

## Zionist Conversazione.

### Mr. JACOB KALICH ON THE JEWISH THEATRE.

The Zionist Hall was filled to capacity, and large numbers were unable to gain admission on Tuesday night, when Mr. Jacob Kalich gave an address at the fortnightly Zionist conversazione.

Dr. H. W. Altschul was in the chair and cordially welcomed Mr. Kalich. He also paid a tribute to the brilliant art of his wife, Miss Molly Picon.

Mr. Kalich began his address in a humorous vein and kept the huge audiences entertained for some time with his relation of typical Jewish jokes and anecdotes. Turning to the subject of his address: "A Jewish Minstrel's Message," Mr. Kalich said that the Jewish actor carried a message from one Jewish centre to another. Whatever parts of the world he and his wife had visited, they had always met Jews with whom they had a bond of sympathy. They invariably met with a cordial welcome from members of the Jewish community and this had proved so also in South Africa, where they had received the greatest hospitality.

Dealing with the subject of the Jewish Theatre, Mr. Kalich said that this had evolved from Jewish folklore and expressed the soul of the people. Where there was no Jewish theatre there was no proper Jewish life. This did not mean that the medium had to be Yiddish; there could be Jewish theatre in any language provided the spirit was Jewish.

In Germany there had not been a Jewish theatre before the Hitler regime, and this was due to the fact that there was no real Jewish spirit. To-day this was being created in Germany, while in America the assimilated Jew Max Reinhardt, had produced that wonderful play "The Eternal Road," written by the other assimilated Jew Franz Werfel. This raised the question whether it was necessary for the Jew to be persecuted and humiliated before he realised that he was a Jew who should be proud of his Judaism.

In Poland, in spite of the terrible conditions and the violent anti-Semitism, there was a Jewish element of which we could be proud; they were full of courage and self-respect and refused to be humiliated. Hence there was a sound cultural life and the Jewish theatre was in a healthy condition.

In America, said Mr. Kalich, the Jewish population was strong and virile; they held up their heads in pride and were not afraid to voice their opinions. The third generation were full of enthusiasm and were producing a new Jewish culture which gave the Jews added prestige.

The Jewish theatre in America played an important part in their cultural life. There were nineteen Jewish theatres in the whole of America; New York had eleven, and fifteen to twenty thousand Jews visited the theatre daily. There was an arrangement by which various organisations "bought" one performance for part of the proceeds, and though this was not always a success from the point of view of the audience who did not always get the theatrical fare they desired, it was certainly the financial backbone of the Jewish theatre and helped the relief work of many organisations.

(Continued in Third Column).

## Scopus Club Entertains Molly Picon.

### LUNCHEON AT GRAND HOTEL.

Miss Molly Picon and her husband, Mr. Jacob Kalich, together with Mr. Abe Ellstein were the guests of the Scopus Club at a luncheon given in their honour at the Grand Hotel on Monday.

The large gathering demonstrated in no uncertain manner the high place Miss Molly Picon has won in the heart and affections of Cape Town Jewry, and the ovation accorded her was remarkable for its warmth and spontaneity. There were close on a hundred people present and extra tables had to be squeezed in at the last moment.

Mr. Gerald Gordon (Chairman) presided and extended a hearty welcome to the speakers and guests. Mr. Gordon, in introducing Mr. and Mrs. Kalich, stated that in the short time Miss Picon had been in Cape Town she had proved herself to be an exquisite artist and one of whom we were justly proud.

Mr. Jacob Kalich, in a short speech, referred to the awkwardness of being a famous woman's husband. Once he was addressed as Mr. Molly Picon. Mr. Kalich then went on to speak of "the Jew and the drama" and mentioned the close association of Jewish people with every branch of the theatre in America—with drama, comedy, satire, pictures, shows and music.

Dealing with the important part played by Jews in the theatre, Mr. Kalich mentioned a galaxy of famous people (including Paul Muni, Sylvia Sidney, Ricardo Cortez, Dorothy Parker, George Clark and Geor White (of "Scandals" fame (who were Jewish. Thirty of the forty most prominent playwrights in New York to-day, such as, Edna Ferber, Vici Baum, Elma Rice, Anita Loos, Dave Friedman, George S. Kaufman, S. N. Berman, Fanny Hurst, Joe Swerling and David Belasco, were Jewish, and twenty-five of the thirty most prominent producers were Jewish too.

Many incidents in the Bible, Mr. Kalich said, were early examples of later Hollywood "happy endings." In this connection he mentioned the incident of Abraham who wanted to sacrifice his son Isaac and also Joseph's quarrel with his brothers.

In concluding, Mr. Kalich spoke of the Theatre Guild in New York, which is one of the finest dramatic institutions in the world and consists of seventy-five per cent. of Jewish artists.

Miss Molly Picon then gave a short address, which was full of wit and humour and she was listened to with great interest. She spoke of the warm and generous hospitality she and her husband had received in South Africa and mentioned that she had found South African audiences as receptive and responsive as any audience in the world.

Accompanied at the piano by Mr. Ellstein, she sang two songs "The Wandering Jew" and "Yiddish is also a Language" and kept the large gathering in roars of laughter.

Mr. M. S. Comay proposed a vote of thanks.

## Final Lecture by Dr. A. Syngalowski in S.A.

In connection with the final lecture to be delivered by Dr. Syngalowski in South Africa, the following has been sent to us for publication:—

### "Maftir."

"All my future lectures on various subjects will merely be different 'Parshoth' of the same Sedrah 'Labour,' but at the very end before my departure, I shall give a summary of all my lectures. I shall read the 'Maftir.' Thus, Dr. Syngalowski declared in his introduction to his first lecture in Cape Town.

Dr. Syngalowski leaves South Africa on the 23rd April; on Wednesday evening, 21st April, he will deliver his final lecture in the Zionist Hall on the subject:—

### "Culture and Labour."

In all his former lectures, Dr. Syngalowski spoke as an economist and politician. In the last lecture we shall hear the philosophy of the labour-idea, the higher meaning of that human function called "Labour."

Each lecture of Dr. Syngalowski's is to his hearers a great cultural event, the "Maftir," however, the final speech on "Culture and Labour," is expected to attain the highest peak among Dr. Syngalowski's master speeches.

(Continued from First Column).

Mr. Kalich paid a tribute to Abraham Goldfaden, as the father of the Jewish theatre, and as one who had enlisted the support of the theatre in the cause of Zion.

Miss Molly Picon arrived later in the evening and was received with loud applause. She was cordially welcomed by the chairman and made a delightful little speech in reply.

Mr. F. Rogoff rendered a pianoforte solo, and Mr. and Mrs. Weinreich (accompanied by Miss H. Schwalbe) songs.

Mr. J. Herbstein, on behalf of the Dorshei Zion Association, expressed thanks to Mr. Kalich, Miss Picon and the artists.

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