

A Suggestion

I HAVE not heard of any function being organised by the Jewish community of the Rand to celebrate the Jubilee of Johannesburg. I know, of course, that my co-religionists take up the attitude that they participate with the rest of the general community in all the various and numerous celebrations.

At the same time, I feel that some specific celebration on a large scale should take place, if only in honour of the great number of Jewish pioneers, who from the very earliest days helped to build the Golden City.

One could reel off a long list of the names of many excellent fellows of the Jewish persuasion, whose energy, enthusiasm, loyalty and sacrifice, have been so important a factor during the last fifty years in developing a mining camp into a thriving, modern city of world fame.

I submit this suggestion for a specific Jewish celebration of Johannesburg's Jubilee, and trust that it may appeal to others. Incidentally, the funds gained at an historic function of this kind might go towards a worthy purpose in sympathy with the celebrations in general.

Sheitels to Shorts

THE part being played by Jewish women in the field of sport is ever increasing these days. Considerable interest has been taken in Miss Helen Jacobs, who won the World Tennis Championship at Wimbledon recently. Her success is almost a household word. Other great tennis players are Baroness Maude Levi and Millicent Hirsch, who both have fine tennis records — the latter chiefly on the American Continent.

On the cinder track there have been fine performances by women athletes. Miss Sybil Koff and Miss Lillian Copeland are remarkable that between them they hold the first place for every event for women in the Maccabi events in 1932 and 1935. In 1932 Sybil won four firsts by breaking one world record and creating three new Maccabi standards. Lillian Copeland in 1935 repeated her record smashing Olympic performance of 1932. The latter lady was approached by the Olympic Committee to register for the recently-held Olympic Games in Berlin but she refused.

A fine woman golfer is Bea Gottlieb—a Jewish lassie, who played a few games with the King of England, when he was Prince of Wales. A newcomer to the ranks of golfing queens is Patty Berg. Already she holds the distinction of being the youngest girl ever to compete in international golf matches. Then there is Sylvia Annenberg, who is undoubtedly one of the best top-flight woman golfers in the game to-day. In swimming, the national long distance champion of America until recently was Eva Bein. The pingpong champion is Ruth Aarons, who some time ago pocketed the English and Czech titles as well as the American title.

There are many other Jewish women all over the world who are creating big reputations for themselves as graceful athletes. Which all makes me feel that shorts are definitely supplanting sheitels as an accessory of the modern Jewish girl.

Current Communal Comments

By
"Hamabit"

An Unenviable Position

BELIEVERS in democracy and orderly government everywhere are watching the progress of the Spanish revolt anxiously. The Fascist character of the rebellion and the reported support it has won from Italy and Germany have naturally enlisted anti-Fascist and democratic sympathy for the existing regime. Unless revolutionary extremists run wild, it is safe to say that most people will hope for the defeat of the revolt.

The Jewish community in Spain is small, consisting of about 25,000 inhabitants. Thus far the Jews as such have not suffered, although in Barcelona German-Jewish refugees have lost heavily as a result of rioting and the interference with normal business activities. The anti-Semitic language of the Fascist press, the hostile attitude of Nazi Germany toward the Spanish Government and the attacks in the Nazi press on the German-Jewish emigres in Spain, have made Spanish Jewry fearful of the possible triumph of the rebels. There have been rumours that Nazi funds played a part in the outbreak. It is also alleged that the desire of the Nazis to frustrate the anti-Nazi sports festival in Barcelona also had something to do with the timing of the rebellion which broke out 48 hours before the festival was to open.

Regardless of the outcome of the revolution, the Jews of Spain are in an unenviable position. If the Fascists win, the Jews will probably meet the fate of all minorities under Fascist regimes, Italy excepted. If the Government triumph, the Jews will undoubtedly be in for a period of very serious economic stress.

A Famous Library

MANY people have read the famous novel "Jew Süß," by Lion Feuchtwanger, but few are aware that the "Jew Süß" of the history had a contact with the family of David Oppenheimer, whose famous library of Hebraica and Judaica was bought by the Oxford University a hundred years ago. The library in question is housed at the Bodelian.

Recently the Bodelian has celebrated the bicentenary of David Oppenheimer's death by the holding of an exhibition of rare Jewish works. Among the manuscripts shown are a manuscript of Maimonides's Mishne Torah, dated 1289, probably the earliest dated manuscript in the collection; a Bible of 1302; the Onyx Book of Moses ben Isaac of Bristol, probably written, however, in France and not in England, and the copy of Isaac Ibn Sahulah's Book of Fables with curious illustrations. Of the latter, an edition printed at Fano in 1505

and a Yiddish translation of the seventeenth century, both with quaint woodcuts, are also exhibited.

Also there are shown at the same time a number of early Yiddish works — for instance, a Pentateuch printed at Constance in 1544; Moses Henoch Yerushalmi's Brand-Spiegel, Hanau, 1626, and the Masse-Buch, 1673. A magnificent two-volumed edition of the Pentateuch, printed at Prague in 1530 on vellum and illuminated by hand is also included.

Crooning

I SEE there has again been trouble in New York over the question of the "Crooning Chazan." Last Rosh Hashonah a leading orthodox synagogue engaged a famous raider-crooner to officiate during the High Festivals. The singer was well-known to wireless listeners for his melodious crooning of red hot jazz and love songs. Somehow he managed to apply his talents to his love for the Creator and when he was given a trial on the Sabbath before Rosh Hashonah, thousands of people "licked their fingers" (as they say in Yiddish). His performance in *chazanuth* delighted them.

Orthodox rabbis were naturally furious and a sort of a *cherem* was called against the defamation of the character of the synagogue. It did not help. The radio-singer crooned away at *Kol Nidrei* and the public was pleased.

With the approach of the forthcoming High Festivals, the "chazonim market" has now opened in New York. Congregations advertise the fare which they offer to seat-holders and one synagogue has again announced that Moshe Osher—what his stage name is, I do not know—will officiate at the *Omud* on Rosh Hashonah.

This time the ultra-orthodox are more militant and when his *trial-davning* was held last month, a band of American Yeshiva-students surrounded the synagogue and protested vigorously. They broke windows (on Sabbath, mind you), shouted and disturbed the service. As usual, there were headlines in the papers and much heart-burning resulted. Some declare that traditionally every Jew (even a crooner) is eligible for *chazonuth*, others demand more dignity and respect for the *omud*.

The incident throws a lurid light on the conditions of *chazonuth* in the United States of America.

A Good Purpose

THAT brilliant orator, Maurice Samuel was once asked to address the annual meeting of an important charitable organization. After the function, the president proffered him some monetary compensation which Samuel refused.

"Since you do not wish to take the money," said the president, "I should like to apply the amount for the purpose of special funds."

"I quite agree," said Samuel, "but what is this special fund?"

"To obtain a better speaker for our annual function next year," replied the president.