

## Perfume

I THINK there is an opportunity for Jewish women in South Africa to deal an effective blow against a certain international perfume manufacturer. In his newspaper *L'Amie du Peuple*, Monsieur Coty is conducting a daily scurrilous campaign against the Jews. This tirade has been going on for months and in spite of a challenge here and there, is still proceeding.

It will be readily recollected that when Henry Ford allied himself with an Anti-Semitic campaign, it was the action of the millions of Jews in the United States in discarding their Ford cars, which was the most effective means in bringing Henry to his senses.

If, therefore, a certain brand of perfume is still found on the dressing tables of some of our Jewish women, a good idea would be to pour it all into the kitchen sink. A little action of this kind done by a million women, can make no small impression at "headquarters."

## Teaching Yiddish

IT is interesting to learn that the Jewish Guild in Johannesburg—hitherto an almost strictly English-Jewish institution—has established a subsection for Yiddish drama. This is all to the good, as after all, Yiddish still plays a prominent part in Jewish life.

In this connection it is illuminating to note that the *Jewish Morning Journal* of New York is now running in its columns a course for those desirous of learning Yiddish. Its managing director, Mr. Fishman—a most striking figure in Jewish journalistic life—says that if Yiddish has a future, it is in America.

He adds that the idea of the survival of the Yiddish tongue in Russia is nonsensical, as the background of Yiddish sentiment is being destroyed. Mr. Fishman, of course, realises that even in America there is a danger of the disappearance of Yiddish, unless strenuous steps are taken to avoid this occurrence. With the stoppage of the flow of immigration, there is a new generation arising in America which will have no knowledge of this language unless its tuition is stimulated. It is for this reason that he advocates the teaching of Yiddish to the young.

In Johannesburg, there is a Yiddish Literary Society which strives to keep up the use of this tongue amongst South African Jews, but here, too, the South African born youth has but a vague idea of the language which has produced a Peretz and a Sholom Ash.

# Current Communal Comments

By  
'Hamabit'

## A Composer

IN attending services at some of our local synagogues, I have been impressed lately by the tendency on the part of the cantors to introduce modern folk tunes into the ancient prayers. Whilst not altogether enamoured with the idea, one cannot help but feel that such experiments are interesting.

I am reminded of this tendency by the announcement of the death a few weeks ago in Vilna of Abraham Moses Bernstein—a famous composer of synagogue music and Jewish folk songs. At the age of twenty he became chorister to the famous Cantor Rabinowitz in Kovno and was later appointed choirmaster. Afterwards he became choirmaster to the famous Cantor Rosofsky of Riga and in 1892 he was appointed Chief Cantor at the Vilno Great Synagogue, holding this post for thirty years.

It was Bernstein who introduced into his synagogue compositions, Yiddish folk song motives. Many of his compositions found wide favour and were adopted even in Reform Temples. Bernstein's compositions received wide attention because of their religious ecstasy and fine Oriental music. In 1914 he issued the first two volumes of a complete Jewish synagogue choral service, containing compositions contributed by all the famous Cantors. The intervention of the Great War held up the further issues of this work.

Bernstein set to music many of the works of famous Yiddish poets. His interpretation of Frug's famous poem "Have Mercy," written at the time of the Kishineff pogrom, was sung all over Russia. His music to Reisen's "Klapp, Hemerl, Klapp" has made it one of the most popular Yiddish folk songs in the world. Bernstein left unpublished about 200 compositions, Jewish folk songs and children's songs, both in Yiddish and Hebrew, many of which are sung in the Yiddish schools of Vilna.

## An Adventurer

I SEE there is an American publisher bringing out an autobiography of Trebitsh-Lincoln. A copy has not yet reached this country, but a perusal of

the volume should make for thrilling reading. It is entitled "An Autobiography of an Adventurer." It is nice of Trebitsh-Lincoln admitting himself to be an adventurer. In a way, he is one of the most interesting freaks which the maelstrom of modern life has produced.

Here is a man who has been in his time a Jewish Rabbi, a Christian Minister, a Buddhist Monk, a member of the British Parliament and a convict. This is a pretty good variety of professions and occupations. Perhaps the climax of his life was reached during the War when he was arrested in America for being a German spy—and an English spy as well. He appears to have been getting money from both sides and I hear that he admits to this.

Yet this strange character has at least one fine thing to his credit. For Trebitsh-Lincoln is the author of a study of the land values of Belgium, which is really a splendid piece of work. Just now he is in the Orient officiating as a Monk—preaching Nirvana. A remarkable aspect of his career is his ability to have occupied the post of Rabbi of a Jewish congregation for a number of years and to have gained the respect of the Council of his congregation and of his congregants.

## Courtesy

TWO Jews—an elderly and a younger one went into a restaurant and ordered *Gefillte* fish. The waiter brought them two pieces of fish; one an extremely large portion and the other just a dainty morsel.

The younger man shared out the portions and took the larger one for himself. They ate in silence for some time until the whole of the delicious dish was consumed. Just before saying the prayer-after-meals, the older one said.

"You know, Chaim, I am deeply disappointed in you."

"Why?" asked Chaim innocently.

"Well, if I had been doing the sharing, I would have acted differently."

"What would you have done?" queried Chaim.

"I would have given you the larger portion and taken for myself the smaller one."

"Well," replied Chaim, "you had it."

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