

RABBIS, SAGES AND AUTHORS OF KUTNO

translated from the Hebrew by Sara Mages

Our city was privileged to contribute in honor of the Polish Jewry a group of genius rabbis, community leaders and wise leaders, and also a group of famous authors: Shalom Asz, Dr. Abraham Glikson, Trunk's sons from the lineage of the *Gaon* of our strength¹, Y. M. Najman, Bar-Drora (Issachar Dov Frajer), all of them from the generation of yeshiva students at the time and, without a doubt, they were influenced by the splendor of the *Gaon* of our strength, the charm of his witty sayings and the grace of his pure ways that were praised throughout the land.

The Divine spirit also rested upon the simple homeowners in their manners, the events of their daily life and their negotiations with the people, and the expression of cleverness was reflected from their families.

The old Baba, a simple Jew, who was a frequent visitor to the estate owners' courtyards in the villages, told me that it is known that every "Polish nobleman" liked his Jew: he was his advisor in all his manners and business and did not take a step in his private life without using the court Jews. He listened to his clever advice and did not arrange anything without his court's trustee, his "*Shrul*,"² because the cleverness and the sobriety of a Jewish mind is above all riches.

At festive parties the Polish nobles amused themselves, with great pleasure, at the wit of "their" Jews, and did not forget to invite them to all meetings and consultations. On their lips was always a faithful devotion for the service of Berek Joselewicz³ and his comrades in the days of the Polish uprising against the Russians. The

picture of the Jewish officer, who fell heroically in the suburbs of Kock, decorated the palace of every estate owner, and tales about the service of King Saul Whal⁴ who was crowned King of Poland when they were at a loss and found in him a faithful and honest leader.

This Baba once came to the Polish nobleman's palace on a day of celebration and a large gathering of the noblemen in the area. The estate owner wanted to brag about his wisdom before his friends. He asked him in a soft grin: "Please say my friend!" showing him a picture of that man, "Do you know who he is?" And he did not hesitate for a moment to answer him: "Your Honor asks me if I know him, he'd better ask him if he knows me..." They were dumbfounded and covered their heads in shame.

Once, they asked him if he would not mind giving his opinion about the "rabbi" they had chosen for themselves, while showing their palace dog lying in the middle of the circle where they were sitting... He answered them at once in fine words: "Surely the bright masters know and are familiar with the Polish proverb circulating in our world: Like synagogue, like rabbi"...

The joking of the gentiles with the Jews knew no bounds, but the Jews always responded tit for tat to every rude attacker. Once, a Polish estate owner joked with "his" Jew about the soul leaving the body, and to anger and upset the Jew who was subordinate to him he shot his joke at him and said: "The soul of the Jew comes out through the buttocks and that of a believing Christian through the nostrils"... "Well, very good," replied the Jew, "I will give

¹ TN: R' Yehoshua Trunk.

² TN: common Polish nickname for the name "Israel", used here as synonym of "Jew".

³ TN: Berek Joselewicz (17 September 1764, Lithuania – 15 May 1809, Kock) was a Polish Jewish colonel of the Polish Army during the Kościuszko Uprising.

⁴ TN: Saul Wahl Katzenellenbogen (1541–1617), aka "the king of a day," was a wealthy and politically influential Polish Jew who is said to have briefly occupied the throne of Poland on 18 August 1587.

you advice and you will live forever, if you wish please listen to the advice of a faithful Jew and you will have a happy life forever and ever"... "Ah, how?" he asked him. "Please put your nose inside the Jew's buttocks..."

The Polish Foreign Minister Szebeko, owner of the Gołębiew estate near Kutno, son-in-law of Hipolit Wawelberg⁵, from the directors of H. Wawelberg Bank in Warsaw, did not take a step without consulting the late Shmuel Baba, a famous grain merchant in Kutno, and his son, Mr. Simcha Baba⁶, who is a member of the Board of the Liberal Party of Israel. The latter is a talented author and I believe he will not disappoint us in the future of his life.

Summary of things I wrote down from the words of my uncle R' Yosef Korn⁷ – elder of our community who lived one hundred and seven years.

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HaRav Moshe Yekutieli HaCohen Kaufman⁸, author of *Lechem HaPanim*, son-in-law of Magen Abraham⁹, did not find his satisfaction. He resigned and returned to his hometown Krotoszyn (East Prussia) and became a permanent judge there. He wrote many books, besides organizing his father-in-law's factory – approximately in 1710.

HaRav Dov Berish, author of *Butzina Kadisha*, did not stop studying the Torah in the *Beit Midrash*.

HaRav Israel Kon a native of Kutno.

HaRav Tuvia Bryn, son-in-law of Katzav¹⁰, his brother, Rabbi Nisan, went to Golub and was not appointed after him.

HaRav Eliezer Brisz, a *maskil* from Leszno. On the death of Tsar Alexander I, he eulogized him in a poem, sent it to Warsaw and from there to St. Petersburg. Was a *posek*¹¹ for the Rabbi of Lissa. Passed away in 1830.

HaRav Rabbi Shmuel – moved from Kutno to Płock.

HaRav Rabbi Leibush Charif¹², Arie Leib son of Rabbi Moshe Zuenz, brother of Rabbi Yehonatan Eybeschütz, came from Warsaw-Praga to Kutno (1810) and moved to Płock (1768-1833).

HaRav Fligeltaub, "*Kanfe Yonah*", moved at the end of his life to the city of Koło.

HaRav Yehoshua Itzik Shapiro, author of *Emek Yehoshua*, came from Kalwaria and returned to Słonim. Served for six years, had an argument with chassidim who persecuted him and he left them (approximately 1842-

1848). His popular name was Rabbi Itzik Charif, he loved riddles and his saying Kutno ceased to be a city.¹³

HaRav Rabbi Moshe Aharon from Lithuania, father of the Kronzylber family from Piotrków, came from Stryków. An avid chassid of Rabbi Fisheli, a prominent, indisputable scholar of the place.

One of the most special in the Kutno community, who excelled in his wealth, honesty and nature, was R' Pinchas HaKohen, *chassid shebikechunnah*¹⁴, from the city's wealthy and important, a wise homeowner who had a three-story stone house in the city center, a crown glory to his spiritual height, and his wife the homemaker, famous in giving in secret to the poor from good families as a righteous woman of valor...

This Rabbi Pinchas [Rabinowicz] was a grain merchant exporting abroad. At that time Kutno, which was located near Thorn¹⁵ on the border of West Prussia, sent on a large scale from Congress Poland, which was an agricultural country, to industrial Germany its surplus produce through the railway, of which Kutno was a central node. The regions of Płock, Kalisz and Warsaw used this train that was the only one under the rule of the Tsar of Russia. This Rabbi Pinchas managed his business in faith until all the merchants of the country trusted to give him their crops, some in commission and some in sale!

The family of this Pinchas was divided into five pairs, sons and daughters, like olive seedlings around his table, and in addition to them regular guests who came to Kutno for their trade.

