

A HISTORY OF SHECHITA IN AMERICA

[EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK SHEHITA]

By Jeremiah J. Berman 1941

NOTES

You will find in this booklet passages from what has been the terrible and tragic history of the Kashrut of meats in America.

Sadly, today the problems are not any better, but Jews have become numb to the faults of those involved in the field of Shechitah and everything is done in a more concealed fashion.

Read for yourself about the pitfalls in Kashrut in New York. There were problems already more than 100 years ago.

Shechita depends on fear of heaven and nowadays before the coming of Mashiach those who fear Hashem have become small in number (As brought in the Mishna of Sotah at the end)

We hope that those fearful of Hashem will distance themselves from eating foods of doubtful Kashrut.

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INTRODUCTION

THE KASHRUT SUPERVISION IN ALL JEWISH COMMUNITIES

The Jewish community dares not leave its Shochet to his own devices. It is to be feared that the slaughterer will pass non-kosher meat as kosher, especially if the Shochet also acts as a meat dealer or as the hireling of a meat dealer. The community removes its Shochet from any financial interest in the meat he produces; it organizes itself to employ the Shochet as its own paid, controlled, and protected official. As soon as the shochet becomes a communal officer, the production of kosher meat becomes a community monopoly. The community then uses this monopoly to establish its authority upon all Jews within its jurisdiction, as well as to

collect a tax from kosher meat. The revenues enable the community to engage overseers over the meat shops, to maintain the rabbi and the teachers, and to assist the poor. The Shechitah tax, known variously in different countries as gabela, as bakdish, or as In Czarist Russia as korobka, is a feature of the typical Jewish community. (page 2)

THE SATAN FIGHTS AGAINST THE G-D FEARING JEWS IN ORDER TO FEED NEVELOT AND TEREFOOT TO THE JEWS

Many communities desired a more drastic corrective measure. They were not satisfied that the slaughterer receive some payment for terefah, but wanted him to receive a fee for terefah equal to that given for the killing of beasts pronounced kosher. Rabbi Isaac Lampronti (Italy, 1679-1756) reported how in his city of Ferrara some of the people sought the adoption of the equal payment plan and how they failed to secure it. He wrote, "In the city of Ferrara we stood up to be counted in the great Yeshivah and decided to forbid and to hold guilty any shochet who would accept greater compensation for animals declared kosher than for those declared terefah. We did not succeed, however, because of those powerful persons who listen not to the word of the Lord and who, do not bow their shoulders to the yoke of the commandments of our God. 146 (page 63)

Rabbi Kluger enlarged upon the point in the next case. A slaughterer had given his word and hand to the pacht men (holders of the meat tax lease) that he would not slaughter in their territory. Subsequently he did slaughter in the 'villages within the proscribed boundaries. Rabbi Kluger, who upheld the disqualification of the shochet, wrote, "We may not treat the failings of shochetim lightly. In earlier generations, when most of the world was God-fearing and truth-seeking, a rabbi might have been lenient with a slaughterer in a responsum or in a reprimand. A shochet then might have transgressed because of a desire to make a livelihood, but his conscience still troubled him; the thought of breaking the laws of Shechitah appalled him. He knew too that were he to transgress a second time no man would stand up for him. Not so now. The earth is sinful, may the good God forgive. Every shochet now is like the most lax among the most lax. When he is called to account he calls upon his family, his friends, and the people who love falsehood, and they come to his aid; they rush eagerly to strengthen the hand of deceit. Therefore we must exercise the greatest care in our time to see that we select shochetim who are more pious than

those before us, and for the slightest infraction to drive them out of their calling. According to the older writings one was permitted to eat meat slaughtered by a thief. Now it is universally recognized that a thief is to be suspected of violating any law in the Torah. (PAGE 122)

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THE SCANDAL OF BLEEDING CALVES IN NEW YORK

