

A PHILOSOPHER

(Concluded from page 13.)

I also want to express my great indebtedness to what Jacob Gordon did to create whatever taste I have for dramatic literature. Gordon might have made a name for himself in Russian or English literature. But he preferred to stick to Yiddish and portray the life of his own people. We ought to honour his memory.

AND now, as to the relation between Yiddish and English. I need not express my belief that so long as the Jews wish to live in this country and to participate in its cultural life, in its science, literature and drama, as well as in its political and industrial activities, English is bound to prevail as the language of the Jewish people. The Jews have ever been ready to adopt the language of the people among whom they have lived. Did they not drop Hebrew and adopt Aramaic as their national tongue? And was not Aramaic succeeded by Greek, Arabic, Spanish and German? Nevertheless, I think that Yiddish is rendering a great and cultural service and will continue to do so for a considerable time. I cannot share the views of my fellow-citizens who look upon the very existence of a foreign press as a sort of treason, who would make the speaking or writing of a foreign language a crime. These people

are doubtlessly influenced by patriotic motives, but their conception of Americanism is narrow and unworthy of the great traditions of American liberalism. The patriotism of these people is a narrow nationalism, copied from or in imitation of European nationalism. The American tradition is Federalism, which allows for diversity instead of dull uniformity. The very name United States and our motto "E Pluribus Unum" express this. We have no national church as French and Italian nationalists want.

America has been settled by many peoples and each must contribute freely to the common stock — the Germans have contributed their love of music, the Italians have contributed their love of nature, gardening, and certain household arts. Why should not the Jews contribute their specific gifts in the way of enthusiasm for the arts, for social idealism, as well as their peculiar love of intellectual life for its own sake? The idea that all immigrants should wipe out their past and become simple imitations of the existing type is neither possible nor desirable. The past cannot be wiped out. And we make ourselves ridiculous in the effort to do so.

ALL great civilisations have been the resultants of the contributions of many peoples, and a richer American culture can come only if

the Jews, like other elements, are given a chance to develop under favourable conditions their peculiar genius. The Jewish press can therefore look back upon its work of the last fifty years with pride. It has prepared millions of Jewish people to take a worthy part in American civilisation while also promoting the natural self-respect to which Jews are entitled because of their character and history.

But what of the future?

It is often said that the Yiddish press is for a disappearing generation. That as our young people are educated in the public schools and learn to speak English of a sort in their daily life and business, Yiddish is bound to disappear. That may be; but, not being a prophet, I venture no opinion. Languages have a peculiar way of persisting, for they express experiences not so readily expressible in other languages. In any case, I think, there is a great social value in maintaining Yiddish, not only for the cultural opportunities in English, but also to keep some portion of the Jewish people in touch with the life of our own immediate past and in touch with the vast majority of the Jewish people abroad, whose language is predominantly Yiddish. Perhaps fifty years from now the Yiddish press may celebrate its centenary. I hope that when it does so its past will be no less honourable than it is to-day.

In Capetown

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

ONEG SHABBOS CONCERT.

A very successful concert was held in the Zionist Hall recently, under the auspices of the Oneg Shabbos Society. Those who contributed to the programme were:—Miss Ruth Cohen (piano solo), Miss Kantorowitz (song), Miss Hammerman (Hebrew monologue), Mr. Shuman (violin solo), Mr. G. Laden (humorous reading), Misses Linde, Kudowitsky and Mr. Shuman (musical trio), Mr. Boris Rome (song), Miss R. Rabinowitz (song), and Mr. M. Natas (humorous recitation).

A lecture by Mr. M. Pogrand on "The Mainstay of the Jewish People in the Diaspora" was given last Saturday afternoon, under the auspices of the Mizrahi Association.

MIZROCHI ORGANISATION (J'BURG).

Under the auspices of the Mizrochi Organisation, evening classes will be established, where all Jewish subjects will be taught by prominent teachers. Those desirous of availing themselves of this opportunity should communicate with the secretary of the office 174, Exploration Buildings, Commissioner Street, Johannesburg.

In Durban

(Post News Items to Box 2308.)

DURBAN JEWISH CLUB.

ON Saturday evening, the 25th ult., Miss Anne Moshal, a popular and energetic member of the Durban Jewish Club, scored a complete success in her able production of "Daddy Long Legs"—a delightful romance by Jean Webster.

With the exception of Mr. Harold Freed in the name part, and two other almost minor characters, the cast was completely filled by Miss Moshal's talented pupils, all of whom are just in their teens.

Jocelyn Gevisser as the loveable Judy, and Janie Chanani as Miss Pritchard, played their parts to perfection. Equally successful were Myra Patz, Annie Borach, Lorna Upton, Charlotte Lax and Sidney Smolensky. Mr. Harold Freed excelled in his interpretation of the beneficent Jarvis Pendleton (Daddy Long Legs).

Forthcoming Musical Comedy.—Members of the Durban Jewish Club are at present putting the finishing touches to their forthcoming musical comedy, "The Girl in the Taxi," to be produced at the Club on July 18 and 19.

The production is in the capable hands of Messrs. Dave Kentridge and William Stone with Miss Ida Patlansky, who incidentally is taking the lead—in charge of the dancing. The Club is fortunate in having its own orchestra for this ambitious project under the directorship of Mr. David Cohen. Visitors to Durban should endeavour to see this show, which promises to be an unqualified success.