

I WAS interested to learn that preparations are being set in hand, at this early date, to commemorate in 1936 the jubilee of Johannesburg's existence. It would be a pity if this significant event did not include a special Jewish participation. It should be interesting to have a record of Jewish achievements in the Golden City during the last fifty years.

On the whole, little is realised of the fine Jewish contribution to the development and general prosperity of Johannesburg. Many Jewish pioneers in the early days of settlement gave their share in the unbuilding of one of the most interesting and fascinating cities in the world.

I would suggest that local Jewry does not delay taking the necessary steps to organise a suitable recognition of Jewish achievements on the Rand during the last fifty years. The record is one of which it can well be proud.

An Honorary Citizen

IT is not perhaps known to many here that prior to Mr. Nahum Sokolow's recent departure from Tel-Aviv for South Africa, the veteran savant received the distinction of having the freedom of the city of Tel-Aviv conferred upon him.

The announcement of the fact that Sokolow had been created a honorary citizen of Tel-Aviv was made by the Mayor, Myer Dizengoff, at a municipal reception, attended by a large number of representative citizens. In this connection, Sokolow will now rank with the chosen few whom Tel-Aviv has thus honoured. Among these are Achad Ha'am, Lord Balfour, Professor Einstein, Sir Herbert Samuel, Lord Reading and C. N. Bialik.

I hear from a friend in Palestine that Sokolow was deeply moved by this great honour bestowed upon him. It was practically a "Sokolow Day" in Tel-Aviv. After the municipal reception, the President of the Jewish Agency addressed a mass meeting at the Beth Ha'am, and made a deep impression upon a crowded and interested audience of Tel-Avivians.

"Shirts"

IT is regrettable to note that the virus of "shirt wearing" has not escaped some of our own people. I hear that a group of Jews in New York have organised a "Blue Shirt" movement, ostensibly to protect Jewish interests in fighting against the Nazis, who have undertaken to wear the official uniform at their propaganda meetings in America.

In my opinion, the donning of any distinctive clothing to denote a political philosophy is the product of a deranged mentality. Surely Jews have sufficient weapons available to defend themselves against Hitlerism without yielding to a psychology which must antagonise intelligent men and women, interested in helping the Jewish cause. As Jews, we must be opposed to brown, black and grey shirts. To adopt a coloured shirt of our own would put us in the same category with the other hysterical groups exploiting the basest motives of human nature.

Current Communal Comments

By
"Hamabit"

I am glad to observe that the movement in New York is being strongly condemned by sane Jewish leaders; it is hoped that nothing further will be heard of the proposed "Blue Shirt" activity.

The Trebitsches

NOTICE that Trebitsch Lincoln, the notorious adventurer, has been refused admission into England. It is known, of course, that he renounced Judaism, but not many people are aware of the fact that the Nazi theoretician, Arthur Trebitsch, was his cousin. All that the Nazis are saying about the Jews—all that the Nazis are saying about the race—are but the rehashings of Arthur Trebitsch, who died a few years ago, and Otto Weininger — another Jew. Both were brilliant men. Both while very young were regarded as philosophical prodigies.

Arthur Trebitsch wrote "Geist und Judentum," the most bitter tirade against the Jews one can imagine. Everything that Trebitsch disliked, he discovered to be Jewish. He hated Catholicism, so he proved that Catholicism was a Jewish invention. Later, he hated Freemasonry, and he branded that as Jewish.

Brilliant as he undoubtedly was, he suffered from a persecution complex. He laboured under the delusion that the Alliance Israelite was seeking his life. He was always sure that they were following him, with the knife of the assassin or with poison. When he went to sleep in a friend's home, he would steal down to see if there were any Jewish assassins concealed. He argued in the most profound German academic manner for the extermination of the Jews.

The Nazis have not added one iota to what Trebitsch wrote. He anticipated what they said later. And it may be of interest to recollect that Theodore Lessing, who wrote of Trebitsch's anti-Jewish tirades, was one of the first Jews assassinated when the Nazis got into power.

Minus Hebrew

IT is some years now since the Yiddish newspapers and other publications in Soviet Russia Yiddishised the spelling of the Hebrew words used in the Yiddish language. Although this change entailed some considerable difficulties, causing the use of more letters in the Hebrew words and giving some of these words a ridiculous appearance, the Yiddishist bias against Hebrew effected a thorough and complete change. Recently the *Emes* and other Yiddish newspapers in Soviet Russia started a campaign for the complete elimination of all Hebrew words used in Yiddish and their replacement by Russian words.

The claim is made that Yiddish is not a language in the real sense of the word. It is a conglomeration of words of many

languages, predominantly German, with the addition of a considerable number of Hebrew words and phrases. The latter is the only excuse for calling the dialect Yiddish, i.e., Jewish. Now the Russian Yiddishists seek to remove the last of the Hebrew influence from the Yiddish language.

Yiddish in Soviet Russia is on the decline as it is. The numbers of readers of Yiddish newspapers fall alarmingly and the publication of Yiddish books is growing more rare. The younger generation thrive on Russian newspapers and literature, and the Russification of the Yiddish language will help to bring about a speedy disappearance of Yiddish in that country.

Perhaps this is the intention of the gentlemen of the *Emes* and the other Jewish communists, whose profound ideal is the complete assimilation of Russian Jewry.

It would be interesting to know the real truth behind it all.

A Great Moment

NO definite celebration of the seventieth birthday of M. M. Ussishkin appears to have taken place in this country. This is rather a pity, as I know that this grand old Zionist stalwart is greatly admired here.

I notice that in New York, eleven thousand people attended a dinner given in his honour, although the veteran Zionist leader himself could not be prevailed upon to be present on the occasion, but has remained at his post in Jerusalem.

Perhaps the most dramatic episode in the active life of this fine worker was his speech at the Peace Conference at Versailles. This speech, it may be recalled, was spoken in Hebrew. It was the first time since the days of the destruction of Jerusalem that the nations of the earth heard Hebrew spoken officially.

But what was most characteristic of Ussishkin was the fact that the delivery of the speech was part of the stubbornness which, it has been said, is Ussishkin's most conspicuous trait. The leaders of Jewry urged him against Hebrew, but Ussishkin refused to be turned aside. The speech was translated, as were the languages of the other minority groups, into French.

But the voice of Ussishkin ringing out in the language of the Hebrew prophets created a tremendous impression — beyond the mere content of the words. It was a great moment.

Hot.

WHEN Yehudi Menuhin made his American debut in Carnegie Hall, New York City, Mischa Elman, the great violinist, and Leopold Godowsky, the celebrated pianist, were sitting in one of the boxes.

When the youthful beginner completed his first number, the applause of the audience was prolonged and ardent. Before it came to an end, Elman remarked to Godowsky: "It's dreadfully hot in this place! Don't you think so?"

"Only for violinists!" was the answer.