The evil of decentralized Shechitah made possible the scandal which disgraced New York in the period between 1854 and 1862. Reference is made to the improper practice of bleeding animals preliminary to slaughter. This practice, denounced by the leading rabbinical authorities of the day, was for a time continued in New York because it had the approval of a single rabbi and his shochet. The background of the case was that calves, destined for killing in New York, used to be shipped from great distances on open boats. While the creatures stood exposed to the sun en route they would oft times contract a malady which could be relieved only by bleeding. Blood would be drawn from the necks of the sick animals. Some people questioned the permissibility of bleeding a creature before slaughtering, and so addressed themselves to European rabbis. Rabbi Solomon Adler of London sanctioned the procedure, and from Poland it was learned that the veterinarians there were required by the law of the land to bleed the cattle. It was furthermore brought out that a shochet in Stavisk under the supervision of Rabbi Abraham Stavisk had allowed it, but then only because it was performed by an expert. In 1854 the shochet Aaron Zevi Friedman landed in New York and was shocked to note the practice of bleeding cattle. He conveyed his misgivings to Rabbi Judah Mittleman in New York, and together they wrote to Rabbi Joseph Saul Nathanson of Lemberg on the subject. His answer explained that the usage had already been approved by Rabbi Moses Schreiber (Hatam Sofer) and by Rabbi Abraham Zevi of Pitrokov, and furthermore, that in Europe cattle were bled. "Only this," warned Rabbi Nathanson "it must be done by an expert."

Rabbi Mittleman and Friedman misapplied the permission to bleed animals before slaughtering. It was granted by the European scholars only in order to relieve sick animals, Mittleman and Friedman permitted the vicious practice of bleeding animals extensively, in order that after killing, their meat should come out white and tender. By sanction of the rabbi and

shochet, cattle would be bled for several successive hours before being led to slaughter. The process was followed in both summer and winter. A wound would be made in the animal and kept open until the blood no longer spurted and began to drip. Then, to save the creature's life the wound would be stopped. By this process cattle were so weakened that in most cases they could not eat, and had to be assisted in order to rise. When Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore and the rabbis of Cincinnati heard of this practice they branded it as contrary to Jewish law. In 1858 the usage was made a subject of inquiry of the rabbis of Jerusalem. They also forbade it, explaining that in bleeding an animal there was the danger of rendering it *Nebelah*. Still the practice went on. When Rabbi Moses Aaronson arrived in New York City in 1862, he was shocked to see that many Jews were eating the meat of cattle that had been severely bled before being killed. He reopened the arguments against the illegal usage, pointing out that there was the danger of drawing the life blood as well as that of perforating the gullet, and also that the procedure brought pain to the animal. He invited the opinions of Rabbi Zevi Meeklenberg of Koenigsberg, Rabbi Samson R. Hirsch of Frankfort-on-the-Main, Rabbi Eleazar Hurwitz of Vienna, Rabbi Solomon Kluger of Brody, Rabbi Isaac Llob of Wurtzberg, Rabbi Samuel Salant and his religious court in Jerusalem Rabbi Abraham Samuel of Russia, and Rabbi Mordecai Ettinger. The replies were unanimous in denunciation of the practice.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE PRIVATE SHOCHET IN AMERICA THE PRIVATE EMISSARY OF THE SATAN

The anarchical state of Shechitah affairs made possible about the middle of the century the emergence in New York of the private shochet. This was a man who in the overwhelming majority of instances had received his original authorization to slaughter from a proper source, a rabbi. He hired himself out, however, not to an organized community or synagogue, but to a private dealer, a slaughterhouse operator or butcher. In that capacity he was not an independent religious functionary, as the Jewish law had planned him to be, but a paid hireling of the butcher with a financial interest in his work. The private shochet represented a clear and gross violation of Jewish law. The illegal private shochet who began to infest New York soon after 1850, and supplanted all synagogue shochetim before the year 1875, was thus characterized by an anonymous writer in a New York Anglo-Jewish publication early in 1863: "The shochetim who in this city

officiate in that capacity are neither authorized by the congregations nor by the ministers; some have probably certificates from European Rabbis, but some are never reexamined to ascertain whether they are still competent to perform those duties. The butchers, Christians as well as Jews, are thus made the only judges of their qualifications, for they are the men who employ, pay and discharge the shochetim.

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PRIVATE SHECHITAH

Private Shechitah, the system under which the shochet performs slaughtering as the paid employee of the private butcher or packer, is the commonest arrangement in the United States. It is found in fully one-half the communities reported in this study, and is the rule without exception in the largest cities. This clearly improper system is unknown in the Old World, and did not exist in America before the year 1860.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THE MEAT RETAILERS, THE BUTCHER SHOPS

Decentralized Shechitah control in New York made possible also the badly conducted meat shop. Kosher meats were vended in stores most of which were owned by gentiles, and in which terefah meat was also sold. The sides of kosher beef bore lead seals, but when the large sections were cut up the smaller pieces became indistinguishable from the terefah pieces lying about in the place. To quote the same writer: "We see, on entering the butcher's shop, that there are several heads of cattle offered for sale some kosher (at least marked so), others terefah, and as long as they are not cut up we may distinguish one from the other, but what reliance can be placed on the word of the butcher's boy when he tells you that this or that piece, though not marked, is part of the kosher cattle. The shop is filled with terefot, including hogs, oysters, crabs and clams. The boy is the only authority present who can distinguish the kosher from the rest."

