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The Macquarie Street Synagogue, 1859-1877.

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The reasons for the establishment of the Macquarie Street Synagogue, the Sydney New Synagogue as it was officially called, have been described in some detail in earlier papers read to this Society.¹ There is, therefore, no need to go over that ground again. Although the controversy which led a group to break away from the York Street congregation was not resolved until October, 1859, the inaugural meeting of the New Synagogue took place on Sunday, 26th June, 1859, in the office of Messrs. David Cohen and Company in Spring Street. The congregational history properly commences with that meeting.

The minutes² describe it as "a preliminary meeting convened as per advertisement . . . for the purpose of establishing a new Synagogue."³ J. G. Raphael was voted to the chair.⁴ The Chairman read the advertisement and called on Samuel Cohen to speak, which he did, according to the minutes, "at considerable length."⁵ Samuel Cohen, as the earlier research shows, had been the leader of the breakaway group, so that he naturally took the lead now. He urged the advisability of forming a new place of worship and suggested the immediate search for suitable premises and a competent minister. These things he pressed so that the members could "all meet religiously and socially to pray to our Supreme Father." Cohen himself offered £1 a week towards the support of the institution.

Another early stalwart of Sydney Jewry, Philip Joseph Cohen, spoke next. He, too, urged the foundation of a new synagogue and permitted himself a vigorous attack on Rev. M. R. Cohen, Minister of the York Street Synagogue, whose actions had led to the rupture. Simeon J. Cohen

followed him, and suggested the formation of a sub-committee to obtain a place of worship. Samuel Davis, J. H. Asher, Elias Moses and A. J. Levy also spoke, the last named advocating the immediate subscription of funds. Samuel Cohen again emphasised his generosity by the offer to provide half the cost of the necessaries for the Synagogue.

The tone of the minutes would lead one to assume that consideration had already been given to the premises in Macquarie Street, which soon became the Synagogue. A number of motions were put and carried, the general effect of which was that the Macquarie Street property should be taken at once and a subscription list opened "for the purpose of inaugurating a Synagogue on strict Orthodox principles." Those who subscribed within three months were to be privileged members, and at the expiration of that time officers were to be elected. Meanwhile, P. J. Cohen, S. Davis, J. G. Raphael, A. J. Levy and J. H. Asher were empowered to act and make all the preliminary arrangements. The meeting adjourned to 3rd July.

On that date the sub-committee reported that they thought the premises known as the Tabernacle in Macquarie Street a very fit place for the present, and it was resolved unanimously to engage them for twelve months. Like so much else that is temporary, this home remained permanent. The Synagogue stayed there till it ceased activity in 1877. The Tabernacle had originally been built in 1835, and was the first Baptist Chapel in Sydney.⁶ It stood next to Burdekin House, a fine mansion whose disappearance lovers of old Sydney still regret. The Synagogue site is now occupied by the northern end of St. Stephen's Church.⁷ A description of it in its later years, written by Mrs. Esther Stone, has been published in the *Journal*.⁸ Parts of it deserve quotation :—

The entrance into the Macquarie Street building was by way of a passage on the side next to Burdekin House. This passageway was in the grounds of the Synagogue. The entrance to the ladies' gallery was by way of a staircase commencing from the floor of the building. The gallery extended across the end of the building farthest away from Macquarie Street. It was a small enclosure. It did not extend along the sides of the building. The Ark was set at the Macquarie Street end of the building, and the Reading Desk in the middle. The men's seats were arranged along two sides of it. . . . The edifice was a small one in comparison with the York Street Synagogue. The space within the building was much more limited than the space in the York Street building.

The building itself was situated in a locality very much superior to that in which the York Street building stood. Burdekin House next door was an elegant and beautiful mansion, very well maintained. The Synagogue building itself was very well cared for by its supporters. The dwellings in the area were the residences of people of considerable substance. . The street was as wide as it is at present, and there were no professional chambers in the street as there are at present. Most of the buildings nearby were two-storey residences and homes of the gentry of the city. The York Street building, on the other hand, was in a business area and among buildings which were used for commercial purposes.

The Macquarie Street building was set back a little from the street. However, the willow trees appearing in the 1848 sketch, as remembered by the late Mr. Victor Cohen, were not there at the time of my visits, nor was there any garden plot in front of the building. So far as I can remember, there was not outside the building any sign showing the date of its erection.⁹

The same sub-committee was given the task of preparing the building for public worship. The opening of a fund necessitated the appointment of a treasurer, and Simeon J. Cohen was chosen to act temporarily. Samuel Cohen, Asher, Davis and Raphael were appointed trustees, in whose names the premises were to be taken. By the next meeting on 31st July all sorts of practical preparations had been begun. Tenders had been called for making the Ark, altering the ladies' gallery and painting. Thought was now given to having the gas installed. We may leave the harassed but enthusiastic sub-committee to their details and pass to other matters.

At the meeting of 7th August a Rabbi Cohen was present. This is almost certainly the Rabbi Yechiel Cohen who in September, 1858, attended a meeting of the York Street Board in search of funds for Palestine. In August, 1859, he asked that congregation for funds to enable him to go back to Alexandria, but was refused.¹⁰ He met the same fate in Macquarie Street.¹¹ No one seems to have thought that he might make a suitable minister, for in his presence consideration was given to the application and testimonials of Rev. Joseph Emanuel Myers. He had apparently just arrived in Sydney, and was commended to the members by Raphael. There was some discussion, but the upshot was that he was engaged as Minister, Shoehet and Mohel on three months' trial at a salary of £3 a week. When one considers that the rent for the Synagogue premises was £2 a week, it will appear that the salary was not excessive. Surely no man ever had a shorter term of office as minister. He was engaged on 7th August. On

17th August he was dismissed, Samuel Cohen telling a general meeting that circumstances had arisen to alter his opinion of Myers. We shall probably never know what these circumstances were, but they must have swayed the members. Myers received £10 for services rendered. In later years he gave yeoman service to the Brisbane community, and became highly respected in England.

The time was now thought to have arrived for the election of a provisional Board of Management to succeed the sub-committee which had so far done all the work. Samuel Cohen became President, a tribute to his zeal and leadership in fostering the new group. The Treasurer was Simeon J. Cohen. The Committee comprised P. J. Cohen, Emanuel Phillips, Lewis Lipman (who was appointed Honorary Secretary), A. J. Levy, M. Grossman, Elias Moses, Samuel Davis and J. G. Raphael, a strong body of staunch Jews who, as events showed, were likely to give a forceful lead to the congregation. One cannot help noticing how many of the members had been among the most prominent in the York Street congregation, which must have felt the loss severely. The Board was given power to make laws and to engage a minister.

Both of these matters soon occupied its attention. Two days earlier, at a meeting on 15th August, the name of Rev. Solomon Phillips, then living in Melbourne, had been suggested as that of a suitable minister. Phillips was an old Sydney identity, a former assistant minister at York Street, and would have been known to everyone. On 21st August a general meeting agreed to engage him as Reader, Baal Kore and Mohel at a salary of £252 per annum. At the same time Lewis Collins was engaged as beadle and housekeeper, but later declined the office, which went to Lewis Nathan.

Some basic laws were adopted at this meeting which were of importance as showing how the members felt about communal matters generally. The congregation was to be divided into members and seatholders. A ballot among the Committee was necessary for the admission of a member, and seatholders were to have no voice in the management of the congregation. All gentlemen who had already subscribed were to be considered members. This was carried unanimously, no doubt because all those present had subscribed. It was then resolved that "the congregation be independent of all other congregations and make rules

and regulations for their own guidance and government.”

P. J. Cohen moved that the name of the congregation be Succath David—The Tabernacle of David—a neat pun on the name by which the building was generally known. The words are correctly spelt in the minutes—which is more than can be said for all the Secretary’s ventures into Hebrew.

Naturally enough one of the first matters which would require to be clarified was the relationship of the two congregations. Feeling still ran high, and there was no disposition towards peace on either side. The somewhat curt letter to York Street, recorded in the minutes of September 4th, was no doubt typical. As background information one needs only to be reminded that up till now all communal affairs had been the concern of York Street alone. The letter read :—

Gentlemen :

I am directed by the Board of Management to ascertain what proportion of your expenditure for the expenses of maintaining the Burial Ground and the use of the necessary utensils for Taharas you would require us to pay annually.

An early answer will oblige.

I have the honour etc.,

LEWIS LIPMAN, Hon. Secy.

The reply has not been preserved, but its tenor can be gathered from two paragraphs in Macquarie Street’s letter of 11th September :—

The Board of Management has arrived at the following unanimous decision :

“That the Burial Ground was granted by the Government to Trustees for the burial of all members of the Hebrew faith and the congregation possess an equal right with any other congregation to bury their dead in that Ground so granted and must be allowed to do so without any interference.”

The Board have no objection to contribute a fair proportion of expenses of the ground for its management but this congregation must apply only to their own officers and not to the officers of another Institution.

Nothing was done about the Burial Ground until York Street’s reply of 23rd October was received. It was so unsatisfactory that at a Board meeting on 26th October it was unanimously decided to refer the matter to the Crown Solicitor for his opinion.

Unfortunately no copy of the opinion is available—if there ever was one—for the Crown Solicitor was interviewed by the President, who gave a report to the next meeting. It was then resolved that York Street be informed

by P. J. Cohen that in future he would carry out the power vested in him as a trustee of the Burial Ground. This was followed on 27th November by a further resolution expressing the determination of the Board to maintain its rights over the ground. A letter suggesting negotiations was sent to York Street, but, as might have been anticipated, the matter dragged on for a long time. Macquarie Street took steps to obtain equipment for funerals, and nothing appears to have happened for some months beyond a desultory exchange of letters. This stage culminated in the somewhat startling notice of motion of 5th July, 1860, "That the congregation take steps for the due safety of all bodies interred in the Jews' Burial Ground from the community in future." Did the mover, Raphael, fear body snatching? No action was ever taken to deal with the motion.

Then in August, 1860, came the bombshell. P. J. Cohen, who had been a trustee of the Burial Ground in Devonshire Street since its grant in 1832, was suddenly served with proceedings in the Equity Court issued by York Street. The fight was on. Macquarie Street at once appointed solicitors to watch their interests.

The Macquarie Street records tell us very little of the Court proceedings. The story which follows is based on the York Street minutes. The Board of the old Synagogue had gradually been getting more and more annoyed and, at one stage, early in 1860, there had been talk of using force to prevent access by Macquarie Street members seeking to perform a burial. In April they decided to seek legal advice, with the object of removing P. J. Cohen from the trusteeship of the cemetery. The other two original trustees had been Joseph Barrow Montefiore, then living in London, and Michael Phillips, who was dead. Cohen was by now sole trustee, no other appointments having been made. His secession made matters very difficult for York Street. Their solicitor, R. J. Want, however, advised that instead of seeking to remove Cohen they should apply to the Court to appoint two nominees of their own to act with him. This advice was available for the Board meeting of 6th May, 1860. Consideration was deferred.

One last attempt at reconciliation was made by Saul Samuel, who moved on 1st July :—

That in order to avoid a repetition of the unseemly scenes which had recently taken place on the occasion of the burial of deceased members of the Macquarie Street Congregation, this Committee do

again invite the Committee of that Congregation to join with them with a view to removing the present difficulties and for that purpose to leave the whole matter to be submitted to arbitration—each congregation naming one arbitrator and the arbitrators naming a third—to determine upon such regulations for the management of the Ground and the burial of the dead of each congregation as they may deem advisable.

This motion was carried, but at the same meeting the Board also resolved to empower S. A. Joseph and Samuel to instruct any solicitor of their choice to commence proceedings. A further resolution named Samuel and Jacob Lazarus as the persons whose nomination to the trust was to be sought. It is apparent, though nothing is recorded, that Macquarie Street rejected Samuel's overtures—if, indeed, they were ever made.

The next development was a report by Joseph to the York Street Board on 15th July that he had seen Want, and that proceedings had been instituted in the Equity Court in accordance with the previous decision of the Board. Optimistically, he expressed the hope that the whole matter would be completed by the next meeting. He underestimated the delays of Equity and the violent reaction of Macquarie Street. It was not until April, 1861, that Want could make his final report.

