

THE HEBREW SYNAGOGUE.

CONSECRATION SERVICE

The opening or consecration service of the new Hebrew Synagogue lately erected in Barkly street East, took place on Sunday (Nissen 6th, 5621), and the rarity of such an occurrence made it one of more than usual interest. The service, which was advertised to commence at half-past three o'clock, did not commence till after four, by which time the Synagogue was filled, and many, ladies especially, could not find room. The gathering was a truly cosmopolitan one. There were Jews from all parts of the world, and Christians of all denominations present, including many of our principal citizens, besides nondescripts who affect an altitude above, or a profundity below all faiths. To the Christian unacquainted with Hebrew observances, the services were of course strikingly novel in some particulars. The women alone in the gallery, and the men alone below, were the first novelty, and next was the retention by the males of their hats on their heads during the whole service. Both of these customs have, however, been adopted by Christians as well, since the Quakers often keep their heads covered in "meeting," and Wesley used to separate the males and females in his earlier congregations. The interior of the Synagogue contains a gallery for women, and on the ground floor is a raised platform about six feet square, where the reader or minister officiates, and the choir perform their part of the services. Seats rise on either side for the accommodation of the congregation, and in a recess in the wall in front of the platform, and approached by steps is the ark for the custody of the law. This recess is bordered by cedar work, a white veil hanging in front of the sliding panels of the ark.

Before the service commenced the congregation were furnished with printed programmes of the celebration, and the first ceremony consisted in bringing to the synagogue doors the Sacred Rolls of the Law for deposit in the ark, the choir chanting "Open unto me the gates," &c. The doors were then opened, and the Rev. D. Isaacs, attired in black robes, entered, followed by Messrs C. Dyte (president), L. Meanowski (treasurer), S. Cohen, A. Scott, J. Bernstein, E. Steinfeld, and J. Joseph, members of committee, each wearing the *talis*, and bearing a covered parchment scroll containing the five books of Moses. The bearers of the law, standing under a canopy borne by Messrs Rees, Solomons, Woolf, and Isaac, the choir sang, "This is the gate," &c., and "How goodly are thy tents," &c.; after which the procession moved, under the canopy, to the front of the ark, and the ark was opened by Mr J. Benjamin. The canopy remaining there, the minister took up his

place on the platform with the choir, and the procession made seven circuits of the interior of the synagogue, while the choir chanted psalms appointed for the occasion. The minister then read in English the following Prayer for the Royal Family:—

He who dispenseth salvation unto kings, and dominion unto princes! whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; who delivered his servant David from the destructive sword; who maketh a way in the sea and a path through the mighty waters; may he bless, preserve, guard, assist, exalt, and highly aggrandize, our most gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria, the Prince Consort, Albert, Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family; also His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of this colony. May the Supreme King of kings, through his infinite mercy, preserve their life, and deliver them from all manner of trouble and danger. Subdue nations under her feet, cause her enemies to fall before her, and cause her to prosper in all her undertakings. May the Supreme King of kings exalt and highly aggrandize her, and grant her long and prosperously to reign. May the Supreme King of kings, through his infinite mercy, incline her heart, and the hearts of her counsellors, and nobles, with benevolence towards us, and all Israel. In her days and in ours may Judah be saved and Israel dwell in safety; and may the Redeemer come unto Zion. May this be his gracious will; and let us say Amen.

The scrolls of the law were then deposited in the ark, and the ordinary afternoon service ritual was performed, after which the minister ascended the dais before the ark, and preached a sermon in English. The discourse began by congratulating the congregation on the erection of the synagogue after vercoming many difficulties, and by

recognizing the meritorious services of the president and others of the congregation in connection therewith. Then followed an eloquent appeal to the congregation to be zealous and faithful in the observance of their religious duties, and the maintenance of loyalty to their race and faith. Some answers followed to objections said to be urged by the lukewarm members of the fraternity who were characterized as raising untenable objections to certain observances in order to shield themselves from the reproaches of their conscience for neglect of duty. The sermon over, the ordinary evening service was performed, the chanting of the Hallelujah (150th Psalm) by the choir concluding the whole ceremony, which lasted about two hours. The choir consisted of Messrs Isaacs, Benjamin, Bernstein, Deutsch, and Sanders, led at the harmonium by Mr J. Moss, the whole of the music being the composition of his father, Mr Matthew Moss, of London. The building, the foundation stone of which was laid on

THE FOUNDATION STONE, OF A NEW CHURCH, AND THE BUILDING,
the foundation stone of which was laid on the 25th of last January, by Mr C. Dyte, the president, is of brick, pointed, and has a handsome Grecian portico. The building is well lighted and ventilated, and will accommodate about 300 persons, and its erection is creditable as well to the architect, Mr Cameron, the builder, Mr Barker, and the energy of the congregation who compassed so much. There are a few things yet to be done to complete the work, including the erection of a cedar platform, in lieu of the present temporary one; and the total cost is estimated at £1600, of which sum £800 has been already collected; £17 was collected at the door at the close of the service.