

In and Around the Town.

100, St. George's Street.
Thursday.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Should women be given the Synagogal vote? This vexed question, was, recently, the subject of much discussion at a conjoint meeting of the United Synagogue in London. The orthodox section, however, prevailed and by a majority it was decided that women are not to exercise the franchise. The objection to female franchise, so far as the Synagogue is concerned is fostered by the Beth Din and maintained by that section of Jewry who look with disfavour upon any alteration in the present system of synagogue segregation of females. Some there are who would favour the granting of the vote to women, providing they exercise it in the same manner as they pray—separated from the men. Others desire the removal of all restrictions on women, which custom has for generations imposed on them. But the advocates for enlightenment, for the discontinuance of age-long superstition and the introduction of ideas and customs more suited to modern needs have, thus far, been defeated by that section who will not have any departure from the system of orthodoxy which they favour.

UNITY IMPERILLED.

What the outcome will be so far as the United Synagogue is concerned one cannot foresee, but one thing is abundantly clear. The religious unity of Anglo-Jewry is imperilled by this incident. This is a great pity. Just now unity in the community is necessary, nay vital. The ranks of Judaism must be solid, the "Brotherhood of Israel" real in fact as well as in name, for it is only by these means will the repeated onslaughts on Jewry be withstood. Schisms in our religious life can only weaken our defence against those who seek to destroy us. The votes for women controversy must not be allowed to become the wedge that will divide Jewry. Although the movement was defeated those whose views were not accepted must for the sake of Jewry as a whole accept the set-back quietly and endeavour to attain their end by peaceful though forceful efforts.

AN INNOVATION.

As to the question of giving females the vote there are many aspects and he is a courageous man who will openly advocate the departure from age-long usage. Those who desire the innovation rightly point to the important part women to-day take in matters communal. Every phase, excepting the religious, plainly shows the hand of woman. Modern conditions have shown how unreasonable is the prejudice in some quarters against women. The "weaker sex" now take a prominent part in National Councils and in every walk of public life. There are many who think that the time is surely coming when even orthodox Jewry will admit that the interests of Judaism, Jewish traditions and Rabbinical teaching will not suffer by the inclusion of women in Synagogue Councils. How this will be attained without hurting the susceptibilities of those who tenaciously cling to medieval Judaism remains to be seen, but certain it is that the agitation for female franchise, so far as the synagogue is concerned, is becoming more and more insistent.

AN ANECDOTE.

Although women have no say in matters synagogal—officially—the following anecdote is rather significant:—

In a little Rumanian town the position of *Chazan* became vacant.

A candidate for the position, who had been "tried-out," after the service, asked the Rabbi how he liked his (the candidate's) *Chazanuth*, and what were his chances for the position. The Rabbi answered "It depends upon what the *ysay* above." The *Chazan* looked surprised. "How do we know what is decreed in heaven?" he asked. "When I said above," replied the Rabbi, "I referred to the gallery."

WOMEN CONSULTED.

The Sedra for this week is Exod. Chapter 18-20 inclusive. In Chapter 19, verse 3, we read ". . . . And the Eternal called to him (Moses) out of the mountains saying 'thus shalt thou say to the House of Jacob and tell the Children of Israel'"

Rabbinical comment on this verse is that "Unto the House of Jacob" refers to the women and "To the children of Israel" to the men. It is further explained in reference to the words "to say" and "to tell," that the former is used in the case of women, as being the more delicate expression.

Is it not strange that in spite of the fact that women take no part in the religious life of the community, such as being counted in a *minyán* or taking any part in the deliberations of the synagogal "powers that be" that, according to the instructions of the Almighty they had to be told and consulted about the Commandments that were to be given to them!

THE LATE REV. J. M. EAST.

A reader writes: "I was very glad to see the reference in your 'In and Around the Town' notes to the late Rev. J. M. East. In the passing to his eternal rest, local Jewry has sustained a grave and irreparable loss. Especially the Cape Jewish Orphanage and the Bickor Cholim' with which Institutions his name will be ever associated in the grateful memories of those who laboured with him in this noble cause. He was true to his name. 'From the sun of the East, down to the setting thereof his name was praised.' In his earlier days he did valuable work as a Jewish minister in England and in this country and when he relinquished his ministerial post for a business career he showed his deep and abiding interest in the welfare of his brethren."

SIR H. GRAUMANN, K.B.E.

I am glad to know that Sir Harry Graumann has recovered from his recent illness. I saw him in town the other day looking more like his old robust self. He has not lost much time in re-entering the political arena, and last week appeared on the platform of a candidate for Provincial Council honours. In his usual forceful manner he dealt with South African problems, and one hopes that the time will not be far distant when he will once again, take a part in trying to find solutions. Politics had always an attraction for Sir Harry.

THREE WEDDINGS.

