

Dawid Tanski

Jakub-Ber Silver [Zylber] – at Seventy-Five

Jakub-Ber is 75! This simply beggars belief! Those who have worked with him in the various fields in which he was - and still is - active, and those who know him in general, simply cannot imagine - and do not even notice - that he has almost already become an old man. No - the years have had no power over him!



Jakub-Ber Silver

A Jew, with so much lust for life, with so much joy in his heart, with so much faith in the destiny of humanity, with so much benevolence towards each and every one - a Jew, whom no tempest has been able to bend, who has never acknowledged defeat - even when he, himself, was the victim of it; one, who possesses such boundless energy and spiritual power, does not grow old. And the truth is that, even now - already past seventy, he is still the same Jakub-Ber, who inspires every individual and infects one with his confidence, his faith [and] his idealism. He still remains the youngest one amongst us all!

Jakub-Ber is known far and wide - not only amongst those close to him, but also outside his circle. He is the symbol for one, who shed his own self and dedicated his entire life to the public good. He lives with society, breathes with its breath and lives with its force. Jakub-Ber's personal life is swallowed up by his social one and each new enterprise seizes him with all its force and becomes the stimulus for a new leap in his creative life.

Jakub-Ber has no enemies and also no opponents. He has his beliefs and goes about with his own teachings, but he is tolerant of everyone and would not force his ideas upon anybody. He only seeks out the person who could be useful and assist him in his extensive work or who requires aid and whom he can tear away from the claws of despondency and desperation.

There is no organisation of *Częstochower landsleit* which serves any kind of humanitarian cause to which he does not belong and contribute his labour, time and money. He does not seek honours and egoistic goals. Behind-the-scenes politics are alien to him but, everywhere, he becomes the leader, the tone-giver, the nerve, the heart and the soul of the organisation. He gains his position quickly, easily [and] without any effort, because he is upright and deeply interested in the work's progress. He is always the representative of the community, the stimulating force [and] the central nerve which holds together, builds, fortifies [and] cements [everything]. [He] brings in the exalted word, the profound faith and the enthusiasm. With his benevolence and his lust for life, with his intelligence and his understanding of human weaknesses, he wins everyone's trust and also infects others with his sense of responsibility and idealism.

Already, from his earliest youth, he became involved in communal life. However, it is among his *landsleit* in America that he has distinguished himself, to the utmost, with his great skills and merits - in the *Arbeiter Ring*, in the Union and in many other organisations, especially in the [Częstochower] "Relief", in which he is active to this very day.

He has always been the giver. It has been his wont to give away not only his time and energy, but also the last dollar he had saved.

He has never been worried about himself - about his own material situation - which has often been unsure and many times even critical. Whenever the organisation needed money (and when did it *not* need it?), Jakub-Ber, himself a toiler, contributed much more than what he could permit himself [to give]. He would also secretly support needy people, putting money into their pockets without their knowledge, although this was already definitely above his means.

He arrived in America young and he has remained, just as young! Many of his comrades have aged before their time and have been flung out of their effervescent life. His desire to work [and] to be useful has never weakened, but rather has continuously grown and has been manifested in his extensive activities.

He has lived through difficult times, but no tragic event has been able to break his strong spirit, nor influence his deep faith. His habitual proverb has [always] been - "It's going to be alright", and he would shout angrily at those black crows who try to make one despair and who spread hopelessness.

We, too, are proud to have him in our ranks and we wish him many more years of fruitful activities.

Jakub-Ber can well take pride in his youthful, old age.