PROBLEMS WITH POULTRY

MASSIVE QUANTITIES OF CHICKEN BEING KILLED VERY FAST

But the "speed-up" system was in force. Many slaughterers were driven to produce unconscionably large quantities of poultry, working long hours at a terrific speed. Keppel Shechitah" (head Shechitah) it was called among the shochetim. In this arrangement an attendant held the fowl with neck

exposed for the shochet to cut. One shochet who labored under this system testified before Judge Rosalsky that his hands became so wearied by the strain of rapid killing that he would be obliged to dip them in vinegar to relieve them. Another declared, "We shochetim cannot assume responsibility for our own Shechitah. When these facts were stated it was clear to the mediator that the difficulties in the poultry industry were not only monetary. There was the question whether the shochetim were producing kosher poultry: a wearied shochet cannot perform correct Shechitah. Judge Rosalsky desired to ascertain the time required by a shochet to kill a fowl in conformity with religious law, and for answer he turned to the rabbis represented in the Kashrut Association. That body called an extraordinary conference of its membership at the Hotel Pennsylvania on August 27, 1934 to make reply. It adopted resolutions which went beyond the scope of Judge Rosalsky's inquiry.

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VIOLATORS OF KASHRUT WERE ARRESTED BY THE STATE AUTHORITIES

Between May 1934 and May 1941 officers of the Bureau arrested 510 persons for violation of the Kosher Law. Of these, 310 were found guilty, 25 were dismissed on their own recognizance, and the cases of 30 others are still pending. During the year 1940, jail sentences totaling 330 days were imposed, and fines totaling \$4,010 collected. The New York State Kosher Law has had a salutary effect, beyond doubt. As appraised by the Mayor's Kashrut Committee in its report submitted December 1, 1931: "It helped to eliminate a large number of petty merchants who brazenly sold non-kosher stuff and nevertheless kept their windows adorned with large Hebrew letters to the effect that their product was kosher. The Law also had the effect of removing a certain helplessness which, prior to 1915, was generally manifested by the defenders of kashrut. The exhortations of rabbis and other pious Jews sound now more convincing, since it is generally known that the State is ready to prosecute all offenders against the Kosher Law."

Still not even the most sanguine will claim that the Kosher Law has brought Kashrut to New York. The task of observing the conduct of thousands of butcher shops and delicatessen stores, as well as numerous hotels in the

mountain and seaside resorts, is too great for the number of inspectors assigned. The work of the Inspector is made more difficult by the fact that most poultry in New York bears no mark of identification. The pious Jew therefore still attaches no weight to the legend "Kosher Meat" on the shop window or to the words "Dietary Laws" in hotel or restaurant advertisements.

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THE SHOCHATIM ARE MADE TO WORK UNDER HUMILIATING CONDITIONS

The synagogue shochet in old New York was an honored official. He was selected and paid by the congregation, and as long as he performed his required tasks properly he was retained. He had both position and security. By the year 1870, with the multiplication of synagogues and the consequent decentralization of Shechitah in New York the congregational shochet had all but disappeared. In his place appeared the private shochet, hired man of the slaughterhouse proprietor. This functionary was without status, good working conditions, and security. He came to realize that he could improve his lot only by joining with his fellows in demanding better working conditions from his employer. The first reported union of shochetim was that founded in 1886 under the title Zibhe Tamim (Unblemished Slaughterers)." That association was short-lived. After 1888, by direction of Rabbi Jacob Joseph, many of the shochetim were replaced. In many cases the new slaughterers were recent arrivals from Eastern Europe, and unfamiliar with the language spoken by their gentile or German-Jewish employers. In their New York positions they suffered humiliation and difficult working conditions. They had come from cities and towns in the Old World where the shochet was treated and spoken to reverently: in New York they found themselves ordered about rudely. They were put to work at long hours in bad working quarters. The slaughterhouses in those days were barn-like sheds, open from opposite sides, and in winter frightfully cold. No room was provided in which the shochetim might change their clothes or sharpen their knives. The Rev. Abraham J. Kaplowitz, who served as a shochet then, wrote: "The Shochetim would tremble in the frigid air as they changed their clothes; and they were obliged to warm their chilled boots over fires of straw before they could draw them on. They had to keep a pan of water over a kerosene

stove to provide warm water, in which to dip their frost bitten fingers before testing the knife, and also to pour over the sharpening knife to keep the knife from freezing." The shochetim worked long hours. In some establishments the working day began at three o'clock in the morning and did not end until nine at night. For this the slaughterer received between \$5 and \$8 a week. In 1892 the shochetim revolted against the humiliating and harsh conditions under which they labored.

