

his intention. Mr. Yehuda Riftin was a religious and observant Jew and requested that his students also followed his way, but as a noble person he did not try to force them, but looked for a pleasant way to influence them.

Moshe MAJZELS, Tiv'on

He came to Kutno from Pulawy, near Lublin, although he was born in Bielorussia. He became the private secretary and personal assistant of the famous wealthy Jew from St. Petersburg, Kopelman. As Kopelman was determined to establish a malt house (where barley is transformed into malt for beer) in Kutno, he appointed Yehuda Riftin as his representative and business head; he then became a Kutno resident. The Kutno Jews Timkowski and Turbowicz worked in Kopelman's company as accountants – reliable people.

Yehuda became a good scholar, a fervent Zionist and an intellectual. He became proficient in the *Mishna* [the six books of Jewish law] and interpretation. For some time, he studied in a *yeshiva* [religious school] in Wolczyn [now in Belarus], along with Chaim Nachman Bialik.

About his integrity, there was once the following story in town: as a teacher of Jewish religion in the "Podrzeczna" school, he also managed the kitchen, which survived thanks to the products sent by the American "Joint" [US Jewish charitable organization]. A former priest was in charge of the foodstuffs, appointed by the Polish authorities. It is said that Yehuda Riftin once took some bag of products, brought it to the kitchen, and realized that in the bag there was... sugar! Yehuda didn't think for long, carried back the goods because the priest had thought it was rice. Not only was the priest astonished, but the staff were too, since in those times sugar was worth its weight in gold! The whole world laughed at this action, seen as ineffectiveness. This prompted Yehuda to resign from managing the kitchen.

A. MENDELEWICZ

YEHUDA RIFTIN Z"L



In his time Yehuda Riftin was a teacher of Bible studies at our school. I remember that he used to ask his students about expressions and sentences that they had learnt, where they could also find them in the prayer book. And the student who got the right answer was praised. This way, he gave his children the desire to pray and it was indeed