Lipman Rajcher

**The Pilcer Rebbe ztz”l**

Although our Teacher, Rebbe Pinches Menachem ztz”l, came to Częstochowa from Wieruszów, we called him “The Pilcer Rebbe”, after his first rabbinical post in Pilica (Kielce gubernia [Province]). The Rebbe was a tzadik of the age, an extraordinarily assiduous studier, whose mouth literally never stopped uttering words of Torah. I, personally, often saw that, on his way to the mikvah\(^1\) on Friday, he took with him a Mishna or another book, which he studied right up to his immersion.

Followers from all corners of Poland came to him every Shabbes. They would flood the Częstochowa streets, wearing their shtreimels and silken caftans. Those who prayed with the Rebbe had the special pleasure of hearing the fine prayer-leaders Reb Mendel Froman [and] his son Reb Jukel, as well as Reb Mordche Wajnsztok and his choir.

The Częstochowa Jews were proud that such a great tzadik lived there. In times of trouble, they went to the Rebbe, where they always found a comforting word and good advice on private affairs.

The Rebbe passed away in Częstochowa, on Shabbes, 10\(^{th}\) Kislev 5681 [21\(^{st}\) November 1920], at dusk. The death caused great bereavement and tears, not only in town, but also throughout Poland. Hundreds of Chassidim, Rabbis and Rebbes, came to the funeral, with the Gerer Rebbe and many of his followers at the head.

There was a quarrel regarding the burial site. Pilica demanded that he be buried in Pilica and Częstochowa argued that he had died in Częstochowa. A rabbinical court was appointed, which ruled that he be buried in Częstochowa.

In accordance with his will, the Rebbe was immersed in the Old Mikvah. Chassidim heroically went into the ice-cold water, where they immersed the great deceased one.

[Also] in accordance with his will, his tomb was not covered with any roof.

Every yuhrzeit, thousands of Chassidim would come to Częstochowa and made merry and prayed at his tomb, disregarding the frost of the month of Kislev.

The Rabbi of Pabianice, Reb Mendele Alter z”l, the Gerer Rebbe’s brother, who had been one of the [Pilica] Rebbe’s great followers, also came for every yuhrzeit.

The grave and tombstone remained undamaged to the last day, which was considered a miracle from heaven.

His son, the Rabbi of Wieruszów, was appointed as his successor (of whom a grandson of his writes separately in “Sefer Częstochowa”).

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\(^1\) [TN: Ritual bathhouse for purification; all Chassidim “purify” themselves before Shabbes, holidays and any “serious” religious endeavour, even daily morning prayer services.]