We have seen that in August Macquarie Street referred the matter to its solicitors, and Cohen soon made plain his intention to defend the proceedings. Early in September the York Street Secretary, Alfred de Lissa, told the Board that things were not moving as fast as they had hoped, and only on the 23rd of that month the President, Isaac Simmons, was able to report that the hearing of the case had begun before the Master in Equity. There had been argument between counsel on both sides as to the procedure to be adopted in the somewhat unusual circumstances. Applications for the appointment of new trustees were not uncommon, but it was rare for objections to be raised to the fitness of the proposed appointees, and rarer still for counter-nominations to be submitted by a surviving trustee—nominations which, in their turn, were opposed as unsuitable. Cohen had asked that Samuel Cohen and Moses Moss fill the vacancies, having accepted as inevitable that he could not continue to act alone. Cohen's affidavit had set up that the York Street nominees were not fit persons to be appointed. The York Street Board approved a draft by de Lissa, based on minutes and other records, justifying

their recent course of action, and accepted an offer by one of the Board to make an affidavit showing the unfitness of Moss and Samuel Cohen. It is probable that this was never used—one certainly hopes that these personalities were not aired in open Court—but there was a further hearing before the Master late in September.

Saul Samuel was still bent on settling the matter. At a special Board meeting on 7th October, after referring to the high cost incurred, he moved that Want be instructed to tell Macquarie Street, without prejudice, of terms on which the litigation could cease. If Macquarie Street would withdraw its opposition to himself and Lazarus, York Street would alter its burial laws in accordance with any suggestion the Master in Equity might make to ensure smoother relations in the future. The Board agreed, but Macquarie Street was adamant, and there had been a further hearing by the time de Lissa next reported on the matter on 14th October.

A sidelight on the bitterness which this controversy caused is visible in the earlier part of October. Since 1835, P. J. Cohen had been a "perpetual member" of all committees of the York Street Synagogue—an honour granted to him because of the great work he had done as virtual founder of Sydney Jewry. Now, some felt, the past should be forgotten. A move was made to have this honour taken from him by a general meeting. There was some discussion and the actual wording of the original motion was toned down later in the month, but the intention remained. Eventually, in February, 1861, while the controversy still raged, the resolution of 12th October, 1835, was rescinded and P. J. Cohen ceased to have even a formal connection with the congregation he had laboured to build. Even the simultaneous exclusion of another person who had been granted honorary membership of committees would not have softened the blow, for there were very different reasons in his case. It must, of course, be admitted that Cohen could in the circumstances scarcely have sat on any York Street committee, but there is no evidence that he had tried to do so since the secession. It is a pity one must record an action which, despite its apparent justification, seems rather petty.

By early November all the York Street affidavits were ready for the resumption of the fight, but, in fact, the contest was over without further disputes in Court.

Though attempts were made by some members of the community to present a memorial to the Master in support of the York Street stand, it was decided to defer any such action, and eventually the solicitors advised against it. York Street was still anxious to settle the matter. It may well be that Macquarie Street had also come round to the idea of peace, but in the absence of records one cannot positively assert that that was so.

The final approach was begun by York Street, which took the initiative at its Board meeting on 27th January, 1861. Want had told them that the real issue was the comparative fitness of the men named by the two Synagogues. With this in view, the Board resolved to accept the Master's decision on the basis of the evidence already before him. They instructed their counsel, however, to point out that the existing trustee was a member of the Macquarie Street Board, that "he had manifested great partisanship, and that he was one of those who principally caused the division in the community." Stress was laid on the obvious fact that if another Macquarie Street supporter was appointed to the trusts York Street would be in a minority, and that this injustice would be all the greater because the New Synagogue comprised only about one-quarter of the community.

Despite this last argument, which was of considerable weight, the Master appointed one trustee from each Synagogue, Saul Samuel from York Street and Moses Moss from Macquarie Street. By April, 1861, the litigation was over, and a somewhat uneasy peace succeeded it.¹²

There we may leave the story of the burial ground and retrace our steps to deal with more pleasant matters. As early as 15th August, 1859, J. H. Anderson, a musician of considerable attainments who had given service to the community for many years, had advised that he would require only one month to train a choir for the dedication ceremony of the new building. From that date onwards preparations proceeded quickly, and at the meeting of 11th September it was decided to hold the consecration on Friday afternoon, 23rd September, at 2 o'clock. It was, however, postponed till the Sunday. The details of the Service can best be gathered from the printed Order of Proceedings (published with this paper), which was reproduced in full in the Minutes of 26th September. The occasion received much publicity in the *Sydney Morning*

ORDER OF SERVICE

FOR THE

DEDICATION OF THE NEW SYNAGOGUE

Macquarie Street, Sydney.

INTRODUCTORY SYNPHONY.

Reader Open unto me &c. (פְּתוּחַ לִי)

Response This is the Gate &c. זֶה הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה

Doors are opened and procession enter the Synagogue.

Choir Chaunt How Goodly, כִּה טוֹב

Procession proceeds to Ark, during which the Choir Chaunt Blessed is he who cometh &c. בְּרוּךְ הַבּוֹא

Seven Circuits are then made with the Sacred Scrolls.

1st Circuit, Psalm 30, recited by Reader and Congregation מִזְכוֹר שִׁיר הַצַּבֹּת
הַבַּיִת לַיהוָה

2nd ditto, 24th Psalm, Solo and Chorus by Reader and Congregation לַיהוָה מִזְכוֹר לֵאלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ

3rd ditto, Psalm 130, recited by Reader & Congregation שִׁיר הַמִּעְלֹת כַּמַּעְמָקִים

4th ditto, Psalm 100, Choir מִזְכוֹר לַתּוֹרָה

5th ditto, ,, 84, Recited by Reader and Congregation לִכְנָפַי עַל הַיְהוּדִים

6th ditto, ,, 122, ,, ,, שִׁיר הַמִּעְלֹת לַיהוָה שִׁמְחֵתִי

7th ditto, ,, 29, Trio מִזְכוֹר לַיהוָה

The Scrolls are then placed in the Ark by the President.

Prayer read by the Reader.

Ark closed by the President

Discourse by Mr. P. J. Cohen.

Announcement of Offerings

Hymn by Reader and Choir.

The Reader proceeds to the Ark and takes one of the Scrolls from the President
And Reader says, Hear O Israel, שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל

Choir respond.

Reader ascends the Reading Desk and chaunts the prayer for the Royal Family.
And replaces the Scroll in the Ark which is then closed.

The Choir then sing the concluding Psalm, הַלְלִיךָ

Evening Service Concludes the Ceremony.

Herald, in which the work of Anderson, who played the harmonium, the male choir, and P. J. Cohen's address were given most prominence. As one would expect, a number of gifts were made to the Synagogue to mark its formal opening. Samuel Davis presented a bronze chandelier; Mr. Brooksteyn a gold tassel; H. B. Cohen (on behalf of various members of his family) a spice box, a Kiddush cup and a cloth; Mrs. Charlotte Barnett a blue velvet cloth for the reading desk and two mantles for Sephorim; and A. J. Levy gave four Lulabim (Succoth was not far off). This list could no doubt be extended were it not for the fact that the gift book the Board decided to institute has long since disappeared. At the Board meeting of 16th October, Elias Moses was appointed Chasan Torah and Samuel Davis Chasan Bereshith.

An echo of the original dispute between the members of York Street can be heard in the resolutions of 9th November, 1859—probably the result of the Chief Rabbi's ruling which ended the legal controversy. The Board decided "That on all occasions when a child of the Jewish faith is to be circumcised the Mohel shall be the sole judge, and unless he objects it shall not require the confirmation of the Board."

There is no escape from recording the controversies of the day. While the quarrel over the Burial Ground was more or less quiescent, a new difficulty arose—this time over sheehithah. Previously the only shochet in Sydney had been an employee of York Street. The present problem arose out of a letter from York Street inviting co-operation in the permanent engagement of a shochet and the payment of the salary of £130 per annum in equal shares. Macquarie Street somewhat ungraciously resolved to reply :

. . . The Congregation, being entirely independent of any other, reserve to themselves the right of appointing their own officers who shall be immediately under the Board of Management's own control. Furthermore, should they deem it desirable that a shochet should be engaged for the Congregation they consider themselves fully qualified to select and appoint their own officer to perform such duty and at such salary which they believe remunerative for his services without dictation from any congregation as to who they shall have and upon what terms.

At the same time it was decided that a small sub-committee which had been authorised to discuss the Burial Ground with York Street be also empowered to discuss "any other matter relative to the Congregation." If this

was to include shechitah, their hands would have been rather securely tied by a motion, notice of which was given at that same meeting, to call by advertisement for tenders for the supply of meat. The notice was withdrawn, however, the meeting of 6th December merely appointing a sub-committee to see on what terms a butcher would supply meat. This attitude was not maintained. The dispute receives no further mention in the Minutes, and as late as 1863, when Rabbi Jacob Saphir described his visit to Sydney, there was still only one shochet—an employee of York Street.¹³ This state of affairs continued. Macquarie Street never employed a shochet or busied itself with the supply of meat.

The Synagogue, however, was not always beset with these problems, and could turn its eyes away from Sydney to help suffering Jews abroad. On 28th July, 1860, a committee meeting "took into consideration the case of the poor Jews of Morocco," who were in serious difficulty owing to fear of war between their country and Spain. A subscription list was opened and the President assumed the task of canvassing. Unfortunately there is no indication of the result, but the spirit was most certainly there. In similar vein one may record the advertisements in the Sydney newspapers during March, 1861, and 1863, calling on those poor Jews who needed free matzos for Passover to approach the Honorary Secretary. Assistance to country Jews was also provided. Throughout its history the congregation received requests for the services of a mohel in outlying districts. Among the early cases were those of Morris Woolf of Kiama, who, in November, 1859, made application on behalf of his sister-in-law's son; B. Nelson, who asked Rev. Solomon Phillips to go to Orange in July, 1860, and Nathan Mandelson, who required his services in Tumut in November, 1860. Regretfully the congregation had to refuse the last request owing to the distance from Sydney.

Somewhat later, in April, 1862, the Board found that frequent country trips meant that the minister was absent over week-ends. It was then resolved that members seeking a mohel should apply in writing to the President (in all cases, country included), and in the case of a country member he would permit Phillips to go to the member's place of residence occasionally on payment of the expenses. There was a proviso that he must not be away from Sydney

over Sabbaths and Festivals. In 1865 the matter was raised again and, after some discussion, the rule was amended in August allowing him to be absent for one Sabbath.

As the congregation grew in stature and confidence it asserted its claims to a share in the State aid then given to Jewish ministers. On 11th December, 1859, a letter was sent to the Colonial Secretary informing him of the appointment of Phillips as minister, noting that no other Jewish minister was then in the colony (Cohen, of York Street, had just left), and requesting that the Government grant be paid to Phillips. Though the minutes do not say so, it was clear that the claim was approved at least in part. Macquarie Street received only that one payment, as the system was abandoned the same year.¹⁴

By May, 1860, congregational life was peaceful enough to justify the making of permanent rules. A sub-committee had been working on them for some time, and they were now ready for consideration by the Board. Several meetings between this time and May, 1861, were devoted to detailed discussions. There is no need for us to enter into the minor controversies that developed. At last a general meeting could be called to adopt the Laws formally. For some reason no quorum was present, and the meeting adjourned to 30th June, 1861. Some amendments of little moment were approved, the Board was thanked for its zeal, appreciation to the Honorary Secretary was recorded, and the Laws were ready for publication. A passage in the preamble shows that there was still no desire for too close an association with York Street.

The congregation asserts its rights to decide upon all affairs which may concern themselves on their own responsibility and without reference to any clerical authority whatever; although they will at all times be most happy to listen to the advice of eminent men learned in our holy Religion, still whether upon a religious or any other subject, the decision of the congregation properly assembled must be considered decisive and acted upon.¹⁵

This was not the first publication to issue from Macquarie Street. A report presented to a meeting in 1860, after a year of active work, was printed and distributed to members. It showed a balance in hand of £50. At the same meeting it was reported that Grossman was unable, by reason of his residence in the country, to attend Board meetings. His resignation was accepted, and Moses Moss and Myer Brodzyak were elected to the Board. Only

a couple of weeks earlier, Brodziak had been appointed auditor with Jacob Charles Cohen.

The first formal annual general meeting was held in two parts on 11th August and 1st September, 1861. The earlier meeting was called for the nomination of officers, and the latter for their election and the adoption of the annual report. A glance at the nominations give some idea of the vigorous life of the congregation. Three men stood for President, four for Treasurer, and 21 for eight places on the Committee. Samuel Cohen was re-elected President and Philip Cohen Treasurer. The new Board comprised Moses Moss, J. G. Raphael, H. Phillips, L. Phillips, Simeon J. Cohen, Myer Brodziak, Solomon Cohen and L. Eskell. There was an equal number of votes cast for Eskell and Lewis Lipman for the last vacancy on the Committee. Lipman withdrew his name, but continued to act as Honorary Secretary.

