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## The Sinai Pulpit.

At a special meeting of the Sinai congregation held last week, it was resolved by three-fourths majority that the Sunday services should not be abolished, and that the duty of the future minister of that congregation be to hold such services. Should the Sinai congregation be fortunate enough to procure the ministerial service of a man with all the qualifications which are set forth in Mr. Felsenthal's resolutions, his labor will be hard in the extreme. Indeed it is hard to comprehend how one man may be able to fulfill all the functions which the adopted resolutions put upon him. Empty talk, trite phrases and truisms, superficial thought and scholarship will not do for the Sinai congregation. And a thoughtful scholar and orator must have time and calmness of spirit to work out his discussions on ethics and history. All the aggravation of spirit which such a man can stand, the rabbi of the Sinai congregation will have in representing its mission and principles before the outside world, for men like those which this congregation requires, find themselves involved in public discussions in the press before they think of it, and very often against their will. The party bickerings, which are unavoidable in corporations of highly intelligent standard, also have their effect on the minister, and cause him many an hour of trouble and of profound reflection. Then the Sabbath-school with its burdens, which are often heavier than those of the pulpit; and many chronic evils at the hands of congregational officers, officials, and officious persons—all this reflects on the minister more or less, directly or indirectly, and takes time, and causes diversion from study. With Moses we may wish *יקר אל ה' ויהי* "may the God of the spirits of all flesh appoint a man for this congregation," to suit its requirements and taste, to satisfy the progressive element, and not to displease the others; to be a master of oratory and a close logical thinker; to have broad catholic views of the present state of affairs, and to possess sound learning to connect his views with the history of the past; to be a man of unflinching courage in advancing liberal ideas and sustaining them—and, at the same time able to take care of the practical affairs of his station and position. But it would not be out of place for the members of the Sinai congregation to think of the difficulties, which the position of their minister involves. And if they procure the services of a man to suit them, they may also think of their duties to give him the moral support he will need.

## The Jews of Beyrout.

We left Jaffa and the Holy Land, regretfully, behind us at eventide. There, we heard, from our estimable and hospitable host, of one of those acts of politeness and kindly courtesy on the part of Sir Moses Montefiore which contribute so much to endear the name of one who so worthily upholds the dignity of Judaism, to all who have the good fortune to know him. Residing for thirteen days in the house of our host, on the occasion of his recent visit to the Holy Land, he noticed that the daughter of the house, who had presented him

with a beautifully embroidered *Tephilin* bag, was a musician. Not content with sending her father a valuable gift, he sent the young lady a handsome piano, and a box of musical publications, which derive additional value from the fact of their having belonged to the late Lady Montefiore, and has since, on the festive occasions of Purim, kept her supplied with the latest music. Small wonder, then, that the inhabitants of the house hold him in affectionate regard.

Jaffa fades away in the distance, and we cannot refrain from giving expression to the hope that it may be, one day, supplied with an adequate port and rail, or tramway, communication with the Holy City; and a night's journey brings us to Beyrout. A more magnificent sight than the entrance to Beyrout cannot well be imagined, even by those who are familiar with the beautiful Bay of Naples. In the background tower the majestic mountains of Lebanon, their summits as yet innocent of winter snow. There dwell the Druses (said to be the ancient Philistines), whose religion is still a jealously-guarded secret, and the Maronites, earliest of Christians. In front is the town, sparkling in the sunrise, looking almost as if its houses were out of cardboard and painted for effect. In Beyrout, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Titus caused many Jews to fight as gladiators, against each other, in the amphitheatre. Modern Beyrout is a town of some 80,000 inhabitants, and, though but a night's journey, by sea, from primitive and neglected Palestine, its streets are clean and fairly paved, and there are traces of advanced civilization everywhere manifested. The environs are exceptionally beautiful, bright and romantic, and the climate is equable and healthy. There dwell at present some one thousand Jews (or about two hundred families), many of whom are well-to-do, and most of whom are above poverty. They have but one synagogue, and that hardly worth mentioning, but the rich have synagogues in their houses, which are open to all. Of educational or other institutions, for the general poor there are none, but the well-directed efforts in the cause of education of Mr. Zaki Cohen deserve more than a passing notice.

