

Cape Jewish Aged Home

NEW WING OPENED—

TRIBUTES TO MR. EILENBERG.

The new wing of the Cape Jewish Aged Home was opened on Sunday afternoon by Mr. M. Eilenberg, J.P., in the presence of a large and influential gathering of local Jewry.

After seven years of very useful work on behalf of the aged and infirm, it was found necessary to increase the inadequate accommodation, and although recently two large rooms were added, many applications for admittance had to be refused. It has for some time been recognised that still more rooms were required and as a result the present structure was added to the Home. The new wing is built of concrete, is fire-proof and comprises ten large airy rooms, of which one on each floor will be used as sick hospitals for males and females, when necessary. At the present time the Aged Home houses 27 inmates whose ages vary from a little over 60 to a little over 90. With the additional accommodation now provided, many old and infirm co-religionists will be able to enter this sanctuary.

The new wing was opened by Mr. M. Eilenberg, with a golden key (given by Mr. L. Pinn), handed to him by the Chairman of the Institution, Mr. Abraham Liberman, following which the Rev. A. P. Bender, M.A., read the dedicatory psalms and offered up prayer, whilst the Gardens Synagogue Choir, under the leadership of Mr. Boris Rome, rendered appropriate choral music.

Mr. A. LIBERMAN, in his introductory remarks, said he was delighted at the excellent attendance that afternoon, on the occasion of the formal opening of the new wing of the Aged Home. Mr. Eilenberg had been asked to perform the ceremony in view of the exceptional interest he had taken in the Home since its inception. Not only was he one of the trustees, but he was one of the hardest-worked members of the Committee. (Applause.) Above all he had, single-handed, seen to the erection of the fine building which had just been opened, and which was a monument to his good work. (Hear, hear.) For many months Mr. Eilenberg had, at great sacrifice to his own affairs, spent the greater portion of every day in supervising the building operations, obtaining materials and the necessary labour, with the result that he had saved the Home 30 per cent. on the contractors' tender. (Applause.) This, however, had only been achieved with considerable inconvenience to himself.

Continuing, Mr. Liberman said the Cape Jewish Aged Home was very unobtrusive in its work. It had not flaunted any propaganda, and as a result he feared had been the "Cinderella" of the Cape Town Charities. He claimed, however, that in providing a sanctuary for those who had reached the evening of their lives, a Home where they could spend their declining years in comfort, in

plenty and in an orthodox Jewish atmosphere, they were justified in being placed in the front rank of local charities, and was deserving of the utmost support of the Community, not only in Cape Town, but in the country districts whence a large proportion of the inmates came.

The erection of that new building had not only exhausted their capital funds, but left them in debt, and when filled with inmates as it would be soon, their current expenses would, through additional staff, food and various other details, go up considerably. Then they would need funds for the furnishing of the new rooms. It had been the aim of successive Committees to carry on the Institution without having a mortgage on its property or other debts of any magnitude, and he now appealed to them, and through them to the rest of the Community, at a season of the year when their hearts were turned to good deeds to assist in preventing that happening now. He knew only too well of the very many calls that had and are being made on their purses, locally and from overseas. Without wishing to decry any other institution, he would say the call of the aged, weary and needy within their gates should be paramount.

Mr. M. EILENBERG then addressed the gathering in a speech bristling with humour. At the outset he said he did not wish to tire them, and he knew that many did not agree with the atmosphere of the Home. He would, therefore, be as brief as possible. He thanked the Chairman and Committee for the honour done him that afternoon, and when he looked around him—at the various institutions in the town—he was delighted with the great progress made during the past 50 years. (Hear, hear.) The Almighty had not forgotten them, and they, in turn, must not forget their feeble, their orphans and their poor. "But the orphan and the poor seem to appeal to mankind more than a home for the aged and feeble, and to me this appears to be all wrong, for I do not think that anyone in this world has ever adopted an old person," added the speaker.

Among many poor people their parents were in the way, and so they sent them to the Aged Home. Therefore theirs was a Home of convenience. The Chairman had pointed to the necessity for funds, and in that connection he desired to thank Mr. and Mrs. Rosen, Mrs. Goldberg and Mrs. Lewis for their support on every occasion. Thanks were due to the Committee, the people who came there every day, for the work they were doing.

"Ours is not only a home for the aged," continued Mr. Eilenberg, "but also for disabled men and women—the blind and the paralysed—in fact, incurables. A home of rest for men and women in the evening of their lives."

After paying a tribute to Dr. Kark, to Mr. A. Rosenthal, the founder of the Home, to Mr. I. Barnett, a past president, and to the Matron, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Eilenberg said it was not so much the money that counted, but the work done. Everything was being done for the benefit and the comfort of their old folk.

Mr. Pinn, Dr. Berelowitz and others had been very kind in donating various things for the Home, and, said the speaker, he had received £62 5s. towards the cost of the new building. He was thankful to Mr. Kramer for 140 bags of lime, to the Portland Cement Co. for 50 bags of cement and to the Glass Beveling Co. for various materials. A non-Jewish friend, who wished to remain anonymous had given a chest of drawers. He would also like to thank Mr. Romain, the contractor, for his services and valuable advice, as well as Mr. Seeliger, the architect, who had, as usual, done his duty satisfactorily.

In conclusion Mr. Eilenberg appealed to the Jewish youth to

come forward and help in the administration of the various charitable institutions. It was not by power of wealth but by spirit that they won through, and he would like his young friends to realise that it was work that counted, not money. (Applause.)

Mr. H. J. STODEL, President of the Capetown Hebrew Congregation, in moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Eilenberg, said the latter was a social worker who succeeded. He had, for many years, played a great part in the Aged Home, and responsible to a great extent for the excellent progress it had made. In his work on behalf of that Institution, Mr. Eilenberg was deserving of all their support. He sincerely hoped that Mr. Eilenberg would be spared many years to help along the progress not only of the Home, but of all Jewish movements, charitable and otherwise, in the city. (Applause.)

The ceremony of unveiling of a tablet to the memory of the late Mr. H. Liberman, reported elsewhere in this issue, was then proceeded with.

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