

D. Koniecpoler

Reb Izaak Mendel Horowicz *hy*"d

Reb Mendel Horowicz, one of Częstochowa's oldest Zionists, was among the first "*Hovevei Zion*" in our city, along with his brother Berisz and Messrs Natan Gerichter, M. Mokrajer and Gostynski.

Reb Horowicz was the owner of a large factory and was known for the meticulousness and honesty with which he managed his business. He was also able to pass this awareness on to his whole household, until it became a tradition in his house, in which the spoken language was Yiddish and not Polish, as was then the custom in most families of his standing. He educated his sons in a nationalistic spirit and instilled in them love for the Land of Israel.

His son Eliyahu [Eliasz] made *Aliyah* as a pioneer back in 1921 and is now a veterinary surgeon in Israel. His second son, Ze'ev Wolf, arrived in 1924 and is a member of the "*Mishmar Ha'Emek kibbutz*". His third son, Szmul, who was also a *kibbutz* member, travelled to Częstochowa to see to family affairs and was unable to return in time.

Reb Horowicz visited Palestine in 1924 (in the month of Adar 5684) as a tourist, with the intention of settling in the land of his boyhood dreams. Upon returning to Częstochowa, he even said, "I've come from the home". But his dreams did not come true.

When Hitler assumed power in Germany and a boycott was declared on German products, the "Horowicz & Ptr" firm cancelled all its orders for machines and raw materials, even though this brought it great losses and hindered the factory's development.

We should mention an incident which is characteristic of Reb Mendel's attitude. Once, one of his workers stood (after working hours) in front of Jewish shops, holding up a sign calling to boycott the Jews. Upon discovering this, he sacked him at once, disregarding the threats from the rest of the Polish workers that they would call a strike. Horowicz was not intimidated and he did not allow that antisemite to set foot in the factory again.

M. Horowicz was distinguished for his generosity in giving to charity, but he treated the National Funds especially generously. In all the fundraising events for "*Keren Ha'Yesod*" or "*Keren Kayemeth*", the "Horowicz & Ptr" firm was amongst the highest on the list and it did not suffice with this - each individual partner in the firm also made his own, private contribution.

(In 1942, his two sons Leib and Szmul were executed in his factory's yard.

On 21st June 1943, Nazi troops discovered the bunker where he was hiding with his family. The leading murderer of the Częstochowa Jews, Degenhardt, took mercy upon them and allowed them to move to the "Small Ghetto".

On Saturday, 26th June 1943, when the "Small Ghetto" was liquidated, both he and his wife were shot. Blessed be their memory.)