

Notes from the Editors^{*)}

The editors of the book *Czenstochov* have succeeded in gaining, as a contributor, the important *landsmann* and young academic, Dr W. Gliksman, who works with YIVO. Dr W. Gliksman has completed his studies in the field of General and Jewish History and in Jewish Education in the United States, at the Dropsie College in Philadelphia.

Leib Kurland

Leib Kurland [was] born on 19th May 1913 in the village [Dębnie, to his father^{*1}] and mother Sura-Ajdla Zekowicz. He is the third of seven children. His father had a water-mill and a small estate. Leib studied in a *cheder* - at [Jechiel] Grylak's - in Częstochowa and then at the Jewish Gymnazjum. He completed the gymnazjum in 1932 with a *matura* [secondary school certificate]. From 1930, he contributed to the *Częstochower Zeitung*, in which [his] stories and sketches were printed. He left for France to study Medicine in Montpellier and graduated in Lyons in 1937. During that entire time, he contributed to *Unser Weg* (Częstochowa) and, in 1936, was a correspondent for *Moment* in Warsaw. In 1937, he married Fela Majerowicz (Wieruszów, Poland). For two years, he specialised in children's diseases.

In 1939 he voluntarily enlisted in the French Army. In 1940, he [was] transferred to [General Władysław] Sikorski's Army in France. Following the capitulation, [he] went with what remained of the Polish Army to England, where he served in the army as a military physician and officer. During these years in England, from time to time, he wrote for the *Zeit* [Time] in London [and] was the author of a drama [titled] "*Moishe's Stick*". He [also] published a sheet of poems entitled "*We are Like Rocks*" (Narodsky Publishers, [London], 1942), a volume of stories [entitled] "*And so it Started*" (same publisher, 1942) and a large novel [entitled] "*There was Once a Village*" (1943). He participated in the invasion of the continent as the military physician of an infantry regiment and came into contact with the first Jewish survivors - the remnants of the destruction.

Leib Kurland was the first Jewish writer to describe the traces of a Jewish "life" following the Liberation. He was the first to come into contact with the Jews who had been saved in France, Belgium [and the] German [DP] camps. [He] described all this in a long series of reports in *Forverts* (New York), *Zeit* (London), *Unser Wort* and *Unser Stimme* (Paris) [and] *Naye Welt* (Israel). He received First Prize in the *Zukunft* (New York) 1945 storytelling contest. At the end of the War, he was wounded and spent six months in hospital.

Since 1946, [he] has been in Paris. [He is] active literarily [and has] published a volume of stories in Landsberg, Germany (a DP camp), entitled "*Fearful Days*". [He has] contributed to an array of newspapers with stories and reports or correspondences to *Forverts*, *Zukunft*, *Zeit*, *Unser Weg* (München) [and] *Naye Welt* (Israel). [He] began regularly contributing to the Parisian daily papers *Unser Stimme* and *Unser Wort*, in which he continuously conducts, to this day, a regular medical rubric. [Having] established himself as a practitioner, Kurland writes in this journal under different pseudonyms.

^{*)} We hereby present, in a condensed manner, the biographies of several Częstochower Landsleit who are, in our opinion, worth mentioning in our book – both as writers and cultural activists, and as social activists.

The Editors

^{*1} [TN: Obviously a line is missing from the original, which would have specified the name of his village and of his father. The former is given in the *Sefer Częstochowa*, Vol. II, p.255. We have not been able to ascertain the name of his father.]

[He] has lost almost his entire family, except for a brother and a sister who are now in Israel, and his wife, who was saved in Lyons. Two children have been born to him – Hershel, who is now just eleven-years-old and Noach [who is] eight-years-old.

Kurland prints medical and socio-medical discourses in a number of Yiddish newspapers throughout the globe. [He] frequently delivers lectures on popular medical themes. He has created his own style of writing popular medical discourses, immortalising the Jewish medicinal folklore and customs. [He has been] elected Chairman of the newly-founded Society of Jews from Częstochowa and the Vicinity (Paris).

Henia Lustiger^{*)}



Henia Lustiger, born in Częstochowa in 1902 [sic 1921], lived through the horrifying years of the War. In her memoirs, Henia Lustiger, she depicts her youth in Częstochowa. She comes from an intellectual, Jewish, bourgeois family. Her father, Uszer Szmulewicz, was very well-known and owned a mirror factory on ul. Warszawska. He wrote articles in the *Częstochower Zeitung*. Henia was brought up in a Jewish spirit, although her grasp of Yiddish is weak.

