## OUR PALESTINE LETTER.

(By Moses Levene.)

For the third time since the occupation of Jerusalem by British troops have the sons of Abraham, serving in the British army, enjoyed the celebration of a Jewish feast not a furlong's distance from Mount Zion, namely the Jewish New Year Rosh Hashounah.

A large number of soldiers assembled at the Beth Am (Public Hall) where the troops were accommodated in tents kindly supplied by the authorities. The complete arrangements were in the hands of the Rev. J. Frankenthal, C.F., who also collected the necessary funds for providing kosher food for the soldiers and making them, during their stay at Jerusalem as happy as possible. The services were also attended by the doctors of the American Zionist Medical Unit, and it was a real pleasure to witness how the Jews from different parts, serving in the Allied armies had united in the place where issued spiritual life to mankind.

* * *

The conclusion of the two days' furlough was preceded by a tea and dance, and the men returning to the trenches will ever remember the happy "Rosh Hashounah" spent at Jerusalem.

Next month is Mucharam, and it is the custom in Palestine to rent houses yearly from Mucharam to Mucharam. Last year hardly any removing occurred, the prominent citizens in Southern Palestine were either banished into the interior, or they lay in concealment in cellars or garrets. In the case of families who were forced to leave their homes at a few hours notice, they were only too pleased when they obtained a friend to move in and keep watch over the furniture.

Now, however, that matters have settled down and the personnel of so many relief societies have arrived, there is a demand for convenient houses, and Mucharam will return as of old. Already houses are being inspected and the "atak" will come in for a good time shortly.

* * *

There is an abundance of fruit now in the bazaars of Jerusalem and other occupied places in Palestine—peaches, grapes and pomegranates. The grapes of Hebron are now coming into the market of Jerusalem and they are the most delicious in the whole country. The quality of these grapes is referred to in the Old Testament when the men sent to spy out the country "cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff."

Tommy is very fond of grapes and figs and the fellah is fond of bully, so mutual exchanges occur quite frequently to the satisfaction of both parties. The almond crop has been rather poor, but a good olive harvest is assured. The inhabitants are all expectant for the picking of the olives, as they form one of their staple winter foods.

## THE NATIVE PRESS.

### OUT OF THE FRYING PAN...

"Wady el Nil."—(From another article on the purification of Boulevard Ramleh.)— We cannot believe that the Government meant to purify only Boulevard Ramleh from vice when it took the recent measures to remove all immoral houses from that street and, so far as we see, it must have the idea of purifying every populous and prosperous street from immorality. We should be pleased then also vice to move to such an important street as Rue Tewfik which is the seat of the Governorate? Suppose the Government's orders were clear regarding the purification of Boulevard Ramleh, particularly, the Governorate and the Alexandria City Police ought to take into consideration the object which the Government had in view when it expressed its desire to save the Boulevard from an overwhelming vice. There is no reason why they should wait for particular orders for particular acts, and not act as one who knows well how to carry out his duty fully and indefeasibly. Do not those who have purified Boulevard Ramleh feel that it is shameful to allow the same evil to spread in other streets without opposition, while they are supposed to be anxious to remove it, and they know that it is their duty to do so?

### MORE OIL NEEDED.

"Wady el Nil."—The shortage of cotton seed oil has become more conspicuous and is feared to develop into a crisis. The quantity taken from the Salt and Soda Company, which has been under distribution in the town for the last few days is about to be finished. It is even stated that many of the oil sellers entrusted with distribution have sold out the quantities given to them. If the S.C.B. observes this it must be clear that the statement which was made four days ago to the effect that the new cotton seed crop is hardly expected to come from Lower Egypt in less than 20 days only tends to bring about a much more quickly an oil crisis of a serious nature; because the want of oil just now cannot be attributed to hoarding.

### THE FEAST AND MEAT PRICES.

The "Bassir."— In the first two days of the Eid, mutton was sold at Alexandria, at the rate of P.T. 48 per oke, and beef at P.T. 20 the oke. Some of the butchers who could not find sufficient mutton and beef used camel meat on the occasion, selling the same at the rate of P.T. 16 an oke. Besides this, butchers are using false weights and weighing meat together with thick paper.

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The "Vosni Izvestia," the Bulgarian military journal, states that the Government has placed an embargo on all this year's grain crops of Bulgaria, Macedonia, the Morava district, and the Dobrudja.

