

Goldstein.

There is now sailing on the ocean, on his way to this country, a person who will be cordially welcomed upon his arrival on these shores. I refer to Dr. Alexander Goldstein, who proved himself to be a dynamic personality when here some years ago. He is a man whose enthusiasm for the national cause is continuously at white heat.

It will be recollected that when he came here in the first half of 1924, Goldstein was to have been the lieutenant of Nahum Sokolow. At the last moment, the latter was prevented from coming to South Africa and the responsibility of the whole campaign fell upon the shoulders of Alexander Goldstein. How he faced the responsibility and met it with a rare courage, will remain a shining chapter in the history of South African Zionism.

Since he was last in this country, Goldstein has visited many Jewish communities throughout the world, and on his arrival here, we shall no doubt see an even more vigorous personality. His task in assisting in the forthcoming Weizmann campaign is no easy one, but there is no difficulty which the spirit of an Alexander Goldstein will fail to overcome.

“Foreigner.”

It is strange indeed to find that one of the finest writers of modern English prose has recently been designated in England as a foreigner. I refer to Mr. Phillip Guedalla, who was the Liberal candidate in a Manchester division during the last election. As a result of this accusation, a leaflet was issued stoutly denying that Mr. Guedalla was a foreigner. The leaflet further indicated that the Guedalla family had been prominent in the professional and business life of Britain for a long period and that Phillip was born of British parents in London.

“It might be well for Conservatives to remember the name of their revered leader Disraeli”—the leaflet added.

“British fairplay”—has always conjured up a sportsmanlike attitude towards an opponent. When there is, however, a slight suspicion, that the opponent is a Jew, then the code of honour apparently disappears—even among certain sections of folk in enlightened England.

Lesser Ury.

Within a few weeks before his seventieth birthday, there passed away in his home in Berlin—Lesser Ury—one of the greatest painters of the day and regarded by many as second only to the

Current Communal Comments

By
‘Hamabit’

doyen of German art—himself a Jew—Professor Max Lieberman. Extensive preparations had already been made by his admirers to celebrate in suitable manner his seventieth birthday—which Lesser was not destined to enjoy.

The great painter had a long struggle with poverty before he won recognition and even after he had become famous, he was a poor man. His father—a small trader—died while Lesser was a boy, leaving him and his mother totally unprovided for. Lesser secured a job in a shop and despite material hardships for many years, continued painting and finally won recognition.

He made his name by paintings of city life and scenes, and in this regard, he was called the discoverer of Berlin. The animation in the streets, the people rushing backwards and forwards, the endlessness of the lines of trees and houses, the street-cars, the wheels moving, the sparkle of the cafes, the shining pearl chains formed by the electric arc lamps, the mirror-like rainy streets, the dimness of night lights and shadows, the entire wild, shrill and yet rhythmic swing of the life of the big city, pounding, breathing, rotating—all these were to be found in his pictures.

A Year Book.

I have just been perusing a copy of an extremely interesting annual—the thirty-third of a series. The volume contains a mint of useful information that can be found nowhere else in such a compact and readable form.

The American Jewish Year Book is of special interest this year containing information and statistics as to South African Jewry. It is pleasant to realise that the community here has reached a sufficient size and importance to be placed—as it were—on the map of world Jewry. Any student of the progress of Jewish life throughout the world must avail himself of this interesting year book—which by this time has become a recognised institution.

Edited by Harry Schneiderman, the volume, whilst full of statistics of a most important character, has yet the appearance of an attractively published book,

for it contains reading matter of an instructive and entertaining quality. To those who sponsor an annual undertaking of this kind, the gratitude of world Jewry is extended.

I think it is a pity that only a few copies of this fine annual reach this country. A greater distribution of such a volume should occur, for the American Jewish Year Book is an educational volume *par excellence*. I would like to see a copy in the hands of every communal worker throughout the country.

A Phenomenon!

There is a rabbi-cantor visiting various cities on the American continent who gives his name as Abraham Benjamin Franklin. He is a coloured gentleman and claims to be a descendant of the Abyssinian Jews who existed in the days of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. It appears that a Benjamin Aaron family came to the Americas in 1821, finally settling in the United States in the midst of colour and religious prejudice. Finding it difficult to maintain themselves as Jews, many who came there lost their identity. Still others departed to South America and some returned to the old world. The grandparents of the present rabbi-cantor struggled through to a finish and he appears to have remained a Jew. He speaks a good Hebrew and knows a good deal of the Talmud and has quite a fine knowledge of *Chasonuth*.

There are some people who look upon the visiting rabbi-cantor as a *fakir*. In any case, he appears to be arousing a good deal of curiosity and quite a number of congregations are permitting him to conduct services. If his story is true, the existence of an Abyssinian-American-Jew is a strange phenomenon indeed!

“Between.”

Owing to the power of Hitler in Germany the virus of anti-Semitism has been let loose in every conceivable direction.

Recently a Jew entered a compartment of a train and found two German gentlemen seated opposite to him. As the train moved on they both came over, placed themselves one on each side of the Jew—with the evident intention of annoying him.

“Listen,” one fellow demanded in a blustering tone, “let’s know the truth, are you a swindler or just an idiot?”

For a few moments the Jew paused and then replied quietly:

“I fancy I am between the two.”