EGYPT'S WATER.

WARNING TO FARMERS.

The Ministry of Public Works announce that the water supplied to the canal system of Lower Egypt is and has been for some weeks past much in excess of agricultural demands. This is because the river in Upper and Middle Egypt must be kept at sufficiently high levels to allow free navigation to water-borne craft assisting in the transport of food to the main centres of population. This excess water will amount in all to about one quarter of the contents of the Aswan Reservoir. When it not for the needs of navigation, this water would have been held back in the reservoir and only released in June and July, when the demands of the cotton and dhura crops are greatest.

If the natural supply of the river were normal and the Nile flood were early, this loss would not be so serious, but the discharge of the Nile South of Aswan is well below normal and prospects are bad; the spring rains which herald the flood are already late, and the river in the Southern Sudan has as yet shown no signs of rising. In consequence, the supply of water for irrigation in June and July will be seriously inadequate, and it will be necessary to delay the sowing of the flood dhura crop many days later than usual.

Under these circumstances it is essential that all concerned would carefully adhere to the programme of sowings prepared by the Irrigation Department for the fair distribution of supply, and should abide by the Decree prohibiting the watering of land for flood "dhura" until the water supply is sufficient to allow of its removal; otherwise serious damage to crops will certainly result.

In view of the lower levels which will be maintained in canals and the higher lifts which will certainly be involved owners of all lifting machines from engines to tambours, are again advised to see their machines put into good working order; to supplement their stores of oil fuel, for such as use it; and to collect and store all locally available fuel such as cotton-stalks, wood, rice-straw, reeds, and vegetable refuse of every kind. As regards coal, supplies can be obtained for irrigation and industry on application to the Director General, Mechanical Department, Ministry of Public Works, Cairo; price L.E.7 per ton free on truck at Alexandria. This important notice is signed by Mr. P.M. Tottenham, Acting Under Secretary of State, at the Ministry of Public Works.

THE SUEZ CANAL Co.

It is reported that the workmen of the Suez Canal Company are still on strike. The military authorities and also the French authorities are helping the works by the lending of their men.

MAIL FOR HOME.

Latest times for posting at Alexandria for the next P. and O. mail via Port Said and Marseilles, are: ordinary correspondence, Tuesday, May 20, 8 a.m.; registered correspondence, Monday, May 19, 9 p.m.; insured articles, and money orders, Monday, May 19, 6 p.m.

THE WAKFS BUDGET.

We understand that Mahmoud Shukri Pasha, President of the Sultan's Cabinet, has been entrusted with the examination of the Wakfs Ministry's budget for the present year which has been delayed so far owing to the resignation of the Minister of Wakfs with the other members of the second Rushdy Ministry. In order to regulate the payment of salaries and allowances to the Wakf officials, the Government now issues monthly decrees ordering payment in accordance with the rules of the budget of last year. The Ministry of Wakfs, which deals only with the affairs of pious foundations, has a special budget of its own.

THE SUMMARY NATIVE COURTS.

The First Summary Native Court will resume its usual sittings and the Judge will be obliged to live at El Ayat in order to attend the Court.

The Ministry of Justice has decided to hold the Sheiyn el-Kanaiat Summary Native Court in El-Marg district until the railway communication with Sheiyn el-Kanatir is resumed.

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EGYPTIAN DELEGATION IN PARIS.

"Wedy el-Nil" (a letter from its special correspondent in Paris, dated April 29,—We have to make the difficulty of the mission laid on the shoulders of the Egyptian Delegation, and the amount of difficulties encountered, we have been confronted by the sudden recognition by the United States of the British Protectorate, but we must know too that the only good thing for us to do is to direct our attention towards the real object, clearly to understand our situation and rely upon ourselves for our question can hardly be expected to be solved except by the efforts made by us. Let our efforts be based on discretion, wisdom and foresight. The Delegation and rely upon ourselves for our question. As already reported in a former letter the President at first paid visits to the Delegates of the Five Great Powers at the Peace Conference and Signor Orlando, the Italian Premier, of the Italian Delegation, was the first to return the visit. A letter was received from President Wilson's Secretary. The members of the Delegation are now anxious to find a way to bring the Egyptian question before the Peace Conference. Your representative (correspondent of "Wadi el-Nil") will read a lengthy lecture on May 14, at the Rights of Man Society (French). The Egyptian Society here has undertaken to print and publish pamphlets and circulars on the Egyptian question. In two days' time a pamphlet will appear dealing with the history of the Egyptian Cause; and at the end of next week a detailed statement of the British Protectorate will be published. Thousands of copies of these publications will be produced for distribution among the members of the Chambers and the Senate, members of the Peace Conference, Ministers, politicians and journalists.

