

PALESTINE

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*THE BRITISH PALESTINE COMMITTEE SEEKS TO RESET
THE ANCIENT GLORIES OF THE JEWISH NATION IN THE
FREEDOM OF A NEW BRITISH DOMINION IN PALESTINE.*

*"If he [Lord Beaconsfield] had freed the Holy Land, and restored the
Jews, as he might have done, instead of pottering about with Roumelia
and Afghanistan, he would have died Dictator."—THE SPECTATOR.*

The Future of Trans-Jordania

WE welcome the announcement that Mr. H. St. John Philby has been appointed by the Government of Palestine as Political Adviser to the Emir Abdullah in Trans-Jordania.

The position calls for qualities of no mean order, and will tax to the utmost the political sagacity and administrative ability which Mr. Philby is known to possess. We are confident that he will undertake his task in no narrow spirit, in view of the peculiar position occupied by Trans-Jordania and the immediate repercussion in that territory of events in the adjacent countries. Trans-Jordania is situated in the very centre of the Mandated territories of Syria, Palestine and Iraq, and has also, as its near neighbour, the Hedjaz.

The administration of Trans-Jordania as a separate administrative area under the Palestine Government for an experimental period was agreed upon during the Colonial Secretary's visit to Jerusalem at the end of March, 1921. The Emir Abdullah was given an opportunity of proving his capacity to inspire confidence in the local population, and to maintain order with the help of a few British advisers. The experiment has not turned out to be very successful,

and it would not be surprising if, as a result of the conversations which have recently taken place between the High Commissioner for Palestine and the Emir, a readjustment is decided upon.

There has hitherto been a tendency to ignore the fact that the River Jordan is not a military frontier between Trans-Jordania and Western Palestine, but at most an administrative boundary. It is not unlikely that the new arrangements will further emphasise the unity of the two parts of Palestine. The Government of Palestine, in spite of a few regrettable setbacks, has been comparatively successful in establishing law and order in Western Palestine. The worst of the Bedouin raiders have been rooted out and the Arab attackers of the Jewish colonies in May last have been punished. By contrast, the weakness of the methods hitherto adopted in Trans-Jordania is manifest, and an extension of Palestinian authority is clearly called for.

The recent remarkable articles in "The Times" on "The Mesopotamian Mystery" from the pen of a correspondent in Teheran show clearly that King Feisul's throne in Iraq is none too stable, and are scarcely calculated to encourage the advocates of Sherifian hegemony in a Greater Arabia. If King Feisul falls, the effect will be felt immediately by his brother Abdullah. The position of King Hussein is also by no means free from danger, and there is every likelihood that great political changes are in store for all these territories.

So far as Palestine is concerned, we have always held the view that a loyal and progressive population is the best guarantee of a permanent peace in that country, and that it is in British interests to promote the immigration of Jews into Palestine as rapidly as the country can absorb them. Quite apart from the pledges which have been given by the Government to the Jews in this regard, such a policy is the merest commonsense. What England needs above everything is a strong foothold in the Near East; a place where no matter what change may occur in the surrounding territories, she shall be able to uphold her prestige as the Power which can maintain order and administer justice. We need not repeat here the arguments based upon the proximity of Palestine to the Suez Canal, and the increasing importance of Palestine in this connection, as a result of the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in Egypt. In carrying out the trust

which it has accepted to establish a Jewish National Home, this country will, at the same time, consolidate its position in the Near East. On a long view, the small expenditure now required in Palestine is an insurance at a very moderate premium against the possibilities of a disastrous conflagration which might involve much British blood and treasure.

