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1930

730TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD, 1930,
AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. A. H. FINN IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the election of the following:—Lieut.-Col. Hope Biddulph, D.S.O., as a Member, from Associate; and as Associates, Mrs. H. Lander Johnston, F.R.G.S., M.R.I., Mrs. E. M. Moore, Lieut.-Col. A. G. Shortt, B.A., Rev. W. Ellis, M.A., B.D., and the Rev. Frank Madeley, M.A.

The CHAIRMAN then called on Mr. Avary H. Forbes, M.A., in the absence of the author, to read the paper by the Rev. W. M. Christie, D.D., on "Arabs and Jews in Palestine."

ARABS AND JEWS IN PALESTINE.

By REV. W. M. CHRISTIE, D.D., Mount Carmel Bible School,
Haifa, Palestine.

ANCIENT REFERENCES.

THERE can be little doubt that the Midianites, Ishmaelites and others mentioned in the earlier works of the Old Testament belonged to the Arab stock, though the name "Arab" does not occur till the middle of the ninth century B.C. Then we find them named in 849 B.C. as bringing tribute to Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xvii, 11); and in 845 B.C. in connection with an attack on Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxi, 16). These references to the much maligned work of the Chronicler receive a very strong support from the Assyrian mention of Arabs at the Battle of Karkar in 854 B.C. Thereafter we find references to Arabs in

many of the succeeding cuneiform records. Jeremiah and Ezekiel knew them, and Nehemiah had his own troubles with representatives of this people (ii, 19; iv, 7; vi, 1). The Nabathean section had occupied Petra before 312 B.C. driving out the Edomites, and they had also extended their authority over the Hauran, forming there the Kingdom of Beni-Ghassān. In the first century of the Christian Era, they traversed Palestine as traders, and in A.D. 70 they evidently made visits with their camels to Jerusalem (B. Keth. 66^b). It seems quite clear that the Arabs were well known in the neighbourhood of Palestine for nearly two millenniums before the conquest by the followers of Muhammed in A.D. 636.

IMMIGRATIONS.

So far as evidences go, the Moslem invasion did not in any degree constitute the settlement of the new population or the extirpation or removal of the earlier peasantry. There are evidences of the settlement of sections of Yemenite and Kaisite Arabs in Nazareth and Cana of Galilee (Strange, "Moslems in Palestine"), and there were also representatives of the Moslem rulers settled in the larger towns—Jerusalem, Hebron, Nablus, Jenin, Nazareth, and Acre. These are probably represented to-day by the Effendi class, who claim, without genealogical proof, however, to be the descendants of the conquerors. Of them we shall speak later. Other Arabic-speaking settlers have come from various places outside of Palestine proper. Thus the native Christians of Nazareth claim to have come from the Hauran and from Merj-Ayun; the Christian element in Safed are immigrants from Hasbeiya at the N.W. foot of Hermon, and their grandparents came in the second half of the last century. The Christian population of the coast towns and Jerusalem represents a people made up of fragments of all the Levant races, and the only soldering element is their common Arabic speech. In some of the towns of Galilee we meet with Maronites and Druses, both clearly immigrants, and in connection with Upper Galilee we discovered a tradition regarding the Metawileh (or Shiite Moslems) population that indicates a non-Galilean origin. In 1891 we were told that when Saladin was hard pressed by the Crusaders, he begged help from Persia, and in response there came 150,000 Persian Moslems, who ultimately received for services rendered lands in Upper Galilee and in the Sidon district.

This tradition fully and satisfactorily accounts for the presence of these people who show more of an Indo-European than of a Semitic physiognomy. As this people reside mainly in the French mandated territory, they hardly count to-day in Palestinian politics. The most recent immigration is that of the Moghrabiyeh Arabs, and this has been beset with the most serious consequences. They consist of groups of the various populations of North Africa from the provinces extending from Tangier to Egypt. When the various tracts of land indicated passed under European authority, these Moslems were discontented with what they considered Christian rule and prepared to move out. They were received by Turkey and allowed to settle within her borders. Apart from smaller groups, they occupy mainly a large quarter in Safed, and the portion of Jerusalem that lies between the Wailing Wall and the Dung Gate, which has from them been re-named "Bab-el-Moghrabiyeh." They constitute the most fanatical section of the Palestine population. To a great extent without education, they are ready to accept any statement concerning things done to the detriment of Islam, and to act without sense of responsibility. In Safed it was this community that in 1877 attacked the Conder-Kitchener Exploration Party and left Kitchener for dead in a thicket of brambles and thistles. Twelve years later, in 1889, we often heard it remarked that the 10,000 Moslems living in a state of barbarism in the Moghrabiyeh quarter were a real danger to the city. In the recent massacres in Safed, it was this party that carried through the nefarious work.