This gentleman, seeing that general education amongst the Jews of the East was woefully neglected, resolved to consecrate his life to supplying the want, as far as in him it lay. At first his attempt was unsuccessful, his whole fortune being sacrificed (for he lost ten thousand francs in the first year), but, nothing daunted, he borrowed fresh capital and started again. Happily, his efforts have been crowned with complete success, and the school is now a self-supporting concern. Thither boys from Smyrna, Constantinople, Jaffa and Beyrout, are sent by those who can afford it, the charge being but from three to five hundred francs per year for board and general education, comprising, besides the usual routine, instruction in French, German, Italian, English, Hebrew and Arabic and their branches. With truly charitable intent, Mr. Zaki Cohen admits, for every ten paying boys, one poor boy, gratuitously, thus carrying out the commandment of the tithe in its happiest interpretation. Anyone who wishes to send a poor boy there is also at liberty to do so at a reduced and unremunerative charge, and in a city where neither the Alliance Israelite, nor the Anglo-Jewish Association have yet seen fit to do anything for the cause of Jewish education, this fact needs only to be brought to their notice for them to avail themselves of it. In this college, called *תלמוד תורה* the instruction appears to be of a more than ordinarily efficient character. There is a fine garden, a pretty synagogue, ample class-rooms and dining-rooms, dormitories with marble floors, clean and well ventilated, which are quite refreshing to look at, especially when one is fresh from the inspection of the ill-kept schools of Jerusalem. At the time of our visit, which was totally unexpected, the school was in full working order, and the pupils seemed most healthy and well-cared for. The situation is exceptionally bright and picturesque, on the outskirts of the town, at the foot of the Lebanon range of mountains. In the reception-room was the photograph and autograph of Midhat Pasha, who had visited and expressed his approbation of the school, and the *Vanity Fair* cartoon of Sir Albert Sassoon. We wish Mr. Zaki Cohen every success in his useful and enlightened enterprise; and express the hope that his present complement of ninety boys may increase largely and rapidly.

At Cyprus, dreary, lonesome and grim looking, there is nothing of Jewish interest. At the first blush of the English occupation, crowds of Jews, as of other nationalities, flocked there but the place has, so far, proved a disappointment, and they have left. At present there are but ten Jewish families at Larnaca, and two or three at Nicosia; where, be it remarked, the chief officer of police is an Israelite.

At Rhodes, with its quaint, and perfectly preserved mediæval relics of the Knights-Templar; its castellated harbor and its drawbridges, mingling strangely

with the modern Turkish buildings; and its fine Roman and Greek antiquities; the Jews are much in evidence. The boatmen who rowed us ashore were Jews; the guide who showed us round was a Jew; and the men who came on board to sell curiosities were Jews. There are about 500 families, or about 2,500 Jewish souls on the island. They have six synagogues and a school for Hebrew only, the children, however, attending the general schools. They appear to be actively engaged in trade, and fairly, though not markedly, prosperous.—*Cor. Jewish Chronicle*

## The Weekly Review.

The *Russkiy Yevrey* strongly advocates the institution of a rabbinical centre of authority on religious matters. Our cotemporary seems as yet undecided about the definite form and manner of that authority which, as it seems to him, the Russian Israelites are greatly in need of. Something like the chief-rabbinat of England would probably answer his desire. The rise of various congregations, in which he sees with great sorrow signs of disintegration, is due—he says—to the personal ambition, or dissatisfaction of the unruly heads of congregational members; they are displeased with the work of the mother congregation, and start new congregations according to their own notions. This causes the spread of indifference and irreligiosity; but a central rabbinical authority would counteract it. With characteristic simplicity (quite in contrast with his sagacious remarks on other subjects) our St Petersburg cotemporary says: "Why there should be two different kinds of Jewish synagogues or how the new mode of worship with regularly trained choirs and according to reform principles has sprang into existence?—we could not tell. This state of affairs exists and probably it has its *raison d'être*."

In America we can hardly appreciate such a manner of reasoning. Centralisation, and a blind faith in a *raison d'être* which in the sense used by our cotemporary, is but another name for fatalism, are truly Russian characteristics. In religious matters the free exercise of thought, as well as the aspiration of managing affairs according to the rule of reason, grappling with problems of life and their *raisons d'être* by dint of reason—should be the rule and guiding principle.

