**TABERNACLE,** as a general term in architecture, a species of niche or recess in which an image may be placed.· In Norman work there are but few remains, and these generally over door­ways. They are shallow and comparatively plain, and the figures are often only in low relief, and not detached statues. In Early English work they are deeper, and instead of simple arches there is often a canopy over the figure, which was placed on a small, low pedestal. Later in the style the heads of the tabernacles became cusped, either as trefoils ’or cinquefoils, and they are often placed in pairs side by side, or in ranges, as at Wells cathedral. Decorated tabernacles are still deeper and more ornamented, the heads are sometimes richly cusped and surmounted with crocheted gables, as at York, or with projecting canopies, very much like the arcade at Lichfield. In this case the under side of the canopy is carved to imitate groined ribs, and the figures stand either on high pedestals, or on corbels. Perpendicular tabernacles possess much the same features, but the work is generally more elaborate (sec Corbel, Canopy, Niche, &c.). The word tabernacle is also often used for the receptacle for relics, which was often made in the form of a small house or church (see Shrine). The term “ tabernacle work ” is given, in architecture, to the richly sculptured tracery, similar to that employed on the upper part of a tabernacle, decorated with canopied niches which contain statues. The Eleanor crosses in England are enriched with tabernacle work over the niches, as also the chapels of Bishops Nicholas West (1461-1533), and John Alcock (1430-1500) in Ely cathedral, both dating from the beginning of the 16th century.

**TABERNACLES, FEAST OF,** the autumn festival of the Israelites, beginning on the 15th of Tishri and celebrated by residing for the seven succeeding days in rustic booths (Heb. *Sukkoth,* in the Vulgate *Tabernacula,* whence the English name of the feast). Among the Hebrews it was the third and chief of the three annual pilgrimage festivals connected respectively with the harvesting of the barley (Passover), of wheat (Pentecost), and of the vine (Tabernacles). Hence it is referred to as “ the Feast ” *par excellence* (Heb. *Hehag,* cf. Arab. *Hajj)* even as late as 2 Chron. vii. 9. Being of the nature of a pilgrimage feast the booths were temporary erections for the accommodation of the pilgrims. But in early Jewish tradition, in both Yahvist and Elohist sources of the Pentateuch (Exod. xxxiv. 22, xxiii. 16) it is called simply the Harvest Feast (A.V. “ Feast of Ingather­ing ”) and is to be observed “ at the end of the year,” *i.e.* of the agricultural year. In Deut. xvi. 13 seq., it is termed the Feast of Tabernacles and is to be kept seven days after the produce of the threshing-floor and winepress has been gathered in. In the Holiness Code (Lev. xxiii. 39) it is to be kept for seven days after the first, the first of which is to be “ a sabbath,” and the eighth “a sabbath” (possibly originally a lunar quarter- day): branches of four trees are to be taken. In the Priestly Code (Lev. xxiii. 33seq.; Num. xxix. 12-38) the first and eighth day are to be days of holy assembly, and in the latter passage elaborate details are given of the sacrifices to be presented, including a series of bullocks, thirteen on the first day, twelve on the next, and so on down to seven on the seventh day. Only one is to be sacrificed on the concluding feast (Heb. *Azereth)* of the eighth day.

The higher criticism sees, in these successive enactments of the various codes included in the Pentateuch (*q.v.*), a develop­ment in the character of the festival. At first held at any of the local shrines, such as Gilgal, Bethel, Shiloh, as well as Jerusalem, it was held at an indefinite date during the harvest in the fall of the year. Then with the concentration of the cultus at Jerusalem represented by Deuteronomy, the celebra­tion was restricted to the Judean capital, and its duration fixed at seven days, though its date was still left indeterminate. This was fixed in the Priestly Code at the 15th of the seventh month, and an eighth day of solemn assembly added after the return from the exile.