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THE STORY OF RABBI YAAKOV YOSEF ZT'L HE COMES TO NEW YORK TO FIX THE KASHRUT

After the year 1880 Russian Jews began to stream into New York in great numbers. They came with a picture in their minds of the pious kehillas in their native land, where the slaughtering and vending of kosher meat were holy and honored tasks. They looked with horror upon the New York arrangements, where the shochet was a hireling of the meat dealer and where kashrut had sunk to the level of a crass business. The Russian Jews were growing in numbers and strength, and by the year 1887 they counted no less than eighteen congregations. Many of them began to speak of inaugurating a kehillah presided over by a chief rabbi through which kashrut would be administered in accordance with European standards.

On May 6, 1887 Rabbi Ash, who for many years had ministered at the Beth ha-Medrash Hagadol, the largest Russian-Jewish synagogue, passed away. Following the funeral the members of the congregation voted to name as their new religious leader the man who would be acknowledged as New York's Chief Rabbi. Representatives of the eighteen Russian-Jewish congregations then convened to establish the Agudat ha Kehillot (Associated Congregations). At the first meeting they expressed the need for a religious leader who by his standing and ability would unite the Jews of the city and bring order into all departments of Jewish religious life including Kashrut. They sent a letter to a number of eminent rabbis in Europe seeking guidance in the delicate task of selecting the Chief Rabbi. That letter said in part, "We have assembled the membership of the congregations, and with one voice have decided to extend a call to a rabbi, who shall be learned and pious, and be reputed as a Gaon and as a glory among our people. His function shall be to lift up those who have stumbled upon the path of our people, to unite the hearts of our brethren of the

House of Israel and direct them to the service of our G-d, to supervise with vigilant eye the shochetim and all the sacred matters upon which the House of Israel leans. For, to our sorrow, there are many transgressors, many who bring blemish upon us. This is because we have no teacher and leader, honored by all the people; and each one decides the law for himself."

After replies from Europe were received, the field of prospective candidates was carefully surveyed, and the man selected was a great scholar of sterling character, the world renowned Jacob Joseph, rabbi in the city famed for its scholarship. and piety, Vilna. In order to enable the new Chief Rabbi to deal with the problems of Kashrut effectively, the Associated Congregations wrote into the rabbi's contract terms that shielded him from contact with the financial phase of Kashrut.

It was stipulated that the Chief Rabbi should receive neither fee nor emolument from any shochet or meat dealer. "We undertake to pay him \$2,500 per year in monthly payments, to furnish him with a home and furnishings befitting his position, and to pay for light and heat to the value of not less than \$1,000 a year. He is to have the income from weddings, circumcisions, and holiday gifts. Excluded from his income shall be divorce fees, payments for endorsement of the Kashrut of purveyors of foods, and fees for the granting of shochet certifications. We make the condition distinctly that he derive no benefit from them. The Bet Din (religious court) which shall be under the Chief Rabbi Shall issue divorces, Kashrut endorsements, and shochet certifications. The Associated Congregations shall set the fees to be charged for them ... The Chief Rabbi shall not grant an endorsement to any dealer in meats or wines until there shall be brought in a favorable report from an investigating committee, to the effect that the endorsee is a proper person and worthy of trust in matters of kashrut ... 14th day of Ab, 1888.

The Associated Congregations was inaugurated most auspiciously. The Chief Rabbi arrived in New York on July 7, 1888 in an atmosphere charged with high expectation and acclaim. His first few addresses in New York synagogues were delivered before overflowing congregations In early August, the Associated Congregations held its elections and designated Henry Jones " president, Morris Alexander as vice-president, and N. Hutkoff as treasurer. The thirty-one trustees were M. L. Abraham, R.

Bernstein S. L. Brody, Moses Bukowsky, Moses Cohen, Cramer, M. Friedman, L. Goodman, Gutterman, Guinzburg, B. Harris, M. Jarowlez, D. Horowitz, Herzberg, P. Kaash, N. Lewin, M. Louis, M. Livingston, M. Lubetkin A. Pellerman, A. Perlman, Medalla, Rafelson, H. Rosinsky, Rothstein, A. Samuel- Sony Schnitzer, A. Tannenbaum, M. Wechsler, Jonas Weily Schopransky.