A sad blow struck the congregation in the sudden death of its leader, Samuel Cohen, early in November, 1861. It was at once resolved to prepare a letter of condolence to his widow, which was to be engrossed on parchment and signed by its members. Part of this obviously sincere and well-deserved tribute read :—

. . . . No doubt to you the loss you have all experienced must be deeply felt as he was a kind husband and an indulgent father but to us the loss of our first President, our friend, and one with whom we have so cordially acted upon all occasions . . . has caused great affliction. We sympathise with your sorrows for we feel them deeply and you may be assured we shall endeavour to carry out as far as we possibly can his views in the establishment of this congregation. Well may the poor bewail his early death for they have lost a sincere friend. His charity was boundless and fell on them like a refreshing rain upon the parched earth.

A special meeting on 8th December, with P. J. Cohen in the chair, proceeded to elect a new President. Moses Moss was chosen from among three candidates. The meeting then carried unanimously a resolution to erect a marble tablet in memory of Samuel Cohen. This was completed by April, 1862, and set up in the Synagogue, over the seat he usually occupied. Mrs. Cohen's touching letter of thanks has been preserved, and I have it here this evening. The plaque was removed in 1878, and is now fixed to the wall of the Board room at the Great Synagogue.

Moss, however, for some unknown reason, declined the Presidency, and P. J. Cohen reported to a meeting on 6th February, 1862, that the Board had approached Lewis

Wolfe Levy to accept it. Levy "consented to do so as far as lay in his power," and so began a long and fruitful period of communal service. A week later he was formally elected. The growing work of the Board and congregation led members to think that a Vice-President was a necessity. Especially was this so in view of Levy's frequent absences from meetings while he was in Maitland on business. The laws were altered accordingly and Solomon Cohen was elected. His place on the Board went to Emanuel Phillips, who, however, resigned in March, no successor being elected.

Another opportunity soon arose for the congregation to declare its independence of York Street. On 14th April a deputation from York Street consisting of Nathan Mandelson (the President), Sigmond Hoffnung, Solomon Moses and Lawrence Speyer interviewed the Board. They came to ask that Macquarie Street should contribute a yearly sum towards the pension of Rev. Jacob Isaacs, Reader at York Street from 1840 to 1855, who was now living in England. Macquarie Street flatly refused, the Minutes saying that "it was shewn that this congregation was not in any way called upon to do so." Technically this may have been right, but since the majority of its members, and certainly its leaders, had benefited from Isaacs' work for fifteen years, their attitude was scarcely fair—even if understandable in view of the relations between the two bodies.

One of the diseases to which the congregation was subject throughout its life was poor attendance at meetings. Even a general meeting called in February, 1862, to elect a new President lapsed for want of a quorum, and this was by no means the first. Committee meetings often failed for the same reason, with the result that in July Simeon Cohen gave notice of motion for an alteration of the laws to declare vacant the seat of a Board member who absented himself for three consecutive meetings without proper excuse. No such action was then taken, but the next general meeting, held in August, reduced the quorum of the Board from eight to four. Another matter of control which exercised the Board at this time was the preparation of a set of by-laws. On the motion of Myer Brodziak, the task was entrusted to the mover, P. J. Cohen, S. J. Cohen and Raphael.

Once again there was a minor difficulty over shechitah. It began with a letter from York Street, which cannot be

traced. The reply, dated 2nd July, asked for information, which not forthcoming. Macquarie Street apparently wanted to find out how much meat each of its members used, so that it could determine the indirect contribution the congregation made to the shochet's salary. The matter was not pressed, and nothing further was done about it. This sort of thing, however, pin-prick though it was, would not be likely to improve relations.



GEORGE JUDAH COHEN,
About 1867.

(Photograph by courtesy of his daughter, Mrs. R. H. Marks.)

So, too, with the Burial Ground controversy, which came to mind again in July, when Messrs. Rodd and Dawson, the congregation's solicitors, asked for payment of their costs amounting to £235/5/-. The matter dragged on till January, 1863, when Raphael reported that he, with P. J. Cohen and Brodziak, had settled the matter on the footing that £100 would be paid in cash and two promissory

notes given for £40 each. The receipt, dated 2nd February, 1863, is still preserved.

The mere fact that the congregation could not, or would not, pay its lawyers did not prevent it from trying to purchase the synagogue building. The matter started with Brodziak's suggestion for the opening of a Building Fund in July, 1862. At the same meeting it was decided to ask the owners to sell for £900, payable over five years with interest at 8%. The owners, however, were unwilling to agree. Jewish control over the building was assured by the generous action of David Cohen and Company, who purchased it in August for £1,400 and at once granted the congregation a lease.¹⁶ After some negotiations, which we need not follow, this was arranged in September as a lease for ten years, with an option of renewal for a further eleven.¹⁷

The next important matter was the annual general meeting on 21st September. Seventeen members attended and unanimously re-elected L. W. Levy as President, with Moses Moss as Vice-President and Raphael as Treasurer. The new Committee was P. J. Cohen, Emanuel Phillips, S. J. Cohen, L. Lipman, M. Brodziak, J. H. Anderson, Solomon Cohen and J. C. Cohen. The auditors were W. B. Lee and Sydney Cohen of George Street, this latter gentleman being generally so described in order to distinguish him from someone else of the same name. Moss again declined the honour to which he had been elected. No successor was chosen until March, 1863, when P. J. Cohen was voted to the office. Meanwhile Raphael took the chair as Treasurer. The other offices in the gift of the members this year went to Raphael and Anderson, who were respectively chosen as Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith. The death of Samuel Cohen necessitated the appointment of a new trustee. L. W. Levy and P. J. Cohen succeeded to the post.

Holy Day Services now occupied the attention of the Board. At its meeting on 14th September it was decided to inform Rev. Solomon Phillips that on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur the omission of the usual Piyutim would be sanctioned, and that Yom Kippur being on a Sabbath that year, Psalm 92 was to be included before Borechu.¹⁸ It was also decided that P. J. Cohen and Lipman would assist the minister in the conduct of the Services. In December, Cohen was apparently dissatisfied with the way

Services were conducted, and gave notice of a motion that the matter should be considered by the Board. Nothing was done. Whether this meant that Cohen changed his mind or simply that the Board shelved the matter by frequent deferments of it we have now no way of knowing.

Changes on the Board continued into 1863. Brodziak resigned in March for business reasons. Lipman gave up his seat in the same month on his appointment as paid secretary to the congregation. A general meeting unanimously re-elected Brodziak to the Board, and Henry Barnett succeeded Lipman. The Board was weakened at this time by the absence of Anderson in England. Apart from problems of its own membership, the main concern of the Board during this peaceful period was the problem of marriages. The difficulty was, as always, the Jewishness of one or other of the parties. The matter was usually solved by leaving it to the minister and a Board member to investigate, and, if satisfied, to approve the marriage taking place.

This was the time when Rabbi Chaim Z'vi Schneersohn was in Australia seeking funds for Palestine.¹⁹ Macquarie Street received a letter from the Society of the Friends of Zion in Jerusalem commending him and his cause. The Board declined to assist in the appeal, and resolved in April that any money collected by the congregation be sent direct to Sir Moses Montefiore. Also in the realm of public affairs, the Board decided to present an address to the Queen. Levy, P. J. Cohen and Brodziak were asked to prepare it. The address is recorded in full in the Minute Book as of 5th July, 1863, and bears repetition here.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,
MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY :

We, on behalf of the Hebrew Congregation of the New Synagogue, Macquarie Street, Sydney, humbly approach your Majesty's person and throne to unite with our fellow subjects in offering to your Majesty our sincere and heartfelt congratulations in the recent event of the marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with the Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

We sincerely pray the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, may grant his blessings to this union and vouchsafe to England's hope perfect domestic happiness—a proper reward to a Lord loving—prince, the offspring of a royal and God fearing parentage, and it is our fervent prayer that this union may prove a healing balm to your Majesty's sorrow and grief.

We humbly assure your Majesty that members of our Faith have ever been distinguished for their loyalty to their sovereign and constitution and that in this distant part of your Majesty's

dominions will bear favourable comparison with any of your Majesty's subjects. Commending your Majesty to the King of Kings we say with the Royal Psalmist : "Let there be peace in your dwellings and contentment in your palaces."

Such will ever be the prayer of your Loyal and Dutiful subjects.

(Sgd.) L. W. LEVY, President	} on behalf	
P. J. COHEN, Vice President		} of the
J. G. RAPHAEL, Treasurer		} congregation.

Synagogue Chambers, 18 June, 1863.

One of the minor mysteries of our Jewish history in New South Wales is the origin and fate of the congregation at Forbes. The only time it has come to my notice was on the discovery of three short Minutes dated 1st and 10th March and 12th April, 1863. Apparently the congregation there sent a letter to Macquarie Street in January. The letter has been lost, and only an inconclusive reply by Lipman is available.²⁰ This was addressed to L. Phillips, Honorary Secretary, Synagogue Chambers, Forbes, and stated merely that the matter was under consideration. A sub-committee was in fact appointed, but never reported to the Board, and nothing further was done or recorded.

The main item which engrossed the attention of the Board for the next four years was the question of a cemetery. Matters had been quiet since the litigation, but in July, 1863, York Street initiated discussions. These did not concern the burial ground which had so far been the subject of controversy, but resulted from the decision of the Government to establish a new cemetery at Haslem's Creek (Rookwood) for all faiths in view of the obvious unsuitability of Devonshire Street. The talks between the two congregations produced no agreement on joint control of the Jewish portion as had been suggested by the Government. After several months of negotiation, Macquarie Street resolved in December to submit three of their own names to the Department of Lands for appointment as trustees.

This was followed almost at once by fresh negotiations in which York Street produced two proposals for joint action. The first was to provide for three York Street and two Macquarie Street trustees; the second suggested a division of the part allotted to the Jews. Macquarie Street insisted on equal numbers of trustees, but seemed more inclined to accept the second scheme. This, however, did not suit York Street, and in February, 1864, Macquarie

Street decided to ask the Government for a separate piece of land for itself. From that time until March, 1866, the minutes are silent on all matters concerning the new cemetery. The Board then resolved to consider "all matters regarding the new burial ground as promised by the Government to us." This would seem to make it clear that the Synagogue's representations had succeeded. Sites at Long Bay and Moruya Bay (? Maroubra) had been mentioned to the Board, but were never seriously contemplated.²¹ In any case, the Government had decided on Haslem's Creek, and there was little point in trying to establish a new cemetery elsewhere. Sporadic discussions occurred at Board meetings until finally, in August, 1866, L. W. Levy lost patience with the delays, and offered to pay £200 towards buying a piece of land for the congregation, fencing it and erecting the necessary buildings. Raphael offered to pay half the purchase money, and a sub-committee was at once appointed to find a suitable block.

York Street, however, was quite unmoved. While the search for land was still going on, the three trustees of the new cemetery, all York Street nominees, sent a letter to both congregations.

CIRCULAR.

Sydney,
March 16, 1866.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MACQUARIE-STREET
CONGREGATION OF JEWS :

Sir,

We have the honour to inform you that we have been appointed Trustees of that portion of the New Cemetery at Haslem's Creek devoted to the Hebrew Community, and that we are desirous of having the co-operation of the several Jewish Congregations in the carrying out of our trusts.

In order to do so as equitably as possible, and to avoid any probability of dispute, we propose to divide the ground equally between the York Street and Macquarie Street Congregations, each portion being placed under the control of the respective Boards of Management—subject of course to the regulations of the trustees. There is also another portion of land in the centre intended for the erection of Houses of Worship necessary for the performance of the religious rites at burials, upon which it will be necessary to erect a neat building which we propose should be used in common by both Congregations.

We also propose that the expenses of erecting this building as well as enclosing the Burial Ground with posts and chains, and also the ornamentation of the Ground and the keeping it in proper order, should be borne equally between the two Congregations.

Should you agree to these conditions we will thank you to let us have an early reply, as it will be necessary for both Congregations to furnish us with a scale of burial charges in order that we may submit them for approval to H.M. Government.

We have the honour to be Sir,
Your most Obt. Sts.,

S. A. JOSEPH,
A. COHEN,
SAUL SAMUEL.

N.B.—A similar circular has been sent to the York Street Synagogue.