If my memory will not be mistaken, I will explain them by their names: from the daughters I remember the eldest who married Mr. Yitzhak Kriszek from the city of Ozorków near Kutno. The young man, who was learned and crowned with good manners, was one of my esteemed friends, a grain and bran merchant who also exported to Germany. According to the rumor, he has a married daughter in Israel, one of our survivors.

And the sons, the eldest, Mr. Shlomo, a respectable man in the community; second to him, my good friend, a community leader, observant, handled matters wisely, Mr. Naftali, a merchant, had a shop at his parents' house; third to him, Mr. Moshe, he got married in the nearby city of Koło, founded a Hebrew gymnasium there and headed it, an important community leader in his place of residence; fifth to him, Mr. Feivel, moved to Danzig and immigrated to Israel, but he could not get by there and went back to the Diaspora, his location is unknown to me because the

⁵ TN: Polish Jewish banker and philanthropist (1843–1901). Also, a Polish patriot.

⁶ TN: Simcha Baba (27 November 1902 – 10 December 1973) was an Israeli politician who served as a member of the Knesset for the General Zionists between 1951 and 1959.

⁷ TN: aka Yose'le the Goldsmith. See article on page 298 of this book. According to data, he was born 8 December 1837 and died in 1936, so he was a bit short of 100.

⁸ TN: circa 1661-1722, in Krotoszyn. He resigned as Kutno rabbi, following some controversy.

⁹ TN: Abraham Abele ben Chaim HaLevi Gąbiner (c. 1635 – 5 October 1682), known as the *Magen Abraham*, was a rabbi,

Talmudist and a leading religious authority in the Jewish community of Kalisz, Poland.

¹⁰ TN: or "son-in-law of a butcher".

¹¹ TN: Posek is the term in Jewish law for a "decisor", a legal scholar who determines the position of *halakha*.

¹² TN: "Leibush the sharp".

¹³ TN: (1801 Słonim – 1872) a similar joke is attributed to Rabbi Israel Yehoshua Trunk, in the article on page 235 of the original book.

¹⁴ TN: *Chassid shebikechunnah* – "the most pious in the priesthood."

¹⁵ TN: now Toruń, in Poland.

connection between us ceased for the time; my soul is grieving for them, almost all of them became victims of the European Holocaust, may *HaShem* avenge their blood!

I skipped the fourth son because he deserves a special mention, and he is a very dear friend, Mr. Yitzhak HaKohen Rabinowicz, electrical engineer who lives in Haifa. He showed heroism and excelled in his many Zionist activities, and it is worth telling in his praise that he is a beloved son of a family of good deeds. Forty years ago, before the routes of immigration to Israel were organized, he escaped from the Diaspora, passing through countries and seas, and settled in Beirut, Lebanon. The paths of providence led him in a straight way. He married the daughter of an engineer from Lublin, and his house was wide open to all immigrants who came through illegal sites in order to sneak into Israel. They found in his house, as in the house of Abraham *avinu*, food, drink, and lodging. The writer of these columns, who was on the way of his third *aliyah*¹⁶ but failed and his permit expired, was among those who owe him a debt of gratitude. Meanwhile, he moved and settled in Haifa and he is respected by all the residents as an honest man. He has two married daughters and three grandsons – may they multiply and may he derive pleasure from them as befits him.

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*And here's a correspondence between me
and HaRav Yitzhak Yehuda Trunk.*

Rabbi and president of the rabbinical court of the holy community of Kutno, may God protect and preserve it!

With God's help, Tuesday 7 Adar II 5695 [12 March 1935]

Close to redemption a spirit of joy and happiness, my honored and beloved ally, my friend from my youth, the wonderful and exalted in the Torah and wisdom, the energetic activist, our teacher the rav, R' Aharon Shlomo Elberg, may his light shine.

Your letter was delivered to me by your sons and I was happy for your safety and that you are already a citizen of our country. May God grant that your wish will succeed in your hands in the near future, to fulfill that a man and his family will not come to Egypt but only to our lovely country. If only our eyes could see the ingathering of our scattered ones from among the gentiles who rise against us as in the days of Haman to annihilate us from the country. It is impossible to imagine the enslavement difficulties of the present exile, in its last days. Apparently, it feels that its end is near and therefore it harnesses the rest of its strength to fight us with raging fury. God will have mercy on the remnant of His people (read Megilah 17, the war of the beginning of redemption). I will make an effort to fulfill your wish regarding the book *Yeshuot*

Israel of the rabbi, the rabbi of the Jews, my grandfather, which is out of stock in the book market, because I know that the book *Divrei Dodim* is your favorite. My dear, give me a hand to pull me out of the pit of the Diaspora after I have already given my daughters to men. Who am I and what do I have, here? My allies are already in a decent number in Tel Aviv. I have a lot of acquaintances like R' Daniel Sirkis the community leader. Maybe you'll find a job that suits me so that I can make a living for myself and my wife, maybe in Petah Tikva. Strive for my benefit, surely you have vigor and desire and I will thank you all the days of my life for this act of kindness for me. Your faithful admirer expects that his words of request will enter your heart.

Yitzhak Yehuda who lives here in the community

With God's help Tuesday 10 Nisan 5695 [13 April 1935]¹⁷

On a sleepless night he will get to hear the herald on the mountains¹⁸, my respected and dear friend from my youth, the educated and wise, the fine man, Mr. Aharon Shlomo Elberg, may his light shine.

For sure you received my letter to you and I repeat your question, why am I delaying my arrival to the gates of our country? But, my dear, I feel how hard is the grief of being separated from it. Therefore, I'm waiting, maybe I'll be granted to settle in it. I think, maybe now is the right time for that and I have a lot of confidence in my townspeople, after all my honorable brother-in-law, the holy rabbi of Sochaczew¹⁹, may he live long and happily, is now with you. You can enjoy his advice and resourcefulness on this matter. Nothing will stop you from helping me, to bring me out of darkness into light and from enslavement to redemption. Your faithful admirer – a blessing for a kosher and happy holiday on *Har HaKodesh*²⁰ and greetings to all the members of my community and the aforementioned blessing for the holiday – signed.

And greetings to my dear person, our teacher and rav, Z. Metal, may he live long, my words are also said to him that we will have good days, and a blessing of joy and happiness for the holidays and festivals.

And my answer:

With God's help the day after Passover 5695, Tel-Aviv, may God protect her.

To my teacher and rav, the Rabbi Yitzhak Yehuda Trunk, may he live long and happily, president of the rabbinical court of the holy community of Kutno.

Beloved rabbi! Forgive me, your Honor, for the delay of my reply to the letter from 7 Adar II for the reasons that I've been busy, and the most important thing

¹⁶ TN: *Aliyah* (lit. "Ascent") the immigration of Jews to Israel.

¹⁷ TN: date is probably wrong because 10 Nisan 5695 was a Shabbat, not a Tuesday.

