

Berley

BELIEVE that Hedley Chilvers, the well-known South African journalist, is now engaged in preparing the history of the De Beers company, the great Kimberley mining concern.

Wonder whether the specific Jewish contribution to the development of the diamond fields will be mentioned in the pages of Chilvers' book.

It is hardly realised to-day that there was a very active

Jewish communal life carried on in Kimberley for many days. The exemplification of it was the erection of the synagogue in Kimberley more than three decades ago. This is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful edifices of worship in the British Empire. It was built lavishly for those days. There was a ready eagerness on the part of the community to supply Kimberley with a wonderful place of Jewish worship.

There was much activity of all kinds. Was then a record kept of the happenings? Probably the minutes of the local synagogue, if carefully perused, would yield a considerable amount of interesting information. Besides items of specific Jewish interest, there should be found many new and important references to Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Beit, Barney Hertzog, Sir David Harris and other "mortals" in the early days of the diamond fields.

Bookseller

PERSONALITY well-known in the Hebrew publishing and book-selling world has just passed away in London. I refer to R. Mazin, who was the owner of one of the most interesting bookshops in the world.

When in London last year I wandered around the shelves of his establishment in Whitechapel and was struck by the extraordinary range of books displayed. There was hardly a single volume of Jewish lore which did not find a place in the crowded shop. When the proprietor discovered that I was a visitor from South Africa, he was tremendously interested. It appeared that he was in correspondence with many people in this country, and, as a matter of fact, secured orders from individuals and institutions.

Remember he took me to a small room at the back of his premises and showed me a *paroches* (a curtain hung in front of the Holy Ark of a synagogue containing the Scrolls of the Law). Mazin informed me that this beautiful plush curtain (upon which was being worked out Hebrew inscriptions in golden cord) had been ordered for a South African synagogue by a woman donor, who wished in this way to perpetuate the memory of her beloved husband who had been a member of the particular synagogue.

Jewish scholars of note from all over the world used to visit Mazin whenever they came to London. It was indeed a meeting place for all interested in Jewish scholarship. Visiting Mazin always ready to discuss with them the latest "find" in

Current Communal Comments

By "Hamabit"

manuscripts of Jewish interest. To him Jewish bookselling was not merely a commercial undertaking, it was a high calling which he was privileged to serve. He was one of the dwindling group of old fashioned type of Jewish bookseller.

I daresay now that Mazin has gone, the business will be carried on under more modern, but much less interesting conditions.

"No Clown"

NOTE that one of Italy's highest Fascist dignitaries is annoyed at Toscanini's having recently accepted the honorary citizenship of Tel-Aviv after giving eight concerts in Palestine, for which he refused fees.

"As an orchestra leader he is a great man," says this Fascist dignitary, "but as a man he is a prize clown." He "deserved" this insult, according to the Italian authority on grace and manners, because Toscanini was quoted as having exclaimed: "I feel truly at home here" whilst staying in Palestine.

What an awful "crime" for Toscanini to have committed—to have declared to the world that he loved and felt at home in Palestine.

The kindness of the great Italian conductor and his altogether human demeanour has made him beloved by almost every people on the globe. I read in a recent issue of the "Times," of London, that Toscanini visited the humble home of his chauffeur in Palestine, so that the latter's wife, who was ill at home, might have the thrill of seeing the maestro. Such a homely deed cannot but help to make him beloved amongst many people. He is not given to verbose or grandiloquent speeches.

Toscanini's simple statement was that "I like to go into Jewish homes, eat Jewish food and feel the pulse of Jewish life." It is but natural that sentiments of this kind should endear him more to Jewish hearts than many a lengthy oratorical declamation on the part of other eminent public figures.

Toscanini is no prize clown! He is a man who is in deep sympathy with liberal and democratic humanity.

A Job Wanted

CAN anyone suggest a job for Nikifor Robu, Governor of Czeronowitz, Roumania, who has just been deprived of his post by the King Carol Government?

Here are some details concerning this new type of "unemployed": Born in a small Roumanian village, was sent to a good school, but teachers reported that he never took a book in his hands. Before reaching the upper grades, he was expelled from school and began the look out for a career.

Politics seemed the best thing; so he joined the party of Cuza and Goga. At the last Parliamentary elections, he organised storm-troopers, and taught them how to use their fists in terrorising the population to vote for the anti-Semites. He was thus elected to Parliament. But what was he to do there? He had no education and was not capable of making a speech. So he specialised in one thing: Whenever a Jewish Deputy caught the eye of the Speaker, Robu would jump up and trip him on the way to the platform. On one occasion he smacked Dr. Michel Landau, the Deputy of Kishineff, and last year he assaulted the aged Chief Rabbi, Dr. Nemirower.

When Goga came into power, Robu was appointed Governor of Czeronowitz. He terrorised the Jewish population, and was preparing for a grand scale pogrom, which was to have taken place as soon as martial law was due to be called off. Now, however, since the Goga Government has fallen, and Robu is out of a job, what can be done for the poor fellow and men of his ilk?



A Chazan—A Fool?

A MELAMED says to a chazan: "Why do people say that a chazan is a fool? Is there any ground for the accusation?"

The Chazan: "Absolutely, it is true!"

The Melamed: "How do you work that out?"

The Chazan: (talking to himself): "You, chazan, you have no real learning, nor general knowledge. You cannot read Hebrew properly. You have no voice. You cannot read the notes of music, neither are you able to understand properly a page of the Talmud. Why, then, did you become a chazan? You could so easily have become a melamed."

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