

**The
Balfour Declaration**

an Analysis

Published by:—

“Falastin”

PALESTINE NEWSPAPER

P. O. Box 194

Phone No. 94

JAFFA

The
Balfour Declaration

Foreign Office,
November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the cabinet:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country"

I should be grateful, if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely
Arthur James Balfour

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To
"England at its best"

PREFACE

We owe no apology for introducing to the public this discussion, which a friend called "flogging a dead horse." It would have been well, if the horse had been dead and buried, but, unfortunately for every one concerned, it is very much alive and is making things very unpleasant. His Majesty's Government, while aware of the grave situation which has arisen in Palestine, has not taken the only logical step which was called for, i.e. the appointment of a Royal Commission, with very wide powers to investigate into all the causes which have lead to the present unfortunate situation.

It is in the hope of convincing the British public of the necessity of an enquiry through a competent commission, that we issue this pamphlet.

Considerations of space and etiquette forbid us to enter fully into topics which are well worth an independent study. The General Economic question, the Land question, the Historic Right claimed by the Jews, and lastly the practical application of the Balfour Declaration are questions, which if dealt with adequately, would swell a pamphlet into a respectable volume. We may enter into them later, at some appropriate time.

We are conscious that we have not brought the spiritual Zionist under discussion. It is simply because nobody has a quarrel with him. There were Jewish colonies in Palestine before the Great War. The first

sign of Arab opposition was shown at the coming into the field of the Political Zionist.

In quotations, we have relied chiefly on Ahad Ha-am's essays, the article on Zionism in the Jewish Encyclopedia and Lord Balfour's speeches on Zionism.

We must thank those friends who helped us in reading the manuscript and correcting the proof. While we are solely responsible for the argument, any degree of readableness which the composition has attained is due to their generous help.

21st, October 1929.

"I can not help thinking, that this experiment is a great experiment, because nothing like it has ever been tried in the world, and because it is entirely novel."

LORD BALFOUR, Nov. 19th, 1927.

The words quoted above are our justification for the analysis we are going to undertake. We are face to face with a great experiment, entirely novel, without a parallel, involving the destinies of two nations and the reputation of a third. It has been tried for twelve years, and at the end of it we are confronted with a tragedy which has attracted the sorrowful attention of the whole thinking world. It has given rise to new controversies and is monopolizing the energies of the two nations, energies which might well have been spent by these unfortunate people in construction, in paying their quota to humanity in its march forward. The world which was all ears to hear the proposals of projects expected to give comparative peace to humanity, reluctantly turned its attention to the cries heard from this land, to which most of the civilized communities are bound with ties which will always compel their attention to its cry. A Commission of Enquiry has been appointed to tell the truth to the world and has been ordered to enquire merely into the immediate causes of the disturbances". As in our opinion such a restricted enquiry cannot solve the difficulties, we have taken it on ourselves to try to find whether there is not also a case for investigations into the remote causes.

It is the essential of every experiment that it should be checked at every stage. Whenever we come across a phenomenon which is contrary to the spirit of the theory on which the experiment is based, we must make a pause and check our process. The theory on which the experiment was based may have been wrong or the methods adopted to apply the theory may have been defective. In an experiment with the qualifications Lord Balfour's words have ascribed to it, and in which millions of human beings are interested, it becomes doubly imperative that an immediate halt be made to re-examine all the premises and the process; and, disregarding all the fine phrases of the theorists, to judge it by the conclusions afforded by experiment. The author of the Balfour Declaration has repeatedly stated that the declaration will achieve the aspirations of the Zionists and will not wrong the Arabs. It was also implied in the shouldering of the mandate that the British people would not be put to any moral or material loss. The interests of three parties being thus involved in the declaration, any study of the declaration must be objective. We must find out whether the Balfour declaration in its conception and in its practical interpretation is or is not capable of fulfilling the Zionists' aspirations. We have also to examine whether it has or has not involved the British nation in losses which they may not be ready to bear, and lastly whether it has not inflicted a wrong on the Arabs.

THE JEWISH QUESTION

In the latter half of the 19th Century the Hebrew

thinkers were faced with two great problems, which taken together are called the Jewish question. One was the problem of *Persecution*, the other was the problem of *Assimilation*.

The former was much older than the latter. In the fictitious pages of Scott's "Ivanhoe" and in the actual records of the Dreyfus case, the problem is present with all its shame and all its tragedy. The Antisemitic prejudice reached such a limit that any novelist who was hard up for a villain, turned to to the Jew to fill the gap. The familiar type is the Jew "with a portly figure, diamond rings, and uncertain morals coupled to doubtful designs". The description may differ, but take a genius like Shakespeare or that plague of the gods, "the shilling shocker", the Jew is the scapegoat. Laws of Venice and the traditions of sport have both condemned him.