In the Budget of the United Synagogue of London, occurs an item of expense of £576 paid to men that attend *Minyan* in the various synagogues. The *Jewish World* comments upon it, as follows:

"If the charge for *Minyan* men is not an evil in the accounts of the United Synagogue, to the community generally it is a disgrace. It is a disgrace for two reasons: for the reason that paying people to pray—to make a quorum, in fact, in order to address one's God—revolts the most superficial sentiment of morality, and also because we do not believe that in any district the charge is necessary. An appeal is made in the Treasurer's Report to local Secretaries to whip-up their acquaintances in order to increase the number of seatholders in the constituent synagogues. Why is not an appeal addressed to them to endeavor to collect voluntary *Minyanim*? Even in Bayswater, where the charge is highest, we believe that very little exertion would be required to bring together a sufficient number of young men who, under normal circumstances, have so much time on their hands that they only commence the various operations of their toilet about 10 o'clock in the forenoon. We would recommend that a *Minyan* mission to these young men be established amongst the local Secretaries; and if by this means they are able to save £576 which the *Minyanim* now cost per annum, we are confident that, whilst removing a moral stigma from the community, they will also be doing financial good, for all their exertions to increase the roll of seatholders would not produce so large a monetary accession.

The same "Budget" shows a decrease of marriage fees on account of the lessening of the number of marriages during the year. Our cotemporary's remarks on this point are highly characteristic:

"That the number of marriages in the community should have decreased, is no doubt financially to be regretted; but it must be remembered, now that most catastrophes are being ascribed to commercial depression, that a diminution in the number of matrimonial al-

liances is one of those evils which may be very properly accounted for by bad trade; for when homes have to be furnished and a number of other expenses have to be incurred, something more alluring than a reduced marriage fee has to be offered in counterbalance of trade losses."

Lippe's "Address Calendar" of all friends and patrons of Jewish literature, the addresses of living authors and bibliographical notices of their works, has reached the fourth issue, comprising the names, in alphabetical order, from "Lebrecht" to "Pinner." Two more issues are to complete the work, which will be a valuable book of reference for the book-trade as well as for the students of modern Jewish literature. The publishers request all ministers and authors whose notices are not complete in the "lexicon," to send them complete information about themselves. We are curious to learn what many of our American "giants of mind" will have to say about themselves. We shall, certainly, in time, find the "lexicon" an interesting study and draw from it pictures for our "Kaleidoscope."

Says the *Am. Hebrew*:

"The endeavor to prove that commerce is permitted on the Sacred day (in direct contravention of the fourth commandment), is *a priori* absurd."

Our cotemporary is correct. It is an absurdity to say that the writing of two letters of the Hebrew alphabet on Sabbath is prohibited as "a principal labor," while commercial pursuits on Sabbath are in themselves not prohibited, and only interdicted as *אגודת* "a hedge around the law." It is an absurdity. But how did the orthodox *Am. Hebrew* come thus to place himself in this matter upon the rational standpoint, and to denounce as "absurd" the Talmudists and Casuists who endeavored to enact such laws and to prove their legality? If he will only open his *Rambam*, *Hilchoth Shabbath* xxiii., 12, he will find the following:

"Writing is one of the thirty-nine principal labors.... therefore it is prohibited to lend and to borrow, to buy and to sell, to hire and to lease, *for thereby one might be caused to write*."

"The *Am. Hebrew* denounces the great *Rambam* and the Talmud which he extracts as *absurd*! Indeed, American Jewish orthodoxy is *sui generis*,

The London *Saturday Review*, apropos of the agitations in Germany, devotes some thoughts to the state of the Jews in Europe. It claims that "the present position of the Jewish race is altogether anomalous. The Jews are at once the most national and the most cosmopolitan race on the earth: but they neither found a State of their own, nor do they become absorbed in the population of the countries they live in. It seems difficult to believe that this contradiction can be a permanent one. The scandalous oppression under which they long suffered forced them to be a caste apart. It was as futile for them to hope for a genuine national life of their own as it was to hope to share the national life of others. Their enfranchisement puts the alternative before them to do either the one or the other; and the one or the other they will in the natural course of things do. It is obvious that the race is in a state of transition; and all final or dogmatic judgments about it are as unreasonable as they are impertinent. But it needs no prophet to see that the sentiment of nationality, which has attained in our days a force hitherto unknown to the world, must inevitably turn the scale one way or the other. Either some sudden impulse, of which at present there are few signs, will lead the race to attempt the task, whether possible or impossible, of founding a Jewish State in the East, or else continued intercourse with the Christian world, the continued sharing of its public life and continued intermarriages between Jews and Christians, will gradually lead to the absorption of the people by the other nations of the earth. No one but themselves will venture to say which would be the better alternative; but the latter certainly appears the more likely. But it is probable that they will long hover between the two paths, too full of individuality to be easily absorbed, and with too little political cohesion for any great national enterprise to be feasible. And for countries like Germany, where they are very numerous, or like Roumania, where they live among a much less energetic people, the results of this dubious position will not be without inconvenience, either to themselves or to those among whom they live. It is idle to complain of what is inevitable, and of what is very largely the result of Christian misdeeds in the past."

