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314

Palestine during the War

*BEING A RECORD OF THE
PRESERVATION OF THE JEWISH
SETTLEMENTS IN PALESTINE*



LONDON
ZIONIST ORGANISATION

77 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.1

1921

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PRESERVATION OF THE JEWISH
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*From the Report presented to the Twelfth Zionist Congress
at Carlsbad, September, 1921.*



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I.

A. 1913—1917.

PALESTINE BEFORE THE WAR.

(1) **The Palestine Office.**

At the outbreak of the war the colonisation of Palestine had just entered on a period of somewhat quickened development. The Palestine Office, which had been founded by the Zionist Organisation at the beginning of 1908, had overcome its initial difficulties, and was commencing to become a focus of all efforts directed towards the colonisation of Palestine. Hopes had been entertained of a rapid expansion of the Palestine Office, and with it of the whole work of colonisation, from the Turkish Revolution, which broke out a few months after the Office was opened. These hopes, it is true, were not realised. The Young Turks, as it turned out, adopted an imperialistic policy, and aimed at establishing a Turkish state with the suppression of other nationalities, so that the Jews could not look to them for fulfilment of their national aspirations. To counterbalance this, however, it was soon found that they were just as feeble as the previous Turkish Government, and consequently were not able permanently to hinder the progress of determined national efforts. In spite of the pronounced nationalist-imperialist tendencies of the leaders the officials in the country did not differ materially from their predecessors. It was always possible to get round the individual official with the aid of a little artifice. The Turks were far more vehemently opposed to the Arabs than to us, and there was actually a disposition on the part of some of the leaders to play us off against the Arabs, and on that account to encourage our efforts. The Arabs on their side reserved their whole hostility for the Turkish Government, and did not yet display any towards us. Strong protection was afforded to us by the Capitulations. Activities which might otherwise have met with opposition from the Turkish authorities were rendered possible by the protection of foreign consuls.

A new impulse to the colonisation movement was given by the Vienna Zionist Congress in 1913, which led to a strengthening and expansion of the Zionist Organisation in general. At this Congress, which took place just a year before the outbreak of war, the conflict which had gone on for years between the advocates and the opponents of the idea of immediate practical work in Palestine was amicably settled. A complete scheme of practical colonisation was presented in the Report of Dr. Arthur Ruppin, who as responsible representative of the A.C. had been at the head of the Palestine Office since its inception. After this Congress the vast majority of Zionists were convinced that the realisation of the Zionist idea could be brought about only by persistent and self-sacrificing work, and by solid and substantial achievements in the fields of economic development, education and organisation.

(2) **Immigration.**

Progress in Palestine now began to manifest itself in a number of ways. The most conspicuous sign was the great increase in immigration. In the period between the Vienna Congress and the outbreak of the war over 6,000 Jews came into the country. Not all, it is true, were able to become absorbed in it, and many of them drifted away again; but a portion remained and took root. Especially notable was the increase in the number of young men who came to help in opening up the country by the labour of their hands. These were scions of the young Jewish movement which had commenced with the Russian Revolution in 1905, and had become a spiritual power in the Jewish life of Palestine and also of the Diaspora. Their settlement was greatly facilitated by the fact that employment of a nature suited to their requirements was available on the farms of the Jewish National Fund and in the undertakings conducted by the Palestine Land Development Company and the other companies directed by the Palestine Office. These young workers combined together in workers' organisations, and began to form a solid labouring class which continually increased in numbers and power.

There was also a continuous increase in the number of persons of means who brought their belongings here in order to settle or to invest their capital. Some of these went into the professions, others contributed to the expansion of the export trade, while others again, settling in the towns of Jaffa and Haifa, acquired property and plantations, opened workshops, built houses, and laid the foundations of a new commercial life. It was these settlers who did most for the expansion of Tel Aviv, and who began to found there a new commercial organisation which exercised a strong influence on the whole of the Yishub. The progress of this section was displayed most conspicuously in the increase of land purchase and of the sums devoted to this purpose.

This class also furthered the development of the colonies, where they acquired property, built houses, laid out plantations, promoted commerce, and took an active part in the public life which was ripening there.

A special class of immigrants was formed by the school children, who were either sent by their parents alone to Palestine in order to receive there a national education, or for whose sakes the parents themselves came over. The best testimony to the attraction of Palestine for the studious youth of Jewry is afforded by the rapid growth of the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa, alongside of which should be mentioned the Modern School in Haifa, the Hebrew High School in Jerusalem, and the "Bezalel" Arts and Crafts school in Jerusalem, as in these also there were a number of pupils from abroad. The Jaffa Gymnasium had in 1914, the eighth year of its existence, 750 pupils, who brought 50,000 francs monthly into the country. The yearly expenditure of the Gymnasium, three-quarters of which was defrayed from the fees of the children from abroad, amounted to 125,000 francs. The financial importance of this immigration is further shown by the fact that in addition to the fees about 50,000 francs came into the country from abroad for the maintenance of these children.