Macquarie Street rejected the scheme on the ground that the number of trustees was unequal. At the same meeting, in December, 1866, it was resolved to approach the Minister for Lands to ask if he would grant the congregation the same facilities as had been afforded other denominations should they purchase land at Haslem's Creek. The deputation then appointed was authorised to complete the purchase if the Minister gave the assurances asked. The Government agreed, but it was not until June, 1867, that Levy and Raphael were able to report to the Board that they had bought 4½ acres of land at Haslem's Creek.

Some differences of opinion arose among the Board as to the building to be erected on the land which occupied the meetings in July. Eventually Levy and Raphael were authorised to have a suitable building put up on the understanding that the cost would not exceed £275. On 1st September the President made a formal report that the ground had been consecrated on 18th August. Although this was not a joint effort and was not part of the Government grant, the consecration ceremony was performed by both Rev. A. B. Davis of York Street and Rev. Solomon Phillips. A lengthy report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* described the proceedings in detail.

The matter of the new cemetery was now settled, but while the talks and searches had been going on some minor problems had arisen over the old ground in Devonshire Street. In June, 1865, the congregation had been asked to join with York Street in making repairs to it, and had agreed. An account for £18/9/- was paid in February, 1866. In January, 1867, the whole matter was put on a permanent basis by the decision of the Macquarie Street Board to pay for the future one-third of the expense of keeping the ground in order. This solved another of those

problems which held the congregations apart. Cemetery matters could still be prickly, however, such as the controversy that arose over the alleged interference by a York Street minister in the choice of a grave for a Macquarie Street member's child.²² Despite irritated letters nothing was done to fan the flames, so that in June, 1866, the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Nathan Adler, could fairly allude to the growth of friendly feeling between the two Synagogues. His letter has already been published in the *Journal*²³ and need not be reprinted here. The reply which Levy sent on 18th November, 1866, merits quotation :—

Reverend and Dear Sir,

We have the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of your esteemed favour No. 2957 dated June 28th, 5626 handed to us by favour of Mr. M. Brodziak.

We are glad that Mr. Brodziak, whose position as one of the founders and Vice President of this Synagogue would necessarily give weight to his representations, has had so favorable an opportunity of placing our position and feelings correctly before you.

The friendly feeling which you mention as springing up between this and the old Congregation is one which no efforts on our part shall be wanting to cement, and your evident interest in the matter can but induce us to embrace every opportunity to increase this cordiality.

In course of time, it is to be hoped a short one, further unity of action on all important points will doubtless be arrived at, and while the existence of two Synagogues will remain an established fact, the calls of our common nationality will as hitherto never be neglected on that account but a ready and helping hand be ever stretched out to aid in all connected with the advancement of our Holy Religion, and the ensuring of its respect on all points, whether educational or otherwise by all classes of the community.

As far as we are concerned we shall have much pleasure in uniting in a common Burial Ground, and on your suggestion shall endeavour to take steps to ensure so desirable a matter.

Your kind promise of co-operation in promoting kindly feeling will be gladly availed of by us, should any occasion arise when an appeal to your intervention might be productive of settling amicably any matter when a difference is likely to arise upon any point connected with the observance of our Holy Religion, or in our worship, which we have much pleasure in informing you is carried out in the most Orthodox Manner without innovation of any kind in disregard of Laws, whether scriptural or rabbinical.

We sincerely appreciate your expression of cordiality, and pray that our Almighty Father may spare you for many years to control and aid by your wisdom and experience the religious path of the people entrusted to your care.

We have the honor to be Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your Humble Servants,

For the Board of Management,

L. W. LEVY,

President.

Of course, there is always the possibility of over-emphasising matters of controversy, because they occupy greater space in the records and are more spectacular than occasions of co-operation. This has been particularly the case as between York Street and Macquarie Street, where the rupture began over a family matter and where for long the smaller body fought hard for recognition. There were, however, many instances of co-operation, even in earlier years, and there was no ill-feeling at all between the two ministers. As early as 1863 they worked together in connection with the then existing day school.^{23a} Although in November of that year there was difficulty over their joint performance of a wedding where one party came from York Street and the other from Macquarie Street, it had no permanent result.

Macquarie Street, it must be said, was particularly happy with its minister, and went out of its way to help him by such methods as insuring his life, obtaining State recognition, easing the burden of his country trips, making him a donation from the funds of the Synagogue, and granting him sick leave whenever he needed it.²⁴ They were, for instance, most considerate towards him when, in July, 1866, he felt compelled to resign owing to his wife's ill-health. The tribute to him on that occasion well deserves quotation :—

The Board desires me further to state that the loss will be more fully felt by them and the congregation from the fact that so kind a feeling has existed between you and them during the last seven years and they have therefore much pleasure in bearing testimony to your exemplary conduct in every way and to the very efficient manner (in which) you have on all occasions performed the duties of minister to this congregation.²⁵

Though arrangements were at once made to write to David Cohen asking him to find a successor, the Board welcomed Phillips' decision to remain and cancelled the request to London. The Board's pleasure at keeping their trusted minister was recorded in early September.

The story of more formal matters must be taken up again with the elections of 1863. The three executive officers were unopposed—Levy as President, P. J. Cohen as Vice-President, and Raphael as Treasurer—but there was a ballot for the Committee, eight candidates standing for four positions. At this election the scrutineers were Sydney Cohen and George Judah Cohen. The latter, who was then 21 years old, was the son of Samuel Cohen. In

all probability this was the first communal duty of one who in later years was to become the most outstanding of all leaders of Sydney Jewry. Emanuel Phillips, J. C. Cohen and S. J. Cohen were elected to the first three vacancies, but there was a tie between Myer Brodziak and Moses Moss for the fourth place. The President gave his casting vote to Brodziak. The two auditors for the ensuing years were Sydney Cohen and David Cohen of Woolloomooloo, the son of P. J. Cohen.

At this annual meeting, which was held on 13th September, another generous gesture by Levy and David Cohen, of David Cohen & Co., was announced. They had agreed to remit £174/13/-, the amount of rent due to them. The Synagogue was never wealthy, whatever may have been the private resources of some of its leading members, so that relief from rent must have been welcome. A special vote of thanks was ordered to be noted in the minutes. David Cohen was then in England, but the congregation was able to honour Levy by appointing him Chasan Bereshith, with Brodziak as Chasan Torah.

Committee meetings at this time had little real work to do. They were able to spend considerable time discussing such matters as the beadle's salary—which they refused to increase, with the result that they had to find another beadle. This decision was made on 11th October, at which meeting they did raise the salary of the Secretary. The search for another beadle produced three applicants, and on 1st November Jacob Levi was appointed. He stayed only a year, and resigned in November, 1864, Abraham Lazarus being chosen to succeed him. This sort of thing was not sufficient to occupy a Board of the calibre of that now in office. Interest naturally waned, and from March to September, 1864, seven meetings lapsed for want of a quorum. When they did resume, little work was done except discussions over the new cemetery and an occasional marriage application. Congregants and friends, however, maintained their interest and their generosity. In October, 1863, Mrs. Rachel Cohen, widow of Samuel Cohen, gave three mantles for the Sephorim and a cover for the reading-desk, while David Cohen sent a curtain for the Ark. For her zealous efforts in several directions, she earned the address the Synagogue gave her in January, 1864, on her departure from the colony for England.²⁰

Fitted in among these minor matters there was only

one item of importance, other than the new cemetery, which arose during the years 1863-4—the incipient quarrel over a wedding, to which brief reference has already been made. No damage was done, however, and the dispute died down. One decision reached in October, 1863, perhaps deserves mention. After some discussion, the Board unanimously decided that in future Sabbath and Festival Services should commence at 9 o'clock instead of 8.

Congregational inactivity was such that even the annual general meeting called for 18th September, 1864, lapsed owing to the small attendance. A fresh meeting on 20th September proceeded to nominate office-bearers. The elections five days later returned the old executive unopposed, two people nominated for treasurer having withdrawn their names. Eight men stood for the Committee, and Brodziak, Anderson, S. J. Cohen and J. C. Cohen were successful. The auditors for the year were W. B. Lee and David Cohen of Woolloomooloo. The October committee meetings failed to secure a quorum, and no work was done till November—if the appointment of a beadle can be considered work. The December and January meetings also lapsed.

The death of P. J. Cohen in November, 1864, deprived the Synagogue of one of its most devoted members, who, since his arrival in Sydney in 1828, had striven to build the Jewish community. One can only account for the absence of any praise in the Minutes by the infrequency of meetings, but even so it seems ungracious. The congregation nominated Levy to succeed him as a trustee of the Cemetery in Devonshire Street,²⁷ but this was apparently beyond their powers, the appointment being legally in the hands of David Cohen as heir-at-law of his father. In April, 1865, the committee asked him to nominate Levy, and he did so.²⁸ At the same meeting, Myer Brodziak was elected to the vacant Vice-Presidency. This cannot have caused any very great interest, for three meetings called in March and early April for this business did not attract a quorum. Nor did the meetings in May and June, at which it had been hoped to fill the vacancy on the committee caused by the elevation of Brodziak. Finally the matter dropped, and nothing was done until the annual meeting in September.

Finance had been causing some concern, and the Board in February, 1865, decided to circularise the congregation

in order to ascertain the amount of annual subscription members might be prepared to give. One can imagine the reaction to-day if Synagogue members received such a letter as this :—

Sir :

The Board of Management, anxious to obtain a fixed amount of income so that their future operations may be secured upon a sound basis, address you for the purpose of ascertaining the amount you may feel disposed to subscribe annually to the funds. The subscribed sum will include all seat-rents and offerings for yourself and family under 20 years of age (but exclusive of any special occasions, such as marriages, burials etc.). An early reply will oblige.

The size of the congregation can be seen from the fact that 100 circulars were ordered to be printed. We moderns may be surprised, but the members rallied round and quite a considerable sum came in. The revenue disclosed in the report of September, 1865, is £125 higher than that for the previous year.

One peculiar financial transaction was foreshadowed at that same meeting in February, 1865. Brodziak (not yet Vice-President) gave notice that he would move "That the sum of £50 be set aside for the President, Vice-President and Treasurer for the purpose of offerings to be made to the Synagogue during their year of office, viz., President £25, Vice-President £15, Treasurer £10." The motion was passed on 4th March. It seems difficult to explain this even on the basis that office was a financial burden. After all, both Levy and Raphael were wealthy men, and, at the time, there was no Vice-President. Of Brodziak's financial circumstances I know nothing, but he was at the time not on the executive. An offering paid for out of Synagogue funds would not be much help to a congregation in financial difficulties. Things, however, cannot have been so bad for long, for in August, 1866, in response to a request, the Board agreed to give £5 annually to the Sydney Hebrew Philanthropic Society.²⁹

The elections in September, 1865, produced no contests for the executive, Levy, Brodziak and Raphael being unopposed. Seven members faced the electors for positions on the Committee. Anderson, Louis Brodziak, J. C. Cohen and S. J. Cohen were successful. The previous auditors were re-elected. It may be worth noting, as an indication of the condition of the congregation, that only ten people were present at the meeting, and that number did not

include all those who stood for the committee. The President and the new committeeman, Louis Brodziak, were appointed to the posts of honour for Simchath Torah.

Two matters only took up the Board's time in 1866—the minister's resignation and his withdrawal of it, and the search for a suitable cemetery. Both these have been dealt with already, so that we may jump at once to the elections of September, 1866, pausing only to record that this year five meetings had no quorum, and one—that of December, 1865—was abandoned because “there was no business to lay before the meeting.” A better attendance than in the previous year unanimously re-elected the three executive officers. The first three committeemen chosen were S. J. Cohen, J. H. Anderson and P. S. Solomon, but there was a tie for fourth between Louis Brodziak and J. C. Cohen. Brodziak retired in Cohen's favour. Perhaps as a solatium he was appointed Chasan Torah, Levy being Chasan Bereshith. There is no record of the appointment of auditors.

Solomon had earned his place on the committee by his devoted work as Assistant Reader to Rev. Solomon Phillips, especially over the High Holyday season. In September, 1865, he had been requested to join with Anderson in giving assistance, and during the minister's illness and absence in Melbourne in 1866 he had been Acting Reader. In September of that year, just after his election to the Board, it was resolved to “convey thanks to P. S. Solomon Esq., for his gratuitous services in assisting in the performance of the Services for the past twelve months,” and to present him with a set of Festival Prayer Books. Strangely enough, the voting was equal, and the motion was carried on the casting vote of the President. It should be added that Solomon himself was not present at the meeting. His reply is recorded in the Minutes of 17th October.