The problem of assimilation arose when the walls of the Ghetto broke down before the industrial call of the 19th Century. All Jewry felt the pressing need for meeting these two great dangers and particularly the latter. Persecution had in a way cemented the scattered Jew, but assimilation was rightly felt to be a disintegrating force. All felt the necessity of a centre, a home which, while sheltering the persecuted, might impart a self-respect to the Jew to ward off the temptations of assimilation. This was the birth of the idea of the Jewish National Home.

ZIONISM

In 1882 Dr Leo Pinsker, in a pamphlet entitled "Auto-Emancipation", outlined a scheme for the emigration of the Jews to some territory (not necessarily Palestine) where they could be "their own masters". The pamphlet found little response. In 1895 Dr. Theodor Herzl of Vienna issued his pamphlet "Der Judenstaat", which advocated as a solution of the Jewish trouble the establishment "*of an autonomous state in some suitable territory (not necessarily Palestine).*" A wave of enthusiasm spread, and a conference was called at Basle in 1897, and great hopes were built on it. The conference brought out the difference in ideals and methods. Broadly speaking, there were two readings of the question: One party stood for Spiritual Renaissance, the other for a Jewish State.

To the former, the Jewish Question was a moral question. A nation could only progress along the line of its genius, and for this party the Jewish genius was a moral genius and the Jewish past was a moral past. If the Jews were to recapture their past to fulfill their mission in the future "as a people of the Lord", then the method was that "*the Jewish people should aim, not at political or material power, but spiritual greatness*". To this kind of thinker Palestine was the only National Home. But it "*must be the spiritual Home of the Jews, not a territory in which Jewry exercised Political powers*". His criticism of the Political Zionist is expressed in the sentence, "*The salvation of Israel will be achieved by prophets, not by diplomats*".

The Ideal of the Political Zionist was quite different. His purpose was to "*wipe out the name of Jew as a title of shame*". He diagnosed the trouble by saying, "*Our great misfortune is that we do not form a nation, we are merely Jews*". For such a thinker the Jew could gain his self-respect by belonging to a "Jewish State". State being the goal, Palestine as a home was not the only solution. We want to make it quite clear here that to the Political Zionist an autonomous State had more attractions than Palestine with limited powers. Whatever statement the leader of this party, Dr Herzl, made to placate those who stood for Palestine only, he never let go any opportunity of having a "state" wherever it might be got. As there may arise a difference of opinion on this point, we would like to enter a little more into details. The Basle programme reads as follows:- "*The establishment of a legally secured and publicly recognized home for the Jewish people in Palestine*". Dr. Herzl's idea of a legally secured and publicly recognized home was an autonomous state, and until the 9th Congress the Basle programme was generally understood as involving the creation of an autonomous Jewish State in Palestine." Dr. Herzl's idea during the negotiations with the Sultan was that the Jewish state in Palestine should have a status similar to that of the island of Samos, that is "*with its own flag, army and congress*", and that it should pay to the Sultan a yearly tribute. As soon as the negotiations with the Sultan failed, East Africa and the Sinai Peninsula were successively thought of as National Homes. Argentine had already been suggested. There was

always a strong territorialist party in the organization, and at the sixth congress, when votes for East African Commission were taken, the votes were as follows:-

For 295 Against 178 Neutrals 80.

When at the seventh congress the East African Question was dropped, because "*The proffered land was not sufficient in extent and resources for colonization on a large scale*" Zangwill formed a separate party which was defined as "*a body seeking a territory upon an autonomous basis, where such territory might be available*". British Government was again communicated with, but, this time, Lord Delamere's influence made the British Government refuse the request, which it had formerly been ready to grant. An examination of the programme of the Jewish Colonial Trust, which was meant for "*redemption of the people and the land by Political means*", shall clear this point further. At first the purpose was described to be as follows:-

"To work in Palestine, in Syria or, where (in the opinion of the Advisory Council) the interest of the Jewish people should demand it, in any other manner and in any part of the world."

The programme was later modified as follows:-

"To promote, develop, work and carry on Colonization schemes in the East, by preference in Palestine and Syria."

In 1905 the field of activity was described as follows:-

"In Palestine, Syria or any other part of Asiatic

Turkey, the Sinai Peninsula and the island of Cyprus."

There seems to be no sense in including all Asiatic Turkey, except the fact that the political condition of Turkey had aroused hopes of a "*State*" in the mind of the Political Zionist; and he preferred to be near the "*Sick man of Europe*". The Turkish Negotiations, the East African Negotiations, the Territorialists, Programme, the Sinai Negotiations, the Jewish Colonial Trust's Policy all point to the following conclusions:-

- (a) The Political Zionist was in search of an autonomous state;
- (b) Palestine was not essential for the establishment of a state for half the party, particularly the West European Jew.

