

Rebuilding Russian Jewry

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changes such as these only because a new chairman has been appointed to an organization which never more than reflected its activity. These were other, much stronger and less personal, forces fermenting in the depth of Soviet life which were responsible for the change. In fact,

even before the resignation of Mr. Merezlin, signs were accumulating that Colonization was heading for improvement. The removal of Mr. Merezlin was, perhaps, nothing more than a mere sop to the displeased Communist critics who were demanding a scapegoat and a visible sign of change. The new administration was, at best, an infusion of new blood which could only stimulate, but not

transform, the movement. The real causes lie much deeper. To begin with, Russian industrialization has reached the peak of its upward rush, and is beginning to slow down perceptibly. 1931 will doubtless go down to history as the high-water mark of the first Soviet Five Years Plan but already towards the end of the year signs of saturation began to appear, and there is hardly any doubt now that in the near future Russian industry will not rush forward with the same impetuosity as in the previous three years. For the time being, at least, the newly-built Russian factories and plants have had their first hunger appeased, and they will not be able to absorb as many new workers as they did. The call of the factory is thus no longer so urgent, and the lure of the industry no longer so powerful to people in Russia, gentle as well as Jews.

Another uncontroversial fact known to every observer of life in Soviet Russia is that the Government is now slowly, but definitely, retreating from its previous advanced position with regard to land Collectivisation. By a series of decrees this measure has already had its sharpest teeth drawn, and it no longer is the dread of the peasant and of the colonists which it used to be. Grade work and better remuneration for harder work which have been introduced into the Collective farm as into the factory, the breaking-up of the big Collective into smaller units, which is now going on throughout Russia; and, finally, the last decree of March 28th re-establishing private ownership of cattle and poultry — all clearly pave the way towards more private ownership within the Collective farm and the loosening up of the strict Communist principles which were so oppressive to most individualistically minded people. Since the days of Lenin Russian Communists have become famous for their ability to retreat as well as to advance. At the present moment

they are engaged in the former operation. They are retreating all along the line of Collectivisation, and this is bound to have a beneficial effect on all agricultural work in Russia, including Jewish Colonization.

Speak low to me my Saviour, low and sweet,
From out the Hallelujahs, sweet and low;
Lest I should fear and fall, and miss thee so,
Who art not missed by any that entertain.—Elizabeth B. Browning.

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Why We Prefer Blondes

By Phineas J. Biron (Our Roving Reporter)

A Close-Up Interview With Joan Blondell

Meet Joan Blondell, latest of screen sensations. She is a Jewish girl, although a scintillating blonde who loves the company of tough hombres on the screen. ... The Editor.

Joan Blondell. Screen star. Twenty-three years young. Five feet four inches small. Weighs 115 pounds. Has grey eyes and blonde hair. Although Warner's able press representative swears up and down that Blondell is her real name, we doubt it. Why? The coincidence would be too staggering. Blondell — if you know French — means a blonde. Not simply a blonde but a white and pink, soft, feminine, charming, pouting pet animal. If you watch Joan Blondell cuddle up to her big tough on the screen you would call her Blondelle (the e is required in French) instinctively even if her name were Goldbaum.

Joan was born in New York City. Her father and mother were old stage troopers. Blondell told us — with a merry twinkle in her eyes — that a property trunk was her first cradle. At the ripe age of 4 months, Joan was carried on the stage as the daughter of Peggy Astaire in "The Greatest Love."

Since then she has been on the stage with but few interruptions. Says La Blondelle (e) proudly: "I have played repertory all over the globe. In tank towns in China, split weeks in Australia, one night stands in Germany. I have crossed the continent of the United States not less than fifty-six times playing vaudeville. Among the occupations that engaged my attention at one time or another, my biographer will have to include circus hand, and a clerk in a New York department store. The latter for the shortest period anyone ever held a job — fifteen minutes. I forgot to charge my first customer anything for his purchase. La Blondell (e) was educated while

doing her stage work. At one time she attended the New York College of Industrial Arts and distinguished herself on the swimming team. That should make it pretty obvious that Joan was not a great genius in the classroom. This because to use her own words: "I never liked school. I wanted to get through with it in a hurry and go back to the stage. "So one day instead of going to the art college, Joan shipped to Australia in a cattle boat with a theatrical troupe. Which reminds us — we couldn't tell you why — that Warner Brothers' able press representative insists that Joan is a direct descendant of a merry minstrel David Blondell, who was one of the original troubadors escorting Richard the Lion-Hearted to the crusades. Rather an amazing story, but don't forget it emanates from Hollywood where Ullman became Fairbanks, Cortez was once called Krantze and Ed. Robinson's real monicker was Goldenberg. "Take it or leave it" told us Mr. Crocker of Warners. We'd better leave it.

La Blondell (e) eventually returned to New York and secured a prominent role in the stage play, "The Trial of Mary Dugan." Then came a more important part on Broadway in "Maggie the Magnificent." And one day she played on the stage opposite James Cagney in "Fenny Arcade." At that time, however, nobody cared a hoop about Cagney's "It" or for that matter about Joan Blondell (e)'s charm. They were two good young actors but a long way from stardom. So thought the smart critics any-how, but these gentlemen of the press didn't know that Warner Brothers had bought "Fenny Arcade" for the screen and that these shrewd Hollywood showmen had signed up Blondell and Cagney to play their original stage roles. And the same arbiters of the stage didn't know that Blondell and Cagney would sweep the country off their feet as a screen team. In any case that is what happened. So La Blondell (e) was launched. Noth-

ing could stop her. She appeared in fourteen pictures in her first year in Hollywood. Her best-known productions are: "Illicit," "My Past," "The Public Enemy," "Blonde Crazy," "Union Depot," "The Crowd Roars," "The Famous Ferguson Case," "Miss Pinkerton." She has just finished "Big City Blues," "Three on a Match," and "Central Park."

screen productions so that you can identify Blondell (e) and agree with us that the little girl from New York did not do so badly. As a matter of fact she made a lot of money and when you ask her if she gave up the stage for her own good, Joan looks at you whimsically and sighs: "There is more money in the movies. Not that money means everything — oh indeed no. But I'd like to have en-

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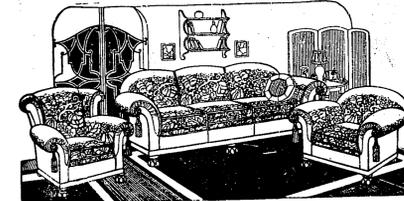
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