

CURRENT COMMUNAL COMMENT

By "Hamabit"

A Mystery Solved?

NOT so long ago a cable appeared in the South African press to the effect that American archaeologists, headed by a well-known member of the professorial staff of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Dr. Nelson Glueck, excavating near the shore of the Red Sea, had discovered the site of Ezion Geber, the city where King Solomon built his ships. According to the Bible, it will be recalled, it was at Ezion Geber that the renowned Jewish king, with the help of Hiram, King of Tyre, constructed a fleet of vessels which traded with Southern Arabia.

This reported "find" of Dr. Glueck's has excited attention throughout the world, including this country, particularly as the suggestion has been made that it may help to solve the riddle of the origin of the Zimbabwe ruins in Rhodesia. The chief sponsor of this suggestion at the moment is Mr. J. P. Cope who, in a recent issue of that interesting South African weekly, the "Forum," says that "the peculiar significance to South Africa of these excavations at ancient Ezion Geber seems to have escaped attention in this country."

Mr Cope believes that King Solomon's ships may have sailed southwards with the Monsoon, right down the East Coast of Africa, "bringing back almsg trees, gold, and precious stones." These bold traders founded ancient Zanzibar, and it has been suggested that the Havilah of the Scriptures was probably the region between the Zambesi and the Limpopo, and that the ancient gold workings there were opened by the Himyarites, followed by the Jews and the Phoenicians. Gold from the mine workings of Mashonaland was carried down to Tharshish, believed to have been the port later known as Sofala.

It would be interesting to know whether there is anything really tangible in Mr. Cope's contention.

Royal Blood

LEIB WAHL, the aged President of the Jewish community in Lemberg, whose death has just been announced, was always proud of the fact that he was a descendant of a Polish monarch and had "royal blood" in his veins. The legend about his royal ancestor has been discussed by many Polish historians and it seems to be founded on fact.

In the year 1586, after the death of the Polish King Batory, the gentry of the country assembled to elect a new king. They could not come to an agreement and debated the matter into the late hours of the morning. During the discussion the aristocrats kept on refreshing their dry throats with large doses of vodka, and Prince Radziwill, the chief, was quite drunk when he suggested that his Jewish councillor, Saul Wahl, who had the best brain of the lot, be elected king.

The Jew was brought in and solemnly crowned king. He reigned for a full day.

The Radziwills, by the way, must always have been a family of eccentrics. One of them, Princess Radziwill, figured in the life-story of Cecil Rhodes, and the great empire builder had a difficult time extricating himself from her intrigues. Recently a grey-bearded Prince Radziwill fell in love with a Jewish woman, the divorced wife of a chassid — and the matter created a great commotion in Poland. The family took steps to deprive the peccant Prince of his title. The Jewish papers were annoyed with the fiancée, who not only had herself, but also her little son (whose father is a well-known chassid) baptised. Now comes the news that the aged Prince Radziwill has broken the engagement.

A Singing Colony?

MEIER GLASS, the cantor of a synagogue in the Indiana State, has evolved a plan for establishing in Palestine a special colony for Jewish singers, particularly for those who are refugees from Germany, Austria and Poland.

According to his plan the colonists would all be men possessing trained voices. They will work their land by day, and do their singing at night. Ultimately, after a period of study, the colonists will form a great Palestine Symphony Choir. The repertoire is to consist solely of Jewish music, and special attention is to be given to Biblical motifs. The prospectus issued by the cantor contains a quotation from Nehemiah, which is intended to add strength to his argument. When the second Jewish Commonwealth was rebuilt, the Bible tells us that "The singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem."

The idea, though somewhat fanciful, seems to be a good one. I doubt, though, if it will ever materialise. Gifted singers are proverbially incapable of resisting the limelight and are rather prone to jealousy. I cannot somehow conceive a hundred singers leading a communal life in a kvutzah in peace and harmony. At the same time, many things which at first have appeared to be Utopian, have been achieved in Palestine. One of these may be the singing colony contemplated by the American cantor.

Mandel

THE LATEST French Cabinet contains the name of George Mandel, who has been promoted from the office of Minister of Posts and Telegraphs to that of Minister of Colonial Affairs. Mandel belongs to the Right camp of French politics.