¹⁸ TN: Isaiah 52:7 – How beautiful are the feet of the herald on the mountains, announcing peace, heralding good tidings,

announcing salvation, saying to Zion: Your God has manifested His kingdom."

¹⁹ TN: Rabbi Abraham Borensztajn. See article on page 268 of the original book.

²⁰ TN: Mount Moriah, the place of the temple in ancient times. Five days before Passover, time for pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

is, that I wanted to examine the opinions of some of our friends regarding this question.

Our country is seen today as a blessed land of God, with prosperity that gives strength and life to all who found shelter in it. Who would ever have thought that that the son of dear Ezra'le, who always ate his sons' meat, would be able to find his livelihood? He's a postman in Borochoy neighborhood [Givatayim] beside our Mr. Shapiro, the postmaster. And who would have thought that Chaim Noah would be able to do any work, that he would support his wife and children and be satiated with the happiness of life? It is a great pity that I was not helped by my great initiatives when I immigrated – despite the help I got and the energy I devoted – and by the crooks and swindlers of Bnei Brak who deprived me and robbed me. We could have built a *moshava*²¹ of our own like the one I dreamed of. Indeed, there is still a lot of work ahead of us, because we are not standing in the middle of the building, just at the beginning, and with vigor and dedication we can create great things, we need the act of Nahshon²² to jump into the sea... I've heard a nice joke from one of the chassidic leaders. According to the *halacha* it is permissible to kill a louse on the Shabbat, but it is forbidden to kill a flea, meaning, he who crawls and whispers and does not move from his place, is not a living creature... and it is permissible to kill him even on the Shabbat, but he who has a soul that jumps and skips shouldn't be touched by hand! This ban is intended for the crawling²³ residents of Kutno... If our rich and influential man had not rejected the offers and accepted them on his visit last year, then he would have become rich and trust the country. To the very question: no one will prepare for his friend²⁴ in his absence without a few deliberations and arrangements, both early and late. As substitute for R' Aharonson z"l, we recommend Amiel or Herzog²⁵ from Dublin. It seems that the candidacy of R' Brod failed because of his critique and judgment in the matter of a "veteran *Mizrachi*."

The main thing is that there is an extensive room for a wide range of work in all professions and diligent hands are needed, and anyone who will wake up to come and join the builder's camp, God will be with him and he will succeed!

With the blessing of *Moadim l'simcha*²⁶ and God will bring us together to the festivals cheerful and happy in the building forever and ever.

With respect and admiration Aharon Shlomo
Elberg

The addresses of the three postcards were:

A) Herzl Street 20, POB 1269. This is the address of the General Bank of Dov Bilig (I worked a hard and strenuous work).

B) 115 Nahalat Binyamin Street, 115, the address of my nephew Zelig Metal, I was a guest when I came to him.

C) POB 849 that I took to find some grip in search after search... and I still haven't been able to raise my family members. Of course, my precarious condition made my hands shake and shackled them, my grief was great being uncertain about returning to Diaspora, and a free hour and a clear mind were far from me. I knocked on many doors of salvation and was not answered, and meanwhile the riots broke out²⁷... and because of the evil, the righteous man has been taken away²⁸, woe to the beauty buried in a foreign land, his heart is the heart of a lion in the Torah, and why, as one of the greatest of our last period, he did not find his way to escape to our country. This is a badge of shame for the leadership of the movements in general and the *Mizrachi* movement in particular, the man was the light of the world and an abundant treasure of life flowing to a great extent, and it is a pity we did not how to use this fertile power!

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Rabbi Yehuda Zvi Wadnik, was a top-ranked teacher for fine young men. It was said about him that he was also a sharp chess player and trained his students for this purpose. He had two sons: the eldest became famous for his essay about Baal Shem Tov and was appointed ritual slaughterer in the town of Hrubieszów near Lublin. The youngest, Nachman, was the joker who lowered the standard of morality of his friends and drew harsh criticism from all the important men of the city. He was hated and despised and moved to Łódź.

Rabbi Zvi Prajs, son-in-law of Rabbi Eliezer-Dov HaKohen Ajlenberg, had an ironware building materials store and donated to the establishment of a yeshiva in the *Beit Midrash*. He taught the Torah in public with the best young men and was among the most important Gur chassidim in our city.

Rabbi Pinchas Bresler, owner of a fabric store, studied the Torah regularly with the best of the *Beit Midrash* (the writer of the columns among them). Despite his impaired speech he was accepted as a teacher and was

²¹ TN: *Moshava* (lit. *colony*) is a form of rural Jewish settlement.

²² TN: Nachshon was a tribal leader of the Judahites. According to a Jewish Midrash, he was the person who initiated the Jews' passage through the Red Sea, by walking in head-deep until the sea parted.

²³ TN: see article on page 84 of the original book for explanation of this term.

²⁴ TN: the author is speaking of himself at the third person, "his friend" means "my friend the Rabbi Yitzhak Yehuda Trunk".

²⁵ TN: in the election of rabbi of Tel Aviv, after the death of Rabbi Shlomo Aharonson (1864–1935), first Ashkenazi rabbi of Tel Aviv. Rabbi Yitzhak HaLevi Herzog lost to Rabbi Amiel, of Antwerp, Belgium. Herzog was the father of Chaim and went on to become second Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi in Mandate Palestine after Rabbi Kook.

²⁶ TN: *Moadim l'simcha* (lit. "A happy festival period") greeting used during the intermediate days of the Passover and Sukkot holidays.

²⁷ TN: premises of the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939.

²⁸ TN: Rabbi Yitzhak Yehuda Trunk died on 11 March 1939.

praised for being knowledgeable in *Rishonim*²⁹ and adhered to the truth of *Halacha* as a responsible veteran *posek*. (After him, at the end of the community's existence, his son-in-law inherited his chair).

Rabbi Eizik Zaklikowski, a cantor and the city's *mohel*, lived a long life. When he fell ill his old friends did not visit him, he sighed bitterly before me: Gather my friends – when?! Those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice [Tehillim 50:5], when I make for them a great *Kaddish* or a mourners' meal, then they come, and when I'm on my deathbed, they forget me... His grandson, Rabbi Leibush Finkler inherited his virtues. He was a pleasant singer and a communal worker.

