OUR PALESTINE LETTER.

EMPIRE DAY CELEBRATIONS.

(By Moses Levene).

JERUSALEM, May 26.

Empire Day at Jerusalem was spent very quietly, no official celebrations having taken place. Hebron, however, was the scene of a very successful Sports Meeting that had been arranged by Major A. Abramson, Military Governor of that place. The guests of honour were General Money, Chief Administrator of the O.E.T.A., and Colonel Popham. There were also present many British officers from the Jerusalem Government Offices.

The sports began at 12.30 p.m., the chief events being Putting the Weight; Blind Boot Race; Wrestling on Mules; One Mile Flat Race; Greasy Pole; Tug O' War; Finding the Coin; Horsemanship by Gendarmes, to wind up by a Football Match between Indians and Arabs, in which the Indians won by 4 to 0.

Most amusing was the Finding the Coin. Buckets had been filled with flour at the bottom of which some coins had been placed, which local boys, after having their hands tied behind them, had to find with their mouths by putting their heads into the buckets filled with flour. In all the races for which Indians and local gendarmes competed, the Indians won. Very thrilling was the horsemanship of the local gendarmes. Mrs. Abramson presented the prizes to the winners, after which a sumptuous tea was provided to the Europeans according to their taste, and to the natives according to their own custom. The Hebron population was represented by its Jewish and Mohamedan notables. Altogether a most enjoyable day was spent in the City of Abraham, for which all present thanked Major Abramson.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE RABBINICAL CONFERENCE.

As in a previous letter, the Executive Committee of the Rabbinical Conference have now published the text of the resolutions passed at their recent conference, a translation of which reads as follows:—"We, the Rabbis of all the cities and colonies of Palestine assembled in Jerusalem, the Holy City, at the first general conference of Palestinian Rabbis held in modern times, in our capacity as spiritual guides of the Jewish people of Palestine and spokesmen of their feelings, hereby express, in the presence of representatives of the British Government and its allies, and of the Jewish communal organisations, our heartfelt thanks to the British and the Allied Governments.

Great Britain, like King Cyrus in days of old, is the first of the great Powers to bring to our people, after well nigh 2000 years of wandering and homelessness the good tidings of peaceful settlement in the land of its origin and its birth as a nation.

We praise God the Rock of Ages that He has fulfilled His promise by means of the armies of Great Britain and her Allies, and that the beginning of the final decision of victory took place in the Holy Land the land of Israel.

As he put it into the heart of Great Britain in Israel's day of crisis and anguish, so proclaim, with the concurrence of her Allies tidings of salvation to Israel, so may He now be with her in her stand for the rights and freedom of all peoples, together with Israel, the most ancient of all peoples of the earth. And may the name of Great Britain, who freed and protects us, be exalted for praise and blessing evermore.

(2) This Conference of Rabbis from every Jewish community in the land of Israel, composed of their spiritual guides and religious centres for the people Israel in Jerusalem, the Holy City, in fulfilment of their sacred duty, express to the Government of Great Britain and her Allies their deeply felt gratitude for the noble declaration that the British Government will facilitate the creation of a national Jewish home in Palestine, that will in no way prejudice the rights of other peoples of Palestine or the Jews in other lands. This Conference looks forward with ardent yearning to the realisation of this declaration, and prays to God who dwelleth in Zion and Jerusalem, His chosen city, to exalt the strength of Great Britain and her King, George the fifth. In his days may Judah be saved and Israel dwell securely.

(3) The Conference of Rabbis of Palestine declares in the name of the holy Torah that it is the hope and the longing of the people Israel to make for itself a secure national home and spiritual religious centre in the land of its fathers, to live therein as a religious national life and to revive again the land that has become desolate. It summons all the peoples of the land in friendship and harmony to work together to make the land blossom again in fruitfulness.

(4) This Conference of Rabbis of Palestine respectfully urges the British Administration to recognise the seventh day Sabbath and the Jewish holy days as official days of rest for the Jews of the land.

(5) This Conference of Rabbis of Palestine respectfully urges that our Hebrew languages shall be regarded as one of the official languages of the administration.

(6) This Conference of Rabbis of Palestine respectfully urges the British administration to recognise the Rabbinical Associations and the Rabbinical Institutions as completely autonomous authorities in all questions concerning the Jewish religion such as synagogues, religious dietary regulations, marriage and divorce laws, inheritance, ecclesiastical property, trusteeship, and urges that all justiciable questions between Jew and Jew shall be arbitrated by Rabbinical courts.