(3) **Economic Expansion.**

The growing interest in Palestine to which the inflow of capital bore witness was shown particularly by the increase in the sums devoted to land purchase. This

branch was the special concern of the Plantation Companies (Achuzoth) which were formed abroad for the purpose of the joint purchase of land for settlement. The first of these companies was founded by S. Goldman in St. Louis. The idea on which he worked was soon taken up extensively, and in a few years a whole number of Achuzoth came into being in America and other countries. Russia especially, with its hundreds of thousands of well-to-do Jews, appeared to offer an inexhaustible reservoir of men and money for Palestine, and before the war broke out a whole number of these companies had already put themselves in communication with the Palestine Office regarding land purchase. No better example could be found both of the keen interest which was taken in the acquisition and development of land in Palestine before the war, and of the disastrous effects of the outbreak of the war in this direction also, than the case of the property in Emek Jezreel. On the day when war was declared, the Palestine Office was on the point of purchasing 140,000 dunam of the best soil in this fertile portion of Palestine. The Russian Jews Brodsky and Halpern on the one side, along with a number of other wealthy persons in Kiev who up till then had shown no particular interest in the practical building up of Palestine, and Baron Rothschild on the other side had guaranteed the money for this, the most important transaction of its kind which had yet taken place in the history of our colonisation. The consent of the Vali of Beyrout had already been obtained for the purchase. The outbreak of war shattered the transaction when on the eve of completion, and at the same time shipwrecked a whole list of colonising schemes which were connected with this big purchase.

The great interest in Palestine which has been aroused all over the world showed itself also in the large number of tourists who came from all parts to see Palestine for themselves and to judge of the prospects of settling there.

The position of the banks was another proof of the gratifying way in which the country was expanding. The resources of the Jewish National Fund increased, while the bank strengthened its position, augmented its turnover, and showed in its balance sheets a constant growth of deposit accounts.

This favourable situation gave birth to a whole series of industrial projects, the investigation, working out and experimental testing of which was taken up by the Palestine Industrial Syndicate. These projects included:—

The cultivation of sugar beet and the manufacture of sugar.

A cement and brick factory.

An engineering workshop.

The transforming of the Baths of Tiberias into an attractive health resort.

The draining of the swamps of the Lake of Merom.

Telephone installations in town and country.

(4) **Hebrew Education.**

It was in this period of general expansion that the Hebrew school system of the Zionist Organisation was founded. Originally the Zionist Organisation had on principle excluded all educational work in Palestine from its programme. The Hebrew school system developed independently in the Jewish colonies, in which schools had existed from the commencement, and it was consistently promoted by the Chovevi Zion Committee in Odessa, which had maintained the excellent girls'

school in Jaffa. Special committees were responsible for the maintenance of the Hebrew High Schools in Jaffa and Jerusalem, and the Bezalel Arts and Crafts School, although in all these institutions it was prominent Zionists who were the leading spirits and chief workers.

The Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden had done very useful work in the field of Palestine education. In contrast to the Alliance Israélite it had introduced into its schools modern pedagogic methods. It also did much for Hebrew teaching by engaging competent instructors and having a large part of the subjects taught in Hebrew. It refused, however, to accede to the demand which in view of the progress of Hebrew education was put forward by the teachers and other nationalists, that Hebrew should be constituted the sole language of instruction in the schools. It preferred to have part of the subjects taught in German; and this language began to gain ground more and more at the expense of Hebrew. This tendency asserted itself with very unpleasant force when the question arose of determining the language of instruction at the Technicum in Haifa, an institution towards the founding of which the most diverse Jewish circles had contributed; and this manifestation gave the occasion for an exit *en masse* of teachers and pupils from the Hilfsverein schools.

