EGYPT AND FRANCE.

THE LACK OF COMMUNICATIONS.

Frenchmen in Egypt are inconvenienced owing to the lack of shipping facilities between their own country and Egypt, the communications between Alexandria and Marseilles being interrupted owing to the great strike at Marseilles. The Messageries Maritimes had drawn up a plan for facilitating communications when the strike broke out with the result that most of that Company's fleet remains in Marseilles harbour. The s.s. Lotus was to have left Marseilles on May 5 for Alexandria and to have sailed from here on June 5, but it remains half painted off Cape Pinede, while the German additions to the Company's fleet, the s.s. Sharnhorst and s.s. Buenos-Ayres require overhauling. It is also not permitted to embark at Marseilles for Port Said, since orders have been given for ships to the Far East to take no passengers for ports this side of Suez, while to get to France by a French steamer from the Far East is out of the question as every Sera is taken and they arrive in the Suez Canal crowded with passengers. The British steamers give the priority to the military and to British subjects. Thus the French in Egypt after having wanted to get home in the first year of peace are very disappointed. Mr. Vayssié, the Editor of the "Journal du Caire," states in that newspaper that when recently in Paris he took up the question with the authorities there and a system of communications was drawn up to begin at the end of June the strike at Marseilles disorganised everything. The French Diplomatic Agent at Cairo has cabled to Paris on the subject and there are still hopes of finding some way out of the difficulty.

THE GREEK COMMUNITIES.

A CAIRO MEETING.

A general assembly was held at Cairo on Sunday last in order to elect five members of the committee to take the places of those who have resigned. Excitement was caused as the seven remaining members tendered their resignations unexpectedly and without previous notice. The subscribers to the community have remarked that this was irregular conduct as due notice was not given and in addition they did not render accounts of their administration as provided by regulations. It has also been remarked that in consequence of these resignations the elections should only be restricted to the original five members. Mr. Sachtouris, Consul General, said that the above were well founded considerations but he emphasised that they dealt with only matters of form and regulations and the community needed serious systematic work and not a blind observance to regulations and forms. The assembly approved of this argument and elected 12 members and the choice have given satisfaction.

CAIRO VITAL STATISTICS.

The following are the figures of births and deaths registered and cases of infectious diseases notified in Cairo during the week ending May 27.

Births 549; deaths 908.

Infectious diseases: 481 cases, typhoid 64 cases; typhus 267 cases; diphtheria 9 cases; small-pox 92 cases; chicken-pox 3 cases; relapsing fever 4 cases; measles 38 cases; whooping cough 2 cases; influenza 2 cases.

THE PRICE OF SUGAR.

It may be remembered that sugar-cane cultivators of the Kena Province came to Cairo and submitted petitions to the authorities asking for an increase on the price of sugar cane, for reasons detailed in our columns at the time. The recent disturbances prevented them from continuing these efforts and they now submitted the question again to the authorities who have promised to consider the matter.

ATTEMPTED FORGERY AND SUICIDE.

An inhabitant of the Gamalia Quarter, Cairo, named Minahem William, commercial clerk, attempted suicide because he was discovered forging a L.E.30,000 cheque on the National Bank.

A red-figured Greek vase of 480 B.C. at Sotheby's fetched £850.

LIFE AT PORT SAID.

AMATEUR THEATRICALS.

(By a Correspondent).

Whilst the writer was seated one night in a comfortable armchair with his feet on the mantlepiece (what a glorious institution the army is), smoking the pipe of peace—army of occupation pipe at that—and reading the latest A.C.I. on demobilisation, a similar "Scrap of paper" was thrust into his hand. This contained the information that a trivial comedy for serious people, was being presented by the Officers of the R.A.S.C. Port Said, supported by some local ladies. "The Importance of Being Ernest." An Orchestra, arranged by Mrs. Cassola, played an overture (and entertained the audience.

The story as everyone knows, is a satirical hit at the ordinary daily life of Society.

ACT 1.

Aglernon Moncrieff—Captain O. H. Carter—The well educated young man about town, who uses a pseudo Mr. Bunbury as an excuse to get away from a somewhat haughty, far seeing Aunt Augusta, (Lady Bracknell) admirably played by Mlle. Margot Meyrier.

John Worthing, J.P.—Mr. L. W. Norrise—the highest praise is due to this Officer. There was never a moment in his long sustained part when one felt he was not actually living a life.