During the week there were three weddings, and in each case one of the contracting parties was a Cohen. A very popular Jewish name one must admit! On Sunday afternoon Mr. Morris Levitan was married to Miss Rebecca Cohen at the Gardens Synagogue, and directly following the *Chuppa* was occupied by Mr. Harry Plax and Miss Bessie Cohen. On Tuesday the marriage of Mr. Michael Cohen to Mrs. Donia Gorson was solemnised.

AN ACCOMPLISHED PIANISTE.

Miss Joyce Kadish made a very successful appearance at the City Hall last Thursday, when she parti-

cipated in an excellent programme submitted by the Cape Town Orchestra. She created a most favourable impression by her performance and was presented with several beautiful floral tributes. Her rendering of Beethoven's Pianoforte Concerto, No. 4, in G Major, was faultless in style and technique, and she delighted the audience with an exhibition that showed a perfect mastery of her subject.

MEDICAL ETIQUETTE.

How many medical men can give the date of the origin of the understanding whereby one doctor must not interfere in a case already being attended by a fellow practitioner?

One of my readers informs me that he asked this question of several local medical men, but none could give him an answer. All were agreed, however, that the custom must be centuries old, and that through the ages, this etiquette has been rigidly observed in the medical profession.

CENTURIES OLD.

My reader, seeking information, came across a statement in the Jerusalem Talmud, vol. Ksuboth, chap. 13, Halacha 2, which throws some light on the subject. Therein it is said "A doctor is in duty bound to attend to an invalid at request, even if there is another medical man attending that invalid."

My reader concludes from this that no enactment is brought in by it rabbinic or the law of the land, unless circumstances has demanded such enactment. A patient must have taken a bad turn, or must have died as a result of a medical man refusing attention of some point of etiquette—say owing to there being another medical man in attendance. The rabbis were then forced to pass legislation suppressing that point of medical etiquette. Consequently this shows that the understanding was established well over 2,000 years ago.

A "BRISMELAH."

The *brismelah* of the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Sandler took place at the Gardens Nursing Home, Union Street, on Monday morning. There was a large assembly at the subsequent reception, at which Rabbi Ch. M. Mirvish presided and delivered an interesting address appropriate to the occasion. The Rev. S. H. Michelson and Mr. J. Carasov (Secretary of the Cape Jewish Board of Guardians and of the Cape Jewish Orphanage) also spoke. The latter particularly pointed to the prominent part taken by the families of Sandler and Teperon (Mrs. Sandler is a sister of Mrs. A. Teperon) in local communal affairs, and particularly instanced their connection with the Orphanage and the Board of Guardians. For many years Mr. Solomon Sandler was the Hon. Secretary of the Talmud Torah, and is at present a member of the Committee of that Institution.

I understand it is the intention of Mr. Sandler to settle, with his family, in Johannesburg.

A FAMOUS FILM ACTOR.

Is Charlie Chaplin a Jew? The opinions on this point are very conflicting. A local contemporary has definitely stated that he is, and yet Charlie himself once disclaimed to an interviewer his connection with Jewry. I am inclined to the belief that this famous film comedian is of Jewish extraction, and I am supported by many who remember him in the early days of his career. A friend tells me that Chaplin's mother was a Jewish woman but that she married out of the faith. Even if this is so, he was born a Jew, but whether or not he practises Judaism is another matter.

That he is a genius in his particular profession there is no doubt and Cape Town is at present flocking

to see his latest picture "The Gold Rush," said to be his best effort, at the "Alhambra."

Meanwhile, Charlie is gaining much publicity, owing to his domestic affairs becoming "mussed up," but I doubt whether he cares very much for this form of advertisement.

A TRAGIC OCCURRENCE.

The many admirers of Mr. Bert Ralton, the leader of the popular Havana Band, heard with horror the tragic news of his death as the result of a shooting accident at Salisbury. The details are now well known and recapitulation is unnecessary. The Havana Band, of which Mr. Ralton was the originator and guiding spirit, has given great pleasure to large enthusiastic audiences throughout South Africa, and he will be genuinely mourned by the host of friends he made up and down the country.

Ralton had an eventful life and it was only seven years ago that he was "discovered" in London and soon justified the confidence that was then placed in him. He was a master of his art, and generally regarded as the greatest saxaphonist in the world.

MORE CAPE TOWN TEA ROOMS?

Reuter announces from London that Mr. Alfred Salmon (Chairman of the firm of Messrs. J. Lyons & Co., Ltd.) sails for Cape Town by the steamer that leaves Southampton on February 4th. Rumours have been current for some time that this famous firm of caterers intend to extend their present ramifications to South Africa and in this connection the visit of Mr. Alfred Salmon is very significant. Are we to have a "Corner House" and the familiar Lyons Tea Rooms in Cape Town?

MR. GOSSIP.

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