The son of a poor Jewish tailor, he has had a most remarkable career. As a youngster he worked as a messenger in Clemenceau's newspaper office. His first meeting with the "Tiger" decided his fate. He asked for a job as a messenger boy and was told that there were no

vacancies. Thereupon, to prove his usefulness, he recited by heart Clemenceau's latest editorial word for word. The "Tiger" decided on a counter-attack:

"It is not enough to know my article by heart," he said, "it has to be known backward and forward."

"If you give me twenty minutes," said Mandel, "I shall also achieve this."

Mandel was given the time asked for, and in the end Clemenceau was beaten.

Mandel is to-day considered one of the most forceful personalities in French politics. Whilst not a great orator, he can without reference to notes, quote almost anything relating to French politics. With a few figures or a quotation he is able to demolish the strongest political enemy.

Mandel's original name was Rothschild. He was obliged to change it, so as not to be confused with the famous Rothschild family to whom he is not in any way related.

A Bible

A CARLOAD of specially-made paper for the twelfth edition of its Bible translation was recently purchased by the Jewish Publication Society of America. It is interesting to learn that the present printing will bring the number of copies of the Bible printed to date up to 170,000.

The first edition was printed in 1917, after years of preparation by a committee composed of the late celebrated Professor Dr. Solomon Schechter, assisted by such notables as Dr. Cyrus Adler, Dr. Kaufman Kohler, Dr. David Philipson and many other leaders in Hebrew scholarship at the time. Since the first printing, this Bible has become the standard for all English-speaking Jews, and is also used in many non-Jewish fields. Its sales have gone far beyond the original expectations of the sponsors.

This particular Bible is printed in various sizes, from the small Bridal Bible to the Pulpit and Family Bible. The prices range from 5/- to £6 per copy. The Pulpit edition is considered to be the most beautiful Bible of its type ever printed, and was originally sold at £8 a copy. There is a fine Bible in leatherette, with red edges, available for congregations, lodges and homes at a cost of £3 each.

This authorised English translation of the Bible should find its way into the home of every English-speaking Jew throughout the world. I wonder how many copies of the work is to be found in Jewish homes in this country.

Wrong Number

THE FOLLOWING conversation took place between the proprietor of a well-known Market Street wholesale firm in Johannesburg and a voice on the telephone:

"Hello! How are you?"

"Well, thank you."

"How is business?"

"Very good."

"Sorry, please ring off! I must have the wrong number!"



SPECIAL
PURCHASE FROM
PARIS
50
SUPERB
WINTER
★ COATS

Trimmed Genuine Fox, Squirrel and Opposum
Perfectly Tailored Models
WORTH FROM 10 TO 15 GUINEAS
Our Wholesale Price:

5 TO 7½ GUINEAS.

Other Prices from 35/- to 5 Guineas.

SELLING DIRECT TO THE PUBLIC

H. FRANKEL

(Pty.), LTD.,

WHOLESALE GOWNERS.

82, President Street (Next to J. W. Jagger)

MORNING SUITS, TOP HATS,
EVENING DRESS SUITS, etc.
for Hire or Purchase

For All Wedding and Dress
Occasions, See Us First

W. J. Baker & Co., Ltd.

72, Market Street (Opp. Library)

PHONE: 33-4519.

For Your Next Simchah, Consult

DAVE TUCKER'S CATERERS

(Pty.), Ltd.

CATERING OF ALL DECEPTIONS
UNDERTAKEN.

Weddings, Barmitzvahs, "At Homes," Tennis
Parties, Garden Parties, etc.

We hire out Crockery, Cutlery, Glassware,
Tables, Chairs, etc.

Phones: Office 33-9085; Res. 33-1706.

314, Lewis & Marks Buildings,
President Street, JOHANNESBURG.

It's Easy
To Buy
A Good
Watch

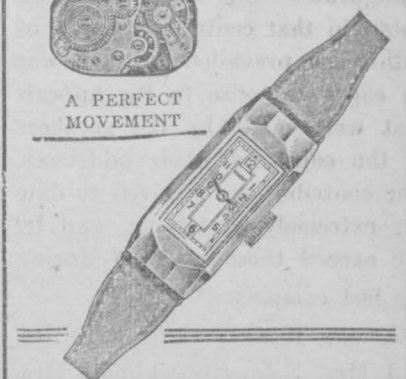
ASK FOR A . . .

ROAMER

AND YOU'LL GET IT.



A PERFECT
MOVEMENT



OBTAINABLE AT ALL LEADING
JEWELLERS.