

E. Ben-Moshe

A.Ch. Sziffer *hy''d*

He was one of the finest figures to make their mark on our city's cultural life. He was an expert on the Hebrew language, in all its forms and periods. Ch.N. Bialik, on his visit to Częstochowa and after holding conversations with him, praised him extensively and expressed his amazement at the depth of his knowledge of our national language and his mode of expression.

His outer appearance was also exceptional. He had a high forehead, a pondering and absent-minded gait, as that of a thinker, with a cigarette permanently stuck in his mouth. He was recognisable from afar.

He was an expert on Jewish and general literature, with a fertile and fruitful intellect in all branches of literature and contemporary journalism. His memory was phenomenal. He read a vast amount of books and remembered not only the names of the authors, but even of the writers of the essays and articles that were scattered in various compilations. His ability to quote from different sources was astonishing. He was truly considered a living encyclopaedia.

Besides reading and studying extensively, he also wrote. Everywhere, be it in research, a political article or poetry, in all these it was possible to discern his graceful hand in the writing and the humoristic and charming expressional skills, even when written anonymously.

A.Ch. Sziffer was on the "*Częstochower Zeitung*" editorial board. But, when the Zionist periodical "*Unser Weg*" appeared, he contributed much rich and varied material to it also, for his passion and zealotry for Zionism were very great and, in this Zionist paper, he loyally expressed his yearning for Zion. For some years, he also wrote for the Hebrew periodical "*Baderech*" [On The Way] that appeared in Warsaw.

(Later, he conceived and planned the publication of a "*Częstochowa Almanac*" and actually began carrying out his plan. But the Holocaust came and destroyed all those fine plans together with their planners and A.Ch. Sziffer shared the fate of the people of his city, on which he had pondered and for which he had acted.)