If satisfactory progress is to be made in this direction, the first essential is the definite approval of the draft Mandate. The Council of the League of Nations is to meet early this month and is expected to deal, *inter alia*, with the urgent question of Armenia. The Palestine Mandate is not less urgent, and it is to be hoped that the formal difficulty arising from the non-ratification of the Treaty of Sèvres will not be deemed insuperable. The British Government has already been asked by the League of Nations, in the form of a letter from the President of the Council to the Prime Minister, to continue the administration of the country in the spirit of the draft Mandate. It should now officially declare its intention to accept the invitation and to proceed with the various schemes for the development of the country, which have been held up for so many months. There is a recent precedent for such a step in the case of Mesopotamia, when Great Britain made a declaration of her policy with regard to that country notwithstanding the non-approval of the Mandate. There is no reason to anticipate difficulty from any of the members of the League Council. The recent statement of M. Briand to a representative of Dr. Weizmann was a definite promise that France would support such a step. As to Italy, we refuse to give credence to the rumours that she may withhold her assent pending a territorial readjustment more to her advantage elsewhere in the Near East. Italy has expressly associated herself with the policy embodied in the Mandate and is hardly likely to obstruct it at this stage. The American difficulty regarding the "open door" in the mandated territories generally still remains, it is true; but we have reason to believe that the United States have clearly indicated to the British representatives at Washington that to the Palestine Mandate, as such, they have not the smallest objection.

Palestine is a key position in the Near East, and the time is propitious for a final settlement. If the step is not taken now, it is impossible to be sure when a further favourable opportunity will recur.

Thirteenth Meeting of the Advisory Council

I.

The thirteenth meeting of the Advisory Council took place on Tuesday, December 6th, 1921, under the presidency of the High Commissioner.

The following were present:—

Mr. J. B. Barron, Lt.-Col. P. Bramley, Mr. N. Bentwich, Mr. H. E. Bowman, Sir Wyndham Deedes, Major-General P. G. Grant, Col. G. Heron, Mr. A. Eisenberg, Mr. H. M. Kalvarisky, Sheikh Abdul Hai El Khatib, Sheikh Freih Abu Meddin, Mr. H. A. Smallwood, Col. H. J. Solomon, Mr. R. Storrs, Col. Symes, Suleiman Razak Toukan Bey, Mr. D. Yellin.

Suleiman Bey Nassif and Ismail Bey Hussein were unable to attend owing to absence from Palestine.

Mr. N. Beiruti was absent owing to illness.

The High Commissioner opened the meeting with an expression of sympathy and condolence to the family of the late Dr. Habib Salem, who was a member of the Advisory Council, whose death was a great loss to the country.

Before his death Dr. Salem had been able to complete a pamphlet on Child Welfare and the Control of Infant Mortality, which the Department of Health proposes in the near future to publish for distribution in schools and to the population in general.

CRAFT AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES.

The following discussion took place on a memorandum presented by the Department of Commerce and Industry, on Crafts and Village Industries in Palestine.

Toukan Bey said that the industries should be promoted not only by the formation of a Committee to study the question, but also by the establishment of an industrial college, conducted by trained experienced teachers of Palestinian arts and crafts.

Mr. Eisenberg said that there were several industries which could be so developed that there would be no need to import certain articles from abroad. For instance, the manufacture of furniture, and the preserving of fruits and vegetables, much of which now was wasted. This industry would also provide work during what was at present a slack season for growers.

The raw material of the spinning and wool industries could be turned into the finished products here, instead of being exported for the purpose; the making of silk could be fostered, for experiments in silk worm raising had already been tried in some villages, with great success. A man, woman or child working at the silk industry three or four hours a day would be able to earn six or seven pounds a month.

Mr. Yellin emphasised that industries in towns needed encouraging as well as in villages. The formation of an Industrial Chamber, after the manner of the Chambers of Commerce, to consist of the heads of industries in this country, might be of advantage.

Colonel Solomon replied that the necessity of Technical Schools and Colleges would be considered by the Commission about to be appointed. The scope for the development of technical education in this country was enormous, and the Commission on Handicrafts would take the first steps in that development.

The standard of cabinet making in Palestine had considerably improved, and the latest machinery was being imported.

The spinning industry would be inaugurated at a very early date in the Jaffa district. Manufacturers state that the Palestinian wool is more suitable for their purpose than imported wool. The silk industry, which had already been started in a small way in Rehoboth, would receive every encouragement from the Government.

The memorandum dealt with village industries only for these reasons: one, it was considered important that those industries already established in the country should be set on their feet. Nine-tenths of the population were engaged in them, and they needed to be improved before attention could be given to new branches of industry. Secondly, the experience which would be gained by the Commission would be a valuable guide in deciding how new industries might be stimulated.