THE PEASANTRY.

There remains the "Arab" peasantry, or villagers. Every evidence points to their being Arabs only in the matter of language. They have much less Arabic blood than any of the sections of the people already named. As the peasantry of a country survives every revolution, there can be little doubt that the peasantry of to-day represents the old race formed by the amalgamation of Canaanites and Hebrews with an admixture of the blood of every race that has, since the downfall of Israel, occupied or ruled the land. In Galilee there would be an infiltration of Phœnician, but that is still Canaanite blood; while in Judea there must have been a strong Edomite, but that is still Hebraic, strain. We were confirmed in this opinion, when

in our early days in Galilee (1889-95) we made a study of the peasant dialect, and discovered that the same mistakes were made in the spoken Arabic of this people as were made in New Testament and in Talmudic days, namely, the confusion of the gutturals (Mt. xxvi, 73; B. Erub. 53^a). This section of the population is, apart from incidents arising out of robbery, in which they do not hesitate to indulge, quiet and, we should say on the whole inclined to be, law-abiding.

THE SAMARITANS.

There remains the Israelite, Hebraic or Jewish element. To this the Samaritans may be reckoned. They are now a feeble folk, occupying a quarter of Shechem (Nablus). They numbered 152 at the end of the war and are now increased to 192. As an element of the population they might be ignored, but there are points of interest connected with them that are still of value. It is worthy of note that the old enmity between Jew and Samaritan has now passed away. In this the Jew took the initiative. When the Samaritan quarter of Nablus was destroyed by an earthquake in 1927 the Jews of Tell-Aviv came to their help with waggon loads of food and a doctor to attend the injured. It was interesting to have the old High Priest declare to Mr. Rohold and myself: "What men have been trying to do for ages (to bring about peace between Jew and Samaritan) and failed, God did in seven seconds" (through the earthquake). The attitude of the fanatical Nablus Moslems was very apparent on the same occasion, for they actually stoned those bringing friendly assistance. The other point of interest and value is the Samaritan testimony to the practically pre-Exilic existence of our present Pentateuch. Had it been a compilation or selection by Ezra, the Samaritans could never have accepted it as canonical; on the contrary, they would have had a magnificent opportunity of attacking the Jews on this vital point. This testimony of course fixes the canonicity of the Torah at some considerable time at least before 520 B.C., after which the Samaritans could not have accepted it. Even if the Samaritans should now be absorbed in Israel, it is a remarkable example of divine working that they should have been preserved till this late era to bring this testimony to the old Torah at the time when it is so much needed.

OLDER JEWISH CONDITIONS.

Jewish history in Palestine has been a chequered one during the whole Christian era. The Fall of Jerusalem destroyed the state and brought deportations (A.D. 70). Restoration came to a certain extent during the brilliant Jamnia Period (A.D. 70-135) but the Barcochab Rising again led to disaster. The Galilean Period was a happy and successful one (A.D. 140-425) and the literary work was continued at intervals till the time of the Crusades. These movements reduced the Jewish population to a minimum and already Benjamin of Tudela (1160-1173) can tell of only "few men left," the representatives of a population of perhaps 2,000 living poverty-stricken lives in a few of the towns. Such conditions as he describes must have remained till the Expulsion from Spain (1492) brought re-population and revival to the land. Jerusalem, Tiberias and Safed again became Jewish centres of light and learning, and in the last named there arose the famous Rabbinical College and a constellation of literary characters almost equalling the most brilliant that Spain had produced. In addition to Sephardic settlers there were also Ashkenazim. Yiddish has had a history of centuries in this mountain stronghold of Judaism, and representatives of the families of the 16th-century settlers are still to be found there. The Haluka system began about 1600 and this meant the re-population of the four Holy Cities—Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed. In every other centre of importance, we find during the next two centuries groups of Jews also, mainly engaged in business.

TURKISH RESTRICTIONS.

On the whole, the Turk and the Arab have treated the Jew with consideration, recognizing in his faith something more akin to their own absolute monotheism than the Christian Trinitarian doctrine presents. The most that the Jew has hitherto experienced has been associated with Moslem belief that the words of the prophets will be fulfilled in the Restoration of Israel. He has sought to take precautions. This is manifest in the Golden Gate in the Eastern Wall of the Temple Court, which has been kept built up since the advent of the Turk in 1516, "because when the Messiah comes, He will enter by that gate, Turkish power will then go for ever, and the Jew will be the man in

possession." The same faith has made itself felt in the restrictive laws made against the Jew. He could come to the land as a pilgrim for three months and then leave, but he could not settle nor could he acquire land. It is quite true that owing to the influence of the Rothschilds, permission was from time to time granted to establish small colonies, but whether said or not, it was understood that these were as outlets for the existing population, and by such men the first experiments were made.