Against this hypothetical reconstruction is the fact that Solomon appears to have selected the occasion of the feast for the dedication of the temple, and that it lasted, even in his time, seven days (1 Kings viii. 2, 65). Jeroboam arranged for a similar feast in the northern kingdom on the 15th day of the eighth month, “ like unto the feast in Judah” *(ibid.* xii. 32). The determination of a fixed date must therefore have been much earlier than Deuteronomy or the alleged period of the Priestly Code. A pilgrimage feast must be fixed in date to ensure the simultaneous presence of the pilgrims. There are, besides, seeming references to the feast in the early prophets, as Hosea xii. 9, Amos v. 21, as well as in Isaiah ix. 2 (Heb.). The concluding feast does not seem to refer to tabernacles *per se,* but to be distinct from it, as is shown by the break in the descending series of the sacrifices of bullocks as given in Numbers. In Jewish practice the concluding feast is not held in booths, and Maimonides *(Moreh,* iii. 42) suggests that its object was to give opportunity for final proceedings in assembly halls.

The existence, therefore, of much variation in the practice of the festival in historic times is scarcely proved by the seeming variations of the enactments concerning it in the Pentateuch. It is possible, however, that there may have been differences of custom in the carrying out of the feast. In Neh. xiii. 15 the trees whose branches were used for making the booths appear to differ from those mentioned in Lev. xxiii. 40, though in Jewish tradition the latter passage was taken to refer to the *Lulab,* or a combination of twigs of willow and myrtle, with a palm branch, which, together with a citron, arc held in the hand during processions in the synagogue. The Sadducees and Karaites did not carry these in their hand, but used them as decorations of the booths. In the second temple there was a water libation every morning of the festival, and on the evening of the first day the great golden candelabrum was lit up and the men danced a torch dance around it (Mishnah, *Sukkah,* v. 2-4). It is reported by Josephus that, when Alex­ander Jannaeus, in the year 95 b.c., was acting as high-priest in the temple on the Feast of Tabernacles, instead of pouring the water libation on the altar, according to the Pharisaic custom, he poured it at his feet, giving rise to a riot in which 6000 men are said to have lost their lives *(Ant.* xii., xiii., 5; Talmud, *Sukkah,* 48 b).

The festival is certainly an agricultural one, and is so termed in the Pentateuch. Whether it was derived from the Canaanites, who had similar festivals (Judges xxix. 27), is uncertain. All nations have similar harvest homes, especially with reference to the vintage feasts; as, for instance, the Athenian Oschophoria. The Syrians celebrated every three years a “ Booth Festival.” At the Hindu Festival of *Dasara,* which lasted nine days from the new moon of October, tents made of canvas or booths made of branches were erected in front of the temples. The Spartans had a nine days’ festival termed Carnea, during which they dwelt in pavilions and tents in memory of their old camp life (Athenaeus, iv. 19). The Feast of Tabernacles is one of the few Jewish festivals described in classical writers. Plutarch *(Symposium* iv., vi. 2) compares Tabernacles with the Bacchic rites. It was pre-eminently the period of exultation in ancient Jewish rite, and the Mishnah declares that “ He who has not seen the joy of the libations of Tabernacles has never in bis life witnessed joy.” So much importance was attributed to this festival that it was chosen as the occasion on which the Law should be recited during the sabbatical year (Deut. xxxi. 9-12), and the Messianic vision of Zechariah xiv. 16 sees the remnant of all the nations coming up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

In later Jewish custom the one-year cycle of reading of sections from the Pentateuch ends on the concluding day of Tabernacles, which is therefore known as the Rejoicing of the Law *(Simhat Torah).* The custom of dwelling, for part of the day at least, in booths, is still kept up by orthodox Jews, who have temporary huts covered with branches erected in their courtyards, and those who are not in possession of a house with a backyard often go to pathetic extremes in order to fulfil the law by making holes in roofs, across which branches are placed. (J. Ja.)