The proposal for the formation of an Industrial Chamber would receive careful consideration. The Department of Commerce and Industry would always welcome advice from any influential body or individual for the development of industry in Palestine.

Mr. Bowman said that during the last twelve months, the question of technical education had been receiving the earnest attention of the Education Department. Owing to financial stringency, however, it had not been possible to make material progress in its promotion. One of the first duties of the Department should be to spread technical and industrial education throughout the country. Whether that could best be done by opening technical schools and institutions, as in some countries, or whether it could best be done by giving grants to established institutions of that kind, or whether it could be done best by giving subventions to existing industries in the country to help to provide expert instruction for the growing generation, remained to be decided. One was certain that if Palestine was to hold her own in the countries of the world, she must maintain her position with regard to technical education. During the last thirty years increased attention had been paid to technical education throughout the world, and it was universally recognised that the country which devoted its educational funds to purely literary education was doomed to failure.

Mr. Storrs remarked that, having been occupied and interested in the development of crafts for nearly four years, he thought they could be greatly helped by the spending and purchasing departments of the Administration, and by the charitable and educational institutions of the three great religions in the country. The former had done much, but far more might be done by the latter. It should be realised that children could be clothed, shod and provided with bedding and practically all the necessities of life without the need of spending one piastre outside Palestine.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CRIME ORDINANCE.

In an explanatory note, read by Mr. Bentwich, it was pointed out that it was often impossible to obtain sufficient evidence on which to convict any particular person of a crime of theft or robbery, because the people of the place to which the criminal belongs are unwilling to give evidence. In order to strengthen the hands of the Government in dealing with crimes against property, and also to enable despoiled victims to obtain compensation, it is proposed to introduce, with very thorough safeguards, the system of collective responsibility of villages for such offences.

The Draft Ordinance provided that an application for compensation might be made by the victim to the Mukhtar of the village in which the property was situated and a petition addressed to the District Court asking that the village or

villages around be ordered to pay compensation. The Court would only make an order when satisfied both that the actual wrongdoers cannot be found and convicted and that there is good reason for imposing collective responsibility.

Two kinds of cases were contemplated:—

(1) Where there was a feud between two parties in a village and one party attacked the other; (2) Where the persons of one place went out and attacked another and raided the cattle or destroyed or damaged the property.

If it made the order, the Court would proceed to draw up a list of the persons in the village or area responsible who were required to pay the compensation. At the discretion of the Court any class or section of the people might be exempted from the charge. The amount would be equitably apportioned amongst the inhabitants, and the order executed by the Governor.

The High Commissioner might empower a Governor in lieu of the District Court to deal with claims for compensation under the Ordinance, either generally or in a particular case, as there might be sub-districts in which, owing to special circumstances, it was desirable that the Governor should be able to take action promptly; and there might be special cases, such as feuds between two parties in a village, where the Governor had full knowledge of all the circumstances and was, therefore, better qualified to deal with the affair than the Court.

The Ordinance applied to damage done to Government property, such as railway or telegraph poles, and also to property of the Army, but not to destruction or damage to property in municipal areas caused by ordinary crime. Where this was caused by rioting or unlawful assembly it could be dealt with under the Police Ordinance.

After a discussion on the subject, the High Commissioner explained that it was proposed to amend the Draft Ordinance so as to contain a provision that the consent of the Governor must be obtained before action could be taken against private individuals.

Mr. Bentwich added that it was the intention to provide that any petition for the imposition of collective responsibilities could not be considered unless the Governor gave his approval first.

The Ordinance thus amended was approved.

(To be continued.)

Immigration

The following table shows the arrival of immigrants in the month of November, 1921:—

Town of Arrival.	Single Immigrants.	Families.	Total.
Jaffa	198	207	405
Haifa	209	115	324
Jerusalem	—	36	36
Total	407	358	765

Agricultural Notes

THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION.

A temporary suspension of agricultural loans, and the practical failure of both winter and summer crops, the low selling prices of grain, and a shortage of working cattle, have impaired agricultural effort, and a universal demand for financial help is consequently encountered.

The orange crop promises to be satisfactory and offers for the fruit on the trees have advanced from 4s. to 5s. per case of about 150.

The amount of revenue from tithe will be less owing to the fall in the price of all cereals.

TRACTORS AT WORK.

