

The Synagogue

THIS evening and throughout the Holy Festival period the synagogues in South Africa will be crowded. There can be no doubt that the season of religious adjustment, ushered in by the New Year, emphasises the power of the synagogue in Jewish life. The desire to become united with the great body of Israel in concrete form becomes very prominent among our people at this time.

I am rather afraid there are many of us here who do not enter a House of Worship during the entire year, but who, heeding the call of conscience, resume their interrupted religious activities of a year ago. In this way Jewish folk will be flocking *en masse* to the various Houses of Worship, eager for the reconciliation they will find there.

Whatever may be the cause for the lack of attendance at the synagogues throughout the year, there can be no doubt that this institution is an outward sign of the solidarity of Israel, as well as the symbol of the purpose of Israel's existence. To belong to a synagogue means identification with the large community of Israel. The consciousness of being a member of a larger multitude, actuated by the one great emotion of communion with the God of Israel, brings out our finer sensibilities and stimulates a feeling of communal responsibility.

I feel that nothing can take the place of the synagogue in Jewish life. In spite of an apparent indifference, that institution still holds sway over the majority of Jews throughout the world.

Paying for Lectures

IF a few weeks ago anyone in this country would be asked whether there was any likelihood of thousands of people paying money to hear any lecture on a Jewish subject, the reply would be definitely in the negative. Yet such a phenomena is being witnessed at the present time.

The addresses given by Maurice Samuel, the eminent novelist and writer, are not only crowding large halls with people who have *paid for admission*, but hundreds more are unable to gain admission to the functions. Added interest is lent by the fact that the latter audiences are made up considerably of those who have already heard the lecturer.

The situation is undoubtedly created by the absolute hunger for a cultural word on the part of Jewry in this country. We have had brilliant visitors in the past, but practically everyone of these came here for the important purpose of raising funds. Any cultural value of their addresses was only incidental. In the case of Maurice Samuel, we have a man whose sole and only purpose is to place before us thought-provoking ideas upon our destiny.

The success of the present tour opens possibilities for the bringing to this country—without any grave financial loss—of other Jewish men of genius, who will illumine for us many of our serious problems and arouse in us a keener and deeper understanding of the treasures of our past.

Current Communal Comments

By
'Hamabit'

The Thirty-Second Mayor

A FEW days ago an interesting event took place when Mr. Louis Gradner was invested with the Mayoralty of the city of Capetown with traditional and picturesque ceremonial. The function drew to the council chamber and its public gallery a large and interested audience.

Mr. Gradner is the thirty-second Mayor to have occupied this particular post. Twenty-six years ago the late Hyman Lieberman was the first member of the Jewish race to be Mayor of the Mother City. His two periods of office have left an indelible impression on the municipal history of the Mother City.

Mr. Louis Gradner is a man who realises the honour bestowed upon him in his election as the First Citizen of Capetown, and there is every likelihood that his Mayoralty will be a successful one.

Bernstein

WHEN on a visit to Warsaw some ten years ago, I met Herman Bernstein, the celebrated Jewish journalist of America. He was then on an official mission on behalf of the American Government.

Some three years ago, Bernstein was appointed by President Hoover as United States Minister in Albania. Bernstein is undoubtedly one of the best known and cleverest Jewish journalists. He it was who published the "Willy-Nicky" telegrams, the secret correspondence between the ex-Kaiser and the Czar before the Great War. He exposed the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion as a literary forgery in his "History of a Lie." He had a great deal to do with bringing about Mr. Henry Ford's withdrawal of his anti-Semitic campaign, and his apology to the Jews in 1927.

Bernstein has now resigned his position as United States Minister in Albania and is returning to New York. It will be interesting to see whether he will again accept an ambassadorial post or return to Jewish journalism?

The Loews

JEWRY in Hungary will celebrate shortly the eightieth birthday of Chief Rabbi Dr. Immanuel Loew. The rabbi is one of the two Lords Spirituals in the Hungarian Upper House.

Fifty years ago Rabbi Loew succeeded his father, the famous Rabbi Leopold, one of the great Rabbinical scholars in Hungary, as Chief Rabbi of Szegedien, the second city in Hungary. He is a descendant of the legendary High Rabbi Loew of Prague, with whom the legend of the *Golem* is associated.

During the early days of the Horthy regime in Hungary, Rabbi Immanuel Loew's name was in the limelight all over the world of Jewry on account of an accusation made against him by an alleged Dutch journalist, that he had given him an interview condemning the Horthy regime.

The Rabbi was arrested on a charge of high treason, and was for a long time kept in confinement in his home. Eventually it was proved that the statements made against

him were inventions, and he was released to his office, and in 1927 he was elevated to the Hungarian Upper House. Chief Rabbi Loew has published a great number of important scholarly works which were issued in 1900 in a collected edition. One of his best known works is his "Flora of the Jews."

Women Novelists

A JURY of prominent literary figures recently issued a list of the hundred best books of the century written by American women. Six of them were written by Jewish women.

The inclusion of six works by Jewish women is a proof that the American Jewess is showing considerable writing talent. Even outside America, Edna Ferber, Fanny Hurst and Dorothy Parker have long since achieved a recognised position in modern English literature. Their inclusion in the hundred best is not surprising. When the jury listed the books of Mary Antin, Babette Deutsch and Marcia Davenport it gave merited recognition to the younger Jewish women writers. It is evident that there is a growing school of Jewish women writers in the United States.

"Colossal!"

THE atmosphere of Hollywood is always of an exaggerated nature. Every talkie picture produced is announced to the accompaniment of a whole shower of expletives and adjectives, such as "superlative," "magnificent," "tremendous," "awe-inspiring," etc.

It is well known that things are not going too well at present in the great film magnates was approached by a friend who asked him how things were getting along at Hollywood. The reply was:—

"Colossal! but things will get better."

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