The "Humanité" has published a lengthy account of an interview with Saad Pasha Zaghloul under his picture. The "Modern Europe" magazine has also published another interview. The editor of the latter paper is Mr. L. Coster (?), former editor of the French edition of the "Balaghat Misri," which used to be published in Cairo by famous French lady Scholar. Egyptian and French journals have reproduced statements by the Presidents of the Delegation, and some of the American journals published in Paris have also done so. The Delegation has visited the secretaries of the Peace Conference, unofficially, and will give a big banquet to American politicians and journalists. Another banquet will be given afterwards to the French.

COPTS AND MOSLEMS.

The "Ahaly" (from an article replying to the statements of the "Daily Telegraph" to the effect that the recent attitude of the Copts in Egypt is due to their fear of Moslems). — The greatest mischief affecting the moral reputation of this country in the eyes of the European public is a result of the fact that those who write to that public about Egypt are divided into two parts—one who is ignorant of Egypt and knows nothing about the social development more than it forms a part of the Black Continent, and that it is inhabited by people who have experienced the dark circumstances of ages and centuries, while the other part write with one-sided views, being absolutely unable to strip themselves of personal interest, which dictates their suggestions. A writer has published an article in the "Daily Telegraph" of late, presuming that the Copts have sided with Moslems in the recent national movement simply because they were afraid of vengeance being visited upon them. This statement, may the head indicates that the writer responsible for it knows nothing of Egypt and its inhabitants and writes what happens to come to his mind without any careful discussion. Had he wished to examine the matter he would have had firstly to understand that the fear of revenge on the part of the Copts could only exist in the case of Moslems being endowed with the power and still to inflict that revenge, and the Copts believing that their compatriots would do harm to them if they refused to join in the movement. Did he inquire into this question and discover the evil intention of Moslems before he contributed his article to the English journal. No. We believe that British public opinion has banished this idea, which has also been contradicted by our Coptic brothers, who have declared the innocence of their Moslem countrymen. Does the "Daily Telegraph" want to hear another proof? If it does, it only has to review the situation of Egypt as it stood nine years ago when Moslems and Copts differed with each other as compatriots, on account of something called "Demands." A Coptic Congress was then held at Assiout, and a Moslem Congress was held at Heliopolis. Sir Eldon Gorst, the then British Diplomatic Agent in Egypt backed up the claims of Moslems in his reports, repudiating the demands of the Copts. Had the Copts been weak-hearted or had they known that their Moslem countrymen possessed the powers of doing harm to them they would have in the nature of things entertained fears under the circumstance when both parties openly stood in opposite camps, the British Diplomatic Agent siding with the Moslems against them. The Copts knew no fear and are still fearless. They are in a position to understand that, though some reason might take place between both elements on account of certain affairs, Moslems are never liable to bear ugly ages against them, or to nourish evil sentiments in a way that only befits traitors. All this is known by Moslems and Copts and by all those who live under the sunny sky of Egypt, and could have been understood by the writer of the "Daily Telegraph" as well had he only been anxious to be a fair reporter of facts.

PRESS LIBEL CASE.

MADAME EMILIENNE'S ACTION.

In our issue of Friday last we announced that on the proceeding day the action for libel, brought by Madame Emilienne against the "Bourse Egyptienne," the "Messagero Egiziano," and the "Egyptian Gazette," had been pleaded before the Mixed Courts at Alexandria. The following is a detailed account of the case:

Maitre Simond, for the plaintiff, opened the case by stating that his client had been hurt in her feelings as a Frenchwoman by the deliberate calumnies of the local newspapers. He alleged that she suffered financially, and, more especially, morally owing to this libel. Notwithstanding the actions taken by the plaintiff in the various Consular Courts and the apologies that the newspapers had willingly made for the injury done to her she now sued before the Mixed Court to demand financial satisfaction for what she had suffered and considered that the Court should award her L.E.2,000.

