

The Guild "At Home."

"The Mere Man" Presented.

An Enjoyable Evening.

The Executive and Committee of the Johannesburg Jewish Guild are to be heartily congratulated upon the success attained at their evening at the Selborne Hall last week when, after the production of Herbert Swears's charming little playlet, dancing was indulged in and kept up till a late hour. The small stage of the lesser Town Hall hardly lends itself to dramatic presentation but the absence of the proscenium was more or less adequately replaced by a number of screens which were subsequently removed. The scene was supposed to be the drawing room at an "emancipated" ladies' club and the cast was as follows:

The President - Miss Ray Lefcovitch.
 Lady Betty - Miss Milly Rothschild.
 Dolly - Miss Rita Lipinski.
 Maisie - Miss Grace Freeman.
 Irene - Miss Ada Bloch.
 Miss Goadsby - Miss Anna Rodkin.
 The Hon. Mrs. Rickerby
 Miss Ruby Jacobs.
 Amelia - Miss F. Fine.

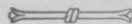
The play was produced by Miss Marion Norman who, judging by the result achieved, must have put in many hours of close and careful study, admonition and encouragement, while her brother was responsible for the incidental music. As the President, Miss Lefcovitch was excellent and it was obvious that she had a complete and intelligent appreciation of the character part she had to portray. Her elocution was clear and defined, her mannerisms easy and appropriate and her whole presentation a finished portrayal. The Miss Goadsby of Miss Anna Rodkin was typical of the spinster weary of single blessedness, the high pitched voice of the querulous old maid being much in evidence, while Miss Ruby Jacobs played the part of the Hon. Mrs. Rickerby with the necessary nasal snuffle possessed by one suffering from a cold in the head. Miss Ada Bloch was the smart American girl to the life and Miss Fine was sufficiently pert as Amelia. Miss Rita Lipinski and Miss Grace Freeman looked sweetly pretty on the stage while Miss Milly Rothschild presented the part of Lady Betty with suitable aplomb. But perhaps the role which attracted most attention and secured what cannot be otherwise described than

an instantaneous and spontaneous success was that presented by Mr. W. P. Cohen who acted with those remarkable demonstrations of histrionic ability that invariably characterise his stage appearances. In fact, we seldom remember to have seen greater demonstrations of amusement than those which greeted his entrance—to say nothing of his departure. We feel that we should be doing less than our duty were we to refrain from illustrating this *critique* with the re-production of the actor responsible for so large a proportion of the success achieved and diversion caused.

At the conclusion of the little comedy the concert items were adequately rendered by the different artistes:

SONG: "My Dreams" *Tosti*, Sydney Schragger. PIANO SOLO: Rhapsodie No 13. *Liszt*, Miss Dora Dorfman. SONG: "Plus Grand dans son Obscurite" (From la Reine de Saba,) *Gounod*, Mrs. H. Goodman.

The gathering then proceeded to the lobbies where a light repast, adequately catered for by Messrs. Graaf Ltd., was served and heartily enjoyed. During the interval the the hall had been cleared and dancing was indulged in and kept up until about 2 a.m. The dance was a particularly enjoyable one, the floor being very light and easy and the music tuneful and rhythmic while the extraordinarily numerous pretty toilettes, worn by the large number of even prettier girls, added to the beauty of the scene.



SPECIAL NOTE. The Editor wishes it to be distinctly understood that he is in no way responsible for the unexampled instance of non-dacuity which follows below and which is published for the delectation of his readers.

An UN-critical Review.

On Wednesday, the twenty-eighth day of the sixth month of our present year, I, a poor weak-willed victim of Influenza, Neuralgia, Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, and (see advert. for further ailments), was set upon, forcibly gagged, bound and, despite desperate struggles, carried off in no uncertain manner to the Selborne Hall. The outrage was originally perpetrated upon me by a handsome-looking, well-built, affluent gentleman (all matrimonial applications to reach this office not

later than Yomtov of 1999) who rejoices in the sobriquet of The Editor;— though the assault was somewhat toned down when I realized that I was not to pay for admittance. Having cast me into the dungeon, the Chief permitted others to complete the tortures of the Inquisition.