(7) This Conference of Rabbis of Palestine respectfully offers to the departments of the military administration and all Jewish national and communal institutions and organisations, the co-operation of the Rabbis by virtue of their Rabbinical office.

(8) This Conference of Rabbis of Palestine pays loving tribute to the soldiers enlisted in the Jewish Legion for the redemption and the safety of this land. It respectfully urges on the authorities that these men be given "Kosher" food, and that a place be set aside in every camp for religious services and that, every possible opportunity be given them for the observance of their religious duties.

(9) The Conference of Rabbis of Palestine makes solemn and loving memorial for the souls of those heroic soldiers who gave their life blood on the field of battle for the redemption of the land, and it prays to the Lord, that the souls of the spirits of all flesh, that their souls may be bound up in the bond of life eternal. Furthermore this Conference respectfully urges that the earthly remains of Jewish soldiers who fell in battle should be reinterred in Jewish cemeteries.

(10) (Adopted in silence, those present standing).

The Conference of Rabbis of Palestine with stricken and bleeding heart makes solemn memorial for the souls of those brethren who have fallen by murderous and massacring hands in Russia, Poland and Galicia. It prays to God that He will proclaim an end to all religious persecutions, so that peace may reign again in the world and innocent blood may no longer be poured out. It asks the Peace Conference and all the nations of the world to put an end to this dark crime by peace, and to grant to Israel in all the lands where it is scattered a life of peace and security.

MUSIC IN CAIRO.

As anticipated, another interesting programme was presented at last Thursday's Recital at the Anglo Swiss Hotel. The Comtesse de Lavison is to be congratulated on her ability in obtaining the assistance of so many well-known artistes at these increasingly popular weekly concerts.

On the evening in question that clever, young pianist, Miss M. Braticevich opened the proceedings with a highly intelligent rendering of Chopin's difficult Scherzo Op. 20. This, though not perfect, was imbued with thoughtful assurance. A feature of this charming artiste's playing is her unaffectedness and entire absence of irritating mannerisms which so frequently detract from what might otherwise be a good performance. Later Miss Braticevich played Debussy's "Jardin sous la pluie" and his "Ut Arabesque." These beautiful tone poems suited her particular style well, her technique and true musical insight being apparent, especially in the last named. She well deserved the hearty applause accorded her, necessitating her return when she gave us Chopin's "Berceuse." Her final contribution was Liszt's "2nd Rhapsody," which shows she has, in addition to her other attributes, ambition.

The soprano was Miss N. Dagher. She was in excellent voice and her selection of Leo Delibes' lively "Arioso" was a very happy one, and suited her admirably. It is well known that Delibes was composed in one of Delibes' more inspired moments, and Miss Dagher sang it beautifully. The delighted "bravo" naturally insisted on her immediate reappearance, and Lane Wilson's immortal "Carmina" was the reward. We eagerly awaited her second numbers, "Le Nil" (Xavier Leroux) and Frances Aylward's "Ecoutez-moi, ô mon." Although obviously hoarse singing in French, her own interpretation of the latter conveyed to those who know the "chanson" so well quite a new and elevating impression. Needless to say, an encore was insisted upon, when C. A. Lidgey's pathetic little song "A widow bird sate mourning" was quite touchingly given. In respect to the artiste, the writer overheard a remark made by one of the audience to the effect that he "could listen to her singing all day"—sound judgment.

A very agreeable novelty at these concerts was introduced by the flute solos of Sergt. R. Schoenheimer, who, from his repertoire, selected John Ireland's "Grand Dance" and "Berceuse de Jocelyn." One wonders why this, the most suitable of the wood-wind instruments, is so neglected for solo. Granted it is very difficult to master, yet surely the resultant pleasure more than compensates for the hard and frequently wearisome course of persistent study, essential to proficiency. Sgt. Schoenheimer is obviously a musician of high attainment, and it was generally regretted that circumstances prevented him re-appearing later in the programme. We, however, look forward to hearing him again at a not too distant date.

Mr. Rousein accompanied throughout the evening with his customary skill and sympathy.

CAIRO VITAL STATISTICS.

The following are the figures of birth and death registered and cases of infectious diseases notified in Cairo during the week ending May 20.

Births 518, deaths, 828.

Infectious diseases: 426 cases, Typhoid 53; typhus 233; diphtheria, 14; small-pox 82; chicken pox 5; scarlet fever 1; relapsing fever 10; measles 22; whooping cough 3 and influenza 3.

HOME MAIL TO-DAY.

Latest times for posting at Alexandria for the next British mail, via Alexandria and Taranto, are ordinary correspondence Monday, June 1, 10 a.m., registered correspondence and insured articles 9 a.m.