The argument that later on the Political Zionist's programme included only Palestinian development and National Education, as an instrument for the realization of the National idea, does not apply it was adopted "perforce"; and as soon as Balfour Declaration was made, hopes were again built of a "*State*." The "*State*" when not apparent was latent, was always the ideal, is still the ideal and alway wills be the ideal. We shall deal with it a little later.

Having sketched briefly the two main currents in Zionism, we would like to sum up their methods of realizing the National Ideal in order to clarify the issues:- The Spiritual Zionist believed that the Jewish problem was a moral problem which could be solved only in

Palestine. Politics would retard the solution. In the words of Ahad Ha-am, "*Political Zionism can not satisfy those Jews who care for Judaism. Its growth seems to be fraught with danger to the object of their own aspirations*". Isaiah and the Prophets were the heroes. A "Fixed Centre" was needed "for the Spirit of Israel." The Political Zionist, saw, that the Jewish problem was a political problem and could only be solved by having an autonomous Jewish state somewhere, (preferably in Palestine.) Joshua and Solomon were the heroes. A home was required for the "Supernation"

THE BALFOUR DECLARATION.

To the Jew with these hopes expressed or understood for 2000 years, came the Balfour Declaration. The great war dried the Red Sea. The war was solemnly begun by Great Britain to fight the "*Scrap of Paper*" mentality; but by the irony of fate, the upholders of the sacredness of treaties were driven to the length of signing so many treaties, promises, pledges and agreements that some of these were bound to be "*Scraps of Paper*". In 1915 the Arabs secured the "*Hussein-Macmahon Agreement*," and in 1917 the Jews secured the Balfour declaration. To play the gamble of "*The War to end Wars*," the prodigal had mortgaged the same estate, to two different interests and in the recovery of a debt, the chances were in favour of the Jew.

The latent hopes of a Jewish State, of which we have already spoken, made the Zionist interpret the Decla-

ration according to his ideal. The ideal was "*that the Jewish People was to rebuild its waste place, and was destined to rule over it and to manage all its affairs in its own way, without regard to the consent of its present inhabitants*." As late as June 1920 the hopes of the Jews were so high that Ahad Ha-am wrote, "*the Declaration has winged anew the imagination of those who were already accustomed to build castles in the air, without regard to the realities of this earthly life*". The Declaration was clear. While facilitating the building of a National Home, it was without prejudice to the rights of the Arabs. Again to quote Ahad Ha-am's interpretation given to those who were building great hopes on it,

"It acknowledged the Historic Right" but "meant a negation of the power of that right to over-ride the right of the present inhabitants and to make the Jewish people the sole rulers in the country."

In short, it in no way, fulfilled the dream of the Political Zionist. As for the Moral Zionist, he would have welcomed this opportunity for activity on a large scale, but he was afraid of his companion, the castle-builder. The Declaration was enough to raise false hopes and not enough to realize a Jewish State. The mistaken demand had succeeded, but miracles were not going to occur every day. "*A mistake which succeeds is nevertheless a mistake*." The clear wording of the Declaration could not be interpreted to mean that there should be only Israel in the promised land, and that the people of the land should be "drawers of water" and "hewers of wood." The declaration did not fulfill and was not

capable of fulfilling the Zionists' aspirations.

But the Zionist accepted it, and if he had meant to carry out it loyally, all might have been well. But he accepted it with mental reservations and resolutions. He should obtain *de facto* what had been refused *de jure*. Ahad Ha-am, clearly seeing the difficulties ahead, said that the declaration meant that:-

"The National Home of the Jewish people must be built out of the free material which can still be found in the country itself and out of that which the Jews will bring in from outside or will create by their work, without overthrowing the National Home of the other inhabitants. And as the two homes are contiguous, friction and conflicts of interests are inevitable."

The friction was bound to be aggravated by any attempt by the Jews to overthrow the National Home of the people who did not recognise even the limited rights of the Jews under the Declaration. So the Balfour Declaration not only did not meet the aspirations of the Zionist, but created a permanent source of friction. By alienating the Arabs it even, in a way, destroyed a Home of the Jews, for before the war it had at least been a home to them against the pogroms of Europe. Instead of being a solution of the persecution problem, it widened its area.

However, the Jews accepted the Declaration. It was at least a step forward. The next would be to widen the meanings of the Declaration. The new programme was to be:-

- (a) National Education, by means of the Hebrew University, revival of the Hebrew tongue, etc:
- (b) Building of Jewish civilization, by going back to land.
- (c) Building of Jewish self-respect, lost in the degradations of persecution, by acquiring an independent Political Status.