## Outrages Upon the Jews of Morocco.

A Reuter's telegram, dated Gibraltar, January 31st, says: The *Gibraltar Guardian* publishes a letter announcing that serious disorders have occurred at Fez. The Moors attacked the Jews, wounded several, and, amidst shouts of joy, killed a man 70 years of age by pouring petroleum over his body, and setting fire to it while he was still alive. Two Frenchmen were among the wounded.

The *Jewish Chronicle* has received the following details of the horrible occurrence:

During the evening of the 15th of January, some Jewish children were, as usual, at play in a public thoroughfare near the Jewish quarter at Fez, when they were attacked by a Mahomedan, one of them being seriously injured. A Jew, a naturalized French subject, who happened to be passing at the time, seeing the injured child, and wishing to have the Mussulman punished for his cruelty, seized him with a view of bringing him before the authorities. On arriving at the Palace of Justice he found the gates closed, in accordance with the custom which prevails when the Sultan passes the place. Whilst awaiting the re-opening of the gate, the crowd of Mussulmen became more and more numerous. The Jew still kept a tenacious hold of his prisoner, but the latter, emboldened by the presence of his coreligionists, complained that his custodian had ill-treated him, and that the behavior of the Jews had become unbearable. The Mahomedans thereupon precipitated themselves upon the Jew, whom they struck with sticks and stones. He only escaped certain death by giving some money to a Mahomedan, who covered him with his person, and thus enabled him to escape. He had barely time to rush into the first open door which he espied; it was that of the prison.

The Mahomedans, who were furious at seeing the Jew escape from their clutches, followed after the Jews, who, on the close of their daily occupations, were about to enter their quarter. Several of them reached their homes seriously injured and were compelled to take to their beds. Others escaped unhurt only through having been able to outstrip their pursuers in the general stampede. But a poor Jew, seventy years old, named Abraham Elalouf, a highly respected member of the community at Fez, was unable to run on account of his advanced age. He was attacked by the Mussulmen, who soon killed him by the force of their blows; they then trampled his body under their feet, so that his bowels protruded. But even then the miscreants were not satisfied with their work. They collected a quantity of combustible materials, whilst the shopkeepers in the neighborhood brought mats and wood. Others then poured petroleum on the corpse and set it on fire.

Meanwhile the Jews, expecting every moment to see the Mussulmen arriving in their Ghetto in order to make it a prey for massacre and pillage, hastened to close the gates. So great was the terror, that about thirty Jewish women, who were in a state of pregnancy, miscarried. During the whole of the night, no one dared go into the street, in order to ascertain what had become of the unfortunate old man, and it was only in the morning that they found his body, half burnt, and half devoured by dogs. An influential Jew presented himself on the following day before the Palace of the Sultan, and demanded justice. He only received a derisive answer, and was told that as far as he was personally concerned, he had nothing to fear.

The Jews of Fez are in an extremely critical condition, they fear an invasion of their quarter, accompanied by massacre and pillage. The Mahomedans, on their part have not ceased from tormenting the Jews, and their attitude is the more provoking since their crimes have as yet remained unpunished.

This outrage is a sample of what may be expected, should the threatened withdrawal of European protection in Morocco be carried into effect. The Spanish Government has already withdrawn its protection from the Jews, who had hitherto enjoyed this privilege, and it is believed that the outrages at Fez are the first fruits of this withdrawal.

Accounts of the murder of Jews in Morocco continue still to reach us. In addition to the horrible outrage at Fez, we learn that three weeks ago at Tazza a Moor killed a respectable Jew, in the open streets with a pistol shot. No efforts whatever have been made to punish the murderer.

## Semitic Literature in 1879.

From the Athenæum.

We have to record this year mostly continuations of important works, a great number of interesting monographs, but few new books on Semitic literature of real importance. The greatest activity has been shown in the Hebraico-Rabbinical branch, which we shall place, therefore, at the head of our review.

*Hebrew and Rabbinical*.—Rabbi R. N. Rabinovitch has brought out the tenth volume of his "Varia Lectiones,"