DIFFICULTIES AND WORRIES.

The regulations we have indicated were, however, altogether invalid. Backsheesh was much more powerful than any decree a sultan could make. Jews on the landing-stage became a source of revenue to every official in the passport and customs departments, as also to the Municipal officials wherever the immigrant might settle. Accordingly immigration went merrily on till in 1906 it could be said "every fifth man you meet is a Jew." But this was not the only vexation to which the Jew was subjected in the matter of "bleeding." He came at the best with a foreign nationality, generally Russian or Austrian, and failing such, he generally tried to acquire some nationality, the British being eagerly sought after and at times not difficult of acquisition. This arose through the fact that during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, the British Government undertook the protection of the non-combatant Russian Jews, and issued them the regular registration certificates. By backsheesh to minor officials, passports were got and the nationality was preserved for the children. This is really the worst offence we have to record against the Jew during our long years' experience of the East, and considering the conditions in which he lived we think it highly pardonable.

But even then he was not free from worries. Their condition was very often that with which we were acquainted in a city where several hundred such "British subjects" resided. They became practically a "milk cow" for the native employees about the Consulate, who were ever ready, when occasion required, to raise the question of "your nationality." Continental subjects were in still worse condition, for as soon as a young man reached the age of 18, he was called to the Consulate and informed that he must serve in the army. This had to be "arranged,"

and a payment of £20 to £50 to the Consular agent and a fee for a "certificate of bad health" from a doctor, secured remission for a time. These conditions throw light on what we shall say later.

HEBREW RENAISSANCE.

Coincident with the re-population of Palestine was the Renaissance of the language. This began nearly fifty years ago with Ben Jehuda's settlement in Jerusalem. His aim was to make Hebrew the living speech of every Jew in the country. But the orthodox considered it too holy to be spoken. He was starved, stoned, persecuted on every hand by his kinsfolk, but he persevered. In twenty years he was able to command respect for his ideal, and now 98 per cent. of the Jewish population speak Hebrew, and it has become the one uniting element for all the sections of Judaism. Distinctions are being forgotten. Jews are no longer Ashkenazim or Sephardim, but Israelites. "Ephraim no longer envies Judah, nor does Judah vex Ephraim." And to the immigrants both Yiddish and Spanish have to go soon after their settlement in the land; they are no longer printed and the Jew reads his newspaper in Hebrew. And with that the output of literature is enormous. In addition to original works in every department of learning, the best of the literatures of all nations has been translated. Whatever is accessible in any European language can be had in Hebrew.

BALFOUR DECLARATION.

We can well understand the impetus given to the movements for immigration and renaissance of the old tongue by that timely document, the Balfour Declaration. It has been much discussed and much condemned, but this is because it has been misunderstood and mis-represented. With full knowledge of the conditions of the Jews and of the land as we have set them forth, we never for a moment had a doubt as to its eminent fairness. It gave the Jew not a single right or privilege that men of every other nationality had not all along possessed. It abolished the regulation, made only against the Jew, which prevented his entering the land and acquiring property, and which law had already become obsolete by means of backsheesh which all along had passed into Arab and Turkish pockets. But what of the

“national home” that has been so much denounced? That, too, gave the Jew nothing he did not possess before—the opportunity of acquiring the nationality of the country of his residence, *i.e.*, he might give up his old nationality and become a Palestinian. He had found security in the past in not being Turkish, now he might, under British mandate, be better as a Palestinian than anything else. And in not a single point has there been an infringement of the terms as we have understood and explained them. Immigration has been carefully controlled and limited, with a view to absorption. The unsuitable have been eliminated by the Zionists, and those who have come in have done so in the spirit of goodwill. Every yard of land acquired has been purchased, very often at high prices, the intermediaries being generally the Effendi class who bought at low rates from the peasantry and re-sold to the Jew at enormous profits. But the land once got, the Jew has tried to make the most of it. When you see a green spot in Palestine to-day, you may be sure it is a Jewish colony. We knew the Plains of Esdraelon and Gennesaret when they were covered with thorns and thistles, but now the former is covered with sheaves of golden grain, and the latter is fast becoming what Josephus called it—“the ambition of nature.” (B.J., III, x, 8.)

CAUSES OF RECENT HOSTILITY.

