

# CURRENT COMMUNAL COMMENT

By "Hamabit"

## Reuvid

WITH THREE thousand other people, I paid tribute on Sunday morning to the late Morris Jacob Reuvid, as he was reverently laid to his rest. The passing of a character of outstanding nobility is always a poignant occurrence. For many years Reuvid devoted himself to the cause of his poorer brethren, and his kindness and goodness were known to all intimately associated with philanthropic endeavour. During the last thirty years, Reuvid never missed attendance at the early morning service in the great synagogue in Johannesburg. He was passionately devoted to his religious ideas and orthodox Judaism in this country has suffered a great loss in his passing.

The modesty of the man was extraordinary — especially in these days when publicity is so much sought after. He avoided any public reference to his good works. To him communal and congregational service was a part of his very nature. It would have been difficult for him to realise an existence in which many hours of his daily life would not be devoted to helping others.

Thus has another pioneer stalwart of Rand Jewry taken the long journey. It will be difficult to replace him. I can only hope that the example of his unselfish devotion and public service, will prove an inspiration to some of the younger men of our community to follow in his footsteps.

## A Lithuanian Title

THAT good Zionists can also be good patriots of the country of their birth, was again demonstrated by the honour recently bestowed upon E. D. Stone, of Boston, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Lithuania's independence.

Mr. Stone is the head of the Zionist movement in New England and a popular figure in American Jewish circles. In 1919, when he was a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts, he moved a resolution asking the American Congress to help in bringing about the independence of Lithuania. The resolution was then handed to President Wilson and to the American delegates at the Peace Conference by Governor Coolidge. When the first Lithuanian delegation arrived in America in 1920, Stone worked hard to establish contact between the then-unknown Lithuanian Government and the politicians of America. In recognition of these services, he has now been awarded the Lithuanian title of Commander of the Gedeminas Order.

The title was conferred upon Mr. Stone at a special banquet arranged by the Lithuanian Consul in Boston and was given wide publicity in America.

## A Chazan

TARNOPOL, a village in Galicia, has recently passed through a memorable and exciting time. Theodore Burbelo celebrated his wedding and the whole community turned out to rejoice with him. His chosen bride was one of the village girls.

Burbelo is the son of a Galician peasant. Some ten years ago he went to settle in Canada. Like many of the peasantfolk he possessed a fine singing voice and during the journey he delighted his fellow-passengers with Ukrainian melodies. The Jewish emigrants exchanged tunes with him and the young peasant managed to render pieces of *Hashkivenu* with real chazanic ardour.

It is well known that there is a strong affinity between many traditional Jewish melodies and Ukrainian folk-songs and this may have been responsible for the peasant's proficiency in *chasonuth*. Furthermore, Burbelo had always been somewhat of a mystic and liked to probe into religious problems. When he settled in Canada he began to take a keen interest in Judaism and finally he became converted to the Jewish religion.

Since every Jew is a bit of a chazan, Burbelo tried his hand — or rather his voice — at the *omud*. Soon his fame spread and he was offered a post as cantor in a synagogue. There was, however, one grave shortcoming: He was a bachelor and there is a strong orthodox prejudice against wifeless chazanim. That is why Burbelo travelled to Tarnopol. He wished to get a truly pious bride, as befits a chazan in Israel. Now that his wedding has been celebrated, everybody is happy: the chazan, the bride, the people of Tarnopol, the congregation in Canada and even the aged parents of the bridegroom, who are pious members of the Greek-Orthodox Church.

## An Honest Man:

THIS is the story of Arthur Abraham Carpels, known as the most honest man in Berlin.

Prior to the advent of the Nazi regime, he managed a little old clothes shop. On a certain day, he had read in the paper a sensational announcement that a German working woman had given to a beggar a pair of old shoes, in the soles of which were hidden the life-savings of her husband — a sum of fifteen hundred marks. Carpels thereupon went though his stock of shoes, examined every pair carefully and found the treasure. He took it immediately to the nearest police station, and soon his name became famous throughout Germany.

Thousands of people crowded round his store in order to catch a glimpse of the man, whom the newspapers described as the model of honesty. He received hundreds of letters from school teachers, and welfare workers. The preacher of the St. Paul Church, in Berlin, took the incident as a text for a sermon, which was later published in all the newspapers.

The Nazi press evaded giving honour to a Jew by declaring that Carpels was a pure Aryan. This little matter resulted in a long controversy in the papers of that time, when the press was not yet muzzled.

But all this was forgotten in the month of April 1933. Carpels was no longer a hero. He had to pack up, and leave Germany. He found a home at Ridgewood, the German district of New York. Here he also became quite popular, and the German press-cuttings displayed on the walls of his little shop attracted many customers. Soon, however, it was discovered that he was a Jew, and he is being regularly boycotted — in a German community on free American soil.

What is happening to the value of honesty these days?

## An Insult

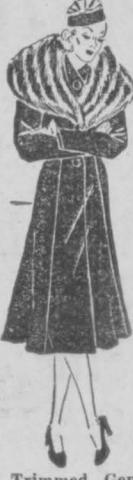
A FEW weeks ago Mussolini called up a village baker named Antonio Conforzi, to congratulate him on being the father of the first set of triplets to benefit by the "have-more-babies-bounty" scheme. The children, two boys and a girl, had been dutifully named Benito after the Duce, Vittorio after the King, and Italia after the motherland. Mussolini asked how they were developing.

Said Antonio, after accepting the gold medal: "The children are growing very big, Excellency. Benito grabs and devours everything he can lay hold of, Vittorio sleeps most of the time, but looks very handsome. Little Italia, alas, cries almost always" . . .

In this connection I am reminded of an incident which happened recently at Munich, when the Catholic Bishop Galen preached a sermon on the subject of the Church's part in the education of youth.

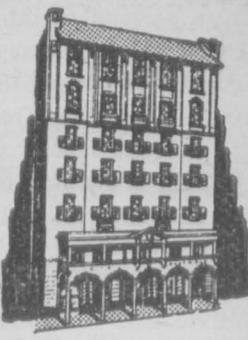
"How can anybody talk about youth, if he himself has neither wife nor child" sneered an interrupting and upstanding Nazi. Without a moment's hesitation the Bishop replied: 'In this house, I will allow no offensive remarks against the Fuehrer.'

Flushed and beaten, the young Nazi resumed his seat.



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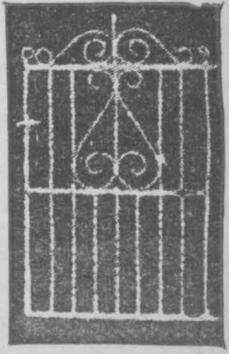
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