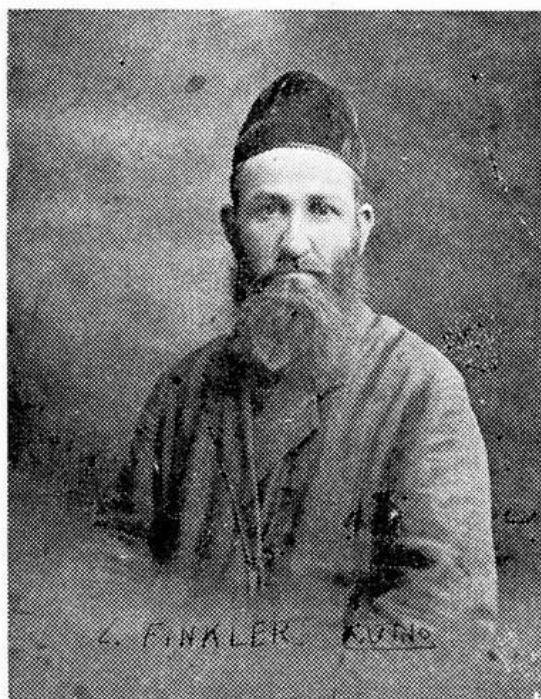
R' Hirshel Neeman was a *Kashrut* supervisor and the rabbi's attendant³⁰. Sometimes, the Aleksander met at the home of his son, Rabbi Moshe'le³¹, before he served as a rabbi in Wiskitki, and the grandchildren joked about the rude expression of Rabbi Zvi³² when he prayed *mincha* and expressed with a strong emphasis *Veyanuchu Bam* (instead of weak), and they stood around him and accompanied him with *Bim Bam*, to the worshipers' laughter and the *Gaon* among them. The grandson, Yechiel Yeshayahu Trunk, describes him nicely in his book "*Poyln*."

Rabbi Yaakov Comber inherited the attendant job from his father-in-law, the aforementioned R' Zvi, and managed the residents' register. Was cheerful and joyful and used to amuse the *Gaon* who prayed for a vision in earnest, and said to him: the rabbi's way is to lengthen and pray the last *Ose shalom*³³ to the *minyan* of worshipers. Maybe the rabbi should stand – simply – a few more moments? He answered him, you must believe that it is already with a pause of a few moments... Towards his old age they gave him a glass of fine wine to drink to strengthen him, and his attendant is asked, how much does the wine cost, he told him a light price, he said it is a waste of money, why? He told him that the sages have already said: "It is preferable for one to care for his body by eating higher quality food..." They won! He used to say: "It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting (Kohelet 7:2), however, I don't have a better wish... I prefer the house of feasting and God will wipe the tears away from all faces! (The son, Zundel Comber, academic historian, served as a teacher in the schools – a Populist).

R' Yekel the scribe loved to play pranks and always entertained. Once, on a Shabbat, on a cold winter morning he stood freezing to find a gentile to turn on his stove. His gentile neighbor, Wilwer, felt sorry for him, you will catch a cold. He answered him and said, we will make a contract between us I will turn it on for you tomorrow and you today! Agree! He entered and turned it on for him. The

next morning, he got up early and knocked on his door: "Mr. Wilwer, get up I will turn it on for you, I am ready, don't be lazy." R' Yekel, was also a book seller and the writer of bills. He did not have the time to repay them and the notary came... He asked him, what is your occupation? He took him by the stove "a scribe to God!" And you are not rich? He took him by the stove "I am a proofreader" and said "This is Mr. Boga the controller and he is poorer than me! However, what am I missing? The rich man has several rooms and I divide my room, this corner is a bedroom, and this is a dining room, and this is a work room and the stove heats all the rooms together, and what else am I lacking, never mind, I will pay the bills a little late..."

R' Ze'ev Yehuda (HaKohen) Wolf Leib Szymonowicz, a teacher at the state school, an old man sitting in the *Beit Midrash* and studies, walks leisurely, a Torah scholar... Once, Dr. Handelsman, who was assimilated to the highest level, invited him and said to him: my son became *Bar Mitzvah*, teach him... He was amazed to hear that and went to R' Yehoshe'le and sighed before him, what should I teach him? There's no point of talking about prayers, the *Gaon* told him, teach him *Kriyat Shema*! He sighed again; he would not even wear a hat! It will be without a hat... (I wrote this fact from his remarks over forty years ago). He lived long in poverty because the Tsarist government left during the war and he remained without a pension. He turned to the German occupier, who added him to the list of pension recipients and he was helped by it, as much as possible, in his old age.



Leibush Finkler

²⁹ TN: *Rishonim* (lit. "The first ones") were the leading rabbis and *poskim* who lived approximately during the 11th to 15th centuries.

³⁰ TN: Rabbi Israel Yehoshua Trunk.

³¹ TN: Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Trunk, son of Rabbi Israel Yehoshua Trunk. Yechiel Yeshayahu Trunk is the grandson of Moshe Pinchas.

³² TN: Hirschel/Hersh is a kinuy for the Hebrew name Zvi (both mean "stag").

³³ TN: The Jewish prayer for peace.

R' Leibush Finkler used to apologize when he pressured members to give charitable donations, saying that the donation collectors are leeches sucking the bad blood from the sick body so they must generously donate a beautiful gift to recuperate and recover, and with these words of reconciliation he drew them to him... And, maybe in my opinion, it is necessary to emphasize the words of the comforter (Yeshayahu 60:17) "and I will make your officers peace and your rulers' righteousness," meaning, this charity saves from any bad command and bad rulers! He was the brother-in-law of David Yaakov Metal z"l, grandson of the *tzadik* of Radoszyce. He engaged in negotiations and set a regular time for the study of the Torah. In the last years was the cantor praying the *Musaf* at the Skierniewice chassidim house.

HaRav Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Leib (Zylberberg?) was born in the city of Łęczyca in 5554 [1794] – he passed away in Jerusalem, 3 Shevat 5625 [30 January 1865], author of the books *Zayit Raanan* and *Tiferet Yerushalim*.

At that time the Kutno rabbinate was of great importance. It was the metropolis of the Warsaw-Płock-Kalisz regions, the grain barn for export and import of foreign trade and great rabbis sat on the rabbinical chair. Our rabbi, *Zayit Raanan*, did not agree to sit quietly on his chair and earn a respectable living from the rabbinate. He settled his affairs, took his bundle of savings and sailed to our Holy Land to live in it sparingly, to teach the Torah in public not for the sake of receiving a bounty, and to strive for the development and the building of our country.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the rabbis of Kutno and Kalisz left their exemplary mark on the population: Rabbi Moshe Leib of Kutno – author of *Zayit Raanan*, Rabbi Meir Auerbach of Kalisz – author of *Imrei Binah*, Rabbi Israel Yehoshhe'le of Kutno – author of *Yeshuot Israel* and Rabbi Chaim Elozor Wax of Kalisz – author of *Nefesh Chaya*. The famous ones who came after them worked hard and invested large donations for the prosperity and development of our country and the expansion of its settlement.

From his world-famous students, we learn the magnitude of his teachings, his inspiration and influence in the research of the *halacha*: Rabbi Shmuel Zanzvil Klepfisz [1820-1902], the Rabbi of Warsaw for thirty years, was his student and was ordained by him; and the rabbis: R' Yehoshua Zvi Michal Szapira [1840 Hebron-2 September 1906 Jerusalem], Rabbi Yeshayahu Orensztajn [1836-1908 Jerusalem], Rabbi Nissim Sharly and Rabbi Yehuda Blumenfeld (Yudel Łomżer) [1820 Łomża –24 September 1910 Jerusalem], and many other great rabbis in the country and abroad received their ordination from him. No secret was hidden from him and all the treasures of the Torah were engraved on his heart. He deciphered everything difficult in minute-by-minute analytics, and to this testifies his book, *Tiferet Yerushalayim*, that he composed on serious questions of the genius of the geniuses, Rabbi Akiva Eger z"l [1761-1838]. When he

arrived to the air of our country he sent it to Warsaw, it was immediately printed as a glorious addition to the *Mishnayo* and was received with a happy heart by all the learners.