This fight over the schools in Palestine was the immediate cause of the Zionist Organisation taking the educational work in hand. Side by side with the schools maintained by the Hilfsverein, purely Hebrew schools were founded, the direction of which was assumed by the Zionist Organisation. An educational committee—the Vaad Hachinuch—was formed, composed of the Hebrew teachers and Jewish householders in the towns and colonies. In a short time this body itself raised 44,000 francs for the expenses of the newly founded Hebrew schools—mostly in Palestine. The whole expenditure of the schools for the first year was 160,000 francs which was guaranteed by the Zionist Actions Committee. These schools included the Boys' and Girls' school in Jerusalem, the Teachers' Seminary in Jerusalem, the Boys' School in Jaffa and the Modern School in Haifa, as well as some kindergartens. Thus was the foundation laid for a school system which from now on was maintained by the Zionist Organisation, and which in the course of a few years expanded to such an extent that about 140 schools with over 500 teachers and 11,000 pupils (*i.e.*, two-thirds of the school children of the whole country) were kept going.

(5) Public Life.

An important sign of the progress of Palestinian Jewry in the period before the outbreak of the war was the improvement in social organisation throughout the country. A strong communal life pulsed in all the colonies, with results that in some places, and especially in Tel Aviv, were truly admirable. In Judea the colonies formed an association called "Hithachduth Moshevoth Jehudah," with a single executive, which looked after the common economic and general interests of the colonies. In Lower Galilee also there arose a joint body representing all the colonies with a Bureau which did fruitful work on their behalf. The workers formed themselves into two main political parties, Hapoel Hazair, which was fundamentally a nationalist party with the securing of employment for its

chief aim, and Poale Zion, which was essentially a Socialist organisation. There was also an association including all agricultural workers without distinction of party. The Palestine Office, as representative of the Zionist Organisation, became gradually the centre of all endeavours to improve organisation. Although it was responsible only to the Zionist Actions Committee, yet it endeavoured to consult in all important political questions with the leaders of public life in the Yishub. By the side of the Palestine Office was formed a standing council, the Vaad Temidi, which consisted of representatives of the colonies, of the workers, of the most important colonising institutions and of the town dwellers, and which deliberated on affairs of moment. These promising beginnings were cut short by the declaration of war between the European Powers, which put an abrupt end to all our hopes and expectations.

II.

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

(1) **Suspension of the Capitulations.**

The outbreak of the war plunged Palestine into a condition such as the Yishub had never before experienced. Turkey, it is true, was still neutral, but a state of war had already been declared, the Turk showed an obvious inclination to side with the Central Powers, and the political sky was overcast and threatening. Through the suspension of the Capitulations the security of life and property which the Palestine Jews had hitherto enjoyed, thanks to the protection of the Consulates against the arbitrariness of Turkish officials, was materially impaired. Even before the official suspension of the Capitulations an endeavour was plainly to be discerned on the side of the Turkish officials to shake off their tutelage and to set aside entirely the power of the foreign representatives—an endeavour that was naturally watched with great uneasiness by the Jews in Palestine, who were under the protection of the government of their country of origin. When the suspension of the Capitulations was proclaimed, many families in the country felt themselves deprived of their chief safeguard. The unrest among the Jews, as also among the Christians, was heightened by the propaganda set on foot for a Jihad, or Holy War.

When to-day after the end of the war we survey its effects on Palestine, we find that, in spite of the sacrifice of human life and the heavy material losses which it entailed, it has not on the whole been so destructive as at first had been feared. This is chiefly due to the fact that Palestine was only to a minor extent one of the actual theatres of war. Not till the last two years of the war did the country become the arena of military operations. When they did commence, the advance of the English (from Gaza to Jerusalem, Chanukah 5678) and the conquest of Samaria and Galilee (Succoth 5679) took place with such rapidity that the Turks fortunately had no time to carry out their plans of destruction. The only places where military operations caused really serious damage were the colonies of Petah-Tikvah, Kfar Sabah, Ain Ganim and Benshemem.

(2) **Economic Isolation.**

The uncertainty of the political outlook was aggravated by the economic insecurity which the war immediately brought in its train. The population, which depended entirely on its communications with the outside world, found itself suddenly completely isolated. This situation was no less threatening for the new than for the old Yishub. The old Yishub with its charitable institutions and its Chalukah system had up to then maintained relations with all foreign countries, especially Russia and Galicia. About 3,000,000 francs used to flow into the country