But I digress!

We were received with open arms by the cloak-room attendant; met with suspicion by the ticket-examiner; and ignored with disdain by the lady booking-clerk. The Editor and I put our frozen mitts into their receptacles, gulped twice, and awaited developments. Suddenly I espied a programme nearby, and had just managed to conceal it about my person when I heard a voice enquire "Press?" We bowed in unison. Then that voice continued, "Front row specially reserved—any seats you like." As HE and I moved down the aisle nonchalantly—it's a habit with me, I mean the 'nonchalantly'—I realized that the Guild had at last appreciated all that is meant by "the Freedom of the Press".

But again I digress!

I glanced at the Programme and noticed four names printed under the word 'Hostesses'. I glanced about me and saw four handsomely dressed ladies but not any of the owners of those four names appeared to be doing or performing, or about to do or perform, any solitary act of hospitality. However, by this time the Hall was rapidly filling. The idea of booking seats—and permitting the audience to sit down anywhere in them—was truly ingenious, and proved the means of bringing together many people who had never met each other before.

The first item was evidently an "extra turn", for there was no mention of it on the Programme. This was a grand Parade and Pageant of the D.C., M.Cs., would-be K.Cs., and all the other officials connected with the Institution, who had worked arduously for the cause,—without regard to their own ends. It terminated with a March Past, Present and Future; the various participants disappearing in diverse directions.

Just as the Honourable Scratchitary was shaking hands with a delegation of our respectable citizens, the lights aft were lowered—warning me that the Play was about to begin. Mr. W. Norman introduced the scene by some accidental music. (I felt sure he could never have done

Wear

Wood-Milne

RUBBER HEELS.

THEY ARE THE BEST.

it on purpose). Screens (*vice-curtain*) were removed by fairy-like hands, and hey-presto!, a "Mere Man" is about to be staged.

"Mere Man" is a one-act play. The Scene—according to the Programme—was the Drawing-room at 'The Emaciated Ladies' Club'. Actually, the scene represented was a reproduction of Messrs A.R. Bradlow and Co's Xmas Window—Fully Dressed.

When the curtain rises, Dolly (Miss Wreta Lipsalve) and Lady Betty (Miss Melee Wrathchilde) discovered sitting on settee. Subsequently a few others discover they are also before the footlights. A few others are:—

The President - Miss Reigh Lefth.
 Maisie - Miss Grayse Phremang.
 Irene - Miss Haydah Bloung.
 Miss Goadsby - Miss Anar Bodkin.
 The Hon. Mrs. Rickerby
 Miss Reubi Jaikaubs.
 Amelia - Miss Eff Phyne.

The Plot is somewhat as follows:—

The Ladies' Club a Meeting hold
 To discuss their hate of mere man
 To talk and rave of actions bold
 Firmly the marriage tie to ban.
 Then one by one, the members all
 Confess their intrigue with a male
 The President turns to the Hall
 In anguish, listening to their tale.
 She demands from each a photo
 The Hero of each one's heart
 Comparing all the snaps *in toto*
 She finds each one a counterpart.
 "False man," each cries, "was it for
 this,
 "I treasured your last sloppy kiss?
 "I've only got myself to thank;
 "I might have known your love was
 swank."
 The President, who was standing by
 Declared she didn't mind
 When COQUEN kissed her on the
 eye:
 And now the girl is blind.

TABLEAU

(Slow curtain to air of "Annie Rooney")

Parts of the dialogue (I mean those parts which one heard and which the histrionic aspirants had not forgotten in their stage-fright) were quite clever at times. As an example I give a few excerpts:—

Enter the President (No relation to Mr. Fred Cohen).

The Pres: "Amelia, you have always been a good and dutiful servant to me."

Amelia: "You have indeed, mum."

The Pres: "And I have been a good mistress to you, have I not?"

Amelia: "Yes, mum; you promised me a rise sixteen years ago."