It was clear that (a) could not be developed satisfactorily in the overshadowing presence of (c); that as (c) had not been granted in the Balfour Declaration according to Jewish aspirations, it meant either attempts to force more from the Government and the facing of the Arab's response to such attempts, or that the Jewish problem, resting on a "state" as a solution, would not be solved. The Jews would still remain Jews and would not be a nation in the political sense. As regards (b), the "Back to the Land" movement,—too great a trust was placed in the Jewish capability to colonize, in spite of the fact that, for twenty centuries, they had been mainly engaged in trade. It was folly to suppose that the purchase of land, the introduction of machinery and the establishment of an Agricultural Research Institute create a farmer. It was an Adam of clay without the spirit of Life. Time and Time only (and a very great deal of it,) can create a genuine farmer, with his tenacity and loyalty to the land, the man who sticks to it even when loaded with debts and taxes, in spite of poverty and tyranny, through all the horrors of wars and the miseries of misgovernment. To a farmer, land is not the means to an end, it is the end. It is not an economic or technical problem. It is a religion whose ties to a farmer are

stronger than any other ties. It would be centuries before the National Home would produce genuine farmers, and meanwhile Time and the Arab would be against such a creation.

The following points taken out of the Revisionists' demand show that slowly and steadily every occasion is being used to reach up to the standard of a Jewish Autonomous State, which is not provided for in the Balfour Declaration:

- (a) Legalisation of Jewish Self Defence in Palestine
- (b) Establishment in Palestine of Jewish Military Units incorporated in the Palestine Garrison under British Command and maintained by the Palestine Treasury.
- (c) Disbandment of the Trans-Jordanian Frontier Force;
- (d) Re-organisation of the Police Force, involving the employment of purely Jewish Police detachments in Jewish-Arab neighbourhoods.

This is followed by two more demands which prove our contention that the Zionist is still dreaming of a purely Jewish National State. One is the demand for free immigration, with right of colonization on both sides of the Jordan, and the other is the abrogation of the Churchill-Samuel White Paper, which is the official interpretation of the Balfour Declaration. It appears that the Zionist is after the Joshua appropriation and has not forgotten the $2\frac{1}{2}$ tribes on the east of Jordan. A Jewish state with "Biblical" boundaries is the ambition

of the Zionist Left Wing. That such a state is bound to produce a reaction from the Arabs, in a form which responses to attempts on their liberties usually take, is an inevitable conclusion.

To conclude, the Balfour Declaration not having provided the Jew with the machinery considered by him necessary to solve his problems, the further continuance of it will not fulfill the purpose for which it was given. The Jewish activities prove that in addition to an attempt to dominate the economical situation, they are trying to acquire politically what has not been given to them, and as a consequence of it the Balfour Declaration is merely a source of unrest in the country; there being another nation in the country, numerically a majority, which is ready to go to any lengths to stop these encroachments. One wing of the Zionists does not accept the interpretation of the Balfour Declaration and has demanded its abrogation, which if the official interpretation is to be taken as correct, amounts to a demand for the abrogation of the Balfour Declaration itself, in its present condition.

THE BRITISH CASE

When we come to the British part of the case, the issues become much clearer. In stating the charges, we have mentioned only those which Lord Balfour himself said had been advanced against the Declaration. As regards the policy which gave birth to the Declaration, we shall take Lord Balfour's own words as being the most favorable and discard what Mr Lloyd George says in

his article "Palestine and the Jews". It would, however, be interesting to quote Mr Lloyd George's words, without suggesting that they are motives of the British Policy. He says:—

"Jewish settlements started practically seventy years ago with Sir Moses Montefiore's experiment in 1854, another War year. The Sultan had good reasons for propitiating the Jews in that year, as the Allies had in 1917."

Mr. Lloyd George's bursts of frankness must make him an embarrassing friend. However, we shall quote below against this what Lord Balfour stated. It runs as follows:—

"I do not deny *that this is an adventure*. Are we never to have adventures? I hope your Lordships will never sink to those unimaginative depths, and that experiment and adventure will be justified if there is any cause for that justification. Suerly it is in order that we may send a message to every land where the Jewish race has been scattered, a message which will tell them that Christendom is not oblivious of their faith, *is not unmindedful of the service* they have rendered to the great religions of the world and most of all to the religion that the majority of your Lordships' House profess, and desire to the best of our ability to give them that opportunity of developing in *peace and quietuess under British Rule, those great gifts* which hitherto they have been compelled from the very nature of the case only to bring to fruition in countries which know

not their language and belong not to their race. That is the ideal which I desire to see accomplished, that is the aim which lay at the root of the policy I am trying to defend.

The italics are ours. Robbed of the glamour of oratory, it means that the aim was:—

- (a) An adventure, a flight of imagination;
- (b) The paying of a fee by Christian Europe to the Jews, for having evolved the idea of monotheism.
- (c) To allow the great gifts of the Jews to develop:—
 - (a) In peace and quietness,
 - (b) Under British Rule,
 - (c) among men of their own race,
 - (d) among people who spoke their language.

