

**Museum ?**

one who had often visited the delightful collection of the late Rev. A. P. Bender, I was filled with a poignant regret upon hearing of the public sale of the many *objets d'art* he left behind him. The late minister had a delightful collection of antiques and there was a large number of objects of historic Jewish interest.

I am glad to learn that a member of the latter articles purchased for the purpose of making them the nucleus of a Jewish museum in the Mother City. Such a project would have delighted the heart of Mr. Bender. I remember that he often referred to the need for such a museum, especially on the occasion of the now defunct Maccabean Society organised an exhibition of Jewish pictures and curios.

I do hope that the contemplated museum will find a ready response. There must be quite a large number of objects of art of Jewish interest in any home. If the owners felt such articles would find a place in a well-established museum, they would be inclined to hand these over for permanent exhibition purposes. In any overseas city, the Jewish Museum makes a feature of this kind of institution. A Jewish Museum is badly needed in South Africa.

**Mir . . .**

The latest craze in jazz music is a hearty little song entitled "Bei Bistu Sheyn." Listening-in the other day to a B.B.C. dance programme from Daventry, I heard the song rendered by a non-Jewish jazz pianist. I was pleased to find that the Yiddish accent was quite good. The song is a mixture of English and Yiddish sentences which rhyme quite well and opens up somewhat as follows:

Y mir bistu sheyn,  
Please let me explain,  
Y mir bistu sheyn  
Means that you are grand,  
Again I'll explain  
Y mir bistu sheyn  
I'm first in the land."

It is interesting to notice that this jazz song originated in a Jewish operetta on the East Side of New York. The author is Sholom Sekunda, a well-known composer of Yiddish operetta airs. It was sung on the Broadway stage several years ago in Yiddish, and was afterwards picked up by a well-known New York jazz singer, who first sang it at a concert at the Broadway Club.

The song spread like wildfire and radio stations in America declare they are flooded by letters from artists who ask for its performance. There is not a leading band in the country which does not play it. Sekunda, who started his career as a young *chazan* in New York, is now a minor hero. The song is said to be making millions for its publishers, and Sekunda himself received a sum of thirty dollars for the full rights.

# Current Communal Comments

By "Hamabit"

**Olam Habo**

JUDGING from the frequent reports which appear in the Jewish press of Warsaw, there must be a brisk trade among Polish Jews in "portions of the world to come." Now and again the newspapers report cases where a man sells the other his portion of the *Olam Habo*. The transactions usually begin in a frivolous way. Young people meeting in a café enter into a discussion on questions of future life, resurrection, etc. Then an excitable "free-thinker" will declare: "For my part, I will sell you my portion of the future world for a song." Somebody agrees to the purchase and a formal agreement is signed. After a few days, however, the "free-thinker" sobers up, thinks better of it and summons the purchaser to the Beth Din.

Recently there was a case, where the seller died soon after the transaction. The relatives of the deceased raised an outcry and dragged the buyer to the cemetery, where he was compelled to denounce the agreement formally.

Last month a case was reported of a man who bought a "portion of the future world," as a bargain, for one zloty. The portion must have been a fat one, for he subsequently resold it for a hundred zloty. The matter ended before a famous rabbi in Warsaw. This time, however, the rabbi refused to handle the dispute. If you deal in matters of the future world, of *Olam Habo*, he declared, then please go for the settlement of your dispute to the rabbis who are in the future world.

**A New Messiah ?**

THE late Nahum Sokolow once remarked that a *Baal T'shuvah*—a man who repents of his sins and returns to his people—"is a wonderful man and ought to be treated with every consideration, but you cannot make him the Chief Rabbi in Prague . . ."

I was reminded of this remark when I read the other day about a most astonishing incident which happened in Portugal. For some years past there has been a movement amongst the descendants of the Marranos in Spain and Portugal to return to their people. The ties which bound them to Israel were extremely loose; most of them had only vague recollections of some custom which was handed down from their ancestors and which reminded them that they were sons of Israel. They, therefore, turned to the Portuguese congrega-

tions in England and Holland for assistance. The latter sent to Spain a special rabbi to organise congregations for the Marranos. The rabbi's work proved a great success and the schools and synagogues which were built by the Marranos were the talk of the Jewish world.

Now comes the news that Colonel Carlos Debora, one of the leaders of the Marranos, decided to sever his relations with *Klal Yisroel*. He dismissed the rabbis and teachers provided by the Anglo-Dutch Committee, and introduced a religion of his own, containing many Christian customs and ceremonies. Furthermore, the colonel, who had become a Fascist, proclaimed himself a Messiah of the new Christian-Jewish sect.

A false Messiah is probably the nearest equivalent to a Fascist dictator. If Colonel Debora succeeds in getting a following, he will most probably offer the world an amusing caricature of a *Fuehrer* and world saviour.



**"A Fourth Jew"**

ONE of the social reforms introduced in France recently is a four-day week in a number of trades. The workers told them to rest on Sundays. Monday. On a certain Tuesday, a French bricklayer was standing with his hands in his pockets, waiting.

"Are you not working today?" he was asked.

"No," said the Frenchman, "I am waiting for the fourth Jew."

"And what do you mean by 'the fourth Jew?'"

"It is simple," he replied. "In olden times people worked seven days a week. Then came Moses and told them to rest on Saturdays. Later came Christ and told them to rest on Sunday. Still later came Leon Blum and told us to rest on Mondays. Now I am waiting for a fourth Jew, who will tell us to rest also on Tuesdays."

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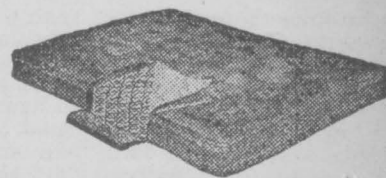
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