

The Book Committee

Reb Berl Bocian

He was born in Częstochowa in 1877.

In 1891, while still a very young man, he opened a large Jewish printing-press at Aleja 6, together with his father Reb Mojsze. It constantly developed and was the first printer of the "*Częstochower Tageblatt*" and, later, of the weekly "*Częstochower Zeitung*". For a number of years, these were the mouthpieces of the Jewish community public social opinion and a whole rank of journalists and writers rallied round them.

Following his father's death, Reb Berl ran the press together with his brother Szymon, who was also a skilled professional in the printing field.

Reb Berl Bocian, above all during his last years, dedicated himself to important, community philanthropic work.

He was to be thanked for the growth of "*Tomchei Ani'im*" [Supporters of the Poor], which literally kept hundreds of poor families alive.

As leader of this important institution, he saw to it that the needy should receive the aid in a dignified manner. He was able to pull to this work people who were held dear in the city and who were known by the popular nickname "little good-*Shabbes* Jews".

An interesting fact should be mentioned here. In his childhood, Reb Berl Bocian learned together with Dr Batawja at Reb Ajzyk Mosze's [surname] *cheder*. Since then, they were friends during their entire lives and they actually died on the same week – "[*Saul and Jonathan were*] *lovely and pleasant in their lives and, in their death, they were not divided*"! [2 Samuel, 1:23]