

In Cape Town

(From Our Own Correspondents.)

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Yom Kippur, the day of our calendar, broke bright and clear for those who were not trusting to the oblivion of slumber to defer the pangs of hunger, which anticipation so easily exaggerates.

Our womenfolk seized at the opportunity thus vouchsafed by Providence, and which the unfavourable Rosh Hashonah weather had denied them. The Rumanian people betrays its love of finery by a proverb: "The stomach has no mirror," therefore money is better spent on raiment than on food. Things seem to combine to make the Jew a bit of a Rumanian on Yom Kippur. In general, however, there was nothing to mark off this Yom Kippur from those of previous years.

Succoth is also running its allotted span. Of all our Festivals, I think Succoth is the most picturesque, so closely connected, as it is, with Nature and her products, the lulab and the ethrog, the honey and the fruit. Intrudes the thought of its antiquity, probably going back to the misty past when man became an agriculturist, or perhaps even to that earlier time when he was still only a collector of what the fields brought forth untended. The electric lights shining from the "Schach" comes almost as an incongruity, especially when it is remembered that the old-world test of the correct density of the covering is to see whether the light of the stars can still penetrate. To cope with the crowds who have hitherto had to struggle to catch a glimpse of the Succah ceremony after the service, the Garden's Synagogue has this year built a much larger Succah.

The Chol Hamoad has been a round of festivities, commenced by the Garden's Talmudical Society, who, on Tuesday night, held a Simchas Beth Hasheovah. After holding the annual meeting and election, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Gesundheit, there was the Seyom of K'thuboth, and Rabbi M. Ch. Mirvish, speaking eloquently on the Hadron, showed how Judaism was a living and growing thing which embraced all departments of human activity, and was not a mere "religion" in the Western sense, a fact which even the Agudas Israel failed to grasp. Then came the carnival part of the evening, dear to the naive heart of the Talmudic scholar.

Similar gatherings were held by the New Hebrew Congregation Talmudical Society on Wednesday, and at the Beth Hamedrash on Thursday. On the same evening the Dorshei Zion held a social in their hall, where a large number of members and friends foregathered, to be regaled with song and chorus while partaking of the good things provided.

On Sunday many people availed themselves of the invitations issued by the Orphanage to visit that institution and inspect the beautiful Succah erected by the children.

It can hardly be said that the Yomtovim have appreciably interfered with general activities, indeed, the heavenly audit has found a counterpart on earth in a number of annual meetings.

The Old Age Home's meeting took place on Sunday, 21st, where, besides ordinary business, the question of the accommodation of incurables was raised. The matter was eventually left to be investigated by the new committee.

At the meeting of the Garden's Synagogue, held on the 5th of the present month, after routine items were disposed of, much controversy was aroused by two suggestions: First, a resolution to create a class of "country members." It became apparent that the motion did not truly reflect the intention of the committee, and it was referred back for redrafting; and second, "That the sum of £100 be granted to Rabbi M. Ch. Mirvish for services rendered to the Jewish community during the past year." The reverend gentleman's personality was, of course, at no time under discussion, but some seemed to feel that the step implied certain recognition of a new status. No conclusion had been reached when the meeting adjourned, to leave the matter over for further discussion.

A Yiddish concert, held on Wednesday night at the Railway Institute as a Motzaai Yom Kippur, failed to attract a full house, and the fare provided was not of a very high standard.

On Saturday, the 11th, Adv. M. Alexander, K.C., M.L.A., in the obliging way which has helped to make his name a household word in South Africa, lectured to the Young Israel Society on the "History of Judaism," with considerable profit to the members, who attended in large numbers.

The previous Sunday, one noticed that the women had a field day. The Bnoth Zion, with commendable energy, having circulated a small leaflet describing the work of the Women's International Zionist League, organised a household-to-house canvass to make a personal request to the women of every home to do something to help forward specifically women's work in Palestine. From the remarks the good ladies let fall, it would seem that the venture met with well-deserved success.

The following Sunday, the men appeared on the scene, this time to clear the National Fund Boxes. It seems to me that there must still be many a household where a box is not yet to be found, and it is rather a pity, for no one misses the stray pence it receives, and by the time it is opened there are quite a few shillings towards the good cause.

On Wednesday, the Maccabees gave their platform to Mr. Louis Herrman, who lectured on "Some non-Semitic elements in the Jews." The lecturer made some anthropological excursions and showed how various ancient peoples were assimilated into the Jewish fold, principally the Hittites. There were two main Jewish types. Since the dispersion, however, little admixture had occurred. The paper was much occupied with a consideration of the "Jewish nose," but Mr. Herrman showed by means of statistics as a matter of fact the Jews had no more claim to this characteristic than any other people.

Mr. Maurice Moscovitch finds himself amongst old friends again and has opened a short season at the Opera House with "Trilby." It goes without saying that the Press is most eulogistic.

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