(1) *Not Wailing Wall*.—Whence then the hostility that led to the disastrous outbreak in August? And what part does the Wailing Wall play in it? We begin with the latter question, and the answer is that the incidents connected with the Wailing Wall are merely created as an excuse and ground of offence. After the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 the Jews began to weep and pray over the ruins (B. Maccoth 24^b), and gradually the western wall became the centre for this worship. There was no question of Jewish right in Turkish days.* From the time of the introduction of printing, prayer books were provided with the prayers for this shrine. We ourselves possess several copies printed in Jerusalem in Turkish days, and, of course, with the approval of the Turkish censor. In 1894 and on later occasions,

* In *Shemoth Rabba*, sec. 2, the Western Wall is definitely named with its present-day designation in such a way as to show that it had for long been a sacred shrine. An early fourth-century rabbi there declares that “the Shekinah never moves away from the Western Wall.”

we have seen benches, chairs, and carpets on the pavement at the Wailing Place, for the convenience especially of older worshippers. Under Turkish rule nothing serious ever happened. The most would be the treatment of the Jew with something of contempt or derision, and the use of the epithet, "Jew," in a tone of despitte.

(2) *Ecclesiastical Intrigue.*—The hostility has a different cause and comes from a different source. It has something to do with international jealousy and more to do with ecclesiastical intrigue. From the close of the war it has been taught in Syria that the cutting away of Palestine from the north is a wrong, and that both ought to be under one mandate, and that in the hands of France. To such an extent has this teaching been carried that the employment of mission workers of Lebanon origin has rendered Gospel work impossible in some instances. The treatment Lord Balfour got in Damascus was a demonstration allowed, if not engineered, in favour of the same idea. Beginning at the close of the war, too, there was a propaganda begun in Palestine and mainly by pupils trained in the schools of a sect having great influence in Syria. The Jews were first approached and informed that, if they would throw Palestine into the hands of France, they could secure even better terms than the Balfour Declaration gave them. They rejected this, and then the Arabs were informed that they were to be displaced and the land given to the Jews. This created feeling and led to the incidents of 1921.

When the Crown Prince of Italy visited Palestine 18 months ago, the propaganda began anew, but with this difference that it was proposed that Italy should get the mandate. The whole movement means neither Italy nor France, but that Palestine became an appendage of the Papal State. If confirmation were wanted it is to be found in the assertions openly made in November, "There will be peace in another month, for the Pope will be the man in authority," and further, by the fact that there is a combination of Moslems and Latins, publicly explained as being against the Jews and Protestants, and having as a badge the Latin Cross inserted in the Moslem Crescent, and worn as an ornament, generally a scarf-pin.

HOW THE OFFENSIVE WAS ARRANGED.

And if this was the powder, the spark was formed within the Holy Land. The Effendis had made money at the expense of

the peasantry, who now saw what the land could produce, and what they had lost, and it was to the interest of the Effendis to turn the attention away from themselves to the Jew. False statements were made to incite the peasantry, and the common Moslem objection to Jews and Christians being made equal to them also found a place. These things formed the spark and thence the conflagration. The Effendis themselves are intensely fanatical and they found an equally fanatical tool in the Moghrah-biyeh Arabs, who did all the evil work in Safed, and who were the nearest aggressors at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.

OUR DUTY.

What should now be done? Without hesitation we say "maintain the mandate." Explain it if necessary, but make no modifications or concessions. Let the Arab know that the Jew has got nothing more than he himself may have in any country in the world—the right to settle, to acquire property, and to become a citizen. Britain must retain the mandate. No other country can deal even-handed justice to all races and creeds. There is no room for fanaticism in what is the Holy Land of all, and under the influence of the Papal State, there would be no toleration and little liberty. And in dealing with all, there must be the firm hand. It must be felt and seen. The "Indian Moslem bogey" must have no place. Islam is as much divided as the Christian world, and, with the family of Osman gone, it has no political head. Firmly administered law and even-handed justice will prove the secret of British success.

HOPEFUL OUTLOOK.

And what of the future? With a definite manifestation of policy and a strict administration many things will happen. Peace will be maintained, the land will be developed, the harbour at Haifa will be completed, and railways will more fully link up the whole of Western Asia with Africa through Palestine; Haifa will be the great oil centre of the Near East, and Palestine, in some sense, the key to the trade of the three continents. There will be work and wealth for all, and peace will be found more profitable than unrest. The Jew will come in increasing numbers, for the land that can support three millions cannot be left desolate with a population of seven hundred thousand. Already we see instead of thorn the fir tree, instead of the brier, the myrtle,

and with the opportunities that are bound to come, all Palestine may be turned into a garden land, and the desert blossom like the rose.

RECONSTRUCTION.