A critic has the right to remark:—

- (a) What right has Europe to select Palestine for their experiment in the rejuvenation of sterile systems, particularly when the inhabitants of the country have their own problems to solve? Hazardous experiments are not meant to be forced on people who shed their blood during the great war simply for the purpose of having the liberty to develop along the line of their own genius.
- (b) Palestine was not a fee simple of Europe, that it might be handed over to the Jews by people "not unmindful of the great service done" to Christianity. Lord Balfour, when he remembers the services rendered to Christianity by the Jews, should also recollect that there is no justification for the exis-

tence of Christianity, if the sterility of the Hebrew genius in evolving spiritual conceptions is not assumed. Incidentally, the fee was paid from a country in which the majority of the inhabitants are Muslims. Though in a serious mood, we can not escape recollecting the saying, "*To rob Peter to pay Paul*" which seems to have guided Lord Balfour in rewarding the Jews for evolving the idea of Monotheism.

(c) The great gifts of the Jews do not develop except when they are scattered. In possession of political power their energies are frittered away. We have not heard of Bergson or Einstein's intentions of coming over to Palestine to bring to fruition their great gifts.

(i) Peace and quietness were impossible when surrounded by hostile Arabs from Aleppo to Aden, and from Muscat to Tripoli, and beyond these the sympathisers of the Arabs. The land had 3 risings in 12 years.

(ii) Palestine being under a Mandate, permanent British Rule could not be guaranteed, unless there were ulterior designs when taking over the Mandate.

(iii) The Arabs might be Semitic, but the Jews have become acclimatized in 50 different countries and are now of no race. Anyhow, the Arab has disowned them.

(iv) The people of Palestine spoke Arabic and not Hebrew.

We thus find that the aims are either unjustified or impracticable and if the declaration stands for these aims, as Lord Balfour himself stated, then one is inclined to wish that the author of the "*Defence of Philosophical Doubt*" would have done well in introducing a little of this element of doubt in his flight of imagination. As a matter of fact he has, where he writes about his experiment that "*It may fail*"

DETERMINISM

The first British charge against the declaration is very clearly put by Lord Balfour where he reiterates it for the purpose of replying to it. It is as follows:-

"If you apply that principle logically and honestly, it is to the majority of the existing population of Palestine that its future destinies should be committed".

To this he replies:-

"There is a technical ingenuity in that plea, and on technical grounds I neither can nor desire to provide the answer".

May we suggest that the reply is a verbal ingenuity? He who introduces an exception has to justify it. We have already examined the aims and we do not think these justify the exception. He states elsewhere that, as the league of Nations had created the principle of Self-Determination, and as it was the League which sanctioned the Mandate, it must be the best interpreter of the principle.

We suggest that it is quite possible that the League may have had its "good reasons" during those days for including the Establishment of the Jewish National Home as a condition of the Mandate. The bargaining of the Mandates has become notorious, and it is a matter of common knowledge that France would not agree to the Palestine Mandate unless, according to Lord Balfour, "*the Syrian Mandate should be taken pari-passu with the Palestine Mandate.*" The power of propaganda to defeat the well-meaning efforts of great Powers has been recently revealed in the Shearer Case, where a single man with money at his back and for a promised consideration of £ 40,000 could defeat the Naval Disarmament Conference. The result of Lord Balfour's plea stands as he uttered it: "*That the Case of the Jews is absolutely exceptional, and must be treated by exceptional methods.*"

BRITISH PLEDGES

We put the second charge as it was reiterated by Lord Balfour :

"That we were doing a great injustice to the Arab race as a whole and that our policy was in contradiction of pledges given by General Macmahon and the Anglo-French Declaration conveyed to the native population by General Allenby."

The charge appeared strange to Lord Balfour, because the freeing of the Arab race from the Turkish rule had been effected :-

"By the expenditure mainly of British blood, by

the exercise of British skill and valour, by the conduct of British Generals"

and that the British,

"have just established a king in Mesopotamia" and
"had established an Arab king in Hedjaz".

To us the reply seems to be strange. If an object is gained by the expenditure of British blood, it is all the more necessary, and is due to those who have spilt their blood, that the object attained at such a sacrifice be disposed of honestly and be not used to stain British Honour. Did the expenditure of British blood in Flanders, spilt in freeing Belgium from the German domination, give Great Britain a right to dispose a "Notch" of this country against the united will of its people and in violation of pledges? Establishment of a king in Mesopotamia and Hedjaz does not lessen the wrong done to Palestine in making it a melting pot of a dozen hybrid civilizations, at a time when the Arab had revolted against the Perso-Turkish civilization. Speaking of Hedjaz and the great boon of putting there an Arab King, was it proposed to put a Hebrew king? Can any power, even by force of arms, put there a non-Arab king?