“My parents”, writes Henia, “cultivated in me a passion for art, for poetry”.

As a young schoolgirl, in a Polish school, Henia already showed literary capabilities. She was awarded honours for her Polish-language stories and poems. During her studies at *gymnazjum*, at the age of fifteen, Henia sends a story to the Polish-Yiddish newspaper *Nasz Przegląd* [Our Overview], for which she receives a honorarium and, after the story is published, Henia is asked to write as frequently as possible. From that time, her stories are printed in many Polish newspapers. In 1939, Henia receives a proposal to write a novel for a Polish periodical in Pommern,^{*} Poland.

After completing middle [sic secondary] school, Henia prepares to go to university and continue her studies. The Nazi invasion turns her plans into a pile of rubble. Years of pain and suffering ensue - Henia finds herself in the Częstochowa Ghetto. And there, in the ghetto, she is wed. Later, she and her husband are sent to the HASAG camp. Following the Liberation, she and her husband travel to the State of Israel, where they live nowadays.

^{*)} Henia Lustiger has become known in the State of Israel with her book of memoirs of the Ghetto Years in Częstochowa, which received an award from Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. The book, for the time being, is still in manuscript form. Let us hope that we, the Landsleit and friends of this young writer, will do everything to assist, [so] that these “memories” from our hometown should be published as soon as possible.

^{*} [TN: Prowincja Pomorze – the Province of Pomerania]

A Letter to the Editors from Dr Benjamin Orenstein

Esteemed friends,

I request that you publish this letter in the book *Czenstochov*.

Knowing that this book *Czenstochov* is a supplement to all that was hitherto published, I therefore deem it necessary to clarify the following:

- 1) Due to the Latin transcription in my book *Churbn Czenstochow*, published by the Central Management of the Czeŝtochower Landsmannschaften in the American Zone in Germany in 1948, some names were misspelt:

On p.25 [sic 27] was printed Dr Braum, and it should be Dr Braun.

On p.35 was printed Leterman, and it should be Lederman.

On p.35 was printed Ploker, and it should be Plocker.

On p.39 was printed Josl Frank, and it should be Mojsze Frank.

On p.193 was printed Mojsze Raport, and it should be Mojsze Rapoport.

On p.360 was printed Arn Szamesz, and it should be Urn Szamesz.

- 2) In writing the book, I utilised what is called the "oral method" as regards the collection of testimonies. I confronted [viz. challenged; verified] every statement [given in] testimony tens of times, but one testimony which I received, in written form, from a *Czeŝtochower landsmann*, who was at the time - meaning in 1947 - living in Mainkofen [Deggendorf?], in the American Zone in Germany (he is now in the State of Israel), [I] had no possibility of confronting, because the affair reached back to Icyk "Shlize" ["The Slippery"; Częŝ. Jewish thug] in 1905 (the written testimony is in my private archives). The majority of the *Czeŝtochower Landsleit* in the American Zone were younger men and had no knowledge of that episode. As a cause, I was driven to a misunderstanding in my collection of this testimony and I, therefore, wish to take advantage of this opportunity to correct [my rendering of] that episode. In my book, on p.360, it is stated that Icyk "Shlize" fell in 1905 as a revolutionary. This is incorrect. What it should be is that Icyk "Shlize" was a ruling figure of the underworld - a "Good Boy" [viz. gangster], who caused huge troubles for the organised Jewish movement [early Socialists]. He collaborated with the [Tsarist Russian] Secret Police [and] was the cause for the arrests of organisers of the movement for the fight against Tsarism. The SS [Zionist Socialist Workers Party] Movement undertook a war against the informers - issuing death sentences upon them. A death sentence of this kind was issued against Icyk "Shlize". The sentence was carried out and Icyk "Shlize" died as a traitor - not as a revolutionary^{*2}. It is worthwhile to note that those who carried out this assassination are still alive and live in the US. (Clearly, the circumstances do not allow us to publish the names of the assassins.)

Dr Benjamin Orenstein, author of *Churban Czenstochow*.

My deepest recognition and congratulations to the editors of the monumental work, *Czenstochov*.

J. Aronoff, J.P.

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Telephones: Crescent [St] – 9-0630; Wellington [St] – 5-9879.)

^{*2} [TN: In Orenstein's book, this same criminal's headstone is depicted as being engraved with a pistol – which within the context that the author himself has now taken back, was meant to emphasise how "revolutionary" the deceased was – supposedly.]