And changes will take place among the peoples, too. Nothing seems more certain than that with an increasing non-Moslem population and a recognized Christian government, such communities as the Moghrabiyeh Arabs, themselves immigrants here, would move out, seeking citizenship in what they consider a Moslem state. And the Effendis, too, might find it advisable to seek fresh pastures. The "Arab" peasantry of the land, a broken and in some sense degenerate, through mingling, fragment of ancient Israel, might very well have a place, if not amongst the people, at least in the land. Indeed, there seems to be provision made for such cases as theirs. To the sojourner Ezekiel gives a place and an inheritance in the separate tribes (Ezek. xlvii, 22-23), while Zechariah (ix, 7-8) confers on the remnants of the Philistines the fullest privileges. Thus in a reconstituted Israel there seems a place for just such a remnant. And the changing attitude of the returning Israelite should make this all the easier. The modern immigrant has done with the bitter fanaticism that characterized the older orthodoxy, and which was the outcome of persecution. Now not the Old Testament only is wanted, but "the whole Bible." The New Testament also belongs to the Jew and so does the Lord Jesus Christ. Soon we shall see the glorious reunion of Land, People, and King.

DISCUSSION.

Rev. A. H. FINN, speaking from the Chair, said: Having been born in Jerusalem, and spent my childhood there and in the neighbourhood, and having twice re-visited the city in recent years—having, moreover, inherited a great deal of information from my father (who for over 17 years was British Consul for the whole of Palestine), I think I may fairly claim to have had some special facilities for getting to know about the country and its inhabitants. As to Dr. Christie's paper, I may say that I can endorse almost the whole of it. Indeed, it takes almost the very line which I took in a paper on the Mandate drawn up some little time ago, a paper

submitted, I believe, to certain high officials of the Government and printed in the *Hebrew Christian Quarterly*. There are one or two points in the paper you have heard which may bear a little amplifying. On p. 98 there is a section about the Peasantry (Fellahin, Ploughmen), and on the next page an allusion to their confusing the guttural letters. That makes it probable that the folk called Ta'amri round about Tekoa may really be descendants of the Amorites, the letter "Ain" having been substituted for the Hebrew Aleph. My mother, during her long residence in Palestine, got to know much of the Fellahin, and became convinced that they must be of Canaanite origin. She set forth the reasons for this conclusion in a little work entitled *Palestine Peasantry*. One bit of significant evidence is the survival of Canaanite practices forbidden in the Mosaic law (e.g. seething a kid in its mother's milk).

About the Wailing Wall, from the first I felt sure that this agitation was factitious, engineered by those who wished to stir up strife. For a very long period the Jews had enjoyed, without any kind of opposition, the privilege of worshipping in the narrow passage before the Western Wall of the Temple, a privilege for which they paid a rental of £200 a year. That passage was till quite lately an absolute *cul-de-sac*. It was only last year that certain Moslems obtained permission to make an opening in the wall that blocked the southern end, and this made it possible to claim that the passage was a thoroughfare, through which Moslems could pass to disturb the Jews at their devotions. It may not be generally known that the reason why the Jews attach so much importance to praying at this place is the belief founded on Solomon's prayer (1 Kings viii, 47-49) that if their prayers pass through the crevices between the stones of the wall, they would ascend to Heaven from the Temple area (whence the Jews are excluded) and be favourably heard.

I am very glad that Dr. Christie has spoken so plainly in favour of maintaining the Mandate. What I saw in my recent visits of the marvellous improvement in the condition of the country during the British occupation convinced me that the one and only hope for the future of the land and its varied inhabitants lies in the continuance of the British Administration, carried out by firm and impartial officials.

In conclusion, the Chairman called for the thanks of the meeting for the paper submitted by Dr. Christie, and the same were accorded with acclamation.

Mr. ISRAEL COHEN, Secretary of the Zionist Organization, an invited speaker, said: I should like to express my thanks to the Council of the Institute for their courtesy in inviting me to open the discussion on the most interesting paper that has just been read, and also to say how pleased I am to have the opportunity of speaking before so sympathetic an audience. I do not wish to say anything on the first part of Dr. Christie's paper, which deals with ethnological questions, but would like to offer a few observations on the second half. I feel impelled to point out that Dr. Christie considerably underrates and minimizes the importance of the Balfour Declaration. That important document gave to the Jewish people a right that they do not possess in any other country in the world, namely, the right to reconstitute their National Home in their ancestral land.

The only rights that Jews possess in other countries are those which they enjoy as citizens of those particular countries. The Balfour Declaration itself was embodied and amplified in the Palestine Mandate, which contains a number of Articles specifically laying down the particular rights of the Jewish people in connection with the establishment of their National Home. Since the Mandate was ratified by the League of Nations, and even before, the Jews have done their utmost to profit by the opportunity that they have in Palestine, but unfortunately the expectations that they entertained as regards the co-operation of the Mandatory Power have not been fully realized.