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Mr. Kerensky has just completed a book giving a full explanation of the relations and the disagreement between himself and General Krimloff when Mr. Kerensky was at the head of affairs in Russia. It is understood that the book will be published shortly in English.

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For perfect tea, pastry and cakes, go to LIPTON'S ORIENTAL TEA ROOMS AND GARDENS, Kasr-el-Nil, Cairo, the most popular rendez-vous in Egypt. American Bar, Arabesque Room and Restaurant. Music: 5 to 9 p.m.

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## ALEXANDRIA BOURSE.

The weakness in the market was accentuated. If exception be made of Unified which were in some request at £94, 1/4 £ higher, the tone was quiet in practically all departments.

National Bank dropped 1/4£ and closed offered at £20.

Priv. Cassa di Sconto were quoted at fr.112, two francs drop.

Building Lands closed at £1 3/4, a drop of 1/16.

Wadi Kom Ombo were neglected at £5 9/16, a drop of 7/32.

Société Anonyme du Behera dropped £1 closing at £13 1/4.

Tribunes et Rurales remained at £3 3/8.

Gabbari Land were quiet and price movements were few between £4 and 31/32, 3/32 1/64 drop.

Ord. Khedivieh were neglected at 52/-, a drop of 5/6d., transactions being done at 53/9, 53/, 53/3, 52/6 and 52/-.

Nungovich Hotels dropped an eighth closing at £6 7/8.

Salt and Soda continued in strong demand closing at 56/10 1/2, a drop of 3/4 1/2d., changing hands in large number at 58/9, 58/6, 58/3, 58/9, 58/6, 58/4 1/2, 58/6, 58/4 1/2, 57/9, 57/4 1/2, 57/3, 57/6, 57/9, 57/-, 57/3, 57/1 1/2, 56/9, 56/7 1/2, 56/6, 56/9, 56/10 1/2. 56/7 1/2, 56/9 3/4, 57/-, and 56/10 1/2.

There was some business in Filatures Nationales which dropped £1 closing at £36.

Brasseries d'Egypte were offered at fr. 346 ex-coupon.

There was some business in Cotton Ginners which dropped 3/32 closing at £1, transactions being done at £1 1/32, 1 1/64, 1, 31/32, and 31/32 1/64.

Port Said Salt dropped 7s. closing at 103/6, business being done at 105/-, 105/3, 105/-, 105/3, 105/-, 105/6, 104/-, and 103/6.

New Egyptian Co. were neglected at 20/4 1/2, a shilling drop, transactions being done at 21/-, 20/6, 20/9, 20/6, and 20/4 1/2.

Egypt and Levant s.s. Co. dropped 1s. closing at 32/-.

## THE COURBAN BAIRAM.

### FESTIVITIES AT CAIRO.

The Courban Bairam festivities have passed off quietly at Cairo, and owing to the usual Mohammedan custom of visiting the dead on the occasion of this festival the cemeteries at Cairo were crowded, especially that of Imam El Shafii, in the Citadel quarter, which is the most extensive of the Mohammedan cemeteries of the capital. People here build small dwellings over the tombs of their dead, so that at least they are able to spend two or three successive days at the cemetery. Here they sleep and cook their meals. In passing through these cemeteries the writer can hardly realise that the buildings there are in reality tombs, for they are built like small houses, of more than one storey sometimes, and are separated from each other by streets just as in the other native quarters.

On Sunday evening, celebrations took place at the Rifaii mosque, where the leading members of the Sultanic family are buried, and after the Koran had been chanted for several hours by famous chanters, meat was distributed in large quantities amongst the poor and needy, at the expense of the Sultan. Similar meat distribution was made by most of the well-to-do Mohammedan population as this feast, which is called in Arabic "Eid El Adha," or "the feast of sacrifices" is particularly characterised by the distribution of meat amongst the poor and it was simply in order to avoid a wastage of meat that the Ulemas of Egypt sent out their Fetwa last week exhorting the believers not to slaughter more sacrifices than were is absolutely required by the Sharia law.

On the occasion of the feast 21 guns were fired daily from the Citadel and Abbassia.