GREAT BRITAIN'S RELATIONS WITH THE ARABS AND THE EAST

The third charge is simple. As the Declaration contained the possibility of alienating the Arabs and the Moslems from Great Britain, it was the duty of the British Government to consult the British Public. It

was a step which might affect the moral prestige of Great Britain, and might injure British diplomacy and British trade in the East. The Jew who has immigrated—mostly non-English—has his commercial relations with the countries from which he has come and is thus not a buyer of British goods. Great Britain, by losing the sympathies of its millions of Muslim subjects and allies, loses a great deal materially. High taxation and unemployment have made it attend to the disarmament problem, which in its turn meant unloading of responsibilities and trusting to goodwill to bring more custom and employment than the armaments ever did. Acting on this wise policy, terms have been proposed to Egypt and Iraq which have certainly added to Great Britain's prestige and credit. The only question unsolved is the Palestinian Question. If it solves it satisfactorily, it will obtain the goodwill of at least 140 millions of Arabs and Muslims, whose purchasing sentiment might mean an increase in the British Trade of at least 100 million pounds yearly. If the Russian Bolsheviks are to be conciliated for the sake of trade, why not the Arab Allies? If Mr. Thomas can go to Canada "to procure custom" why can not the British Ministry devote time to this important matter, which does mean Trade. The whole case has been admirably discussed by Lord Rothermere in the "Daily Mail", and as it must be fresh in every one's memory we need not reproduce it here. We are of the opinion that if any Government went to the polls on that issue, it would find that the British Public do not support any solution of the Jewish difficulty which may bring out Great Britain, premi-

nently, as an enemy to the Arabs or the Muslims. While the idea of the Jewish National Home was agreed to by all the Allies, it is Great Britain alone that bears the unpopularity which it involves and the consequent loss, moral or material, which it entails. It would be an interesting experiment if a suitable constituency were found to fight out the issue. That the whole of the East sides with the Arabs is a fact which is amply borne out by a perusal of the Eastern Press.

THE ARAB CASE

The Arab Question

The Arab had his National problem. He had come to feel that the Perso-Turkish influence was ruining the Arab civilization. Proud of a great past in every field of human activity, he again began to dream of relighting the torch which had given to Europe the treasures of Greece enriched in the carriage, and to the Jew a home when he had no home. A united Arab Federation was the solution. As he was neither scattered nor unaccustomed to rule, it only required freedom from Turkey to achieve his desire. France had always encouraged the idea and Great Britain had always sympathised with it. The war brought his chance. As soon as he had the promise from Great Britain (and he had no reason to disbelieve it), he began to fight on the side of the Allies to achieve his aspirations. The driving in of the Zionist wedge did not only negative his hopes of unity, but it was forcing

upon him a civilization which to him was much worse than the Perso-Turkish civilization against which he had revolted. When the Historical Right of the Jews was pleaded, he could not understand it. History told him that the Jews had been politically a nation for a matter of only 400 years, broken by foreign domination. They had never achieved any political ideal in Palestine. Even though limited to a small country like Palestine, they had not been able to live together, but had made two kingdoms of it, not counting the Philistines who had their possessions in Palestine, and had, indeed, given the country a name which it has borne till the present day, "Eretz Israel" notwithstanding. The Arab had been in Palestine before the Jews, and had again conquered it from the Romans, who had turned out the Jews. He had always lived in the land, taking part in its administration. That Palestine had been wasted was not his fault. During the Arab Khalifats it was in a flourishing condition, and now that the Arab had his chance there was every reason to hope that the land, to retain which he had once fought against combined Europe, and to liberate which he had recently fought by the side of his European Allies, would receive all his attention. Syrians and Iraqians have not done badly in their lands, without the help of Jewish capital and he could have managed it himself in Palestine as well. The advent of the Jews was not necessary for his economic salvation. He also could not understand how he, who had been an independent Ally, had been cast aside for the sake of the Jews, who hailed from

countries which were enemies to the Allies and had fought against the allies. They had even ruined Russia, one of the Allies, by means of their doctrinaires. To see an enemy enter as a conqueror, and to find himself treated as conquered, was something which the Arab could not grasp and has not been able to grasp.

IMMIGRATION

A great deal depended on the kind of National Homebuilder, who came in to settle. The Jew who came was not the West-European Jew, but one who hailed from Poland and Russia. This kind of Jew was supplemented by the Asiatic Jew, the Bokharian, the Persian and the Yemenite, who was far below the Palestinian standard of civilization and could not help in the building a National Home or a State. While idealists were required, demoralized runaways from pogroms formed the majority of immigrants. It is said that the Eastern Jew has helped very much in draining marshes. It does not raise his character, but it does emphasise the inability of the Western Jew to settle in Palestine. Lord Balfour had said:-

"The whole policy of immigration is subject to the most careful study, and the character and the qualification of the immigrant are subject to the most rigid scrutiny under the control of the Government".

Had this promise been kept, half the troubles of Palestine would have been eliminated.

