

Symcha Silver (Zylberberg)

The son of Chaim and Mania née Staszewska, he was born in Częstochowa, where he studied in *cheder* and at the general school. He belonged to the [Bund's] *Zukunft* [Future] youth organisation and helped towards the establishment of the SKIF [*Sozialistischen Kinder Verband* – the Socialist Children's Association] organisation in Częstochowa. He was a member of the Bund's City Committee and secretary of the Clothing Union until he left for Paris.

He arrived in Paris in 1933 and, in 1934, married the [Częstochowa] lady Chaja Bergman, who gave him two children - a son and a daughter.

In October 1939, he was mobilised into active military service in the French army in the fight against the Nazi invasion. In 1940, he was demobilised from the army, whereupon the wrangle against the Nazi destroyers, lying in wait for Jewish life, ensued. The children were under the supervision of a French family and were thus safe from destruction and annihilation. During the time of the Nazi occupation in France, Symcha Silver and his wife did not spend the night where they spent the day. The moral and material aid from the Jewish Labor Committee in New York, which [even] under such unwritable conditions, reached Symcha Silver and many others like him, was a consolation and a hope.

Following the collapse of the Nazi regime, survivors of the destruction arrived in Paris as refugees, and it was from them that Symcha Silver now learned of the cruel Nazi massacres in Częstochowa and the fate of Polish Jewry.

In 1955, Symcha Silver and his family arrived in Montreal and, since then, he and his wife take an active part in all the Society's work. Symcha Silver is the Secretary of the Society and the Book Committee. His wife is active in the Ladies Auxiliary.

As Secretary of the Society, Symcha Silver carries his duties out with great devotion. He has different duties at specific times of the year, namely:

- When a general meeting is called, he is the one tasked with preparing all the invitations, inserting them in envelopes, writing the addresses, pasting stamps and mailing them.
- When a raffle is held, he is the one who needs to provide every male and female member with raffle booklets, whether in person or by mail.
- Each year, when the annual money shower is held, he is the one who maintains contact with the women of the Ladies Auxiliary, rousing and encouraging [them] to collect items for the bazaar and sell tickets. He keeps track of all the proceeds and, at the Executive meetings, reports on the progress of the preparatory works. Afterwards, it is his task to send out receipts and thank-you letters to those who contributed money or items.

- Each year, when the annual *mo'os chitin*¹ campaign is held, Symcha Silver sends the *landsleit* letters and reminders, makes telephone calls and reports on that at the Executive meetings until the campaign is officially closed.
- When the time arrives to send aid to the *landsleit*, and particularly for Pesach, Symcha Silver participates in the meetings of the Special Committee, and he is the one who has all the important information and letters from the candidates, who applied and are in need of aid. Symcha Silver is concurrently the executer of the Committee's decisions – namely, purchasing the special draft cheques from the bank, adding a letter from the Society to each cheque, mailing everything at the appropriate time and maintaining written contact with every applicant to whom the material aid was sent. The same also happens during the rest of the year, when financial aid is sent in urgent cases.

Symcha Silver is also very active in organising the annual memorial services. It must also be mentioned that Symcha Silver takes an important part in the annual evenings celebrating the liberation of the concentration camps. Symcha Silver's activities are of great significance to the Society.

Chenstochover and Vicinity Aid Society of Toronto

Congratulations

The Chenstochover and Vicinity Aid Society of Toronto heartily congratulates the Czenstochover Landsmanshaft of Montreal on the publication of this book, which constitutes an important contribution to the history of the life, struggle and destruction of the Częstochowa Jewry.

We are amazed at the important activities of the Czenstochover Landsmanshaft of Montreal, which has gained renown with its cultural, communal and relief work.

May you be strengthened and blessed for your relief activity for the benefit of our *Częstochower* brothers and sisters overseas.

We wish you [good] health and success in you forthcoming endeavours.

With the *Landsmannschaft's* regards,

**Chenstochover and Vicinity Aid Society
of Toronto**

¹ [TN: Heb., "wheat money"; charity traditionally given to poor people before Passover with which to buy wheat to bake matzos and other holiday necessities.]