A regrettable incident took place at the cemetery on the first day of the feast when the petroleum cooking lamp in one of the tomb houses of the family of the late Hussein Bey Abdel Motaleb burst, burning the daughter of the late Bey, widow of the late Yehia Bey Siddik, judge of the Mixed Tribunal, and two servants, all of whom died. The daughter of Yehia Bey and another servant also received injuries.

## THE COST OF LIVING.

### INCREASE OF 132 PER CENT. IN FRANCE SINCE 1911.

M. Colliard, French Minister of Labour, has just published in a tabulated form the results of the inquiry into the increased cost of living, showing the increases in the price of foodstuffs and household articles in towns numbering more than 10,000 inhabitants.

The inquiry investigated the increases in the prices of the following thirteen articles of food, namely:—

Bread, meat, bacon, butter, eggs, milk, cheese, potatoes, haricot beans, sugar, olive oil, petroleum, and alcohol for fuel.

The average increase in price from the first quarter of 1911 to the second quarter of 1918 has steadily and continually risen to 132 per cent.

## EGYPT'S HOUSING QUESTION.

### THE RISE IN RENTS.

#### EFFECT OF WAR ALLOWANCES.

(From a Correspondent).

With the granting of substantial war-bonuses to the smaller Government officials, the rise in house-rents, both in Cairo and Alexandria, is likely to be still further accentuated; and some action on the part of the Government seems necessary, in order to curb the apparently limitless rapacity of Egyptian landlords.

Unfortunately, while the granting of war-bonuses to the Government personnel will not fail to affect house rents and other items of private expenditure, is borne out by the rise in the price of foodstuffs and other necessities of life, which has occurred even in the two or three days which have elapsed since the news of the Government's decision to help its employees was received. Evidence to this effect is to be found in the translation of an extract from an article in the "Ahram" which recently appeared in your columns, in which the writer records that a Government official, who asked a baker why he had reduced the size of his loaves, was met by the reply: "And why is the Government going to give an increase of 40 per cent to its employees?" Another extract from the "Akhbar," of which a translation appeared in our issue of the 13th instant, under the heading "War allowances and the result," shows that this relief granted to Government officials is already affecting the price of even such things as textiles, a case of a firm of textile merchants having raised their prices from 20 to 40 per cent owing to the war bonuses given to the smaller Government employees, being cited.

It is difficult to believe that the Government ,when taking the momentous decision of saddling the Budget with almost L.E.2,000,000 extra, in order to come to the relief of its officials in receipt of small pay under present circumstances, foresaw the advantage that would be taken of such a step by unscrupulous traders, landlords and others, to still further apply the screw; so defeating the object of the Government measure, with the result that great extra expense is imposed on the country in general without any corresponding benefit being derived by the small section of the population, composed of Government officials, not to mention the other inhabitants of the country whose budgets will be adversely affected.

As regards rents particularly, a case in point has just been brought to my notice. An Englishman living in Cairo and having had his rent raised a second time within a few months by his "get-rich quick" landlord, made enquiries with a view to finding other quarters, and was able to judge of the astounding rise which has occurred in house-rents during the past few months. After vainly perambulating several streets of a likely quarter and being told by the loab of every building that every flat was occupied, he betook himself to an agency which advertises very largely in the press to the effect that it has numerous desirable furnished and unfurnished flats to dispose of. Requiring an unfurnished flat, the gentleman in question hoped to hear that rents for these were less than those for furnished ones, where the present impossibility of furnishing, even secondhand, at reasonable prices, places the would-be tenant more or less at the mercy of the fortunate possessor of a few sticks of furniture; and such extravagant rents as L.E.25 and even L.E.30 per month are being asked and paid for unfurnished flats of four or five rooms in central situations (Vide adverts.) Having mentioned to the agent that he required a fourroomed flat at about L.E.8-10 per month, he was told that such prices were only to be met with in the purlieus of Abdine, Atabe-el-Khadra, and other impossible quarters, and, if he was any decently situated unfurnished flat of the size required, in quarters such as Kasr-el-Nil, Bab-el-Louk, Tewfikieh, etc., he would find nothing under L.E.12 per month and that even these were scarce. The rent of a flat for which L.E.10 was asked six months ago, could safely be taken as being L.E.16 or even L.E.18, to-day. Our friend had therefore no alternative but to accept his landlord's new conditions, and awaits a further disagreeable surprise at any moment.

