

ment to encourage the demands of the Rabbis that every Jewish institution should be placed on a religious basis. The Rabbis are anxious to secure a complete monopoly of Jewish life. They look upon the *Kehilah* not as the agency of Jewry of all sections and classes of Jews, but as a strictly religious body in the management of which none but those who accept unreservedly all the tenets of orthodoxy are competent to exercise control. That may or may not be a legitimate ambition on the part of the Rabbis, but it is obviously to the advantage of the Polish Government to support such a claim. But such strivings are, beyond doubt, a definite step in the direction of clericalism. The aim of the Rabbis at complete control is apparent from their demand to have the right to veto any decision arrived at by the *Kehilah*, if, in their opinion, the decision is not in strict accordance with traditional Judaism.

This, a writer says, is undisguised clericalism totally alien to the Jewish spirit, which refuses to be bound by the interpretation of one or more Rabbis as to what constitutes traditional Judaism.

The Russian Land Settlement Scheme.

Details of the Jewish land Settlement activity in the Soviet countries are given in an official report by the *Comzet* (Government Commission for Jewish Land Settlement.) According to the latest information, the total Jewish population in the U.S.S.R. is at present about 2,750,000. Of this number about 450,000 live in white Russia, about 1,750,000 in the Ukraine and the remainder in the Russian Soviet Soviet Federal Republics. The plan of the *Comzet* for 1924—1925 was to transfer to the Ukraine 3,000 families and 1,000 families to the Crimea and to settle in White Russia 1,200 families and in the Homel Government 224 families, making in all a total of 5,424 families. To carry out this plan 102,600 *dessiatins* were allocated (about 280,000 acres) 50,082 *dessiatins* in the Ukraine, 40,000 *dessiatins* in the Crimea, 10,000 in White Russia, and 2,411 in the Government of Homel. Even under the hurried conditions in which the registration of intending settlers has been carried out, about 25,000 families have registered within a few weeks, of whom 15,000 families (73,000 souls) belong to the Ukraine, and 7,000 families (35,000 souls) to white Russia, the remaining 30,000 families belonging to the other regions. In the course of the budget year (October, 1924, to October, 1925) only 4,373 families, comprising 24,108 souls, have benefited from the land funds allocated for the settlement of toiling Jews and covering the work of settlement in all its different branches. The area of land settled is 67,855 *dessiatins*.

An Anti-Semitic Congress.

I learn that the second International Anti-Semitic Congress has been held at Budapest *in camera*. Among those present were the leaders of the Austrian anti-Semites, Schager, and the notorious Professor Cuza, of Roumania. It appears that the principal subject discussed was the proposal to upset the present Hungarian Government, and to crown Otto, son of the late Austrian Emperor, as King, with a view to making Budapest the headquarters of international anti-

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Semitism. It was found impossible, however to reach agreement on this matter, the cooler heads among the delegates realising that the project would never be allowed to fructify by the Allies, or the Little Entente. The only practical result of the Congress will be the establishment of co-operation between the anti-Semites of Hungary, Austria, and Roumania. The Hungarian authorities have released Rabbi Friedlander, the *Tsadick* of Olaszliszka, who was arrested last September on a charge of forging banknotes, his innocence having now been definitely established. It now appears that Rabbi Friedlander was the victim of an anti-Semitic intrigue, it having been intended to throw upon him the blame for the forgeries perpetrated by the "Awakening Magyars."

Brevities.

Walter Gattermayer, of Vienna, has been acquitted on charges of blasphemy and incitement against a religious body, and sentenced to three weeks' conditional imprisonment (which means immediate release) for circulating a pamphlet attacking Jews and the "Jewish God."

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A town to be named "New Jericho" is to be built to the south of Jericho, 900 feet below sea level, according to a statement made in the *Felstin*, the official organ of the Arab Executive. The Government is to provide water for the town from the neighbouring springs.

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A Jewish Ladies' Country Club has been opened in Bagdad.

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During the month of February, 2,700 immigrants entered Palestine an increase of 400 over January's figures..

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The Soviet Government has withdrawn the permission previously given by it for the organising in Leningrad of a conference of the Jewish religious communities in Russia.

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The trial is to be opened shortly of Rabbi, Ratner, of Dwinsk who is accused of having issued to Jewish emigrants from Russia certificates by means of which they obtained American *visas* within the Latvian quota at a time when the Russian quota had been already exhausted.

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