Suffice it to point out that, although ten years of British Administration have already elapsed, the Article in the Mandate which provides that the close settlement of Jews shall be encouraged on State and waste lands not required for public purposes has remained a dead letter, as not a single square inch of land has yet been given by the Government for Jewish settlement, whilst, on the other hand, a very large tract of land at Beisan was given some years ago by the Government to Arab squatters on a part of it, who have neither been able to pay the dues nor to cultivate the

whole of the land, and have since been trying to sell what they do not need at speculative prices.

I fully agree with what Dr. Christie says respecting the conflict connected with the Wailing Wall as being merely a pretext for the attacks that were made upon the Jews last August. In the course of the hearings of the Inquiry Commission many of the Arab witnesses gave as one of the causes of provocation their alleged grievances in regard to the land. It should, therefore, be pointed out that throughout the whole week of slaughter in Palestine not a single cry was heard on the part of the Arabs that they had been dispossessed of their land by the Jews. The attack had obviously been organized by the Arab leaders at a time when they believed that the Administration would be too weak to resist them. The whole talk of the Arabs that they had suffered, either materially or otherwise, through the settlement of Jews in Palestine was entirely false. The fact is that they have benefited considerably, both directly and indirectly. The Jews have bought land from the Arabs during the last ten years for an aggregate sum of nearly £4,000,000, whilst the land in general in Arab possession has greatly appreciated through the influx of Jews. The Arabs have also found considerable employment in Jewish colonies; they benefit greatly by letting houses, shops, and other buildings to Jewish tenants; and also they profit by selling vegetables and other produce to an amount which has been estimated to be about £800,000 per year. So far as the land itself is concerned, there is ample room, not only for all those at present living in Palestine, but even for an ultimate total population of 3,000,000, provided that intensive cultivation were everywhere adopted.

What Palestine above all needs is that the senior officials engaged in the Administration should be men who are thoroughly in sympathy with the policy of the National Home for the Jewish people. Unfortunately, we have seen during the last few years that a number of officials, who were formerly in the Administration, have returned to England and since then written articles in the reviews which have shown bitter hostility to the whole spirit and purpose of the Palestine Mandate; and from that can be deduced what their attitude was while actually in Palestine. There are, unfortunately, still a number of officials who are antagonistic to the

policy of the Jewish National Home, and it is therefore necessary that they should make room for others who are in sympathy with that policy. Until the Palestine Administration is manned by officials in perfect sympathy with the letter and spirit of the Mandate, it will not be possible for the Jewish people to make that progress in Palestine which they are so anxious to achieve.

Dr. MOSES GASTER, late Chief Rabbi of Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Congregations, also an invited speaker, said: The atmosphere in which I find myself to-night differs entirely from that which I have experienced at other meetings. I have listened with great pleasure to Dr. Christie's paper. Here we have the views of a man who had been living on the spot for many years, and who is animated with profound sympathy for the great Jewish movement in Palestine. I am not going to traverse or discuss the first part of the paper, dealing with historical problems which, for the time being, are not of actual consequence. We are facing now an entirely different position, which has been created in Palestine during the last few years. Dr. Christie has evidently fathomed the position without bias, and with a sympathetic understanding of the conditions which have prevailed; and yet it is necessary to remember that Palestine has always been a volcano, and is now more so than ever. Religious interest has clashed in Palestine at almost every point. The slightest incident is sufficient for rousing the greatest possible resentment. Events are exaggerated or minimized out of all proportion according to religious considerations. Fanaticism grows apace, and explosions of a more or less violent character are always to be expected. These forces for evil have been fostered almost ever since the power of the Turks was broken and Great Britain had obtained the Mandate over the Holy Land. In former years, and here I am going back to some of the details mentioned by Dr. Christie, the situation had been entirely different, and I may also correct some statements contained in the paper.

The first colonization of Palestine on a large scale was started in 1883, mostly by Roumanian Jews. It was the work of a small committee in Roumania, of which I formed part, and it is through our endeavour in all directions—financial, economic, and political—that we have been able to create, in the first place, the colony now

known as Sichron Jacob, formerly known as Samarin, at the foot of Mount Carmel, and the other colony in Galilee, known as Rosh-Pinah. We were assisted at that time by Laurence Oliphant, who had already planned the establishment of a small colony near Tiberias, for which he had sought a charter from the Sultan. It was only two or three years after the colony had been established that, owing to various conditions, we found it advisable to transfer it to Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris. It was through his munificence that the colonies were able to grow and to flourish, and to constitute the premier colony in Palestine. These colonies were allowed to settle because it was after the Russo-Turkish war, when Roumania obtained its independence; and the plea of all these Jews who wished to settle in Palestine was that they preferred to remain rayahs subject to the Sultan rather than to the Roumanian Government. It was later on, through political intrigues, that the entry of the Jew into Palestine was made more difficult.