The first Board meeting of the New Year had the sad task of allotting 10/- a week from Synagogue funds to an old and valued member, one who from the early years of the York Street Synagogue had been a faithful and generous member of the community. The main item of business for a time thereafter was the Chief Rabbi's letter and the reply to it. When that had been disposed of, cemetery matters arose again. We have already considered these questions, and need not repeat here what has already been

said. By December, 1866, the Board was free to receive a notice by Solomon "that at the next monthly meeting he will suggest some alteration in the mode of carrying on the Services." As one might by now expect, it was February, 1867, before the matter came up again. Then, characteristically, the meeting lapsed for want of attendance. It accepted, however, notice of motion from Raphael "That the opening and closing of the Ark and the raising and rolling of the Scrolls of the Law, be performed by the officers of the Synagogue except during the New Year and Day of Atonement, and we forthwith take into consideration the advisability of forming a choir and that the Messrs. Anderson be solicited to co-operate." At the next meeting on 3rd March the motion was carried unanimously, and a sub-committee of Rev. Solomon Phillips, J. H. Anderson and Alfred Anderson was directed to carry out the latter part of it. The April and May meetings had no quorum, so that it was only in June that J. H. Anderson was able to report that it was impossible to form a choir "for the present." No reason is recorded, but one would assume it to be lack of male voices. The use of a mixed choir had not been specifically suggested.

Solomon's notice of motion was never considered. He told the June meeting by letter that he was ill and could not present it. On the same day arrangements were completed, quite amicably, as we would expect, between the minister and the Board, that his engagement was to be terminable by six months' notice on either side. From then until the end of its term of office only cemetery problems occupied the Board, culminating in the consecration ceremony to which reference has already been made.

Levy once more became President at the elections in September, 1867, while the other two members of the executive exchanged offices. Raphael was now Vice-President and Brodziak Treasurer. The new Committee was J. H. Anderson, S. J. Cohen, Louis Brodziak and B. Vallentine, the last named taking his seat for the first time. The auditors chosen were Sydney Cohen and P. S. Solomon. The rest of the meeting was devoted to expressions of thanks to the retiring officers, the Minister and the Secretary for their work, and to Levy and Raphael for their gift of land at Haslem's Creek.

As far back as 1841 land had been granted to the Jewish community on Church Hill for use as a school.

It had never been used for that purpose, and was still vacant in November, 1867, when news reached Brodziak that the York Street Board had let it for £10 a year and was using the money for some educational purpose. He raised the matter at a Board meeting, which decided to ask Elias Moses, one of the original trustees of the Grant, for all information he could give. The letter to him is extant, but his reply is missing. The matter dropped, and another possible cause of dispute fortunately led to nothing. The land remained otherwise unused until it was sold under the provisions of the Jewish Synagogue and Schools' Act of 1872. The proceeds were devoted to the building of the present Great Synagogue—except for £200 which was paid to Macquarie Street.

Two matters which arose about this time allowed the Board to look away from its own doings and its relations with the parent congregation—the application of one Jacob Cohen of Palestine (then in Sydney) for funds to build a hospital and school for the poor,³⁰ and the project of presenting an address to the Duke of Edinburgh, whose visit was timed for January, 1868. Rabbi Cohen's request, despite the intervention of Rev. Solomon Phillips, was granted only to the extent of three guineas. In order to honour the Duke, Macquarie Street took the initiative in writing to York Street suggesting a joint address. York Street, however, replied that they would co-operate only if the Church of England and the Catholics presented addresses. There is no further record in the Minutes, and I have not been able to find out if anything was done at this stage. When the sensational attempt was made on the Duke's life, a meeting of the whole Jewish community was held at the York Street Synagogue in order to prepare an address to him. Rev. A. B. Davis and Rev. Solomon Phillips supported the motion to adopt the draft. Among those who spoke at the meeting was the President of Macquarie Street. The York Street minister expressed his pleasure that members of both congregations joined in the tribute.³¹ It is worth noticing that in January, 1869, Macquarie Street resolved to include the Duke's name in the Prayer for the Royal Family—a departure from the normal practice. I do not know how long this was done, but he outlived the congregation by many years.

Also in November, 1867, the Board began a series of discussions on suggested alterations to the form of Service.

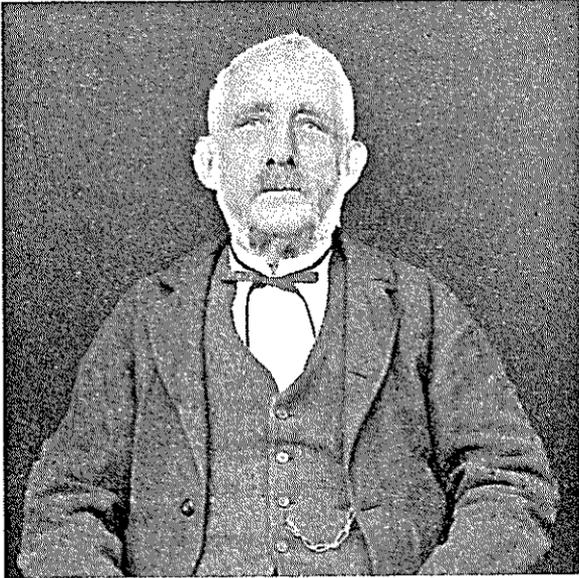
At the end of December the subject was considered at a special committee meeting, which dealt with a number of recommendations. None of them was revolutionary, and there was no question at all of any deviation from Orthodox standards. Only one of the decisions calls for comment—both the Board and the general meeting which was called for 26th January, 1868, rejected the plan of a weekly sermon. Strangely enough, there appears to have been no consultation with the minister, who was informed of the decisions in a lengthy letter at the end of January. A letter from him taking objection to these alterations being made without his consent produced a firm reply, pointing out that under the rules of the congregation the members had power to make any changes in the Service they deemed desirable.³² Lipman's letter ended by conveying the refusal of the Board to record the minister's objections.

November was busy. In that month much time was also spent talking over the fees to be charged at the cemetery. The matter was not settled until there had been motions, amendments and recommitals. Considerable vigour seems to have marked the discussions, but by the end of December all was quiet. Other cemetery matters which were then decided without controversy were the resolutions to institute a burial register and to insist that on all tombstones at least the name of the deceased must be in Hebrew. Lipman, G. Brooksteyn and A. Lazarus, the beadle, were appointed "Kobronim" to superintend funerals and the cemetery generally.

The year 1868 opened with the resignation of Louis Brodziak from the Board on his departure for the country. A general meeting called to elect a successor had no quorum, but J. C. Cohen was eventually chosen at the meeting called to consider the alterations in the Service which have just been mentioned. This was followed early in February by the resignation of Myer Brodziak as Treasurer. The Board at first refused to accept it, but later did so and appointed Raphael Acting Treasurer. The April and May Board meetings lapsed. By June there were all the makings of a serious dispute with the minister over some alleged derelictions of duty, but the matter blew over, or, as the Minutes say, it was "satisfactorily arranged."

The elections created a little more excitement than usual, eleven candidates putting up for the four vacancies on the Committee. Vallentine, David Mitchell, S. J. Cohen

and J. H. Anderson topped the poll. Levy once more became President—the eighth year in succession—with Raphael again as Treasurer. At the nomination meeting in August it was unanimously agreed that “as a Vice-President is no longer necessary that office be dispensed with.” The more regular attendance of Levy at Board meetings, which had been noticeable over the last two years or so, was no doubt the reason for this alteration of rules. J. C. Cohen and P. S. Solomon were the new auditors.



LEWIS LIPMAN.
(In his later years.)

The Board subsequently chose David Mitchell, a newcomer to the Committee, and S. J. Cohen as Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith.

Just before the Holy Days of 1868, the Synagogue had been repaired, owing to the ceiling being found unsafe. For some few weeks prayers were said in Raphael's house in Young Street. For New Year, however, the congregation was back in its own home. Moritz Gotthelf, David Mitchell and Simeon Phillips (a son of the minister) were thanked for their assistance. This was the second year that Gotthelf had taken part in the Services, the commence-

ment of a career of distinguished communal work which lasted for more than half a century.³³ Mitchell, too, was always ready to help, and joined the minister in conducting the Services for the following year as well.³⁴

After the usual interval of a couple of lapsed meetings, the Board decided in February, 1869, to try again to form a choir. The task was now given to Vallentine, with the promise of any "aid he may require" from the members of the Board themselves. This time they were apparently successful, for we find in May that an order was sent to London for Talesim for "the boys who are the most attentive to the choir," and in August, 1870, that the minister asked for a small dais to be erected on which the choir could be stationed during services. At the general meeting in September, 1870, a vote of thanks was passed to Vallentine for his "energy and perseverance in initiating the choir," and for the attention he had given it. One member publicly acknowledged the advantage his two sons gained from their service with the choir—which up till then appears to have been exclusively male, if not consisting entirely of boys. At a later stage ladies joined it, and in January, 1871, we find a fee paid to a music teacher for instruction to the ladies of the choir.

Further alterations to the Synagogue, both inside and outside, occupied a certain amount of attention in the middle of 1869, but the only important discussion at that time dealt with the method of announcing offerings. This, of course, had been the subject of much controversy both in England and Australia for some time past. The proposal, moved by Raphael in July, was to "dispense with the money offerings usually made when parties are called to the Law." An amendment limited the effect of the motion to twelve months. Persons who desired to make offerings were requested to tell the Secretary whose duty it was to announce them in English after the Reading of the Law. A new form of *Mi Sheberach* was approved, which is written in square Hebrew letters and pasted in the Minute Book.

The Cohen family may well be described as the founders of Macquarie Street. They certainly were its staunchest supporters, especially if to them be added their various connections in the family of L. W. Levy. Again they showed their generosity by a gift of another mantle for the Scroll—this time from David Cohen in London.

Shortly after this was received, the annual meeting had to appoint a new trustee of the congregation in place of P. J. Cohen, who had been dead for some five years. The choice fell on Levy's son-in-law, George Judah Cohen, still a young man, but vitally interested in the congregation and in all matters Jewish. His acceptance of the office, addressed from West Maitland, is, as one would expect, plain and businesslike, and expresses his pleasure at the appointment.³⁵

The only other matter remotely worthy of record before the annual meeting was a vote of thanks to P. S. Solomon for performing "religious duties" (presumably those of chaplain) at Darlinghurst Gaol. Later in the year the President was authorised to discuss with the York Street authorities the question of appointing a "competent person" to perform those duties.

Elections followed. Levy and Raphael were returned unopposed. The old Committee was re-elected *en bloc*, but there were two new auditors, Barnett Hyman and Alfred Anderson. New names also appear as Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith, namely, Michael Levy and Isaac Hart.

The Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir records that during 1870 the congregation was rebuffed by the Government over its claim for a share in compensation for the resumption of certain land in Kent Street. While there is no reason at all to doubt this assertion, it ought to be mentioned that there is no trace of this matter in the minute books or letter books of Macquarie Street or in the York Street minutes. Nor can we prove at present the further statement that the Minister for Lands, instead of paying a share to Macquarie Street, "invited the two bodies to join in nominating trustees for the eventual erection of a new Synagogue with this money." According to the only source of information at present available, there was "some initial hesitation in both congregations," but the Government was in September, 1870, "able to appoint a combined body of trustees"—Hon. Saul Samuel, S. A. Joseph and Maurice Alexander for York Street, and L. W. Levy and B. Vallentine for Macquarie Street. There survives a letter of 8th January, 1872, from Lipman asking for £200 as Macquarie Street's share, but this is addressed to the trustees, not to the Government.³⁶

Otherwise the year was uneventful. Most of the Board meetings were occupied with the revision of the laws of the congregation, though there were also some discussions of cemetery regulations. A special committee, including some men not members of the Board, was appointed to revise the laws. It was headed by Levy, the President, and comprised Raphael, Mitchell, S. J. Cohen, Myer Brod-ziak, Lipman, the Secretary, and G. Brooksteyn. The task was complicated, and the new laws were not ready for adoption until November, 1872. There is much in the Minutes on the subject, but the detailed discussions do not merit record. It may be kept in mind as we follow the somewhat desultory talks that went on in Board meetings.

No changes in the executive officers were made by the annual meeting in September, 1870. The new Committee was Vallentine, G. Brooksteyn, David Mitchell and Solomon Cohen, while Barnett Hyman and W. B. Lee became auditors. Just before the annual meeting some 37 gentlemen had been admitted by the Board as privileged members, but this did not have any influence on the attendance. The annual meeting attracted only fifteen people. One cannot help wondering whether the congregation at this time was really healthy. The executive had remained unchanged for years, which is rarely a good thing; little of a controversial nature was ever now discussed; even the relationship with York Street was quiet and peaceful, so that there was little to arouse interest. Though all the formal votes of thanks to President, Treasurer and Board were courteously carried by this meeting, it seems to me probable that the congregation was by then on the down-grade. Some little support is lent to this view by the fact that Levy and Raphael were again appointed Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith. Was no new blood now offering for posts of honour?