CAIRO STRAY DOGS AND CATS.

The Cairo City Police notifies that stray dogs and cats will be destroyed on the dates and at the places hereunderstated:—

Marg: Ain Shams, Ezbekia, June 3; Kaid Bey, Bab el Citadel and Sayeda, June 4; Helwan and Boulac, June 5; Kubbeh, Zeitoun and Heliopolis, June 6; Shubra, Nile Bank and Khalifa, June 7; Ghamra, Tewfikia Canal and Old Cairo, June 8; Khalifa, Imam and Helwan, June 9.

UNREST IN EGYPT.

DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT.

THE PROPOSED INQUIRY.

The following is the continuation of the debate on Egyptian unrest in the House of Commons, of which the first part was given in our last issue:—

Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, replying upon the debate said in the course of the speeches interesting that he had heard in the House this Session, and it had been marked by a complete moderation of tone, brought out by the one topic like hon. member for Bishop Auckland (Mr. Spence) seemed to strike an unhappy note. It was remarkable that, having regard to the situation in Egypt, the Committee should have carried on the debate so calmly and quietly in the afternoon and that only one jarring note should have been struck.

CAUSES OF OUTBREAK.

A great number of reasons had been adduced to explain the recent outbreak in Egypt. He thought it was fair to say that it was not one cause but an accumulation of causes. He thought the hon. member for Newcastle-under-Lyme hit on the real point when he said that we were living in a world of political ferment. There was not a country in the world, so far as he knew, that had been affected by that great war that was not now engaged in political speculation. It would have been a remarkable thing if Egypt, occupying so central a position in the geography of the world, had been unaffected by a worldwide movement. He thought that the Egyptian mind was made more aware of the recent discontent. Egypt had been one of the theatres of the war itself, and here he would say that his hon. and gallant friend opposite (Captain Wedgwood Benn) made a little too much of the hardships undergone in Egypt. It was fair to say, he thought, that Egypt on the whole suffered as little in a material sense as any country during this great war. (Cheers). The hon. member suggested that the Egyptian cotton crop was not that of £20,000,000 owing to some mismanagement on the part of the British authorities. He was wholly unable to accept that. He did not, if he so, think of all the difficulties of removing the cotton crop in Egypt during the last two or three years. There were difficulties of transport on the railways, which were very largely occupied with the movement of troops, and there were almost incredible difficulties of shipping. He gratified him to learn from hon. gentlemen who knew Egypt much better than he did, that, in their judgment, during the last two years, on the whole a very remarkable degree of prosperity.

Captain Wedgwood Benn. — Does the hon. gentleman think that that prosperity extended downwards to the fellahs? Unless it was the cost of living so much raised that the lowest classes could not enjoy what they had enjoyed before?

Mr. Cecil Harmsworth. — Did any people of the world enjoy exactly what they had enjoyed before? He had yet to learn, certainly he had received no record, of any serious privation among the people of Egypt. He thought it was. As he had said, a good many subsidies had been given, and a no inconsiderable part of them had been correctly stated? Some hon. members had referred to the apprehensions among the lawyers in Egypt as to possible changes in the system of judicature. They had heard of the abolition of the Mixed Courts in Egypt, and they had had, no doubt—he did not think they need quarrel about it—a certain amount of disquietude among the native questions by inexperienced officers. During the whole of this war a great part of the work of the world had been done by subsidiaries. It did not surprise him in the least that in one place or another, in one occasion or another, there had been a misheading of native questions by officers who could not, in the nature of things, have been expected to have a lifelong experience of native sentiment.

GOVERNMENT SURPRISED.

Let this be stated with absolute frankness. The outbreak in Egypt came with surprise on the Government of Egypt, and on those who were responsible in part for the Government of Egypt at home. There need be no concealment about that. He remembered almost to the very moment when this outbreak occurred. He was engaged at a conference with a foreign Office with legal gentlemen from Egypt, discussing one of the most legal problems which had been referred to that afternoon. They discussed them, he need hardly say, in an atmosphere of absolute calm. He heard nothing from those gentlemen, some of whom had almost a life-long experience of Egypt, by way of reference to a possible outbreak in that country. It was not surprising that the news of this outbreak gave rise to the greatest alarm and disquietude among in England. They had all been very proud of the British record in Egypt, and he thought they had reason to be proud of it. He had heard Egypt addressed as an object lesson of the almost miraculous incident of the British people for Empire. Certainly that object lesson had excited the admiration not only of our own people, but he thought of foreign peoples too. It was true to say that a population two or three times larger than that of Great Britain and Ireland had been for years successfully governed by native rulers and native officers, advised and assisted by a mere handful of British officials.