When the Chief Rabbi arrived In New York he found the kosher slaughtering done in approximately fifteen small butcheries, owned in the main by German Jews. Many of the slaughterhouses employed shochetim who were deficient in learning or competency. In the majority of these abattoirs the rabbinical supervision was either nonexistent or defective. In most the external, or visual, examination of the lungs was dispensed with altogether, because the operators of the establishments would not allow the shochetim the time required to perform it.

Rabbi Joseph was powerful enough to eliminate these evils. He tested all the shochetim and replaced unqualified men with others, principally shochetim newly arrived from Eastern Europe and familiar with the higher standard of Shechitah followed there. In some abattoirs Rabbi Joseph ordered the engaging of additional shochetim; his reorganization of slaughtering staffs resulted in an increase of between thirty and forty shochetim in New York. He ordered that the lungs be examined visually, as required by the religious law, and instructed shochetim to affix plombes or lead seals to all carcasses pronounced kosher. The seals were to indicate that the carcass was kosher, as well as the day of the week it was killed. The Chief Rabbi designated two rabbis to serve as overseers, to make the rounds of the slaughterhouses, and to inspect the knives of the shochetim.

Rabbi Joseph dealt also with the chaotic conditions prevailing in the chicken markets. In those establishments rabbinical supervision had been lax, if not nonexistent. The Chief Rabbi, with the approval of the trustees of the Associated Congregations, ordered the shochetim to attach a plombe or lead seal as identification mark upon every bird they killed. The seal was to be secured to the leg of each fowl by means of a string, the two ends of which were to be joined and fastened in the lead seal. The plombe was to be affixed irremovably, and was to bear the imprint of the Associated Congregations. The supervision that the Chief Rabbi introduced into the

chicken markets involved a cost equal to five cents per fowl. (The cost of slaughtering was three cents.) The Associated Congregation hesitated to impose the full cost of its supervision upon the consumers of kosher poultry and so it charged but one cent for supervision. It had in mind the establishment of a central abattoir for the killing of all fowl, where great economies in slaughtering and supervision could be effected, and where the total cost for slaughtering and its own proper supervision would be but two cents.

Finally the Chief Rabbi and the Associated Congregations set up governing rules for meat shops. The meat vendors who submitted to their direction were given signs certifying to the fact, to display in their shop windows. The system of kosher meat control instituted by the Chief Rabbi was for reasons of practicability put into force only in the downtown neighborhoods. Pious Jews living uptown wanted Rabbi Joseph's system extended to cover the stores in their own vicinity. To bring this about they arranged a meeting at Bloomingdale Booms, 60th Street between Third and Lexington Avenues for February 17, 1889. Among the sponsors of the meeting was Dr. De Sola Mendes, Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, Dr. Bernard Drachman, and Mr. Henry Chuck. Mr. Simon Roeder presided at the gathering. A few weeks later an Anglo-Jewish journal carried this notice, "Uptown Kosher Meat Supply. Wanted-Retail butchers for the above, East or West Side. Any willing to open stores under the regulations of the Board of Shechitah will please apply by letter to Rev. Dr. Drachman, 329 East 51st Street, acting Sentry. The Chief Rabbi and the Associated Congregations gained added strength when the scholarly Dr. Philip Klein arrived in New York in 1890. Dr. Klein came as rabbi of the First Hungarian Congregation, and straightway became a pillar of support to Rabbi Joseph.

THE SATAN THROUGH ITS AGENTS DESTROYS THE LABOR OF RAV YAAKOV YOSEPH

Despite all the forces supporting it, the Associated Congregations was not destined to last. It succumbed to the cumulative opposition of self-seeking and anti-religious elements, as well as to its own financial difficulties. The self-seeking elements were disgruntled shochetim, discharged upon representation of the Chief Rabbi; abattoir and chicken market proprietors and butchers, irked by the rigorous supervision inaugurated by the Chief Rabbi; and rabbis who were disappointed in not being chosen chief rabbis

themselves. From the beginning these individuals did all in their power to hamper the Chief Rabbi in his work. In September, 1888, when Rabbi Joseph had been in office but two months, a committee of butchers addressed a protest against the plombe requirement to the Board of Health. In October disgruntled persons conducted a meeting in protest against the plombe in a hall at 177 East Broadway. This gathering was addressed by the Rev. Zinsler and the Rev. Brodsky in German, and by a Mr. Fleischhauer in English. In January, 1889 they hold a mass meeting in denunciation of Rabbi Joseph in Phoenix Hall. In that month some of their number visited the District Attorney to ask him to restrain Rabbi Joseph.

