

not know, and furthermore does not care to know those laws, isn't it equivalent to a pious Jew paying a butcher for "Kosher" meat and receiving prohibited, or "Treife" meat instead? Wouldn't the reformed rabbi admit that the butcher has cheated doubly; he cheated his customer out of money and also cheated his soul at the same time.

The argument is advanced by many that the officiating at the ceremony has nothing to do with them personally. They hire a hall, they say, that includes the catering, the music, and a marriage officiator is thrown into the bargain, free of charge; one who is promised to satisfy all those present. This service goes with the hall. "Well," they will argue, as long as we don't have to pay, we have no say in the matter and have to take what we get." We believe that anyone arguing like that betrays lack of understanding. For those people certainly understand that the hallkeeper cannot bring a rabbi to the hall to officiate for this reason; some few of the guests assembled, even if it is only two or three, will undoubtedly ask the rabbi, should he be present, whether the food served is strictly kosher, even if the immediate family, who hired the hall, failed to inquire about that beforehand. The rabbi will not be able to answer in the affirmative, for he knows that the hall-keeper cannot be depended upon for kosher food. On the contrary, there are some hall-keepers who are positively non-kosher and who at one time were in the "treife" catering business. How could one depend on them, then, to prepare the meal in strict accordance with the Jewish dietary laws, things for which the non-Jewish cooks and waitresses certainly cannot be depended upon?

Competition in the catering business has become so keen of late that the hall-keepers in their efforts to reduce prices have to depend for their profits entirely on serving non-kosher food, which is much cheaper than kosher food. The rabbi at the wedding, when asked about the food, cannot say that it is kosher and he must answer that he does not know. And then very often the future in-law, who pays for the wedding, becomes very much irritated and says to the rabbi; "What do you mean 'You don't know?'" When I hired the hall I asked the owner whether the catering will be kosher, and he assured me that he is so strict in that respect that even the rabbi himself eats at the wedding." Then the rabbi is obliged to say to the irate man: "My dear sir, when the hall-keeper told you that his hall was beautiful, you didn't take him at his word, but you went and inspected every nook and corner yourself to make sure that there will be plenty of room for dancing, etc; when he promised you the best food you didn't believe his so easily, but you had a menu made up and presented to you for your approval. Even the number of musicians and every other detail was definitely agreed upon before you closed the deal; but when it came to the question of kosher food you displayed implicit faith and confidence in the hall-keeper's say-so. This goes to show that you do not care sufficiently, honestly about Kashruth, or you would have consulted a rabbi about that beforehand."

Some rabbi, in his indignation, might go further and say: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself. The wedding is costing you hundreds of dollars, you have invited so many friends, and no doubt there are among them religious Sabbath-observing Jews, whose homes are strictly kosher. You want them all to wish you luck and happiness on this important occasion, and as a reward you are selling their souls and feed them "treife" food, which they, in their innocence, devour."

Most naturally, a dialogue of this sort will not be very pleasant to the hall-keeper, so why should he engage an orthodox rabbi to perform the ceremony, when he can get hold of a cantor, or another "officiator" and rest assured that everything will go off smoothly? The cantor will enjoy a hearty meal with the rest of the crowd, if he is only invited to the table, and even the choir will