To the Government of Egypt, some of the best statesmen this country had produced had dedicated their lives. Lord Cromer, Lord Kitchener—these were the men who, we's seemed to him, governed Egypt largely by personality and prestige. And there was, it seemed to him, was another of the causes of the present disturbance. These two men, enjoying as he thought they did, a quite unrivalled prestige in the Near East, had no successors. They governed more largely by personality and prestige. One might almost, perhaps—he did not think the expression was offensive—describe them as benevolent autocrats. When they removed a benevolent autocrat they ought to be careful that they substituted some form of government adequate to fill the place of those who had been removed. He was not satisfied in his own mind that that had been done at that time. Properly followed British rule in Egypt to a perfectly intelligible end, and he believed that among the largest classes of the people in that country there was a some generally of security and contentment. The old Biblical prophecy might almost have been supposed to be intended for Egypt:—"The desert shall rejoice and blossom like the rose." That was partly as the result of British government in that country. (Hon. members: "Entirely"). Let this be noted—it had been remarked that afternoon—it was a great testimony to British rule in Egypt that Egypt stood staunchly by the British Empire during this war. If there were misgivings now, and bitterness in some quarters, let that fact be recorded to the credit of Egypt.

There took places this sudden change. He did not know whether there were members of that House or prophets in other quarters who would tell them that they foresaw and anticipated exactly what had happened in Egypt. He had not yet met anybody who had said the outrage to sentiment in Egypt was for a certainty that this outbreak would take place, and when it would take place. Not merely did he believe, but its extent, surprised those responsible for the government of Egypt.

EVENTS BEFORE THE RISING.

The extent of this rising was not only a remarkable fact in Egypt, but one that was eminently deserved the attention of the House and of England. In November of three Egyptian statesmen called at the Residency. What did they ask for? They demanded complete autonomy for Egypt, leaving to his Majesty's Government only the right of supervision over the Public Debt and facilities for shipping in the Suez Canal. They made a reasonable claim made by responsible public men, having regard to all the history of British rule in Egypt. It resulted Egypt from the suzerainty of the Turkish Government, and no native population ever enjoyed greater advantages from British rule than the Egyptian. (Cheers). That might have been remembered by the leaders of the Nationalist Party in Egypt. Soon after this the Prime Minister, Rushdi Pasha, suggested that he and the Minister of Education should come to England and discuss with the home Government the affairs of Egypt. These two statesmen were held in the highest esteem by his Majesty's Government, but they made it a condition of their coming that Egypt should be represented by them the leaders of the National Party. It was a very difficult thing for a Government to agree to recognise, and by so doing afford immense encouragement to advanced politicians, who were seeking the overthrow of the Government. It happened that at the time of their suggested visit the Foreign Office was almost reduced to the limits of endurance of its staff by questions connected with the Egyptian Government. It was impossible to give to the Egyptian statesmen that their visit might be postponed. It seemed an unfortunate thing that at the moment when the Egyptian statesmen were going to take the disastrous turn they had since taken.

Mr. Spence, the hon. gentleman gives us an understanding that an inquiry will be made into the allegations contained in the statement he has in his possession?

Mr. Cecil Harsworth. — That does not fall to me. There is a Commission going to Egypt and I have no doubt it will examine into that question. I think that is a serious charge, an outrage on the reputation of the British soldier that there should be any need to inquire into that. (Cheers). Was it the Sudan Pipe-line fall?). So far as one can see the allegations are wholly unsubstantiated.

THE PRESENT SITUATION.

As regards Egypt at the present situation, he thought, we now satisfactory. Order and quiet prevailed and only the students in the schools remained to be seen, on strike. Perhaps they felt that they had lost so much of the present term during this time of excitement that it was scarcely worth the trouble to complete it at school. There was, he said, information of a satisfactory kind. Captain Benn, if I understand that it had any immediate relation to the recent outbreak, or was anything beyond a purely parliamentary, and hope, gentlemen then made a statement about the Commission which it was proposed to send to Egypt in terms similar to those used by Lord Curzon in the House of Lords. He added that he had been scarcely worth the Commission was going out, but he could not give a date. The Commission was being prepared by the Government of the first authority, and it would be necessary that some delay should take place.

Captain Benn. — Meanwhile how will Egypt be governed?

Mr. Harmsworth. — Egypt will be governed as Egypt is being governed now. (Cheers).

Captain Benn. — To the point I want to get at is there going to be any form of representative Government in Egypt or is it going to be governed now autocratically?

