

The Jewish Herald

Third Year

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A short time ago a young woman graduated from the Conservatory of Declamation. She passed a special examination in an effort to obtain an engagement in the National Theatre of Jassy, Roumania. The committee before which she passed the examination thought she would make a valuable addition to the company of players. She was engaged. The management was certain she would make a success. Her debut it was felt would bring the public to her feet. So it would, but—and there is the most that any one can encounter in Roumania—she is of Jewish descent. To be sure her stage name is Francesca Rozan, about as Roumanianized a name as she can get after translating Rosenberg. But before the debut anti-Semites learned that she was of Jewish origin. That was enough to prepare a reception for her of the kind that only barbarians and anti-Semites can prepare. I can do no better than to give you a description of that reception by A. Schwarzfeld, editor of the oldest Jewish-Romanian journal "Egalitatea." He gives the atmosphere wonderfully well. You can judge for yourself. Mr. Schwarzfeld writes:

"It is Saturday evening at the National Theatre of Jassy.

"The curtain rises. At one corner of the stage stands the young debutante, young pretty, eager and ready to begin. In the other corner stands an old artist who is to support her. Suddenly hissing, whistling and deafening applause fill the house. Tsss, tsss, bravo, hurrah. From hundreds of throats there are manifestations of sympathy and good wishes. From tens of throats ugly shrieks and exclamations of senselessness and savage hatred. Part of the audience is outraged, another part revolts and a third

The Debut—A Picture from Life

(Written by Oscar Leonard.)

comes more quiet the public begins to leave. From various corners you can still hear: "Down with the Jews!" Where are the Jews of the Opinia?" (A leading daily favorable to the Jews) Roumania for the Roumanians." From their lips come exclamations: "Wretches," "Cowards," "Monsters." "Where are the detectives, the gendarmes, the policemen who always fill the house? Why are they so passive, so indifferent? These questions which some persons asked, others answered: "The police are behind it all." "And in the foyer a new sight presents itself. Boys, young men, old men, bearded, gray haired, gather and sing the national hymn. Around them the pupil curiously looks on. Some turn in disgust, while others applaud. "Behind the curtain a different world. Men and women who come to the young artist and console her. But she can hardly utter a word. Her eyes are moist with tears, as her ears listen to the kind and tender words. The artists have almost all vanished. The director is gone too. Only the few friends who really sympathize with her remained.

is being prepared.

"Lo, the curtain falls! A moment of rest and quiet. But only a moment. Soon the monsters begin their horrible noises once more. The second curtain falls and then follows the Asbestos. A sign that the enemies of the debutante have conquered. The audience remains for a while, to see, to hear. The whistling and hissing begins again. Not as strongly, as widely as before, but ugly enough. From the boxes and from the stalls the people call in disgust, "For shame." As the house be-

her real name was Rosenberg. The rumor incensed the disciples of Cuza and they swore that the stage of the National Theatre, on which a Polish artist scores regularly, where plays taken from other tongues, and where a converted Jew appears regularly, that stage shall not be defiled by the debut of a Jewess. They tried to prevent it by threats, by appeals to the authorities and finally decided to rely on the indifference of the police. Now they are congratulating themselves in the conviction that Roumania has no other master, knows no other will and no other director except that dictated by Cuza—and his satellites. But we are desirous of knowing in what country do artists bear stamp, an insignia? Is there a stage in the world where Jews do not have their artistic triumphs? Who does not know the glorious name of Rachael? Who has not admired Sarah Bernhardt, after once seeing her? Whether it be Russia, Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, or France, Jews have been admired for their talent. Has any one forgotten Sonnenthal, the erstwhile tailor apprentice who held forth for so many years in the Burgtheatre of Vienna? Why do hundreds of Roumanians run to admire Rosenthal, Huberman or Gruenfeld for their music? They are all Jews. Why is the world proud of the name Rubenstein? Even Roumania has given talented artists to the world, many of them Jews. Still Roumania is the only country where a Jew cannot appear on the national stage.

"How much ugliness, how soulless one has to be to mistreat a child of art so grossly! Yes, Roumania for the Roumanians—that is for the Cuzas and their like."

From Reformed Advocate.