On the land of the Jewish National Fund at Nuris (Jezreel Valley) three tractors are now at work, and two additional tractors are going to be used at the Workmen's Colony at Mahlul. These tractors were imported from America to Palestine together with other agricultural machinery and implements which were collected by the Kupah (Palestine Workmen's Fund). These machines will be of great help at these farms and also at the other farms of the Jewish National Fund Lands. Besides the tractors, other agricultural implements have been brought, such as ploughs, harrows, sheaf-binders, cutting machines, sowing machines, picking machines, peelers, etc.

There are tractors also at Ben-Shemen, Merhaviah, and recently a tractor was acquired for Huldah for cultivating the soil between the olive trees.

MARSH DRAINAGE AND WATER SUPPLY AT HULDAH.

The state of health of the workmen at Huldah has become worse during the last year, owing to the marsh in the valley which is close to the farm. For the sanitation of the place the Department of Colonisation is carrying out now, on account of the Jewish National Fund, a drainage scheme, which was drawn up by an expert engineer and sanctioned by the sanitary engineer of the Government. It is hoped that after the drainage of the marshes the state of health at Huldah will improve.

In connection with the above scheme, the Huldah workmen have commenced digging trenches. Part of the trenches will pass, in accordance with the above plan, into the land of the Arab neighbours, and the Government has undertaken to include the Arabs in this work by their supplying the required number of workmen for the carrying out of the work on their own lands.

The Huldah workmen have obtained drinking water until now from a well, situated at the bottom of the hill, rather distant from the camp, and which is also the source of supply for the Arab village. This water supply is unsatisfactory; firstly, for sanitary reasons; secondly, owing to the distance of the well from the farm. The Jewish National Fund has therefore decided to arrange a water supply upon the spot by completing the digging of the well which was commenced before the war, to a depth of 190 metres. This work is to be started shortly.

British Representative in Trans-Jordania

Mr. Abramson, who was temporarily seconded for service as Chief British Representative in Trans-Jordania, has at his own request reassumed the functions of Head of the Land Department and President of the Land Commission in Palestine, functions which he carried out prior to his temporary appointment in Trans-Jordania.

Mr. H. St. John Philby has been appointed Chief British Representative in Trans-Jordania.

Women's Work in Palestine

(From a Correspondent)

Among the immigrants who are arriving in Palestine there is a considerable number of young girls who come here with unquenchable enthusiasm to work side by side with the men. Together with the men they have gone to work in the fields, on the roads, in the erection of buildings, etc. The experience of the last two years prove, however, that the young women lack the power of endurance of the men and are not physically strong enough to carry on some of these works for any length of time. This has raised a serious problem—what to do with these young women?

The workwomen recently held a conference at which they discussed this problem. The general opinion was that the women should leave the road-work, erection of buildings, etc. This would immediately provide employment for a large number of young men. The women would devote themselves to other occupations. It was generally agreed that market-gardening was a very suitable work for women. The Conference, therefore, decided to take a tract of land, near Jaffa, on lease and to organise there a group of young women under the direction of experts. Inasmuch as the young women will have to exist until their crops are ready for the market, the Conference decided to ask the Zionist Executive for a grant of £E.450 or £E.3 per month *per capita* for fifty women for a period of three months. £E.250 will be returned as soon as the first income is realised.

Another form of work suitable for women is housework. The Conference, therefore, demanded that the management of all workmen's kitchens, hostels, etc., be entrusted to the women. It is proposed that the women who undertake this kind of work be trained in cooking, all kind of housework, and also book-keeping, organisation, etc. It is also proposed that all such kitchens or hostels should possess a tract of land where the women will grow the vegetables necessary for their work. The workwomen declare that they can carry out this work without any outside financial help.

Again, it was discovered that several of these immigrants have had experience in the management of laundries. It was, therefore, resolved to help such laundresses in the acquisition of the necessary machinery and the establishment of laundries in Jaffa and Haifa.

An experiment has been made in training young women in setting tiles and tessellated pavements. As a beginning five young women have received instruction in this work. They will complete their course within two weeks, and, it is expected that the experiment will prove very successful.

All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, British Palestine Committee, c/o National Labour Press, Ltd., 8 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.