Hon. Gwendolen Fairfax—Mlle. Odette Arland—man in love with John Worthing as a young Society lady could be, but could not love any man who was named Ernest. (This name is the one under which John Worthing is known to the Hon. Gwendolen).

ACT 2.

Garden Scene. How cool and English it looked, a big rose garden, green and beautiful, with Cecily Cardew—John Worthing's Ward tending the roses.

Cecily Cardew—Miss Marie le Lubez—played the young ward admirably, the type of English girl one looks for, fresh, bright and charming, happy. Miss le Lubez was all this and more, since she played the part so daintily and fresh and her intonation was delightfully clear.

Miss Prism—Mrs. Cassola—the Governess possessing all the niceties of an highly educated woman, but a governess in dress and manners.

Capt. W. J. Purcell as the Rev. Canon Chasuble D.D. was canonical in speech and attitude, in fact one might say he had missed his calling; the tone of his voice would have given clerical grace to many a religious community. In this act John Worthing's Ward is exploded and Algy Moncrieff's—Mr. Benbury killed off.

Cecile in believing Moncrieff's name to be Ernest also, and brother to John Worthing, a serious situation appears when the two ladies discover that their respective lovers have been lying, that neither are named Ernest, and they are not brothers "therefore it appears that none of us is engaged to any one."

ACT 3.

Morning Room at the Manor House, Expiations as should be Lady Bracknell's close scrutiny of Cecily in a well depicted Society manner; this was extremely well done and on finding that Cecily has £130,000, Lady Bracknell's views are changed considerably.

"Come here, sweet child," caused a ripple of applause.

Eventually John Worthing's parentage becomes known, Algy Moncrieff is allowed the permission of Aunt Augusta to marry Cecily (with £130,000) John (now in reality Ernest) willing to marry Lady Gwendolen, and to judge from appearances Miss Prism and the Rev. Canon Chasuble would make a very Canonical couple.

The whole play was performed admirably; it is impossible to praise one more than another; each in turn is to be congratulated on the high character of the performance.

The scenery was all painted and prepared locally; our thanks are due to the Suez Canal Coy. for the loan of the painting.

To C.Q.M.S. E. Chicken, R.E., and Sergt. W. Bayliss, R.A.S.C. we owe our deepest thanks. There was a hard task, the building and general work of the stage, and only those who saw the amount this production entailed have an idea of the time and energy spent by both of them.

For the general setting and organization we are indebted to Lieut. Kirkland, O.C. Coy. We all know of his work, and I think, it is only right that this opportunity be taken to express to him on behalf of all our deep thanks. He has changed the whole atmosphere of camp like. It was he who built and beautified the stage, and then got enough parties to come and give us "Shows." With particular regard to this play, his work was very varied; most of the necessary props. Mr. Kirkland gathered in from "Somewhere." Some people with an abundance of right ideas have the happy knack of getting most things wanted, I believe from the sheer pleasant audacity of the asking.

I have left till last all mention of Lieut. G. M. Stevens, R.A.S.C. as Merriman a butler; he gave a type of actor Sir Henry Irving would have, quiet in movement and voice, each detail well studied and performed. Besides this, it was Lieut. Stevens who produced the play, after three months' hard work.

The "Importance of being Ernest" was produced at Kasaba on May 27 and subsequent performances have been given at the Italian Soldier's Hut on behalf of widows of fallen Italian Soldiers and at the Y.M.C.A. at the Rest Camp, Port Said.

It is to be hoped that facilities will be given for the further performances of this play, two at Kantara, one at Port Tewfik.

The Copenhagen International News Service correspondent at Berlin telegraphs that the German Government has confiscated the entire stock of discs from which the Lusitania medals were struck.

PALESTINE'S PROGRESS.

ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S ENTERPRISE.

(By our Special Correspondent).

II.

