

Charitable Institutions in Our City

The “Achiezer” Society

This Society was founded, by a few public figures, some years before the outbreak of the Second World War. It set itself the goal of serving as a sort of institution for mutual insurance for its members, who took it upon themselves to pay, during their entire lives, a monthly payment to create a special fund, from which would be paid a one-time provision to the families of deceased members, in order to enable their financial preservation following the death of the family’s head and provider.

We have found, in one of the newspapers published in our city (in “Częstochower Zeitung”, #19, from 13th May 1938), details of one of the annual general meetings of this important institution and these are the details of the report published:

Last Sunday, the Annual General Meeting of the “Achiezer” Society in our city was held at the ‘Merchants and Manufacturers Union’ hall.

The meeting was opened by Dr Hirszberg, who proposed appointing the director Mr Pruszycki as the meeting’s chairman. Additionally, member Winter, the lawyer Proport and member Z. Sztyller were elected to its presidency and members Krauzkopf and Manela as its secretaries. Cantor Finkelsztajn conducted a memorial prayer for deceased members and they were commemorated all those present at the meeting standing.

Mr Krauzkopf read the minutes of the previous year’s general meeting, which was approved without disagreements.

Mr Sztokman then delivered the current year’s report, from which it turned out that, in the past year, the exiting committee had held twenty nine meetings.

During the same period, two members, who had insured themselves for their whole lives and also one “active member”, had passed away. Six members, who had not been diligent in paying their membership fees, were excluded from “Achiezer” and twelve new members were admitted.

From its expenditure, the Society had spent the sum of 950 złotych for urgent relief.

Mr Sztokman noted, sadly, that the fundraiser for the high school which the Society had begun, had not succeeded. However, a few hundred złotych had been collected for the purchase of a “funerary box”. He also announced that the Society’s management had decided to renew the memberships of the six expelled members expelled, after they settled their payments.

The board of management also agreed to vigorously acquire additional members. The proposition regarding the purchase of a new “funerary box” provoked great opposition from the members Danziger, Kromołowski and Rubinsztajn, who pointed out that the purchase of

a new and modern bier, whilst retaining the use of the old one, may cause quarrels, if not all the deceased be brought to the cemetery in the new bier. In their opinion, one rule was needed for all.

Members Sztyller and Pruszycki, on the other hand, supported the proposition, stating that the Kehilla's casket, for transporting the community's dead, was completely unsuitable for its purpose and that it should stop being used.

It was decided:

- 1.) to gather special funds for the purchase of the bier;*
- 2.) to approve the readmission of the six expelled members;*
- 3.) to approve the financial report delivered by member Sztokman;*
- 4.) to approve the budget for the new year, of 5700 złotych.*

Elections were then held for the new board of management. Successful members were: Ch. Herberg, H. Zisman, G. Landau, P. Proport, J. Kornwaser, [and] J. Sztokman. And as deputies: J. Engel, Ch. Gerichter, A. Danziger, A. Zilbersztajn, S. Kac, A. Manela and G. Najman. Members Blausztajn, Herszlikowicz and Libskind were elected to the Audit Committee.

W.H.

The “*Nichum Aveilim*” [Consoling Mourners] Society

Over many years, the “*Nichum Aveilim*” Society existed in the Częstochowa slum, on ulica Garncarska.

This Society, founded by simple people, gathered around itself almost exclusively indigent craftsmen, who lived from their daily labours, and who took it upon themselves, nevertheless, the role of visiting mourners' homes, to organise public prayers [of ten adult males] in those homes during the “seven days of mourning”, to console them and to encourage them for the future.

They carried out their gloomy mission with heart and soul and with loyal love – a true love for the People of Israel, as had been accustomed for generation upon generation.



The Society's wardens were Icyk Krakowiak, Szulim Jakubowicz and others, whose names we've forgotten, although they deserve to be mentioned in blessing and in praise.

W.H.

The “*Hachnoset Orchim*” [Hospitality to Guests] Society

(In 1939, shortly before the onset of the Second World War, which brought the annihilation of Częstochowa Jewry within the destruction of the Eastern European Jewry – the “*Hachnoset Orchim*” Society celebrated its 50th anniversary.)

The society, which had always been popular and well-liked by the city's Jews, due to its positive activity, made use of this jubilee to increase its income and widen its operations.

The board of management published an announcement in the "*Częstochower Zeitung*" newspaper, in which it pointed out its important duties and the manner in which they were carried out, particularly at a time when unemployment was increasing and the number of "guests", who came to Częstochowa, who could not afford to stay at a hotel for money and knocked on the Society's doors, was steadily increasing and it was its duty to provide them with shelter in its rooms and beds.

The last Board of Directors of "*Hachnoses Orchim*" consisted of:

Menachem Epsztajn as Chairman and as members of the Board, Messrs. Szaja Oberman, Abram Epsztajn, Zvi Hersz Epsztajn, Szlojme Gryca, Szyia Wilinger, Szmul Zilberberg, Berisz Tenenberg, Szyia Makowski, Mojsze Meserman, Majer Meryn, Szymon Meryn, Majer Nudelman, Alter Neumark and Aron Essig.

(In praise of the Częstochowa Jews, it should be said that the community responded in generous spirit to the announcement of "*Hachnoses Orchim's*" board of management. However, the Holocaust which the enemy of the Jews brought upon the entire House of Israel in Europe, of course, also put an end to this Society's activity.)