

**A. Chrobolovsky**

## Evening Courses

Evening courses for the working youth were first created in 1920 at the *Vereinigte Workmen's Club*, later at the Central Council of Professional Unions and, in 1926, at the I.L. Peretz School.



*Evening courses for the younger ones, with A. Chrobolovsky*

The emergence of these courses was connected with the formation of the *Shtral* [beam, ray] youth organisation. After the kindergartens and primary schools, the youth courses were the best thing that was done in the field of cultural development of the working youth. Before that, in the evenings and on Saturdays, the youth, together with older members, would pack the clubhouses and other workers' premises and while away the time doing nothing.

The first organisers of the evening courses were the active figures of

*Shtral*: Abram Bratt, S. Wenger, Alek Lewensztajn, Mojsze Lewenhof, Malka Dancyger, Gliksman, Wajzman and others.

A group of students from the Hebrew[-language] Jewish *Gymnazjum* also belonged to *Shtral*. Their leaders were Motek Pływacz and Eksztajn, who later became leading activists in the Labour Movement: Motek Pływacz in Independent and Eksztajn in the Bund.

In 1920, the courses were arranged in the premises of the second kindergarten at ul. Strażacka 10, with the participation of 40-50 children [and], later, on ul. Garncarska, in the building of the cooperative bakery, where there were two separate sections for the younger ones and the grown-ups. The number of applicants was so great, that there were not enough places for everyone. The premises could only take in about 90-100 pupils. At the courses, first and foremost, they saw to it that the youth should learn how to write, read and speak Yiddish correctly. But besides Yiddish, they also studied Polish, mathematics, geography [and] natural sciences. In summertime, outings in the vicinity were arranged almost every Saturday morning. On Saturday afternoons, popular [viz. comprehensible to



*A group of students of the evening courses, with the teachers and the manager*

the layman] talks were held on literature, history, social sciences and other topics. The evening courses also introduced gymnastic exercises and singing.

The teacher of Yiddish and popular talks was A. Chrobolovsky. The teacher of geography and natural sciences was M. Kanowski, a teacher at the Horticultural Farm. The gymnastic exercises were led by Moryc Kremski.

The greatest benefit of the courses was that the majority of the students learned to write correctly in Yiddish. The pupils were especially fond of poetry. They were read aloud and their urge to recite was strong. Yiddish literature, in general, was welcomed with enthusiasm [and] Peretz's stories in particular.

Youth from different parties took part in the courses, as well many unaffiliated youth.

Some of the students had [already] belonged to the Communist Movement before that and a number of those, who belonged to *Shtral*, later switched over to the Communists. The majority of them spent long years in the prisons of "Independent" Poland.