Dr. Christie rightly describes the means by which those who were able to enter the land conditionally could settle permanently. But there was peace in the land, and although bakshish was a powerful factor, still, for all that, no Arab ever ventured to lift up his hand, or to raise a claim; nor did he find fault with the purchase of land by the Jews. On the contrary, when I visited Palestine in 1907, I held conversations with some of the leading sheiks, and they all expressed themselves as very pleased with the advent of the Jews, for they considered that with them had come "barakat," *i.e.* blessing, since the rain came in due season. When the delimitation of the frontier between France and England were under consideration, I was anxious to obtain for England the northernmost frontier. In discussing, at that time, these questions with the late Sir Mark Sykes, I suggested to him to take the lines of demarcation found in the Bible as the bases in the negotiation. On the whole, this advice was adopted, but since then other factors have intervened, which cause me not to be able to share the optimism of Dr. Christie as to the immediate future. No one is a prophet, and it would be dangerous to attempt to prophesy as to what may happen within measurable time. All the reasons which have been advanced in order to explain these murderous outbreaks on the part of the Arabs, and curiously enough shared in by many

of the Christian Arabs, scarcely give a clue to the real factor in this drama. These things have been prepared by a long hand; there is system in it and tenacity of purpose, and this is the gravest danger which confronts us concerning the future of the Jewish settlement in Palestine.

It must be clearly understood that the interpretation of the National Home such as given by Dr. Christie is one which we cannot, under any consideration, accept. It is no inducement to the Jews to emigrate there merely to be called Palestinian; that is not a National Home. Nor can I subscribe to the suggestion, made by Dr. Christie, that in one way or another one ought to get rid of a portion of the Arab population now in the Holy Land. Whilst quite agreeing that the Moghrabin are an immediate danger by reason of their wild fanaticism, still there is no necessity to send them away forcibly: a strong hand should be able to curb their fanaticism. As for the idea that those of the Arabs who are not satisfied with the development which is to take place in Palestine should emigrate, that would be simply grist to the mill of the Arabs. We cannot for a moment entertain such an idea. It would prove to the Arabs that the Jews are bent on driving them away, which is far from being our intention or desire. But simply to be allowed to live in that country and become a Palestinian, I do not think there is a single Jew who would ever subscribe to such a theory. He would rather prefer to be an Englishman, or a Frenchman, or an American, than to become a citizen of a small mandated territory with all its political limitations and shortcomings. A National Home, such as we understand it, is that the Jew will feel himself quite at home in a country which is his own, sharing it no doubt with the rest of the inhabitants, but not as a mere protégé. Law and order are an indispensable condition for any civilized Government, and this is such an elementary duty that one cannot call it a special privilege. But it is against the fundamental principle of a Jewish National Commonwealth that a great power is to-day working: that power is the Roman Catholic Church.

It so happened that, about 1921, the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem was practically bankrupt. Russia, which had been the main support of the Orthodox Church, had passed under the rule

of the Soviet Government, and no further help could be expected from that quarter. It was then that the Latin Patriarch started negotiations for the purchase from the Orthodox, the Church of the Sepulchre and all the other properties, of such tremendous religious importance. Of course, if this had actually passed into the possession of the Catholic Church, it would have given to it a paramount place, not only in Palestine but in Christendom. The British Government, however, hearing of what was going on, stepped in. It could not allow such a change to take place under the prevailing conditions, as they relate to the churches in Palestine. Assistance was rendered to the Orthodox Church, and the plan of the Catholic Church was thus frustrated. Hence virulent enmity, with every means possible henceforth to be employed to create difficulties in Palestine, with the design of dealing a blow to the prestige of the English Government and to the Protestant Church. And so Catholic emissaries were prepared, and sent from Syria, especially from the school in Beirut, to take advantage of the ignorance of the Arabs, to enflame their passions and to play upon their fanaticism, to bring about one riot after another, and to create a situation so inflammable and dangerous, as is to-day the case.

It is all intended to embarrass the Government. How far the Administration played into the hands of that propaganda is not for me to say; but that they did nothing to check it is so well known that it hardly requires repetition. Since then tactics have changed, and the outcry against the outrages perpetrated in Palestine, under the very eyes of the British Government, has shocked the world. Nothing would be gained by further terrorism as far as the Catholic Church is concerned, but the position of the Jews becomes intolerable; they are kept in a state of suspense and constant fear. These fears are sufficiently strong to prevent any healthy development, and they certainly make it impossible for the establishment of a National Home as the same is understood by the Jewish people.