Almost immediately after the elections, Solomon Cohen resigned from the Board. The general meeting which was called to fill the vacancy lapsed for lack of attendance, but ultimately Philip Hart was elected from among three candidates. The year opened with the refusal of the Board to extend a loan of £100 to the matzo baker to enable him to carry on business until the following Passover. In March a further gift from Mrs. Samuel Cohen was received, this time a set of bells and a pointer. There was no business to bring before some of the meetings—another

indication that all was not well. This state of affairs continued on into 1872, and grew more serious as time progressed. One healthy sign, however, was the growing readiness to co-operate with York Street. In June the question of a chaplain for Darlinghurst Gaol arose again, and the congregation initiated discussions with York Street with a joint effort in view. J. E. Myers was suggested by Macquarie Street as a suitable person, and when it was found that he had been doing this work of his own volition for some time he was voted a small honorarium.³⁷ Apart from the High Festival arrangements, which were again left to the minister and David Mitchell, only alterations and repairs to the Synagogue were discussed in the last couple of months of the Board's term of office.³⁸ Though rather ambitious schemes were moved, all that was done was some repainting and the purchase of a new carpet and linoleum. Even these minor items were not completed till July, 1872.³⁹

The corporate life of Sydney Jewry went on with Macquarie Street as a full partner. Two incidents recorded in the *Australian Israelite* about this time give complete proof of that assertion. The earlier tells of a Service at the York Street Synagogue on 29th September, 1871, when Rev. Solomon Phillips read Maariv and Rev. A. B. Davis preached a special sermon in aid of the funds of the Sydney Hebrew Philanthropic Society. The second emphasises the separatist tendency still in evidence. The two Synagogues could not combine in one Service to render thanks for the restoration to health of the Prince of Wales (King Edward VII.). On 27th February, 1872, two Services were held, that in York Street shortly before noon and that at Macquarie Street later in the day. The newspaper, in its issue of 8th March, 1872, described the latter as "well attended."

Few changes took place at the election in September, 1871. Levy and Raphael remained in office, and the new Committee comprised Isaac Lewis Isaacs, Vallentine, G. Brooksteyn and Mitchell. David Cohen and Lee were once more the auditors. The executive were on yet another occasion honoured on Simchath Torah. The new Board's first task, other than to arrange formalities, was to consider an application from the minister for an increase in salary. This was refused in November, but instead the Board agreed to pay the premium on his life insurance

policy for the future. For the rest of the Synagogue year absolutely nothing happened. Three Board meetings transacted no business at all, while one did nothing except vote £20 for distribution among the choir. Another lapsed for lack of attendance.

At last, in September, 1872, a matter of importance arose. The sum of £200 referred to earlier was received from the Government "in compensation for a piece of land that was promised to the Jews some years since and given to another denomination."⁴⁰ This related to the land long ago granted at Church Hill (Kent Street). Macquarie Street now had some money, and at once decided that it should form the nucleus of a building fund. Levy, Vallentine and Raphael were appointed trustees of it on the same day as it was reported that the money had been invested in debentures. Apparently Raphael had the handling of them, for in January, 1873, the Board wrote to him asking him to pass them over to the trustees of the congregation.

Raphael's annual report as Treasurer (published in the *Australian Israelite* of 1st November, 1872) refers to the compensation moneys, the building fund, and the repairs which had been completed in July. He takes an optimistic view of the general financial situation, pointing out that "the funds of our Institution are in a more prosperous state than at any time heretofore, inasmuch as we have the sum of £117/14/5 to our credit." He also hopes for considerable donations over the Holy Day season.

At last there was a change among the executive officers. Raphael did not stand for re-election in September, 1872, presumably because he had just been elected to Parliament and found the demands on his time too great. I. L. Isaacs succeeded him, with Levy still as President. The new Board was Philip Hart, Sidney Cohen, Myer Brodziak and Simeon J. Cohen. The same auditors were chosen. Apparently this election excited a little more interest than usual, for there were 31 men present at the general meeting. Levy was in his accustomed place as Chasan Torah, his colleague for this year being Sidney Cohen, perhaps in honour of his first appearance on the Board. A well-deserved tribute was paid to the secretary, Lewis Lipman, not only for his years of work as a paid official, but for "past services performed for the congregation for years previous to his receipt of the small salary now drawn by

him and extra services still performed by him beyond his duty as Secretary." The state of the records on which this paper is based is the best indication of his worth. The minutes are very well written, for the most part clearly expressed and ample. His letter book, despite the ravages of time, is perfectly legible, and his collection of inward correspondence, though now incomplete, is excellently preserved. It is a pity that the treasurers were not as careful in keeping their records for posterity as was the secretary. Almost no financial information is now extant.

Just before the elections, Levy and Raphael were asked to convey the burial ground to the trustees of the congregation. Despite several requests, they refused, and the congregation in fact never owned the cemetery. It remained the property of Levy and Raphael until the latter's death in 1879, when Levy, as the surviving joint tenant, became the sole owner. Its history, after Levy's own death in 1885, need not concern us here, except that we may record that the graves are still cared for under the guidance of the Jewish Cemetery Trust.¹¹

With the passing of the High Festivals, the congregation could settle down to a consideration of the new code of laws, which was ready in November, 1872. Several general meetings were occupied with them, and they were eventually completed in early February. The details may be omitted. There was much discussion, but very little amendment.

Then, all of a sudden, at the meeting called on 2nd March for formal adoption of the whole code, Brodziak moved and Emanuel Phillips seconded "That whereas the revised laws are objectionable to the meeting, that the existing laws are quite sufficient for the Institution." This was put as an amendment to the motion that the laws have effect from the 1st September next. The minutes say "The amendment and proposition were put and the former was carried." It would seem that all the work was wasted and that the congregation would carry on as before.

Brodziak by now had resigned from the Board, but it is clear from his letter of resignation that this was due to purely business reasons and had nothing to do with any dissatisfaction over the proposed rules. Two meetings

called to choose a successor lapsed. Eventually Emanuel Phillips was elected.

While the members were still busy thinking over the laws, Vallentine reported to the Board in February, 1873, that all was not well with the choir. There were not sufficient boys (despite a gift to them of £20 in the preceding July), and the choir may have to be abandoned. However, he and the minister made special efforts, and the vacancies were filled. At the Board meeting, when this good news was reported, the Board found their memories suddenly jerked back to the early years of their history. The Registrar-General had just discovered that Rev. Joseph Emanuel Myers was no longer their minister. They hastened to inform him officially of that fact. The April meeting considered a letter from Rev. A. B. Davis of York Street, who was then forming a Sydney branch of the Anglo-Jewish Association. In its reply, the Board said that it felt this was not a congregational matter, though its "members may have individually every wish to assist you in so laudable an undertaking."⁴²

The time when those peaceful affairs occupied most attention was now passing. Internal disputes were about to become frequent, and from this time, early 1873, may be dated the decline of the congregation. In some respects controversy may be a sign of vigorous life, but my impression of the records is that by now unity and energy were necessary rather than disagreement if the Synagogue was to be preserved. The first matter which led to a deterioration of the feeling of unity concerned the building itself. In parenthesis one may here mention that for some time past York Street had been taking action with a view to expansion. The site of the present Great Synagogue had been bought, and a successful building fund opened.⁴³ Their future was clearly bright, and could not be disregarded by those anxious for the future of Macquarie Street as an independent congregation.

Early in 1872 the lease of the building expired. Levy, on behalf of the owners, David Cohen & Co., expressed his willingness in a letter of 12th March, 1872, to grant a further lease for thirty years, subject to alterations being made. As these would have cost £1,000, and were far beyond the resources available, nothing was done, and the congregation continued as tenants under the old lease. Outright purchase of the building was also suggested, ten

years' terms being offered. This latter point does not appear to have been discussed by the Board. In March, 1873, another approach was made to Levy. His reply was not very clear, and a general meeting adjourned to enable more definite details to be reported. Strangely enough, nothing happened until December, when the Board decided that the time had come for action. A deputation was appointed to wait upon Levy. There was considerable further delay before Levy agreed to grant a lease. In his letter of 30th June, 1874, he accepted the draft submitted, but added one proviso—that Raphael must not be President or Treasurer during the term of the lease. Levy had resigned as President in March in circumstances that will be mentioned later, but which do not appear to have concerned Raphael; and Raphael had ceased to be Treasurer in the preceding September. I do not know what caused Levy to insert this condition, but not unnaturally the Board refused to accept it on the ground that "they cannot disfranchise any of their members nor can they bind the general body not to elect any one of their members." It seems that nothing was ever arranged and that the congregation remained as tenants holding over under the original lease.

Negotiations for the lease occupied rather more than two years. During that time various things happened to increase the tension within the congregation. The building fund, the burial ground and the President's dispute with the minister, which led to his resignation, were the most important. First in time came the building fund. This, it will be remembered, had been inaugurated in 1872, the first, and (as it turned out) almost the only,⁴⁴ moneys paid into it being the £200 compensation. A request to the special trustees of this fund in January, 1873, that it should be handed to the regular trustees of the congregation met with no response, and in April the Board resolved to ask if any money had been received. This stung both Levy and Vallentine into somewhat tart replies, pointing out that Raphael still had the two debentures. All was, of course, settled in a very short time, but people's tempers were rather frayed by then and they were not at all disposed to peace when difficulties arose over the cemetery in June. A deputation was appointed to wait upon Levy and Raphael, owners of the ground, to urge them to convey it to the trustees of the congregation. The leader of the

deputation, Solomon Meyer, who was not yet a member of the Board, reported to a general meeting that Raphael was willing to comply only to the extent that he would convey it for the benefit of the community as a whole, not for any one congregation. The following day the deputation saw Levy and told him of Raphael's decision. Levy pointed out that he had "given" the land to Macquarie Street, and that, in his view, neither he nor Raphael had power to alter the terms of the gift. The meeting passed an angry resolution expressing their regret, and referring to the £300 the congregation had spent on the ground. The sting was in the tail—the committee being instructed "to use every available means to secure to the congregation the burial ground in question." The next step, taken in early July, was a request to Levy to take legal proceedings to compel Raphael to convey the land. Legal technicalities prevented him from being the moving party in any such suit, so I. L. Isaacs, then Treasurer, was appointed to do so. By October, Raphael was still obdurate, and the Board decided not to allow any burials in the cemetery. This state of affairs can scarcely have lasted long, but there is no record of any decision being reached. The whole matter dropped. Raphael never conveyed the land, and by his will attempted to give effect to his wishes.⁴⁵ This was, however, beyond his powers. There has already been reference to its subsequent history, and we may now leave the matter with the reflection that this sorry controversy had made the congregation even more uncomfortable.

As can be imagined, the elections at the end of September, 1873, attracted a little more attention than usual. Levy and Raphael both stood for President, and Levy was selected. I. L. Isaacs headed the poll for Treasurer, while fifteen men contested the four vacancies on the Board. Sidney Cohen, Philip Hart and S. J. Cohen were re-elected, and Solomon Meyer, a newcomer to the affairs of the congregation, filled the other place. There was even a contest for the auditorships, W. B. Lee and Nathan Simmons being chosen. The new Board's first task was to appoint I. L. Isaacs as Chasan Torah and L. W. Levy as Chasan Bereshith. It could then settle down to discuss a funeral which had taken place without permission, and to reprimand the beadle for his part in the affair. At the same meeting it extended thanks to Simeon Phillips for assisting at Services over the New Year.

The next excitement, which came while tempers were still simmering over the burial ground controversy, was the resignation of Rev. Solomon Phillips owing to his continued ill-health. In his letter of 29th October, 1873, he offered to continue his duties until a successor could be found, and requested a retiring allowance. Advertisements were published in the *Australian Israelite* of 21st and 28th November, 1873, and by January, 1874, the Board had completed sifting the applicants. A general meeting in that month carried unanimously a resolution expressing its "earnest hope that through the blessing of the Almighty Mr. Phillips' health may soon be restored and that he may live long to enjoy the esteem of the concourse of his connections and friends." In passing, one may mention that he died in Melbourne in 1877.

The advertisement insisted that the new minister must be "competent to lecture"—a matter which brought the appointment into the correspondence columns of the *Australian Israelite*. The discussion started with some comments by that paper's Sydney correspondent, dated 9th December.

