modern Hebrew. The resources of modern Hebrew, by the way, were worth noting. Professor Roth, of Manchester, who had recently gone to Palestine to deliver a series of lectures, told him that there was nothing in modern philosophy which could not be perfectly expressed in modern Hebrew. He believed that the Hebrew University must have a great future.

THE "CHRONICLE" MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

More than 400 competitors, whose ages range from six to sixty, are taking part in the "Jewish Chronicle" Musical Festival at the Kingsway Hall. The Festival is in its second year, and is stated to be the first organised only for Jews and Jewesses. Among its objects are to stimulate Jewish music in its widest sense and to encourage the development of a specifically Jewish music. Some of the greatest musical judges, including Sir Frederic Cowen, Mr. Stanley Roper, of the Trinity College of Music, Mr. Granville Bantock, Mr. W. G. Whittaker, and Mr. Maurice Jacobson, are adjudicating. Every branch of music is represented in the Festival from the Sacred Synagogue Chazanuth (male voices only) to the juvenile piano-forte competition. "We want," Mr. Alexander Kraut, the organising secretary, said in a Press interview "to create—in a natural way—a Jewish musical atmosphere that

will help and inspire our executive musicians—our composers of the future. To further that idea, Mr. Louis Sterling is offering a prize of 100 guineas for the best orchestral piece. As direct outcome of this Festival also we hope to start a Jewish musical society. Jewish music has never been organised before. Collectively it has always been an unknown quantity. In a word, we want to nationalise our music—give some basis to work on."

Mr. Maurice Jacobson, one of the judges, said: "I am amazed at the high standard of piano playing here. It is really splendid. I have no hesitation in predicting a great future for some of these aspiring artists. The festival, although only a year old, is every bit as good as others I have attended, including even the Enfield and the Bedford Festivals." The Festival concludes to-morrow night.

EINSTEIN'S THEORY ATTACKED.

According to Cardinal O'Connell, who spoke recently at a communion breakfast at the New England College Catholic Clubs in Boston (U.S.A.), the Einstein theory led to atheism. In his attack the Cardinal maintained that it was nothing short of an attempt at muddying the waters, so that innocent students could be led into the realm of speculative thought. "I do not wish to accuse Einstein," he added, "of deliberately wishing to destroy the Christian faith, but I half suspect that if we wait longer we will find that ultimately he will unquestionably reveal himself in this attitude." Few people, the Cardinal concluded, understood the Einstein theory, and he doubted whether Einstein himself did.

Without putting Cardinal O'Connell in the same boat with the militant anti-Semites of Germany, who have been angered at the wide recognition given to Professor Einstein, particularly in connection with his fiftieth birthday last month, his remarks sound very similar, however, to those used by the German anti-Semitic publications. The united front presented by the enthusiastic Relativists, they wrote, is a proof that we have to deal in the case of Einstein with an immensely over-estimated fashionable lion. Real pioneers of human thought have always been martyrs whose teaching obtained recognition only centuries after they were dead. Very few of those who are so enthusiastic about Einstein understand his theory, and we doubt whether Einstein himself does.

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DEWAR'S "I.I." WHISKY.

As Good To-day as in The Good Old Days.