Our rabbi ztz"l was one of the excellent rabbis of Zion. He found a solution to all difficult questions of the geniuses of the Torah except for the permit of living out of the country. He mustered up courage and strength and made efforts to immigrate and settle. He showed his beautiful strength in the teaching of the Torah to thousands of students, and also encouraged the settlement and the building of our country. Among all the writers of the history of Jerusalem, we find famous people who received influence and inspiration from him. Rabbi Yoel Moshe Salomon (5598-5673) [1838-1913], a writer and printer, builder of a city and founder of Petah Tikva, was considered one of his students. Apparently, they consulted together about the neighborhoods outside the wall and the conquest of "Yehud" to turn it into Petah Tikva! And, I draw a conclusion, that in the time that Salomon edited and published the newspaper *HaLevanon*³⁴, our rabbi ztz"l was found in its issues with his contribution of religious articles on current affairs.

In the rabbinical world there are two famous types who need the printed word without moving, even by a hair's breadth, from the commands under the slogan: "Then I shall not be ashamed when I look at all Your commandments" (Tehillim 119:6). And, as opposed to them, the daring who are proficient in the basics of *halachot* and innovate *halachot*, different *halachot* every day...

HaRav Yitzhak Pinchas Kubec z"l

HaRav Yitzhak Pinchas Kubec was born in Łódź, which was famous for its textile industry, but the heart of young Yitzhak Pinchas did not tend to the life of action but to spiritual life. Already in his youth he inherited the rabbinical chair of his father-in-law, Abraham Bornsztajn, who sat in Rawa Mazowiecka, and indeed, even then he stood out as a rabbi. He was versed in all the treasures of the Torah and many enjoyed his advice when they turned to him and he guided them in the ways of life.

In 1916, he was accepted as *posek* in the community of Kutno and received a lot of praise from the rabbi since he taught more than him... His whole appearance expressed the grace and kindness of a wise scholar. His sidelocks that curled behind his ears and his long beard added a rabbinical charm to him, whose teachings are arranged in the mouth and the heart of a wise senior scholar who is accepted and respected by the people.

After an impure case of *kashrut*, it was decided to appoint him chief supervisor for slaughter and *kashrut* affairs in the city and after the city's judges passed away, he was also appointed *posek* and chief judge, the rabbi's assistant. In the book, *Yeshuot Malko* of the *Gaon* of Kutno ztz"l, which was edited and arranged by the rabbi's

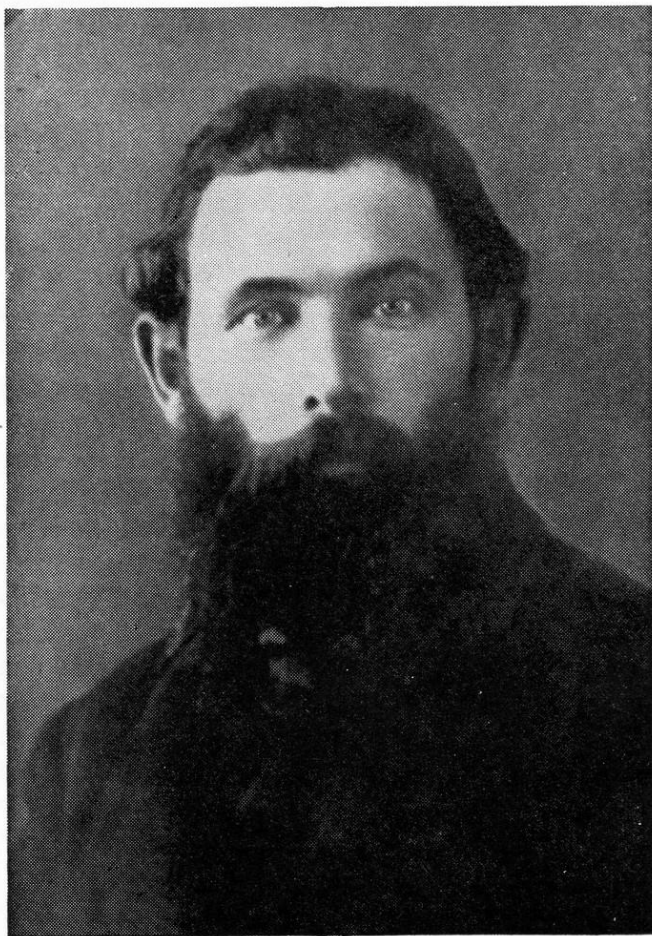
³⁴ TN: *HaLevanon* was the first Hebrew newspaper in *Eretz Israel*. It was published intermittently, and with different

frequency, in 1863-1886 in Jerusalem, Paris, Mainz and London. (The National Library of Israel).

grandson who inherited his chair, the book's editor expresses his gratitude for R' Yitzhak Pinchas' help in editing and arranging the book: "And in that I express my blessing and thanks to the honor of my sharp friend, our teacher and rabbi, Rabbi Yitzhak Pinchas, may his light shine, Kubec, from this community who helped me a lot in the work of copying from the *sidur* and in proofreading."

His proficiency and sharpness helped him to get to the bottom of the debaters' minds, and thanks to the trust they had in him he mediated and made peace between them and everyone was pleased with his smart mediation.

When the Rabbi of Kutno lay in Warsaw³⁵ on his deathbed and wanted to write his will, he ordered to remove the rebbetzin and also the community leaders, Mr. Sztajnfeld and his friends, and only saw R' Yitzhak Pinchas as his competent and faithful confidant and dictated the will to him.



HaRav Yitzhak Pinchas Kubec hy'd

In the raging years of the war, in 1939, the Germans, may their names be blotted out, captured our city and deported all the residents to the ghetto in the suburbs of *Konstancja*, and there was no rabbi left in the city. They accepted him as a substitute rabbi and he alone carried on his shoulder the rabbinate of the Jewish community of Kutno.