A new policy is now being followed. It has been recognized that possession of land creates vested interests, and, accordingly, the more land that is bought by others, the less will be left for Jews to buy. If things are so arranged that new villages cut athwart Jewish colonies, or hem them in, in one direction or another, then

the future development will become impossible; such conditions will throttle further expansion. We see during the last few weeks, therefore, that large tracts of land are being bought by the Latin Patriarch in ever-increasing quantities. The policy is plain—it is simply to make Palestine an appanage of the Pope. Hence also the suggestion, deliberately circulated, that England might transfer its Mandate to Italy. This is a matter which affects Great Britain very closely, and the British Government is sure to look after its own interests, which are paramount in preserving the Mandate. Personally, I have no doubt that we are all united in the hope that Great Britain will not waver in her determination to keep the Mandate, and to preserve law and order in the land, as supplying the first condition for a peaceful development. Therefore, the future of a Jewish National Home does not appear to me to be so promising as Dr. Christie thinks. The Jews may settle there, and work and till the ground and form small colonies; that may be possible, but that anything which would evoke Jewish enthusiasm or justify sacrifices—physical, financial, or moral—is likely to happen is another thing. But though the danger may be great, and the future rather dark, still, we Jews have passed through many trials, and have been able to surmount many difficulties. The Divine promise stands. The land is ours, and in God's own good time it shall be ours. No human power will be able to withstand the will of God, and though the golden gate in Jerusalem may have been walled up by the Turks, there is another golden gate through which salvation will come. It is the Gate of Heaven.

Mr. HOSTE remarked that he too had a small mandate, and it would illustrate what had been pointed out. The Continental Powers who, no doubt from purely philanthropic motives, wish to replace the British Mandate by their own, are not morbidly particular as to the means they employ. He had been asked to show to the meeting, for the sake of those who might not have seen it, the badge of the alliance to this end between the Latins, or R.C. powers, and the Moslems, formed, as was an open secret, against the British Government and the Jews. (Mr. Hoste displayed the badge in the shape of a silver scarf-pin—a Crescent with a Latin Cross in the embrace of its horns.) As for the peroration of Dr. Gaster's address, he might say that the

doctor was not alone in looking for the advent of the Messiah from heaven; Christians, too, had that hope, and when He did appear, he felt sure of one thing—that then for the first time in history believing Jews and believing Christians would, in the language of the prophet Isaiah, “see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion,” and would rejoice together.

Mr. W. R. ROWLATT-JONES wrote: It is encouraging, in these pessimistic times, to read such a fascinating paper as Dr. Christie has written, although some of us may think that it is just a trifle too roseate-hued. The remarks on the degradation of the peasantry serve to emphasize the importance with which the Jew invested the keeping of genealogical tables. Register your genealogy, and you would benefit under the Mosaic law of Jubilee, whereby your inheritance would never be finally alienated. Failing registration, you not only lose caste, but probably sink back into servitude (*see* Ezra ii, 62). When we consider the status of the Holy Family, this is a matter of the highest importance, though hitherto ignored.

LECTURER'S REPLY.

On words by Dr. Gaster on p. 110 I would remark: At the close of the war I met and discussed the boundaries of Palestine with several generals as well as others. I advocated the River north of Tyre, the Qasmiyeh, Litani or Leontes as the northern frontier, and I said to General Money, First Chief Administrator: “Make the boundaries as in our Bible maps.” Later, Mr. Bonar Law spoke in Parliament about the northern boundary as running across country from Ras en-Nakurah to the Huleh Lake. I immediately wrote to him and pointed out the difficulty of making a boundary between British and French Mandated territory over hill and valley through brushwood. Further, I pointed out that some colonies would thus be in French and some in British territory, notably Metulleh. The boundary was then changed so as to include all Jewish Colonies in the Southern Mandate. No doubt it was done at the request of the Jews, as the absurdity was so apparent that they must have remonstrated. The Qasmiyeh is a “natural boundary,” as at some points one can stand on the south side and look down on the water flowing almost 2,000 feet below.

I did not say, as suggested on p. 112, anything about "getting rid of" the Arabs, or suggest anything "forcible." Moslems frequently move from under a Christian government, as they did in Cyprus and Crete to a great extent. I do not doubt the great mass of the "Moghrabiyeh" will move. They left North Africa for a like reason. I have all through hesitated to go further than the words "National Home." "Jewish National Commonwealth" can very easily be twisted into something that might be used to arouse ignorant fanatics. The Jews in all these troubles have been made to suffer from deliberate misrepresentations plausibly set forth.