Maitre Valtimbelle, for the "Bourse Egyptienne" and the "Messagero Egiziano," argued that the allegations as to the financial losses suffered by plaintiff were not justified, and that if there had been any failing-off in the profits, which was not proved, this could easily be accounted for by the fact that during the period when plaintiff was in her business took place Madame Emilienne was absent in France, and also that at that time there was a general state of depression as she was then accused of on its worst phase from the point of view of the Allies.

Maitre Charles Dahan, for the "Egyptian Gazette," opened his case by explaining to the Court the actual facts. On September 13, 1917, the "Bourse Egyptienne," published a paragraph to the effect that it had heard from private sources that a well-known "Modiste" whom it designated as "Madame E.", living in Alexandria and whose sole claim to be a Frenchwoman was her name, had been arrested on the charge of spying at Marseilles. Naturally this news interested all the Press and the "Egyptian Gazette" was informed verbally by the director of the "Bourse Egyptienne" that "Madame E." was Madame Emilienne and that the news had been obtained from an officer of the French merchant marine, who had frequented on the same social end had personal knowledge of the facts. Maitre Dahan pleaded that in time of war it was the duty of the Press to give publicity to happenings that might be a danger to the public security, and that it was perfectly justifiable under the circumstances for the newspaper to give publicity to a statement to which the "Bourse Egyptienne" had already called attention. It was a matter, he said, which could not be proved as it would have taken months to obtain the necessary details from France and that meanwhile, if there had been any harm, it would have been done. Maitre Dahan laid stress on the part played by the French Press in drawing the attention of the authorities in the Malvy and the Humbert cases, although the latter had been declared innocent. Maitre Dahan said that certainly harm had been done morally to Madame Emilienne, but this had been amply atoned for by the complete apology, which both the "Egyptian Gazette" and the "Bourse Egyptienne" had made when Madame Emilienne agreed to settle the actions she had brought before the British Consular Court. In any case, he continued, assuming that there had been any decrease in the business of Madame Emilienne, which had not been proved, this was simply due to the special conditions created by the war, but the truth was that during the war Madame Emilienne had made considerable profits owing to the war by the business she had done as a fashionable "Modiste," and in the present case she was only trying to make money out of an action on the part of the newspapers concerned, which had merely arisen out of the necessities of the war. In any case, he asked, how could the paragraph in the "Egyptian Gazette" cause any special harm when the original paragraph on this subject had already been published in the "Bourse Egyptienne?" For these reasons he asked the Court to dismiss the case.

MR. ASQUITH'S LETTERS CENSORED.

"A Wayfarer," writing in "A London Diary" in the "Nation," says: "While Mr. Asquith was abroad he suffered the gross indignity of having his letters opened and examined by the Censor. A remonstrance against this outrage addressed to the War Office, produced neither regret nor apology."

A Bohemian commission has presented a report in favour of the compulsory expropriation of landowners. The report recommends that no landowner shall be allowed to retain possession of more than 625 acres, and that all his land property over and above this limit shall be bought by the State at a price fixed by the Government.

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THE SULTANIC SOCIETY.

AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION IN ITALY.

After an inevitable suspension, the Sultanic Society of Economics, Statistics and Legislation resumed its work on Friday evening. A meeting was held under the presidency of M. G. Blanchard, Professor at the French School of Law assisted by Dr. J. Levi, Director of the Department of Statistics and Census, in which Mr. A. Tarli, Professor of political economy and general accountancy at the Royal Italian School (Lycee) of Cairo delivered an interesting lecture on Agricultural co-operation in Italy. As the President rightly remarked before closing the meeting, the series of lectures on co-operation organised by the Society could not have been better closed owing to the fact that Italy has placed itself in a few years at the head of agricultural co-operation organisation and has introduced certain types which several others have adopted with success.

Prof. Tarli started his lecture with a short historical sketch of the agricultural co-operation in Italy which largely owes its unrivalled success to two illustrious patriots—economists and statesmen—namely Messrs. Luzzatti and Wollemborg, the founders of Italian co-operation banking. Both of them belong to this small Israelite Community of Italy which, on its exodus from Spain, was kindly welcomed with the traditional liberalism which characterises Italy. This small community intermingled with the great Italian family sharing its sufferings as well as its joy and glory; and contributing highly to its sciences, arts and the purest idealism. The speaker then began to analyse in turn the different branches of Italian co-operation beginning with the Popular Banks which form the mainstay of this edifice. The legitimate father of Italian popular banks is M. Luzzatti who studied co-operation at the Schulze School whence he adopted the main ideas without being bound by them. On the contrary he introduced into them innovations so general as to give him the right of saying loudly "We have not copied any institution but have produced a new type and by giving to it the stamp of Italian originality we have created the Popular Banks."