When he passed away in 1942³⁶, everyone participated in his funeral in the ghetto because they

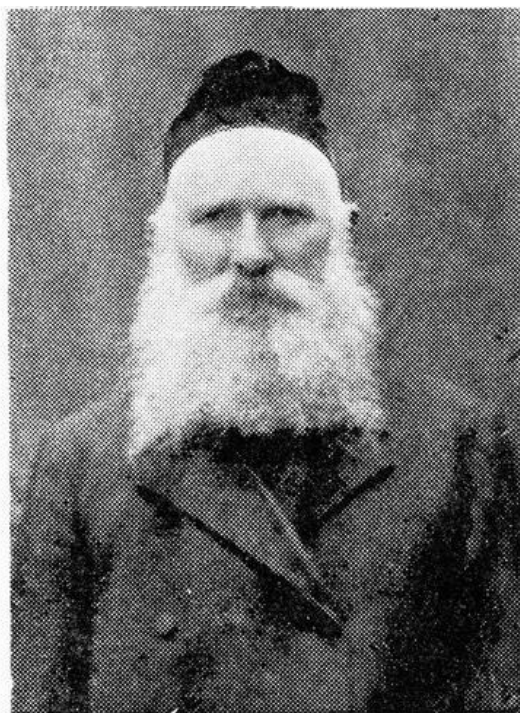
appreciated his holy service in the time of emergency in the ghetto and said to him with warm tears: "And you, go to the end, and you will rest and rise to your lot at the end of the days" (Daniel 12:13).

May his soul be bound up in the bond of life.

*

David Yaakov Metal z"l

He was born in 5640 [1880] in Kutno to Rabbi Pinchas Zelig a veteran Warka chassid. He was orphaned from his father in his childhood and wandered to study the Torah in Lutomiersk with Rabbi Warszawiak, great in the Torah and *chassidut*. He was the only son to his righteous mother, who watched over him as is he was the most precious thing, and brought him to a purpose when she married him as a son-in-law to Rabbi Ze'ev-Zvi son of Rabbi Yitzhak Yudel ztz"l Elberg, and he was liked and loved by all people. When he was a public activist, he gave good advice to anyone who asked, sang his songs well and gracefully not for receiving a bounty, and was a cantor and shofar blower in the Great Synagogue in Kutno. In 5676 [1916], when the "*Mizrachi*" movement was organized in Poland, he devoted himself to it with all his talent and vigor for the benefit of its development, for the building of our holy country under the slogan "*Eretz Israel* according to the Jewish Torah." His singing ceased in the last years of his life, a tree bearing fruit was plucked at the prime of his life after a serious illness. He passed away with a good reputation in 5678 [1918]. The whole city mourned him warmly and praised him with a bitter and mournful eulogy, in the synagogue and in the *Beit Midrash* where he studied.



R' Nachman Yitzhak Ajdels z"l

He was granted to leave an only son who lives among us, a son like him, Mr. Pinchas Zelig Metal, a dedicated activist to the *Hapoel Mizrachi*³⁷.

³⁵ TN: Yitzhak Yehuda Trunk died in Warsaw on 11 March, 1939.

³⁶ TN: died on 17th of January 1941, in the ghetto.

³⁷ TN: *Hapoel Mizrachi* was a religious pioneering and labor movement in *Eretz Israel*.

Our acquaintance had an only son, who bore his father's name, David Yaakov hy"ד³⁸, and married him off when he reached marriageable age. He grew up in Israel in the fervor of the defense of the country and at the outbreak of the War of Independence he was one of the best instructors of the soldiers, and as a devoted officer he guarded his company at the risk of his own life. He fell in battle in the fields of the Negev and was buried in Revivim among the holy of the nation. God will avenge his blood and bound his soul in the bond of life. He left a young widow from the Arye Szymański family in Rehovot and a lovely son, Ehud-Shmuel, named after his grandfather the *Mizrachi* activist, the late Rabbi Shmuel Yaakov Szymański who taught the Torah in public.

Meir Leibush Łeczycki hy"ד

Shivers grip the bones when I talk about one of the martyrs, who gave his life for the sanctification of God's name and ascended to the gallows in the main street to be hanged in public by the Nazis, because, as a city leader he refused to hand over Jewish girls for prostitution. He chose the suffocation of the soul and gave his holy soul to the heavens!!!

A native of Łeczyca, who bore the holy name of the *Malbim*³⁹ ztz"l, highborn and learned, he found shelter with the *Admor* of Alexander. He lived in our city Kutno, was a vegetable wholesaler and ran his business with the ability that God had given to him. He loved charity and kindness to all people and was liked by all the inhabitants. His hand was open to every important public enterprise and was first to donate to all the funds for the benefit of *Eretz Israel*, a devoted and loyal member of the *Mizrachi* movement, and was elected one of the active leaders during the election to the community committee.

On a day of the wrath, he was plucked at the prime of his life in the death of *Harugei Malchut*⁴⁰, for the honor of God and his Torah, may *HaShem* avenge his blood. His delicate family and children, who were raised and educated by him to Torah and *mitzvot*, perished among the martyrs of our people in the Holocaust inferno, in the Chełmno extermination camp, *HaShem* will gather their ashes under his throne of glory among the holy and pure – "Rejoice, O ye Nations, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries!" (*Devarim* 32:43).

Yitzhak Hiler z"l

A man, wise in the mighty Torah and knowledgeable in the laws of God and one of the best *yeshiva* students of the Alexander chassidim, lived in our city Kutno and was one of the great supporters of *Mizrachi*. He passed away at the prime of his life in 5678 [1918]. His widow and two sons immigrated to Israel and

the two families are planted and established in Israel according to their father's will, the holy and pure with refined virtues that was always honored and praised by the residents.

Yitzhak Hiller z"l

He owned coal warehouses next to the nearby train station Krośniewice (Ostrowy), was rich and delicate and his politeness was expressed in his polished appearance. During the war of 5674-5678 [1914-1918], he moved to our city Kutno and occupied an important place in the community. As a respected highborn and learned scholar, he engaged in trade, did not neglect his Torah and did not forget what he had learned. If my memory serves me correctly, he was the son of a rabbi and a teacher in Ozorków near Łódź. He was proficient in a good portion of *Mishnayot* and the *Mishnah* was known to him. He renewed the curriculum and devoted himself to the education at schools. When the *Mizrachi* movement was organized, he was among its best members and participated in all the activities on the agenda. He had an only daughter and married her to a good young man. He didn't live long and passed away in the years of wisdom and the fate of his family is unknown to us. May his soul be bound up in the bond of life

Rabbi Meir the blacksmith

We did not know his surname because he was called by the name of his craft, not a clean and easy craft, because he always left sooty from his work, tired and weary from the beating of his sledgehammer, and yet he was loved and cherished by people and earned a good reputation. He left families branched out in Torah and greatness and saw life and good in his work!

Our Rabbi Meir was respectable and compassionate rabbi, his hand was open to everyone in need and to the beggar. Therefore, he was awarded with son-in-laws, rabbis who studied the Torah and traded in our city and the surrounding area, Rabbi Abraham Bigelajzen owner of a big stone house in the city center (Królewska Street 50), second to him Mr. Yosef Aharon Zandman and the third Mr. Shmuel Płocker. From them branched out great-grandchildren and grandchildren, God-fearing and Torah learners, like olive seedlings around their tables, engaged in study and negotiation.