The reverend gentleman who is about retiring from office, is held in high esteem by his congregants; his extreme urbanity of manner and unassuming disposition proving strong recommendations to their regard. As a reader Mr. Phillips ranks high, but it was rarely that he travelled out of this particular sphere, to occupy the pulpit and deliver lectures or sermons to his flock. The regular Saturday discourse is now so important an ingredient in an advanced and advancing Synagogue programme, that I trust the Macquarie Street Board will endeavour to secure a gentleman, as their minister, whose talents will enable him to supply so serious a want in their usual Sabbath Service.

In considering this advice, one should recall the members' decision of 26th January, 1868, not to require a weekly address. This may, of course, have been induced by the apparent inability of Rev. Solomon Phillips to preach regularly. A reply to the correspondent, signed by "A Member of the Macquarie Street Synagogue," appeared on 2nd January, 1874, and contains a notable tribute to the retiring minister as well as some sidelights on the Synagogue itself.

Sir — In your issue of 19th instant, an occasional correspondent from New South Wales refers to the retirement of the Rev. S. Phillips from the ministry of the Macquarie Street Synagogue.

Your readers will no doubt be gratified to hear that Mr. Phillips "is held in high esteem by his congregants." I am not aware, however, that the rev. gentleman owes the regard of his congregation

to his "extreme urbanity of manner and unassuming disposition" to which your correspondent attributes their respect and esteem. It may be more gratifying and more just to say that after a term of office extending over nearly fifteen years without interruption, Mr. Phillips has succeeded, by ability, moral example and a true sense of his high and responsible duties, to carry with him the love and regard of his congregation:

The general regret with which his resignation has been received will be sufficient proof that the lukewarm sentiments of your correspondent do not express the feelings of the congregation Mr. Phillips has so long and worthily represented.

Your correspondent also refers to the fact that our minister seldom lectures. I understand, however, that Mr. Phillips was not engaged as a lecturer, nor can our Synagogue boast that modern adornment, a pulpit: I have heard Mr. Phillips preach on our great days with force and sincerity, and, above all, his sermons are entirely free from personalities.

Your correspondent, Sir, trusts that the Macquarie Street Board of Management will secure a gentleman whose talents will supply them with so serious a want in their Sabbath Service, viz: a lecturer. I will go further than your correspondent, and hope and trust the Board will secure a gentleman so able, so conscientious and in every way so eminently suited to the duties of the sacred office as our worthy and respected Mr. Phillips.

Applications had been received from four gentlemen. That of Rev. Israel Morris Goldreich, of Ballarat, had found most favour with the Board, and the January general meeting authorised the President to negotiate with him. These discussions took some time, and there was a further delay because the Ballarat congregation did not want to lose his services suddenly. Rev. Solomon Phillips agreed to postpone his retirement until his successor could arrive—estimated to be about 1st May, 1874. The Jewish public, not only Macquarie Street members, desired to recognise his services, and on 14th March a meeting was held at York Street, with I. L. Isaacs in the chair, to consider what could best be done. There is a report in the *Australian Israelite* of the following week, but after that the movement received no mention in the press. Though a resolution was passed forming a committee to arrange a testimonial, it is not certain that anything was ever presented.

At about this time the congregation had suffered another serious shock—the resignation of the President. Towards the end of February there had been an unpleasant incident in public between the President and the retiring minister. Levy, in his letter of resignation, dated 20th March, complained that he had been publicly insulted in Synagogue and that no steps had been taken to obtain an

explanation from the minister. He therefore felt that he had lost the confidence of the Board and must resign his position. No more unfortunate time could have been found for this dispute. A beloved minister was about to retire after fifteen years' devoted service—the scene had, in fact, taken place while he continued to serve only out of deference to the congregation's convenience. An efficient and respected President who had held his office for twelve years had taken offence. No good purpose would be served by an attempt here to judge the rights and wrongs, even if the evidence were available.

I. L. Isaacs, as Treasurer, presided over a special committee meeting on 28th March to consider the matter. Efforts, of course, were made to induce Levy to stay in office. A conciliatory letter was sent by the Board, but it was soon clear that the resignation must be accepted. A general meeting on 15th April formally agreed and at the same time accepted the resignation of S. J. Cohen from the Board. A number of Levy's admirers requisitioned a meeting in order to "recognise the services of L. W. Levy Esq., as President,"⁴⁶ but no such action was ever taken, despite some complaints about the Board's failure to do so. A further general meeting called to elect a president unanimously chose Levy. The vacancy on the committee went to G. Brooksteyn. As might have been expected, Levy declined the honour, but by the end of April, when his refusal was made known, the Board was busily occupied with arrangements for the induction of the new minister. Isaacs, as Treasurer, occupied the chair at meetings, and the congregation was without a President for some months.

Disappointments and difficulties now seemed to be the lot of the Synagogue. The choir had had to be abandoned owing to lack of choristers,⁴⁷ a member had created a disturbance in Synagogue one Sabbath,⁴⁸ a committeeman had resigned in irritation when a suggestion of his had not been accepted,⁴⁹ and the meetings still lapsed for want of attendance. The one bright spot was the arrival of Rev. I. M. Goldreich, and it was hoped that peace would now be restored. The induction was fixed for 10th May. The sub-committee appointed to make arrangements consisted of Vallentine, Myer Brodziak and (it is interesting to note) Rev. A. B. Davis of York Street. By now, of course, rivalry between the two congregations had long ceased.

There had been co-operation on more than one occasion, and, as we have already said, there had always been good relations between the ministers, who had worked amicably together in recent months on the newly established Sydney Beth Din—as they were also to do in the future while the Beth Din continued.⁵⁰

The installation was something in the nature of a festival. The new minister made a good impression, and his sermon attracted so much attention that it was resolved to publish an account of the proceedings as a pamphlet. Copies were sent to all the members and to those who had assisted at the ceremony. It was published in Melbourne at the office of the *Australian Israelite*, neatly bound in mauve paper. Thanks were recorded to all who had helped, including Rev. A. B. Davis and Lewis Moss (who had played the harmonium), and to those who had given donations. Macquarie Street was soon able to return the compliment Rev. A. B. Davis had paid it by officiating at the induction. On 26th January, 1875, the foundation stones of the central arches of the Great Synagogue were laid. Rev. I. M. Goldreich assisted in the Service.⁵¹

Perhaps the hopes expressed by Rev. A. B. Davis when he inducted Rev. I. M. Goldreich the previous May were now being realised. In the peroration of his powerful address, he had said :—

My dear brethren, although I have lived and laboured among you for nearly twelve years, this is the first time that I have taken part in any Service in this Synagogue. I hope it is Oth L'Tovah, an augury for good, the commencement of a new and happier era in our relations. If it be necessary that there should be two synagogues in this city—though I question it—if it be deemed requisite, that two separate houses of Jewish worship should be maintained, I trust that all minor differences will be set aside—that envy and jealousy (if ever such existed) will be merged in one common desire and effort to work and combine together for the common good of all, so that we might be as ever, Goy Echad Ba'Aretz, one united nation in the midst of the earth. Amen.

The new minister's first request was for permission to use the Synagogue to give religious instruction to children. The Board agreed at once, as it was bound to do since its advertisements had informed applicants that "considerable emoluments" could be anticipated from teaching. It is a matter for comment that this is the first and only reference in surviving records to the matter of Jewish education. For part of the congregation's history there was a Jewish day school—actually flourishing in 1874—and much educa-

tion was at that time parental. None the less it is strange that the Synagogue itself seems to have made no effort in that direction.

In June the Board was happy to accept a bequest of £50 from the estate of Maurice Alexander, a staunch supporter of York Street and a member of its Board. His action is one more pointer to the decrease in tension between the two congregations. At the same meeting it was resolved to revise seat rentals to provide for three classes of seats priced at 4 guineas, 3 guineas and 2 guineas a year respectively.

September was election month. A letter from L. W. Levy was read indicating that he was not prepared to accept any office. Raphael and Myer Brodziak contested the presidency, and the voting was equal. The retiring Treasurer, Isaacs, who was in the chair, gave his casting vote to Raphael. Brodziak was elected Treasurer from among three candidates. The four posts on the Board, for which nine men stood, went to Lewis Cohen, Sidney Cohen, David Moses and G. Brooksteyn, two of them being newcomers to the Board. W. B. Lee and Alfred Brooksteyn were the new auditors. Raphael and Brodziak were appointed Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith respectively. Both declined, however, and G. Brooksteyn and H. Phillips took their places.

The year opened with the unpleasant news that Levy, acting as attorney for Mrs. Samuel Cohen and David Cohen, then living in London, had withdrawn their support from the Synagogue. On the other hand, Abraham Cohen, a brother of Samuel Cohen, wrote from Tamworth in October that despite this decision he was "very anxious for the sake of my departed brother that the Shool should be still carried on." He himself had been a generous donor from the early days,⁵² and was to remain so in the future. He and his kinsman, George Cohen of Gunnedah, paid for the redecoration of the Synagogue as late as December, 1875.

One is inclined to suspect that Levy's action was due to his disapproval of the election of Raphael as President, but whatever the motive the result was certainly serious. Early in November an unnamed member of the Board moved:—

That in consequence of some of the principal subscribers having withdrawn their usual support from the Institution, a general meeting be called to devise the best mode for providing means for the carry-

ing on of the Synagogue or failing that to amalgamate with the York Street congregation.

This is the first recorded suggestion of amalgamation—which, of course, does not prove that it had never been thought of earlier. The *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir* ascribes the idea of unity to Levy, and this may well be the case. The authors of that book would have had access to people who could remember the events of those days. It must, however, be noted that when this motion was moved Levy was not in office. There was much discussion at the meeting, in the course of which the Treasurer pointed out that additional revenue must be found if the Synagogue was to survive. Nothing more was said of amalgamation. The motion was never put, and at an adjourned meeting on 15th November cuts in expenditure were considered. The main item of expense was the minister's salary, and it naturally came under fire first. The Board was empowered "to treat with the minister as to his resigning the position he now holds." Rev. I. M. Goldreich was invited by the Board to attend a general meeting on 22nd November, and he addressed to this gathering what the minutes describe as "a forcible and distressing appeal." After several propositions had been put, there was a further week's delay. At the end of the week Vallentine's suggestion was approved—that the minister be retained for twelve months, after which the position would be reviewed. When the subject came up again in December, 1875, the then Treasurer (no president being in office) engaged Mr. Goldreich on his same salary from month to month. Meanwhile the financial position did not improve, and there were other expenses, such as Rev. Solomon Phillips' insurance premiums⁵³ and repairs to the burial ground, the latter resulting from a bush fire which had damaged the fences.⁵⁴ On one occasion during the year a special fund had to be hastily raised for the repair of the cemetery.⁵⁵

Lack of attendance at committee meetings was again causing concern, two members in particular being at fault. Despite a discussion on the subject, the next meeting lapsed for want of a quorum. Eventually the seats of David Moses and Sidney Cohen were declared vacant. At the same meeting, in May, 1875, Lipman resigned as head of the Kobronim responsible for funerals. The meeting called to fill the vacancies on the Board lapsed, and nothing happened till the annual elections. Apart from arrange-

ments for the High Festivals, only one matter was discussed by the Board between May and September—and that was deferred to the next general meeting. The congregation was asked from England to join in a testimonial to Sir Moses Montefiore. The Board found itself unable to reach a decision, and left the matter to the members. If anything was ever done, no record survives. The next general meeting lapsed, and on the following occasion only election business was transacted.



DAVID MITCHELL.

Nominations were made on 14th September. The actual election was set for 26th September, but before that item on the agenda was reached a letter was read from S. J. Cohen claiming that the nomination meeting had been invalid owing to the absence of a quorum. Contrary to Lipman's usual practice, he did not record the names of those present on that occasion, so that Cohen may well have been right. Raphael certainly thought so, but the meeting resolved to proceed to election. Myer Brodziak was elected President, Raphael Treasurer, and Vallentine, Henry Phillips, Lewis Cohen and S. J. Cohen were chosen

as the Board. The auditors were Simeon Phillips and Alfred Brooksteyn. The old Board's last act was to choose as Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith Abraham Friedman and Lewis Austin. Both, however, declined, so that the President and Treasurer acted in their stead.

Conditions had become chaotic. The President resigned after a month in office, and Vallentine's and S. J. Cohen's letters of resignation came in at the same time. The result was a constitutional quarrel based on the alleged invalidity of the original nomination meeting. We need not follow the arguments which occupied a general meeting late in October. Before it was settled, Lewis Cohen had also resigned. Raphael meanwhile took charge as Treasurer. Board meetings, as one might expect, failed to draw the requisite attendance. It was not until July, 1876, that an extraordinary election could be held, although many serious problems arose in the interval.

