

An Important Zionist "Indicted" Successful Mock Trial in Johannesburg

WHILST there was an atmosphere of humour prevalent at the excellently organised Mock Trial held at the H.O.D. Hall on Sunday evening, there was throughout a serious tone in connection with the demand on the part of the Jewish youth for a lead from the S.A. Zionist Federation in developing the cultural aspect of the National Movement in this country.

MR. JACK ALEXANDER, in his capacity of Secretary of the S.A. Zionist Federation, had to face two "counts"—first that of neglecting to promote the study and advancement of Hebrew culture amongst the Jews of South Africa and secondly, failing to educate them with an understanding of all phases of Zionist endeavour. Mr. Alexander had taken Mr. N. Kirschner's place as the "accused," owing to the latter being unable to attend. Adv. H. H. Morris, K.C., the "judge," referred to the prisoner as "Alexander, the Great—alias Nicolai Kirschner."

The jury, who comprised local Zionist senior and youth leaders, were surprised on being sworn in by the "judge" fining them for "swearing with uncovered heads."

Mr. Leonard Oschry, a Hebrew scholar, first witness for the prosecution, was called by Advocate S. Kuper, and stated under cross-examination that the South African Jewish youth were, speaking generally, utterly ignorant of Hebrew knowledge and culture. He expressed the opinion that the Hebrew language, the vehicle of the Jewish culture, was an essential factor in creating a common link between scattered Jewry.

Mr. Aaron Abrahamson (referred to by the "judge" as Aaron the son of Abraham,) was called next by the Counsel for the defence, Advocate A. Shacksnovis. This witness had apparently profited by the experience of the jury and took the oath with his hat on his head. On being questioned he disclosed that there were many Jews outside the Zionist ranks and thought this was due to the inattention paid to the opinions of certain sections of our communities.

Mr. "Sheppie" Ostrofsky, the next witness elucidated the theory that Mr. Alexander was too occupied keeping his Executive and different Boards under control and being tactful with his staff to be able to pay any attention to "small" matters such as Hebrew culture. This witness gave the "prosecuting Counsel" a difficult time. His answers contained many brilliant aphorisms and pithy punning.

The Defence.

THE final witness, Mr. I. Dunsky, was called by the "defence," but his evidence created so good a case for the "prosecution," that the "judge" suggested that

A SUCCESSFUL CONCERT.

Many prominent artists undertook the noble task of rendering their services free by participating in a concert on the 2nd inst., organised by Miss P. Taitz in aid of a poor Jewish widow and children. The Ballalaika orchestra rendered several fine musical pieces and the Josephson Sisters gave outstanding performances. Cantor Badash, Mrs. Ethel Miller, Mr. E. Cattani and Madame Helena Kanterowitz sang different solo selections, while Leslie and Essie Aremband played violin and piano solos respectively. Due to these ladies and gentlemen the concert proved successful and a substantial sum of money will be forwarded to the deserving family concerned.

the Prosecutor endeavour to make out a case for the defence to even matters up.

Mr. Dunsky had the view that it was essential to educate the public to a thorough understanding of Zionist philosophy and Zionist conceptions.

The counsel for the defence (Mr. Shacksnovis) played his trump card in placing Mr. Alexander in the witness box. The "judge" suggested that the accused's knowledge of Hebrew was limited to the meaning of the words "shekel" and "lechayim."

Mr. Alexander spoke of his "multifarious" activities, but received no sympathy from the "Bench." The "accused" explained how the Federation contributed financially and otherwise to bring into being certain institutions to promote Hebrew learning and culture. He referred to the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus and the great influence that it had on Jewish thought and learning.

At this stage the "judge" wanted to know if Mr. Alexander could say the Hebrew alphabet backwards, to which the unfortunate "accused" replied that he was under the impression that the Hebrew alphabet did run that way.

The Summing-Up.

MR. MORRIS, summing-up, defined the different parties in Zionism and referred to many of them as dangerous sects prowling around in the guise of their respective names. It had been proved that the "accused" did not only occupy the position of secretary of the Federation but actually was the board, executive, committee, accountant, etc., all in one, and as such was a most dangerous person. A verdict was returned of "Guilty" on count 1, and "Not Guilty" on count 2.

At this stage Advocate Shacksnovis drew the attention of the Court to an irregularity. There was actually a person named Nicolai Kirschner in existence. This being the case, Mr. Alexander, alias Nicolai Kirschner, was leniently dealt with by the "judge" who fined him a small monetary sum. Mr. Kirschner on the other hand, owing to his absence from the Court was fined £5. This concluded the trial.

The Northern Districts Zionist Youth Society is to be congratulated on their ambitious effort in organising this interesting and amusing function.

Johannesburg Women's Zionist League

Parktown Branch.—Adv. N. Phillips lectured to this branch on "Achad Ha'am," at the residence of Mrs. Fine. Adv. Phillips dealt with his subject in a comprehensive and interesting manner, and gave a thorough review of the life, philosophy and works of Achad Ha'am. Mrs. D. Katzen presided, and Mrs. E. Gordon proposed the vote of thanks.

Mrs. J. Massey was presented with a tree certificate on the occasion of the birth of a daughter. Mrs. Benjamin and Miss R. Meyerson rendered pianoforte solos. The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the hostess.

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