The author of these columns raises sweetness and rejoices in his memoirs about an honest and pure Jew like this Rabbi Meir. When I was a diligent young man, I woke up and went to the *Beit Midrash* in the early hours of the morning, not far from the time of midnight, even though I was a big coward... I had to pass the entire width of the city through alleys, from the leather-worker street to synagogue street. I restrained my cowardice with my

³⁸ TN: see article on page 312 of the original book. He died in the battle of Bir-Asluj, 20km south of Beersheva, in the Negev desert.

³⁹ TN: Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser was a rabbi, master of Hebrew grammar, and Bible commentator.

⁴⁰ TN: *Harugei Malchut* (lit. Royal Martyrs) is a term in the Jewish tradition that refers to Jews killed by a foreign government, usually because of their Jewishness. The term first referred to those killed in the decrees of destruction in ancient Rome.

diligence and opened the *Beit Midrash*. I studied in a pleasant voice in the lust of the diligent, secluding myself with the *Tannaim*⁴¹ and *Amoraim*⁴² of the Talmud until the member Rabbi Meir the blacksmith came. His friends gathered to recite their chapter of *Tehillim*, *Seder Ma'amadot*⁴³ and *Yehi Ratzon*⁴⁴ after *Tehillim*.

Of the descendants of Rabbi Meir in Israel are his grandchildren, from the Zandman family a clerk at the Haifa port, and farmers from the Bigelajzen family in Herzliya, and maybe some of them have not yet been discovered. When I immigrated, thirty-five years ago (5685) [1925], he was very old, probably lived long and saw life and blessing in his days.

His friends to *ashmoret haboker*⁴⁵ were: R' Zvi Meir Gajst of the Alexander chassidim, the lessee of our city's bathhouse, R' David Gecyl the tailor, R' Meir Dorn the milliner and several other members from the craftsmen and traders who prayed the *Vatikin* prayer at sunrise.

Sometimes there were quarrels between us, those who studied aloud and disturbed the *Kaddish*⁴⁶ and *Barchu*⁴⁷... Anyhow, I was privileged to be loved and cherished by all and we lived in peace and politeness.

Once, those who quarreled with the young men came to complain before the *Gaon*, Rabbi Yehoshe'le ztz"l, about the young men that he liked much, and said: Our Rabbi! Don't think that they are so persistent in the study of the Torah. They also stop and play with notes and cards for long hours. Then he answered them: do you think that the apprentices of the leather workers and tailors do not stop their work and play like them, why did not you come to complain about them?! You only complain about the Torah students, that is, you are only angry at those who study the Torah, don't let this bother you...

The saying of the *Gaon* of Kutno to justify young men who play with notes, served the Zionists' propaganda and Rabbi Zlotnik used it a lot: the ultra-orthodox are not comfortable with the Zionists who do not believe the Torah and *mitzvot* as much. He asked, like Rabbi Yehoshe'le, how many assimilators are there around you, why aren't you angry at them, but you are angry at the Zionists because they believe in the doctrine of the resurrection of Zion, don't get angry at them because of this... Rabbi Yehoshe'le also brought the assimilated closer and did not treat them very harshly. On the contrary, he acted as our Sages had taught us: "the left-hand drive sinners away and the right draw them near." He called them by the holy name and the title of rabbi.

*

The wholesale merchants in the city were: R' Nachum Binush Wajsberg, and next to him his son-in-law R' Yoel Sztajnfeld, R' Beril Fiszer and R' Hirszejakubowicz Brisker. In the early hours of the morning lots of carts from the surrounding towns made noise near their shops, also the owners of retail shops in the city and the surrounding area and later also Kanał and Zakszewski.

Suppliers for construction iron and estate owners were: Zindel-Zandel and Meir Manczester. Market days were held twice a week and the farmers from the area brought carts of grain to the city. The main buyer was R' Yehuda Goldsztajn who had a large warehouse near the Great Synagogue. The farmers sold the grain and bought fabric and woven material that the retailers prepared for them on market day at the street stands, and also traveled to market days in the surrounding towns. My aunt, Riesel, wife of R' Nachman Beril, the son of Yitzhak Yudel, excelled as a woman of valor. He engaged in public affairs and piety and she controlled the street, measured and cut according to the will of her buyers.

Rabbi Shmuel Asz and Rabbi Yaakov Opatowski brought wholesale fabrics from Łódź.

The bankers in the city have also did favors to their many customers, they were: Emanuel Hirszberg, his heir Wladek and Rabbi Yaakov Bromberg, son-in-law of Rabbi Yaakov Lipski and the son-in-law of Rabbi Itzel Nowomiaszt, also Gelblum and Rabbi Asher Mendelson, member of the *Sejm*⁴⁸, and Rabbi Yehuda Moshe Goldberg son-in-law of Rubinlicht, a nobleman and activist in *mitzvot* who passed away in the First World War.

The businesses for construction lumber were managed by: Mordechai Kibel – the poor orphan hoped for customers, and Itshe Holcman-Drzewicki, named after the estate owners, was ambitious in his time.

The city was mostly populated by Jews, merchants, dealers, artisans and blacksmiths who made a living from their work, and with their sweat they earned a slice of bread smeared with olive. They established institutions of kindness and charity, *Talmud Torah* societies, *Bikur Cholim*⁴⁹, *Linat Tzedek*⁵⁰, *Gemilut Chassidim*⁵¹, and holy people who dealt with true charity⁵². My uncle, Rabbi Nachman, controlled them with both hands and with him a group of activists headed by R' Shmuel, son of Rabbi Bezalel Wolsztajn, who built and repaired ovens to warm up the winter cold.

⁴¹ TN: Tannaim were the rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah.

⁴² TN: Amoraim refers to Jewish scholars of the period from about 200 to 500 CE, who "said" or "told over" the teachings of the Oral Torah.

⁴³ TN: *Seder Ma'amadot* is a collection of verses from the Tanakh, Mishnah, and Talmud that are to be recited each day of the week.

⁴⁴ TN: May It Be Your Will.

⁴⁵ TN: The last third of the night.

⁴⁶ TN: *Kaddish*, also known as the "Mourner's Prayer," is said in honor of the deceased.

⁴⁷ TN: The *barechu* prayer is an invitation to the congregation to worship God.

⁴⁸ TN: The *Sejm* is the lower house of the bicameral parliament of Poland.

⁴⁹ TN: *Bikur Cholim* – visiting the sick.

⁵⁰ TN: *Linat Tzedek* – the society recruited volunteers to spend the night beside the beds of sick people so that their families could get some rest.

⁵¹ TN: *Gemilut Hasadim* – "The giving of loving-kindness."

⁵² TN: i.e., *Chevra Kadisha* – dealing with the dead. See article on page 302 of the original book.