GERMAN AND ITALIAN BANKS.

Mr. Tarli then made a minute comparison between the German Popular Banks, which were the first in existence and the Italian Banks, showing by it the striking superiority of the latter which are particularly characterised by their democratic spirit, by the exclusion of the idea of gain, by their independence, by their keen interest in social progress, by the great confidence which they have never ceased to enjoy and by the simplicity and solidity of their organism. He then quoted, in this connection, the opinion of M. E. Dumond, the well known apostle of French co-operation who wrote in his work about the Italian co-operative organisation that the "magnificent group of institutions of popular banking which Italy owes to M. Luzzatti, may well excite the envy of Europe."

In point of fact these institutions have fully realised the desiderata which should form the basis of co-operation, i.e., substitution of collective force to individual force; economic and social regeneration; capitalisation of work and capitalist emancipation honesty and domination.

The few figures which the speaker gave show clearly the progress of Popular Banking—a progress which finds its entire justification in the following notes:—

The institutions which in the course of 50 years have attained the figure of 690, possess each an average patrimonial share of 226,000 lires. The total of their capital amounted to 156 millions in 1906, their fiduciary deposits to 971 millions, their operations (discounts, advances, etc.) to 1 milliard 106 million lires and their net profits to 14 million lires or 8 lires 77 centimes by 100 lires.

RURAL INSTITUTIONS.

M. Tarli then passed to the rural banks which carry out in the country the same duties assigned to Popular Banks in towns. The first bank was inaugurated in 1883 by M. Wollemborg in the midst of scepticism and doubt with by friends and enemies. The success of the work however has been a formal dementi to both. The number of rural banks attained 2,122 in 1910, but the statistics of that year contained information only regarding 868 of these banks possessing a fully-paid capital of one and a half million lires. During that same year their free and current account deposits exceeded 57 millions while the work of their bill of Exchange Department attained 46 millions.

M. Tarli then dealt in detail with the organisation and magnificent work of these rural banks. After giving a general explanation of the other forms of co-operation he dealt at length particularly with the co-operative factories of chemical manure and the collective farming system both branches of which are of special interest to this country.

The chemical manure factories are only of recent origin, the first one having been established in 1897. Their object was to spare the cultivator from the exploitation and fraud of the middleman. Their production in 1914 attained the figure of 200 million kilos of superphosphates.

As to the collective farming system, of which the speaker qualifies Italy as the originator, its object is to obtain for the person who works the land the use of the land and a fair remuneration which would relieve him of the exploitation of landed proprietors and of usurers. The larger part of these farms are divided, thus attracting individual interest. They rarely have capitals of their own but obtain their funds by borrowing either from the eventual purchasers of their produce or from the members of the farming co-operation. They also purchase lands, hire machines, ensure etc. all in common. According to the most recent statistics there are at present 83 societies of collective farming in existence, possessing (as capital and reserve) a sum of 778,000 lires and cultivating an area of over 7,600 hectares.

ITALIAN LEGISLATION.

M. Tarli closed his lecture by giving a summary of the Italian Legislation in connection with cooperation and spoke of the future of agricultural co-operation in very optimistic terms. "The hour has come," he said, "when co-operation will be called upon to play the role which its apostles have assigned to it long ago." What appeared Utopian yesterday will probably be the fact to-morrow. The task of economic and social regeneration in the agricultural domain, which appeared above the force of co-operation, will be hardly sufficient for the employment of all its energies."

In coing fully into the figures quoted by M. Tarli it will be observed that the organisation of Italian co-operation consists of 8,875 societies with an army of one and half million members which approximately means that a population of nine millions is benefiting by this co-operation. Their patrimony attains 300 million lires at the lowest estimate and their working figure attains 2 milliards lires annually. This is certainly a balance sheet of which Italy should be proud.

The speaker was greatly applauded and congratulated by the President and the audience. The former laid particular stress on the unfailing efforts of the Society which, by its lectures and publications, has placed at the disposal of public and Government a collection of most precious documents and notices on the subject of co-operative organisation in different countries. He hoped that it will be possible to profit by this collection and present the country with a system of legislation which would encourage the co-operative movement which will render to the country invaluable service.

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