The anti-religious Jews took delight in heaping ridicule upon the Chief Rabbi, who to them was a symbol of hated religious authority. In their radical press they kept up a persistent volley of vilification and vicious insinuation- "It's a money grab for those around the pot!" "Oho, the leaden seals!" "It's another korobka!" The Associated Congregations replied to its critics by authorizing Joshua Rothstein, one of its trustees, to write several European kehillas inviting their judgment upon the program of Rabbi Joseph and especially his institution of the plombe. Joshua Rothstein did as instructed, and astonishment and sorrow were to be read in every reply. A letter over the seal of the Vilna Community said, "We cannot put on paper the pain we feel at the sorrow of our scholarly and G-d fearing Rabbi Jacob Joseph in New York, after the honor and glory he received in our community. . . . The complaints heard against him are both false and stupid. How can one say that this great rabbi has instituted a new Torah! How can one say that he has introduced a revolutionary thing when he insists that there be identifying signs placed upon meat in a situation where many dealers are suspected of selling terefah for kosher!"

It was in the face of malicious attacks that could not be stopped that the Associated Congregations hesitated to charge to the consuming public the full cost of the supervision it had instituted. The result was that it incurred constant deficits. These were written off in part by munificent friends. Chief among these benefactors was Henry Chuck, a German Jew, who underwrote over \$10,000 for the Associated Congregations. Unfortunately Mr. Chuck passed away on May 13, 1890, at the age of 61.

By the year 1894 the Associated Congregations began to disintegrate. Toward the end of that year the packing firm of Weston and Levi deliberately replaced its shochetim approved by the Associated Congregations with men not so sanctioned. It was the intention of the company to dispose of its meat through shops supervised by rabbis in opposition to Rabbi Joseph. The Associated Congregations met the challenge by inserting the following paid notice in the "Yiddishe Gazetten": "The slaughterhouse of Weston and Levi has broken its agreement and has engaged unqualified shochetim. We have heard that one of them is a deposed shochet. We summoned him to appear to be interrogated and he refused to come. We have therefore been obliged to depend upon the testimony of witnesses given in his absence. Upon the basis of qualified witnesses we have established that the shochet Moses Kemilhar, who is now employed by Weston and Levi on East 44th Street has been found guilty of knowingly and willfully passing terefah meat for kosher. Our verdict is that he is a disqualified shochet and that it is forbidden to eat of the meat he slaughters. Witness our seal, Thursday, the 18th day of Kislev 1894. New York. Jacob Joseph Chief Rabbi "The Bet Din "Hillel ha Kohen, known also as Dr. Klein.

A few days later the "Yiddishe Gazetten" carried this paid rejoinder: "To inform all buyers of meat that the wholesale meat firm of Weston and Levi, East 44th Street, employs two shochetim learned in the Torah, pious, and competent in Shechitah. Slaughtering is conducted under my scrupulous supervision. Every Jew, even the most religiously exacting, may eat of this slaughtering. "Witness my seal, Sunday the 21st day of Kislev, 1894. New York. "Rabbi Joshua (Siegel), son of the Gaon Moses Joseph, Chief Rabbi of the Congregations of Israel."

In 1895 Rabbi Joseph fell ill, to be confined to bed for the remaining seven years of his life. His malady developed into a paralysis. His family kept from him the fact that the Associated Congregations had collapsed, that the packing houses, chicken markets, and butchers were in control of Kashrut once more, and that the shochetim were their hirelings again.

On Tuesday, July 29 1902, Chief Rabbi Jacob Joseph passed away. A pall fell upon the Jewish community. On the morrow, the day on which the funeral was conducted, virtually every Jewish place of business in the city

was closed. By police estimate 50,000 persons marched in the funeral procession. Men and women lined the streets to see the hearse go by and fought with the police for the privilege of touching its wheels. The highways became impassable because of the unmanageable crowds, and when the police learned that 75,000 persons were waiting for the funeral cortege along Broadway, Brooklyn, they had it rerouted. When the hearse reached Cypress Hills Cemetery 15,000 mourners were awaiting it. New York has not elected a chief rabbi since."