The whole question of housing in Cairo during the coming winter promises to become serious; and hotels and pensions seem full even at this early date, mid-September. Hotel charges have been raised 15 per cent since the beginning of this month, and P.T.100 per day are now being charged to civilians "en pension" by the first-class hotels in the capital. If the Cairo proprietors of both furnished and unfurnished flats are permitted to raise their rents still further indiscriminately, there is every prospect of a good deal of accommodation remaining empty owing to the sheer inability of would-be tenants to pay the prices quoted, and this at a time when, owing to the increase of the cities' population and the stoppage of building owing to the war, every room will seemingly be required during the winter.

The same thing has occurred this summer in Alexandria, where many owners of furnished houses and flats have failed to let at all, owing to having been too greedy in fixing the rent to be paid. In both England and France, tenants are protected by special war legislation against the rapacity of landlords, and not only are rents forbidden to be raised beyond pre-war rates, but a fair rent is established as regards the payment of such rents. Some action of a similar nature on the part of the Egyptian Government without loss of time seems essential to control the continued rise of rents in this country, if the benefits of the war-bonuses recently granted to Government officials at great expense to the State are not to be lost to the officials concerned, besides having a disastrous effect on the other sections of the population dependent on landlords for a roof over their heads.

As regards the increase in the cost of other articles of necessity, previous to and accentuated by the granting of these war-bonuses, some measures appear to be in the part of the Powers-that-Be to cope with profiteering in general, would be gratefully recognised by the public.

## PAPER MAKING IN AFRICA.

### UTILISATION OF GRASSES.

As report by Dr. C.F. Juritz, Agricultural Research Chemist, Department of Mines and Industries, Union of South Africa, on the possibilities and prospects of a paper-making industry in South Africa is given in the "South African Journal of Industries." It is pointed out that in order to establish a successful paper-making industry there must be a market for the finished product, a sufficiency of suitable raw material, abundance of pure water, a supply of efficient fuel in proximity to the mill, and easy and cheap transport for the raw materials and chemicals to the mill and for the distribution of the paper to the markets. Enquiries which have been made have led to the conclusion that the only part of South Africa in which all these conditions are likely to be met with the immediate future is the Province of Natal and in particular the vicinity of Maritzburg. With regard to the raw material, it is stated that in the Cape Province, South of Natal, there is an abundance of grasses, including Tambookie grass which was examined at the Imperial Institute and found to give a large yield of paper of good quality. To the south of Natal there is papyrus in Zululand and a further supply of Tambookie grass in Portuguese territory. The eastern coast belt possesses numerous rivers capable of affording an abundant supply of water and in some cases offering the advantage of waterfalls from which power could be attained. It is not practicable to establish a paper-making industry at present owing to the difficulty of procuring machinery during the war, but meanwhile further technical investigation of the raw materials and the organisation of other resources is being pursued.

Appendix I. to Dr. Juritz's report ,giving a historical account of the various suggestions which have from time to time and of the investigations carried out in connection with paper-making possibilities in South Africa, has been published in the same "Journal."

## FUME FOR FLYING.

### LONDON TO PARIS IN THREE HOURS.

The possibilities of the aeroplane for travel and business are discussed by Mr. Grahame White in an article in the "Daily Chronicle."

"It would be possible to operate the London-Paris route entirely by private enterprise, and to make it pay. We shall have machines, when the war ends, which will carry a dozen passengers between these two cities in a journey lasting one hour, which will instead of seven—the shortest time by land and sea: and, provided the volume of traffic is sufficient to dispatch several large machines each way daily, it should be possible to carry passengers, profitably, at an express fare of £5 or very little more."

"With high-speed machines, carrying only a pilot and a bag of urgent letters for which special fees, are paid, it should be possible to establish, successfully, certain purely express air-mail routes between London and the cities of the Midlands and the north," says Mr. Grahame White.

"Flying at a speed of 150 miles an hour, these express machines should enable an urgent letter to be posted in the morning in London, at some convenient time after the opening of business, and received so quickly say, in Manchester that a reply could be written and delivered in London in time to be dealt with before the close of the business day.

"It should also be possible to post a letter in London as late as 11.30 a.m. for a city as distant as Glasgow, and for this letter to be delivered in a Glasgow office by about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

"The fees charged at first for a letter sent by express air-mail would be comparatively high—probably about 2s. 6d. for a distance of 250 to 300 miles."