From the very beginnings of our occupation of Palestine, even before the northern part of the land came into our hands, the G.S.I. took up the question of making preparations for the future agricultural, commercial and industrial development, which was to go hand in hand with the occupation. Thus at the outset an Economic Intelligence Branch of the Administration was founded for this purpose, which ran on until August last when it was incorporated with the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration, and this section was entrusted to Captain Goodrick as a part of the commercial administration, which is under Lieutenant-Colonel Crichton and embraces supplies, communications, relief, public works, and archaeology. The Economic Section is run from Headquarters, with branches at Jerusalem, Haifa, and Jaffa. The organisation is still in its infancy, but in course of time as the O.E.T.A. becomes civil the whole service will be on the lines of the Sudan Government administration. A good deal of preliminary work has been done during the few months that the Economic Section has been in being. Officers are continually travelling for the purpose of collecting information, and reports are drawn up on every subject of importance. These are sent on to the War Office and have already aroused a large amount of interest at home, as is evidenced by the many enquiries that have been made for special lines of commerce and as regards future development. It is clear that business people in the United Kingdom are becoming fully alive to the possibilities of Palestine and are anxious to take the place formerly held there by the Central Powers. The country undoubtedly offers a wide business field for British exploitation, and there are noteworthy indications that the leading natives, Jews, Moslems, and Christians, many of them wealthy and receptive of progressive ideas, are prepared to welcome advances from business men at home and to adapt their commercial ways to modern methods.

INSTRUCTING THE HOME MARKETS.

Having in view the fact that Palestine presents great scope for development, and that agricultural and other mineral resources of great aid to its development abound, while a large influx of people of all faiths is expected after the war, it is desirable that British business houses should be made acquainted with this market without delay. Competition in Palestine will brook no procrastination, and, patriotic and thinking as the people may be, it will be a case of first come, first served. It is to be noted that the dependence of Palestine upon Egyptian resources since the occupation has been great, as Egypt was the only source of supply available, but this dependence cannot go on indefinitely, since Egypt, whose imports have been greatly cut down, is in need of all its material and resources. Therefore, from the point of view of necessity and future trade, it is essential that the authorities at home do their utmost to give facilities for direct trade with Palestine, via Alexandria, in such volume as adequate accommodation permits.

There appears to be a curious misapprehension prevailing as to the credit system in the Levant. Trade credits, if long credit, promoted and encouraged by the Germans, are now practically dead, and buyers are prepared to pay cash or 8 per cent with order, pay on F.O.B. prices, and meet manufacture in every possible way. The pernicious system of prolonging credits is neither wanted nor is it likely to return to local commercial life in the Eastern Mediterranean.

ENGLAND'S OPPORTUNITY.

The most unobservant visitor to Palestine must be struck by the possibilities of the country, and the Government has already done its share in view of the difficulties and expenditure necessarily still in force, to give British business men opportunities to travel about and see for themselves. It should be borne in mind that the imports during 1913, the last year before the war, were in our favour, and that our superiority had been rapidly falling off. The total, £616,631, divided as follows, might well be repeated in the first year of peace.

United Kingdom	£172,385
Austria	£164,930
Russia	£121,602
France	£116,593
Germany	£103,413

The immediate needs (priority articles) are agricultural machinery, spare machinery parts, tinned provisions, refined goods as rice, beans, lentils, tea, coffee, household articles, enamelled goods, pottery, and glassware, paints and paint products, linseed oil, chemical requirements, dyes, plumbers' fittings, seeds, vegetables, and cereals, while in the secondary class are the (non-priority articles) are machinery, printing paper, clothing, cement and plaster, window glass, glass article, leather goods, threads, reading books, foot wear and Manchester goods.

ENEMY COMPETITION.

It is considered very probable that German and Austrian goods will be in large quantities at Constantinople and other ports, ready for shipment to Palestine as soon as peace is concluded, for the sale of these articles will have the effect of releasing these goods. We shall also have to meet Allied competition after the war, and our Allies have shown their keenness as to the outlook in Palestine development by considerable correspondence with merchants and banks there. The wants of the country will also be immensely augmented by the large number of immigrants as soon as peace comes, who will create a great demand for European imports, and this in conjunction with the already pronounced wants of Palestine will widen practically a new field to British trade and industrial enterprise. It is to be hoped that the authorities at home will take steps to curtail immediately open parts and freedom of trade to our former enemies. Turkey is not expected to be in a position to send any quantities of her own goods for some time, and it is very undesirable that that country, even in its enjoyment of the benefits of the Allies, should be used as a medium for German traders for dumping of goods for export to Palestine. The imports via Jaffa in 1913 totalled £1,306,136, of which Turkey's share was £325,326 and that of the Central Powers £245,326. These latter Powers owed the greater part of their commercial influence in Palestine to their commercial travellers. While at home commercial circles looked upon the country with ignorance and suspicion and had no idea as to its needs and possibilities, Germany and Austria had quite other views and their commercial travellers were constantly travelling all over the country. Other

(Continued at bottom of next column).

THE NATIVE PRESS.

THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION.