On the other hand, the Arabs who emigrated to America during the 19th Century (and not in the first century A.D.), could not obtain a certificate of Palestinian Nationality. As regards character, the Arab, who had made good in foreign lands, was certainly a better character than the Jew who was running away from persecution. The immigration policy adopted meant an open door for every incapable, inefficient and questionable Jew, and a closed door for an Arab, who had only left the land a few years ago, and whose father or mother or sister was still alive in the land of his forefathers.

PROGRESS

Great hopes were built on the future progress of the country and the benefit which would result to the Arabs. Co-operation, Education, Economic and Political Progress, all were being painted in rosy colours. Such was the extravagance of these pious artists, that it seemed that if the Jew were not willing to come, the Arab should go and compel him to come into Palestine by force.

As for co-operation, it would be well to quote Lord Balfour. He said "*I see no reason why those who lived in amity under Turkish Rule should insist on quarelling under British Rule*". One may reply, simply, that the Declaration associated with his name was the reason, which, we are ready to believe, he did not foresee.

In education, the Arab has not been able to benefit from the learned professors of the Hebrew University, who

lecture in Hebrew; but he is flooded with the Bolshevik propaganda which is translated into Arabic for his benefit. Taking into consideration the population and the area of Palestine, there is more propaganda in this country than anywhere else outside Russia, and the Jews are directly responsible for it.

As to the national character, twelve years of campaigns of hate, punctuated by bloodshed, cannot but leave their impress on character. The Arab who is unquestionably the world's type of hospitality and protection of his neighbour, has begun to use the word "*Dakhil*" (alien), and the responsibility for this change in character must lie at the door of the guest. A free race, coming in contact mostly with a low type of Jew (for it is usually he who has learnt Arabic for his purpose) must suffer in character.

In the political field the Arab is distinctly a loser. While Iraq and Palestine were both under the Turkish rule Palestine was certainly the more progressive of the two; yet we find that Iraq has been offered its independence, while even mere conversations going on about a shadowy parliament for Palestine have been suspended. The subject of representation, it seems, cannot bear talking of in Palestine. This is, of course, a retrogression from the Turkish times, when the Arabs could send a deputy of their own to Constantinople. The difference is again "The Balfour Declaration."

In the economic field the Arab has fared no better. As we shall refer to it below when dealing with concessions, it is sufficient to state here that where the two

communities are not co-operating with each other, the benefit of the one means the loss to the other. If capital has been brought into the land it is circulating among the Jews. On the other hand some Arab industries are being ruined by Tel-Aviv.

PARTIALITY

This was the one point on which definite promises were made to the Arabs by everybody and perhaps these were meant to be kept. Lord Balfour said *"the last thing the British Government has ever desired is that they (the Arabs) should be sufferers from injustice because we try to carry out the policy of providing a Jewish Home in Palestine for the Jewish people."*

If we examine the concessions granted for the exploitation the natural wealth of Palestine, we find that scrupulous justice has not been done to the Arabs. It is easy to find a case for giving a concession to the Jews by showing the inability of the Arabs to finance it. Is it not the duty of the Mandatory Power to see that the interests of the Arabs (who are a minority in the financial sense) are safeguarded, just as the rights of a minority in numerical sense are safeguarded? If Great Britain can put its armaments in the scale to balance the numerical inferiority of the Zionists, why can it not use its credit to balance the financial inferiority of the Arabs? Money can hurt more than a mace. A mandate implies that the country is not fit for responsible Government. Therefore a Mandate is expected to supply the

difference between the existing state of the country and its potential ability. The Mandatory Power, in this case, is open to the charge that it has given away the rights of the Arab and may well be arraigned before the court of history as a culpably negligent guardian, who has wasted the wealth of its ward, by giving it away to a favourite.

Partiality in immigration has already been dealt with but attention is here invited to the sums spent in opening up Public Works for the relief of the Jews who were unemployed as a direct result of the immigration policy. Lord Balfour has said that, *"No single immigrant has been a charge upon any public fund since he entered the boundaries controlled by the British Administration"*. It may have been true then, it is not true now. In spite of it, Dr. Weizmann said that he would send 1000 Jews in place of every one killed during the disturbances; and nearly all Jewish papers are clamouring for an unrestricted immigration which can only make of Palestine an almshouse at the expense of the Arab taxpayer.

Tel-Aviv Municipality has just received a windfall, in having its debt of £ 70,000 written off. It is, by the way, a township which is shown to the visitor as an "eye wash" for Jewish enterprise in Palestine. If bankruptcy is the criterion, (and there are merchants who profit by bankruptcy more than any trade), then this sample of the financial genius of the Zionist is not to be envied.