Mr. Harmsworth. — I should be quite unworthy of the position if I would stand at this late end of debate to discuss the form of any particular form of government. These matters are under discussion. The hon. and gallant gentleman knows that it is quite impossible for any Minister to get up before a Commission which has to examine the whole matter and hear any time to consider it, and give the House a considered statement.

Captain Grimsby-Gore (Stafford C.U.). — Are we to understand that Lord Milner a himself going out to Egypt as the head of the Commission?

Mr. Cecil Harsworth replied that Lord Milner had been invited to act as president or chairman of this Commission. We had no reason to fear that he would not do everything for our Imperial records. There was nothing but our national habit of self-deprecation which would give us any ground for magnifying on that point. It was a sufficient testimony to the British Government and British rule that it stands the Empire stood steadfastly by us in the greatest trial with which we had ever been confronted. The Sudan was the most important of the Empire stood by us—India and the Green Colonies of the East and of the West. Egypt herself was faithful to the Empire during the war. Mistakes might have been made and he was not prepared to say that we had made mistakes in Egypt, but on a close and searching inquiry it was found that there was no ground for the belief that there was much room for improvement in the government of Egypt. But it was not his intention, in anticipation of the judgment of the visiting Commission. Those leaders of Egypt who had participated this unhappy crisis had taken on themselves an immense responsibility. (Cheers). They had known better than those who had generously made the inexhaustible were this resources of British Imperial statesmanship. Egypt (cn it was true) in the long run an honest and constitutional demand would lead to wider opportunities and responsibilities. They had taken that chance and possibility of oppression under the British flag, and they might have been prepared, at least, for the generous benefits that British rule had conferred on the mass of their countrymen. (Cheers). They had chosen other courses, and they had seen by what calamitous results it had been followed. Meanwhile, he emphatically declared that the Government had no intention whatsoever of abandoning the obligations and responsibilities which they incurred before the world when they assumed the task of governing Egypt. (Cheers). Those obligations and responsibilities have been confirmed by the establishment of our protectorate in Egypt, or which we have interested in its future prosperity and good government. At the same time, the Government would pursue indefatigably their policy of shaping for the protectorate a system of prudent and ever-enlarging political enfranchisement. The Government would continue to govern Egypt in association with his Highness the Sultan and his advisers, and they would not prove indifferent—as they had not been indifferent in the past—to the claims of the Egyptian people to a due and increasing share in the management of the affairs of Egypt. (Cheers).

A despatch from Prague states that 2,000 tons of food supplies granted to the Czecho-Slovak Republic by the Allies are arriving daily in Bohemia by barges from Hamburg.

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THE WAR OF SECTS.

(To the Editor, "Egyptian Gazette.")

Sir,—I have been travelling lately and consequently have had to forego the after-breakfast pleasure which your paper used to afford me. I am therefore, unable to answer "Howitzer's" letters in extenso.

He need not, however, despair of me. It is true that since Our Lord said that He founded a Church on Peter against which the gates of Hell should not prevail, I am quite certain that there exists in the world such a Church at the present day. "Howitzer" will not blame me for that, for I want that Church to rule the world of One Whom I believe to be God.

Now, it is no good for "Howitzer" to tell me that a conglomerate of anti-Catholic sects are the Church which Christ founded on Peter; for I have not yet lost my reason. Let him, however, name for me the founder of the Roman Catholic Church, as I can name for him the founder of the Greek Orthodox, the Church of England, the Lutherans, the Calvinists, the Wesleyans and so forth. There let him point out a church, which I have overlooked, which was founded by Christ on St. Peter, and I shall at once abandon the Roman Catholic Church and seek admission to this other body.

Here's a sporting offer. Hoc opus, hic labor, "Howitzer" has only got to show me someone who founded the Roman Catholic Church posterior to the time of Christ, and then to point out to me another church which was founded by Christ on Peter and I am his convert. I anticipate, however, that it will be a task of some difficulty.

If I have gone to Bedghy before his answer comes, I am sure I have left friends sufficiently interested in my spiritual welfare to forward to me his Eureka.

Yours, etc.,
ROMAN CATHOLIC.

Kantara, May 29.

A RISE IN SALARY.

The Ministry of Justice have decided to raise the salary of their clerks by L.E.1 per month, thus the total will now be L.E. 4 per month.

The General Post Office announces that all branches of the Postal Services are now working normally and the temporary dislocation due to the recent disturbances no longer exists. The only exceptions are those of certain localities at which trains do not halt at present and particulars concerning these localities will be furnished on application at any Post Office.

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