It is also necessary to mention the wholesalers who exported grain to Danzig, first and foremost Rabbi Pinchas Rabinowicz, a chassid and a man of action who succeeded, and Rabbi Nachman Bril a distinguished man in the city. In the export of cattle and sheep to Germany were: R' Yosel Rozenkranc and his partners, R' Moshe Gąbner and his sons, Hirsh, Natan and Leibel Asz who succeeded at that time, and this R' Moshe who succeeded in the second marriage of his half a dozen sons: Wolf, Elimelech, Elazar, Yaakov Yehoshua, Zevulun and our author Shalom Asz! Motke the thief! Became angry at Shalom with his claim, is that possible? You will accumulate wealth in my name, and I'm clean?! And I testify that he was not a thief but an abandoned and failing orphan. I will mention in praise the porters who created their own *minyán* and their rabbi, Rabbi Yakel Sofer, authorized it. They were late in paying the weekly payment so he prepared a bill that they owe him for the weekly Torah portions: *Eikev*, *Re'eh*, *Shoftim* ['judges'], *Shotrim* [humor: 'policemen'] for four late payments...

Those engaged in public needs

In the city everyone rests from his work and flows to the churches and the *Batei Midrash*!!! One store is open, that of Starnawski, the pharmacist for medicines that was the art of the gentiles! Later, one of our best friends in the *Beit Midrash* learned this art, and he is Meir Borzekowski who opened a pharmacy in a village between Kutno and Łęczyca. The friend has a married daughter in Kfar Ono, one of the important founding families in the village!

In 5647 [1887], the enlightened members of "*Talmud Torah*" envied the big cities and asked R' Yehoshe'le to establish a general *Talmud Torah cheder* for the city's children! A meeting of all the city's circles was held, the ultra-orthodox objected until the *Gaon* defeated them and the institution was founded... On the eve of *Rosh Chodesh*⁵³ Elul 5672 [13 August 1912], R' Beril Fiszer grabbed me and said "Listen my friend, it's half a jubilee to the foundation of the *Gaon's cheder*, let's have a commemorative party!" I took out my payment and gave it to him, you were right! It was between transitions of power. The *Gaon's* son passed away and the grandson has not yet reigned, and the party was well attended. At the age of thirty I signed up to work as a member and spoke in words of surprise: "Gentlemen, how do we educate?! Not a chapter in the history of our people, no geography of the land. We are almost ignorant and empty in a world of advanced culture... The immigration is increasing and we are to blame if our children are lost in the big world, like semi-savages!"

Two years have passed and the First World War broke out in 5674 (1914). The esteemed rabbi⁵⁴ stayed in the baths in Germany and was imprisoned... I entered with full vigor into the arena of activists and in the election under the occupation, I became a community leader. I took

the portfolio of education and declared *Talmud Torah* a general school. I volunteered to write every request to the German authorities and dedicated the writers' salary to the teachers' payment. In the old market was a barracks for the army that fled and the building was empty. I went to the authorities to ask them to hand over the building to us and improve it to an elementary school for our children, they agreed and we negotiated the program. I explained Chruściel, the Superintendent of Schools, that our children from the *cheder* only studied Judaic studies eight hours a day. It is impossible to jump into such a gap and to devote one hour, this is definitively not enough! We reached a compromise, half and half, three hours of secular studies and one hour of religious study at their expense, and two more hours of religious studies at our expense (the shouting of the ultra-orthodox teachers: the grandson of R' Yitzhak Yudel converts two hundred Jewish children bareheaded). R' Israel Bekerman, who immigrated and became famous as a *tzadik* in Tel-Aviv, was appointed teacher at the school and I allocated *sidurim*, *chumashim* and pairs of *tefillin* to the needy and guarded them as the apple of my eyes.

When we saw in the vision the defeat of the conqueror, and with him the Turkish who conquered our country, we made a plebiscite to demand the Land of Israel for the Jewish people. We saw the birth of a nation as the birth of a child. The feeding pit was blocked and the closed mouth was opened, Poland is blocked and it will be necessary to emigrate to the United States or to our country, and it is necessary to give our children a better culture so that they will know well all matters of life, science and intellect.

I made an effort and created a gymnasium, "*Am Ha'Sefer*," in the toil and sweat of a handful of members, we influenced our residents to give their children to us instead of the gentile school Macierz. Mr. Yehuda Leibish Grinbaum, who lives with us, traveled to Cracow and brought academics in the composition of the best forces with Dr. Leszman at their lead, and even though there were dark forces that whistled and slandered our institution, those who always shouted "schools are not necessary!" the rabbi joined the supervisory board and his children were given teaching positions. Dr. Goldman's wife, member of "*Assuta*," served for a while as the school's secretary. On Shabbat eve we gathered the parents to give them results! Beautiful forces came into service like Rabbi Yehuda Riftin and his daughter, and it is necessary to bring up in sacred memory the unforgettable member, Alexander [Sender] Falc, who was murdered for the sanctification of God's name!

As a funny joke I have to write the defiance of the late Zvi Yosef Plezker who shouted at me in the manner of the fish market: I will blow your brain, why did you raise my tuition payments! I was privileged to answer him after years of toil in Israel, please my friend! I prepared for

⁵³ TN: *Rosh Chodesh* is the first day of every month in the Hebrew calendar marked by the appearance of the new moon.

⁵⁴ TN: Rabbi Yitzhak Yehuda Trunk.

you talented sons to hold respectable positions in banking institutions (*Kupat HaAm*), a son who is a manager thanks to *Am Ha'Sefer*... I have to write that I suffered a lot from the devaluation of the currency in the inflation. I paid on account and on time but their value went down and depleted me, however, public afflictions are my favorites. There were members who felt in the period of my *aliya* to Israel that the institution might suffer because of the depletion of forces. Mr. Leibush Kilbert, son-in-law of Rabbi Yechiel Szlajfer, offered to give me the institution as a private property, to utilize it and stay. I thanked them very much! But my decisions were strong without retreat!

Shabbat eve! I have to write an introduction to the creation of "*Am Ha'Sefer*." Once Mr. Yosef Ajzenman, son-in-law of Rabbi Shalom Kronzylber, of the best Alexander chassidim, came on the rabbi's mission who asked to see me! I went, and here's the matter: the rabbi's son Yosef, studies at Macierz gymnasium and until now he had the right not to come on the Shabbat, and from now, the principal Kostro is going to cancel the right and forces the students to come on the Shabbat, otherwise they would be expelled from school... I refused and said to the rabbi, this is the matter that hurts me, the handing over of Jewish children for conversion by the gentiles, it is necessary to establish a Hebrew gymnasium for ourselves! Shabbat eve *Mevarchim Elul*⁵⁵, mental distress to the ultra-orthodox, the rabbi said sometimes you have to compromise, before founding a Hebrew gymnasium we must take the path of request. We went to ask Kostro, and he opposed us and said: I don't accept old dogmas! I added in front of him: we call an educational institution a small temple, how can we build the temple with one hand and destroy it with the other! He did not move from his stubbornness! We left him in disgrace and went to the head clergyman to ask him to influence Kostro, and he also refused because he was not his subordinate... When I returned, I said to the rabbi, now thank me that my decision is firm to build our own institution!!!

Aharon Shlomo, son of R' Ze'ev Zvi z"l
ELBERG

⁵⁵ TN: The Shabbat, which immediately proceeds the month of Elul, is blessed.