The Land question is the most acute question, and

must be reckoned among the most important problems created by the Zionists. We can not deal with it adequately here, but shall refer only to general questions of policy. We maintain that the passing of the land from an agricultural people to a non-agricultural people is injurious to the country, and hence Government land should in no case be given to people who are not agriculturists. As regards private lands, the Governments of some territories where the problem has become acute have considered it worth while to bring in special legislation, forbidding sale of land to non-agriculturists. The Punjab Land Alienation Act passed by Lord Curzon in the Punjab is a very good illustration of this point. That the Arabs themselves sell the land is no excuse for the Mandatory Government, as it is expected to legislate in favour of the Fellah and to save him in spite of himself. The whole case for the Mandate breaks down if the Government does not discharge its duties of a guardian by forbidding that which is injurious to the interests of a minor. This brings us to legislation. Here we remark, with the greatest reluctance, that the Attorney General, an English Jew, who is responsible for advising the Government in matters of legislation, has not inspired confidence in the Arabs; and in consequence, representations have been made to the Government. We would like to quote here Sir Herbert Samuel, who says: *"It calls for a policy of goodwill and scrupulous justice in dealing with the interests and sentiments of a population whose families have lived for centuries in the land."*

CONCLUSION

Having discussed the Declaration and the results of its application, we would sum up the whole case as follows:-

- (a) The Balfour Declaration as officially interpreted at present did not grant to the Jews those political rights which they consider necessary for the establishment of a Jewish National Home. This makes them strain at the leash to break the bounds of the official interpretation. This agitation in its turn leads to a continual unrest, which retards the progress of the land, and is the major cause of all disturbances.
- (b) The Balfour Declaration, while recognising the Jewish question, does not take fair cognizance of the Arab question and is a barrier to its solution. It is in direct contravention to the principle of Self-determination. In its practical application it is a cause of dissatisfaction and has arrested the progress of the Arabs in all vital matters. It has diverted the Arab's energies from peaceful and constructive employments to combatting the ever increasing ambition of the Jews to obtain by agitation what they did not obtain by the Declaration. The very existence of the Declaration is responsible for a prejudice against the Jewish efforts and has lead to tragic results.
- (c) The Balfour Declaration has involved the British Nation in the support of a doubtful measure which

tends to alienate the sympathies of millions of its Moslem subjects and millions of its Moslem and Eastern allies. It has made it break its faith to an Ally. On its material side injures British trade, which is at present the main concern of the British Government, faced as it is with the stern problem of unemployment.

Lord Balfour calls the Declaration an "experiment", an "adventure", and admitted that "it may fail". His admission certainly refutes those who would maintain it as absolutely unalterable. It has still to face the final judgement on its own merits in the light of the knowledge gained by its practical application. As millions are maintaining that it has actually failed—and it cannot be doubted that problems arising out of it have necessitated a Commission of Enquiry,—we are of the opinion that the time has come when, according to the British traditions of an experiment and the demands of statesmanship, a competent Royal Commission should be appointed to enquire into its effects. The Simon Commission is a most relevant precedent.

The Arab is gradually despairing, and a speedy solution has become an imperative necessity. It is not a question of a *Wailing Wall* but of a *Wailing Palestine*. The country which sent a message of peace and goodwill towards men on earth has certainly some claim on Europe and deserves peace and wants before anything else "peace". Great nations can not ignore that they will have to face the verdict of posterity. Will it be considered wise or worthy of a great nation that it

failed to retrace its steps even when failure was tragically patent, and that it failed to enquire whether an experiment, whose very novelty ought to have counselled caution, was justified by such results as the past twelve years have produced?

Most of the declarations and the treaties made during or immediately after the War have come under revision and have been more or less modified. Even Jehovah's promise to Israel was contingent on good behaviour. Is it the essential of a revision that a demand for it must be backed by an armed resistance, such as was shown by Turkey to the Treaty of Sevres? We are sure that behind all this wall of dogmatism there is somewhere the British conscience, and it is this conscience which we want to reach, and if we reach it we shall see England at its best. And it is therefore that we turn for a conclusion to the celebrated "Address to the King" of Edmund Burke, of whom it is said that "Burke at his best is England at its best":

"This scheme being therefore set up in direct opposition to the rooted and confirmed sentiments and habits of thinking of a whole people, has produced the effect, which ever must result from such a collision of power and opinion. It is not merely the opinion of a very great number or even of the majority but the universal sense of the whole body of the people. This sense has been delivered by the unanimous voice of all their assemblies, each assembly also on this point is perfectly unanimous within itself. The sense of

the whole people ought never to be condemned by wise and beneficent rulers, whatever may be the abstract claims or even rights of the supreme power. It is not consistent with equity or wisdom to set at defiance the general feelings of great communities and of all the orders which compose them. Much power is tolerated and passes unquestioned, where much is yielded to opinion. All is disputed, where everything is enforced."

"That grievance is as simple in its nature, and as level to the most ordinary understanding, as it is powerful in affecting the most languid passions:- it is **an attempt made to dispose of the property of a whole people without their consent.**"

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