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A Kieff telegram says a deputation has arrived from Petrograd to pave the way for the exchange of Ukrainian foodstuffs for the products of the Northern Russian territory.

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## "END OF THE WAR."

### PHRASE AUTHORITATIVELY DEFINED.

The report of the Select Committee on Emergency Legislation has just been issued as a White Paper. The terms of reference of the Committee were to report what provision should be made by Parliament for defining the meaning of the phrase "end of the war" and other similar phrases occurring in the war emergency statutes, and for extending in whole or in part or shortening the period of operation of the several emergency statutes and the several regulations made thereunder.

The Committee agree that the date of the end of the war in relation to powers conferred by emergency legislation should be held to be the date when the treaty of peace is finally binding on the respective belligerent parties that is, the date when ratifications of the treaty are exchanged or deposited.

This is on the assumption that the war is ended by a general treaty of peace between the United Kingdom and all the Powers with which the United Kingdom, is at war. If, on the other hand, our country were to make a separate treaty of peace with an individual enemy Power, the end of the war with that Power would be the date when the ratifications of the treaty were exchanged or deposited, but that might have little or no effect on existing emergency statutes.

The Committee recommend that legislation should be passed giving statutory power to enable the Government by Order in Council or otherwise, to declare authoritatively, in accordance with the principle laid down above, the date at which the war shall be deemed to have ended, whether generally or in the event of separate peace as regards individual belligerents.

The Committee suggest that the statutory declaration of the meaning of the phrase "end of the war" will probably help towards the elucidation of the meaning of similar phrases occurring in contracts.

## LOANS TO OUR ALLIES.

### BRITISH TAXPAYERS GENEROSITY.

The point in the report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure just issued, which will, perhaps, claim primary attention in the city, is that relating to our financial relations with our Allies. The report points out that up to the end of June the sums advanced to our Allies amounted to 1,400 millions. At the present time, of course, the defection of Russia and the entry of the United States have lessened our financial burden, and it is stated that during the present financial year loans have been so far at the rate of 250 millions a year, or about half the sum advanced during 1917-18. The Chancellor of the Exchequer mentioned in his Budget statement in April last that he was making certain suggestions to the American Government which would obviate the anomaly under which we were borrowing from the United States, at the same time that we were lending to our Allies. Purchases made by our Allies, as well as by ourselves, in the United States, are already financed by loans made by that Government. Purchases made in the United Kingdom are financed by loans made here; but very considerable sums are advanced by us in respect of purchases by the Allies neither in the one country nor in the other, and the funds for this purpose are re-borrowed by us in America. So far there has been no change in this method of procedure, but since the "short circuiting" of the loans in question would not involve any increase in the sums to be found in America, the committee expresses the hope that further consideration may be given to the matter.

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In a leading article the Melbourne "Age" advocates an adequate protective tariff to secure the employment of repatriated soldiers in manufactures from the Australian raw material industry, especially in the manufacture of woollen yarns.

HORNSTEIN'S CLEARANCE SALE.

Hornstein, the boot and shoe specialist, of Avenue Boulac, Cairo, is holding his Autumn Clearance Sale from Tuesday, Sept. 17, to Saturday, October 19, when the whole of the stock of boots and shoes for Ladies, Gentlemen and children will be sold off at very reduced prices.

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## THE WAR DRESS.

### FOUR YARDS OF MATERIAL.

While the promoters of the War Economy Dress Exhibition last month in London, have succeeded in arousing wide interest in their venture, the opinion is expressed, says a London correspondent, that the war frock is praiseworthy from the patriotic point of view, but is too consciously "sensible" to have for future generations the charm of spontaneity.

It is made out of four yards of material and, requiring no fastenings, illustrates effectively a saving of time, trouble, and possibly temper, as well as of money. It is capable of a number of minor modifications, so that those who adopt it need not fear the loss of opportunity to express individuality.

An interesting side show is the display, on living models, of the past century's fashions, with all their extravagances and absurdities. All these costumes, include a couple of wedding dresses, and jewellery, are originals of their respective periods, whether it be the silver and blue brocade ball dress, over a quilted petticoat of 1818; the fringed russet brown silk promenade dress of 1865, or the blue cloth "hobble" coat and skirt of 1910.

"Why," ask the promoters of the exhibition, "has there never been a standard of taste in dress? Why so much strange diversity in different places and periods?

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