The Pres: "I am well aware of the fact, and to show I always encourage a good servant I will—let you wait another sixteen years."

Amelia: "(Tearfully) "Heaven bless

you for those few nuts."

The Pres: "But I fear you have some secret—in fact, I'm sure."

Amelia: "It is a secret I would not have you know for all the world. I'm engaged to be married."

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The Play over, there were given two unrehearsed items—also not quoted on the Bill of Fare. The first was a weight-lifting exhibition by the Guildo Brothers. Six herculean youths, with the first down of manhood upon their ruddy cheeks, lifted with ease a Grand-Flat Piano high above their shoulders. Then, without any apparent effort, they lowered it with remarkable velocity and still more remarkable suddenness. The impact must have shivered the timbers (to speak nautically) and incidentally the sounding-board. Scarce had the continued applause died down when two shy young damsels—Phanee and Phlora—did a double turn, hair-raising in its very daring, entitled 'A Slide for Life' or 'Tripping in the Turned-up Mat.'



Mr. W. P. Cohen.

The first item on the Concert Programme was Mr. Zidknee Shragggarr who warbled about Dreams and the Stuff They Are Made of, composed by Post Toasties or some such other cereal. I enjoyed this artist's rendition mainly because he didn't pull faces or wave his arms around like a windmill.

Then came forward wee Miss Daura Daurfmain, stripped for battle. I can best describe her execution in the words of Irvin S Cobb.

She starts gently. She throws her head back and closes her eyes dreamily and hits the keys a soft, dainty little lick—tippy-tap. Then leaving a call with the night-clerk for eight o'clock in the morning, she seems to drift off into a peaceful slumber; but awakens on the moment and hurrying all the way up to the other end of Market Street, she slams the bass keys a couple of hard blows—bumetty-bun. And so it goes on for a long spell. Six months seem to

elapse; how the old place has changed. One of your legs goes to sleep and the rest of you envies that leg. All of a sudden the operator comes out of her trance. She now cuts loose regardless of the piano's intrinsic value (after the weight lifting exhibition) and its associations to its owners. She grabs the helpless thing by its upper lip and tries to tear all its front teeth out with her bare hands. As the crashing reverberations die away the the Artiste rises, wan but game, and bows low in response to the applause and backs away, leaving the wreck of the piano jammed back on its haunches and trembling like a leaf in every limb.

I stole a surreptitious glance at my Programme and saw that the next item was a song 'Plus Grand Dans Son Obscurite.' Beneath was printed the English title of the song. Now, if it had been some idiom or seldom-used expression such as 'Honi soit qui mal y pense,' I could well have understood the necessity for a translation; but for so literary and intellectual a body as the Guild—well! it was mere surplusage, more especially as the song was so intensely and realistically interpreted by the vocaliste, Signora H. Guidmon.

The last strain (s) has scarce died away when the V.C. of the evening announced that Supper would be served in the lobbies whilst the remnants of the Musical Meal were cleared away. If there is one thing that lends Tone, Grace, Colour, and Refinement to a function it is to have an Events' Superintendent who ends his words with HA and uses A.W.s. It makes the commonest affair quite aristocratic.

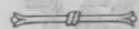
But once more and moreover I digress!

Just about this time the Elite arrived from Signor Danza's Chamber Concert and they at once joined in the rush for seats at the tables in the lobbies. Contrary to the statement on the Programme the Refreshments were NOT Served. They were grabbed or done without. At length the Dance began.

With the beginning of terpsichorian movement came the end of refreshments. From 11 P.M. to 2 G.M. one could not obtain a drop or piece of anything liquid. Even the water-taps had been locked and sealed. Luckily for me the Doc. had made arrangements; and ere long Mr. Counsel, Mr. Cape-Resident, The Doc. and I were ensconced in the Carlton Palm-Court.

I understand that later in the evening the Dance was still in progress.

GUS. AV. FREUNDLICH.



The Tsar has authorised M. Rubinstein, the well-known Jewish banker at Kieff, to accept the post of Consul-General for Persia in the city.