"Wadi el Nil:"—It has been reported recently by some local papers that some members of the Egyptian Delegation now in Paris, or members of the Secretariat thereof, are coming back to Egypt; that the "Ahram" and another journal now report that four members of the Delegation, giving their names, have decided to return home. Being anxious to know the truth on this question we have spared no efforts to inquire in all quarters particularly concerned or interested in the affair, regarding the said reports, and we have been unable to hear a word confirming the truthfulness of the statements is true. A native contemporary also states that no news has been received in this respect, and the families of the four members referred to as coming back home have no information at all on the subject. We can only learn from a trustworthy person that the family of Sidky Pasha in Cairo received a letter three days ago from His Excellency, stating that his stay in France may be prolonged and it would be better for the family to go to France and spend the summer at Vichy..... A propos, it was recently stated by a Cairo contemporary that our special correspondent would come back too, and we have been asked by many people if this is true, but we have no information at all about it.

EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

The "Ahaly" (from a speech delivered at a recent meeting of the Society for the promotion of Girls' Education in Egypt, by Madame Ahmed Effendi Sabri, giving further details of the College scheme):—It was remarked that the college would only be for the education of girls of the richer classes, and that the poorer girls would not be served by the Society; but we would like to point out that one of the main causes of the starting of this movement was the state of ignorance and misery prevailing in the poorer classes, which has made the country suffer from the shameful backwardness. We sincerely trust that our efforts will be crowned with success with the help of God. The Society is not only made for the benefit of the rich. It will admit 20 per cent of the pupils without payment. Our statement that those who will be given free education in the proposed college are the girls who belong to respectable families who have been impoverished by time," does not mean that only the richer people will profit by the services of the organisation. Of course it is impossible to make free education general in a moment and it is most necessary for the society to carry out the task step by step.....

COPTS AND RAMADAN.

The "Watan" (from a letter to the editor):—I suggest that my brethren the Copts should all give up drinking alcoholic liquors in the month of Ramadan, as a mark of courtesy towards our Moslem brothers, and participate in respecting their month of fast. This may also pave the way for the giving up of drinking altogether.....

EGYPT'S MORALS.

The "Ahram" (from an article by "A. Abou Seoud" on the character of the community, suggesting the organisation of a Morality Police Department in the Cairo Governorate):—A rising nation has first of all to look after its defence and do all in its power to remove those defects and proceed in the way of progress.

Among our reputable defects socially speaking are our backwardness in character and our motto of "Ignorance is bliss." This makes us grasp at the fact that we have no men specially qualified to strike at those who abuse our character as a community. The remedy is not difficult and the object in view is noble. Why should we have a Morality Police department in Cairo? A step like this would reduce the evil. We have on more than one occasion asked for the organisation of such a service, acknowledging the valuable services rendered by the Morality Police in Alexandria which has proved that it fills a great need in society. There is no reason why the capital should not follow the example of the Alexandria Governorate. The Cairo Governorate is vigilantly guarding our lives and property and we cannot see why it should not watch our morals and character as well. The Governorate has already recognised that it is its concern to look after morals, having delegated a man and a woman to do this work, but the task which is being carried out by the fewer than 50 persons in Alexandria can hardly be expected to be thoroughly carried out by two persons in Cairo, which is much larger than the former town.....

GOVERNMENT PENSIONS.

"Misr":—Government officials request the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance and his Adviser to save them from the injustice done to them in the present Pension Law, and should be grateful if the Government would answer the following proposals:—

Firstly: To fix the period of full pension at 45 years instead of 60 years.

Secondly: The Government should not share in the pension transmitted to the family of the late officer.

Thirdly: The time spent by the official in "Temporary" service should be counted as a part of the period for which he deserves pension.

Officials from the Sharkieh Mudirieh write to us to ask the Prime Minister to raise the minimum salary for the holders of the Baccalaureate on entering the Government service, to L.E.8 per month.

Railway officials, possessed of the Secondary certificate, have submitted a telegraphic petition to the Prime Minister bitterly complaining of giving them L.E.4 a month each, while their colleagues in the Ministries and other Government Departments get L.E.5 as a starting salary. They also remain for a long time out of the Cadre while their colleagues are admitted thereto much sooner.

TO OFFICERS IN ALEXANDRIA.

The Ladies Dance Committee will be "At Home" to-night, Wednesday, at the Regina Palace Hotel, to all officers in Alexandria. Dancing from 9 to 11-30.

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