The first was the congregation's inability to continue paying the insurance premiums for Rev. Solomon Phillips, then living in retirement in Melbourne. Eventually Raphael paid the current account out of his own pocket, and one is left with the impression that the former minister had to do so himself for the short period of life that was left him after that.⁵⁶ Then there was the problem of financing the present minister's engagement, which, we have seen, was resolved by a temporary expedient only. In April there was a serious dispute between him and the beadle, Abraham Lazarus. Raphael promptly suspended the beadle, who expressed his regret at a general meeting, which reinstated him in office.

In early June another bombshell burst upon the congregation—the resignation of the minister. In his letter, he explained that he had been asked to return to his old Synagogue at Ballarat. Plainly he was anxious to accept, but desired the concurrence of his present congregation before doing so. The general meeting could not come to a decision at first, but after ten days' thought finally accepted the inevitable and resolved to present Mr. Goldreich with £50 as a testimonial to his good behaviour. The funds of the Synagogue would not stand the strain, so that a private subscription had to be opened.

The congregation was now in serious difficulties. It had very little money, an incomplete Board and no minister. The future Great Synagogue was progressing rapidly, and

would obviously be large enough for the whole community. This must have worked in Macquarie Street minds, though the records are still silent on the subject of unity. In addition to all this, there were personal differences among the members. Levy still took no part in any deliberations, though he retained his membership of the Synagogue. All in all, especially after considering the recent constitutional difficulties, one can only sympathise with Goldreich, who said that he returned to Ballarat because he found the Macquarie Street congregation "too quarrelsome."

The next resignation was that of Raphael, who told the general meeting which considered the minister's departure that he could no longer continue in office. New elections were essential, and eventually everyone realised it. A special meeting on 2nd July, attended by only 17 members, elected David Mitchell as President, and prevailed upon Raphael to remain as Treasurer. H. R. Reuben, M. Asher and David Moses were elected to fill the three vacancies on the Board for the rest of the year. The meeting then accorded a vote of thanks to Raphael "for his conduct for the past nine months as Presiding Officer of the congregation."

Despite recent reverses, some members were still optimistic, and the Board at once decided to advertise for a new minister. At least one application was received. The Board recommended that the applicant be engaged as temporary Reader from 1st August. A general meeting towards the end of July rejected the recommendation, which was promptly followed by Mitchell's resignation as President. It is clear, however, that the applicant, D. H. Harris, did act as Reader. There are several letters to him still extant dealing with his duties. In fact, the last letter of all is addressed to him, informing him that the Synagogue would close.⁵⁷ Once more Raphael stepped in as Presiding Officer. Very shortly he was left alone. Moses, Asher and Rheuben resigned from the Board early in August. A committee meeting should have been held in September, but this was clearly impossible. The regular annual elections took place at the usual time.

There was one nomination for President—L. W. Levy. His guiding hand had been sadly missed, but the faithful servant of the congregation had come back in its last hours, too late to save the Synagogue from extinction. Levy

Mandelson was chosen as Treasurer. The new Board were G. Brooksteyn, David Mitchell, David Moses and Henry Phillips. It is typical of the conditions then existing that no one is recorded as Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith. Alfred Brooksteyn and Simeon Phillips became auditors.

Before the meeting began, the indefatigable Secretary, Lewis Lipman, tendered his resignation. The minutes, written by S. L. Samson, who offered himself temporarily as Honorary Secretary, do not give the reason. Lipman was, however, very soon induced to withdraw, and he stayed on until the end.

Disputes still continued. A number of members contended that the elections of committeemen and auditors were invalid on the ground that someone had put in three ballot papers. There was a vigorous discussion, which ended in the elections being declared void. A Board member resigned from the Synagogue at once. New elections took place on 29th October, 1876. David Mitchell, David Moses, M. Asher and S. J. Cohen were elected to the Board.⁵⁸ Simeon Phillips and B. Rittenberg were the last auditors for the congregation. Within a week Mitchell resigned. A general meeting called to fill the vacancy had no quorum; neither did the December Board meeting. January, 1877, opened with the discovery that there was no business for the Board to transact.

A printed circular letter dated 12th February, 1877, signed by Lipman as Secretary, survives in the Marks collection in the Mitchell Library :—

I am directed to inform you that in consequence of the departure of L. W. Levy Esq., I have to request your attendance at the Chambers, Macquarie Street, on Sunday next at 10 o'clock prompt to ascertain whether the Synagogue is to be kept on or otherwise.

On 18th February, 1877, a general meeting, presided over by Levy, with fourteen members present, heard Levy give his reasons for feeling that the end had come. It was proposed by David Moses, seconded by Simeon J. Cohen and carried, "That in consequence of the want of funds and paucity of attendance this Synagogue be closed."⁵⁹

NOTES.

1. "The Reasons for the Macquarie Street Secession" : *Journal*, Vol. 3, p. 6.
2. I have elsewhere stated that the earliest minutes of the Synagogue are missing (*Journal*, Vol. 3, p. 265). This is incorrect. They are, with other Macquarie Street records, in the possession of the Great Synagogue.
3. The advertisement appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24th June, 1859.
4. The number of people who will be mentioned in the course of this paper makes it impossible to supply any biographical details in the notes.
5. With the object of shortening the notes, page or date references to the Minutes are omitted wherever the text can contain the information.
6. *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 9; a photograph of the old building faces p. 4. See also *Australian Dictionary of Dates* (J. H. Heaton, Sydney, 1879), p. 38.
7. When the Synagogue ceased activity the building stood empty for a while. In 1878 it was sold to Sydney Burdekin, who demolished it and used the land for extensions to Burdekin House (*Truth*, 1st March, 1925. See an article by "Old Chum" in Mitchell Library Newspaper Cuttings, Vol. 166, p. 15, col. 1).
8. *Journal*, Vol. 1, p. 319. A photograph, taken from Fowles : *Sydney in 1848* is at p. 320.
9. The photograph in the *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir* shows the date 1835.
10. *Journal*, Vol. 3, pp. 323-4.
11. Macquarie Street Minutes, 1859-62, p. 21.
12. I am indebted to the Chief Judge in Equity, Mr. Justice Roper, and the Deputy Registrar in Equity, Mr. R. T. C. Storey, for permission to search the records of the Court. Unfortunately it has not been possible to trace the Court papers.
13. *Journal*, Vol. 1, p. 46.
14. *Journal*, Vol. 2, p. 36.
15. *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 9.
16. See a letter from L. W. Levy, dated 21st August, 1862, preserved with the Macquarie Street records at the Great Synagogue.
17. Lipman to Levy, 15th September, 1862.
18. The object of this decision, not clearly expressed in the Minutes, is to convey that Lechah Dodi, the Sabbath hymn, should not be included, or, in other words, Kabbalath Shabbath should commence only with Psalm 92—the other Psalms and the hymn usually sung being excluded. The Board's decision reflects the normal practice.
19. *Journal*, Vol. 3, pp. 329 ff.
20. Macquarie Street Letter Book (hereinafter cited as Letter Book), p. 21.
21. Macquarie Street Minutes, 1862-1877, pp. 62-3, 68, 89; Letter Book, p. 102.
22. Letter Book, p. 106.
23. *Journal*, Vol. 2, p. 489.
- 23a. Minutes, 1862-77, p. 54.

24. *Ibid*, pp. 40, 46, 85, 88.
25. Letter Book, p. 113.
26. *Ibid*, p. 58.
27. *Ibid*, p. 77.
28. *Ibid*, p. 80.
29. The text is based upon the Minute Book. A letter from Lipman to the Society (Letter Book, p. 315) says that that congregation cannot give a donation, as it is "contrary to the constitution."
30. Jacob Cohen is not mentioned in our paper on "Palestine Appeals in the 'Fifties and 'Sixties" (*Journal*, Vol. 3, Part 7), but the Minutes seem to be clear that Cohen was then in Sydney.
31. From an undated press cutting in the Marks collection, Mitchell Library, Sydney.
32. Letter Book, p. 151.
33. Minutes, 1862-77, p. 132.
34. *Ibid*, p. 164.
35. *Ibid*, p. 168.
36. Letter Book, p. 207.
37. Minutes, 1862-77, pp. 199, 204.
38. *Ibid*, p. 200.
39. *Ibid*, p. 204.
40. Letter Book, p. 207.
41. A short history of the cemetery, prepared for the Great Synagogue by its honorary solicitors, may be of interest here, even though in part it repeats what has been said in the text.

In 1867 the late J. G. Raphael and the late L. W. Levy purchased as Joint Tenants certain land at Rookwood of which the subject property forms part, and later in the same year the land was brought under the provisions of the Real Property Act and they were registered as Joint Proprietors.

In February 1869 a notice was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* which was headed as follows:—

"To the Members of the Hebrew Community, Macquarie Street
Synagogue.

Freehold Burial Ground, Haslem's Creek."

Under this heading was set out a schedule of charges for interment "to Members of the abovenamed Synagogue." This notice appeared over the name of "J. G. Raphael, Treasurer, February 1869."

In 1878 various lots adjoining the cemetery land were transferred by J. G. Raphael and L. W. Levy, leaving the cemetery land the only land remaining in the relevant Certificate of Title.

In 1879 J. G. Raphael died and in his will he purported to devise the cemetery land "unto the Presidents of the various Jewish Synagogues in Sydney and their heirs and successors for ever in trust for a Public burying place for persons dying professing the Hebrew Faith and subject to the terms and conditions published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in the month of February 1869."

In 1879 L. W. Levy, the surviving Joint Tenant of the cemetery land, was registered on the relevant Certificate of Title as sole Registered Proprietor.

In 1885 the said L. W. Levy died and probate of his last will was granted to George Judah Cohen and Benjamin Wolfe Levy with leave reserved to Neville David Cohen to come in and prove. By

this will the Testator appointed the said G. J. Cohen and B. W. Levy and N. D. Cohen Trustees, and after making a huge number of pecuniary bequests he directed his Trustees to divide the residue of his property between his children. There is no reference in the will in any way whatsoever to the cemetery land.

In 1898 the said G. J. Cohen and B. W. Levy and N. D. Cohen were registered as proprietors of the cemetery land by transmission.

In 1898 the said Trustees agreed to transfer the cemetery land to the Great Synagogue Trustees subject to the condition that Mrs. J. G. Raphael and the members of her family should have at all time free access to the ground, and be exempt from burial fees and charges. This agreement was incorporated in a minute of the Board of Management of the Great Synagogue dated 17th April, 1898.

Accordingly in 1898 the cemetery land was transferred by the said Trustees to G. J. Cohen, L. M. Phillips and M. Gotthelf without any caveat or encumbrance being notified on the Certificate of Title.

In 1931 the cemetery land was vested in the Great Synagogue pursuant to Section 4 of the Great Synagogue Act, 1931.

42. Letter Book, p. 237.

43. *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 12.

44. See a letter from Vallentine to the Secretary, 1st May, 1873.

45. *Journal*, Vol. 1, p. 369.

46. Requisition dated 17th April, 1874. The signatories were Solomon Meyer, B. Vallentine, D. Mitchell, Sidney Cohen, B. W. Hyman, S. Landauer and (?) J. B. Mandelson.

47. Minutes, 1862-77, p. 241.

48. *Ibid*, p. 242.

49. *Ibid*, p. 250.

50. *Journal*, Vol. 2, p. 490. (One other avenue of co-operation was the teaching by Rev. S. Phillips of Barmitzvalh boys of the York Street congregation. Reference to this fact was made during the discussion on the paper.)

51. *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 14.

52. See, for instance, Letter Book, 14th November, 1862.

53. Minutes, 1862-77, pp. 272, 275, 292.

54. *Ibid*, pp. 279, 293.

55. *Ibid*, p. 280.

56. *Ibid*, p. 292, and Letter Book, p. 326.

57. Letter Book, p. 358.

58. Simeon J. Cohen, a step-brother of P. J. Cohen, had the distinction of being the only man to serve on the first and last Boards.

59. This minute makes it clear that the *Great Synagogue Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 14, is wrong in saying that after the sale of the York Street premises the two congregations "worshipped together." The York Street annual report dated August, 1877, states: "Temporary arrangements have been completed for holding Divine Service at the Macquarie Street Synagogue—the Trustees having kindly granted the use of that edifice for the purpose—until the consecration of the Great Synagogue." By this time the Macquarie Street congregation had been dead for six months, but the building was not disposed of until 1878. (See note 7.)