annually and from this sum a whole crowd of people derived their livelihood. The new Yishub depended on foreign countries chiefly for its foodstuffs. The colonies depended for the most part on the export of their produce. Before the war about eighty per cent. of the orange crop, averaging about 30,000 boxes of a value of one and a-quarter to one and a-half million francs, seventy per cent. of the almond crop, to the value of 400,000 to 500,000 francs and fifty per cent. of the vintage to the value of 800,000 to 1,000,000 francs used to go abroad. Now that the country was cut off from the outer world, there were no longer any purchasers for the produce of the plantation colonies, and their existence seemed to be seriously endangered. It was only later that an internal market was created for the requirements of the military, and this suffered from bad transport arrangements. A large number of families in the colonies and towns whose money was still invested abroad, as they had not yet had time to liquidate their businesses there, found themselves suddenly deprived of their remittances. Their fate was shared by the young people who were being brought up in Palestine educational institutions, and who were supported by their relatives abroad. Teachers and officials also the money for whose salaries was raised abroad suddenly saw their livelihood threatened. In theory, it is true, Turkey still maintained its relations with other countries, but in reality intercourse was so seriously interrupted that the Yishub saw the main arteries of its economic life severed. On top of this came the declaration of a moratorium, through which for a time all commercial intercourse was brought to a stop. The situation pressed with especial hardship on the Bank—the Anglo-Palestine Co. For the population of Palestine this was the central institution to which everyone first turned for financial assistance. It had to satisfy its depositors, and yet, in consequence of the uncertain political situation, it could not be much more accommodating to its customers than the other banks in the country, nor could it do more than it was absolutely obliged to do.

Business came to a standstill. The colonies not only lost all opportunity of exporting their products, but were unable even to import the most indispensable materials, especially petroleum for driving motors. The question of the food supply soon became urgent everywhere, especially in the towns. The Jews, who were for the most part town-dwellers, or at any rate grew little corn, were exposed to the danger of starvation in a higher degree than the other sections of the population. Only in the Jewish agricultural colonies was the population able not only to provide for itself, but, in consequence of the scarcity in the towns and other colonies, to dispose of a portion of its corn there at advantageous prices.

Appeal to Foreign Countries: In this desperate situation the representatives of the principal institutions in Palestine—the director of the Palestine Office, the director of the Bank, and the representative of the Chovevi Zion—issued an appeal to prominent Jews abroad whose interest in Palestine was well known. This appeal was responded to with particular energy by the leaders of the Zionist Organisation in Russia and Messrs. Rosoff and Naiditsch. They managed to raise money, and, so long as there was direct or indirect communication between Russia and Palestine, to send it thither. In the countries of Central Europe, with which intercourse was maintained much longer, the appeal met with a far feebler response. The war had

produced such a paralysis of effort there that in a short time the societies which supported the institutions in Palestine had to send word that their resources were exhausted.

(3) **Self-Help Committees.**

In view of the threatening situation, the new Yishub in Palestine determined on a comprehensive scheme of self-help. The example was set by the organisations created in Jaffa and the Jewish colonies. In Jaffa the representatives of all classes—the labourers' organisation, the traders' organisation, etc., met together and formed a "Committee for Alleviating the Crisis" (Vaad Hakalat Hamashber). The President of the Vaad of Tel Aviv, Dizengoff, was placed at the head of this committee, and devoted his whole energy to the work. He received the full support of all classes; particularly to be mentioned among his coadjutors are the Jaffa residents, Bezalel Jaffe and A. Lew. Communal kitchens were erected, which provided meals at cost price. All kinds of devices were adopted to make the situation more tolerable. When after the declaration of the moratorium the ordinary circulating media disappeared from the country, recourse was had to the issue of bank cheques, and also of small circulating bonds, issued by the Vaad of Tel Aviv and the Flour Committee. The J.N.F. farms administered by the Palestine Office placed their corn stocks at the disposal of the Relief Committee, thus contributing materially to avert the famine with which some places were threatened.

The Vaad Hakalat Hamashber joined hands with the general committee of the Jaffa community. It drew up a budget, drafted a scale of taxes to be paid by the inhabitants and collected contributions among them. A number of committees were founded, each with a particular function: a committee for emergency works, for providing flour and bread, for communal kitchens and tea rooms, for assisting the sick, etc. These committees worked in part independently, in part in conjunction with the Committee for Alleviating the Crisis.

After receiving the money from the American Relief Fund, the Committee was able to extend considerably its efforts for alleviating the crisis. It occupied itself particularly with providing bread, flour and other necessaries. For this purpose relief committees from the various Jewish communities were formed in Jaffa, with the task of investigating the position and, under the supervision of the Committee for Alleviating the Crisis, of distributing money or food to the needy. The Jewish communities in Jaffa also formed three special committees: of the Yemenites, of the Sephardim, and of the Ashkenazim.

Emergency Kitchens: Besides distributing bread and flour, the Committee for Alleviating the Crisis displayed great activity in establishing and maintaining kitchens. A definite sum was assigned to the Committee in order to distribute food, whether gratis or on credit, to workers who could not find employment. In the kitchen founded by the Joint Committee, 120 young persons and forty to fifty families were regularly provided with meals. This kitchen was, however, closed when in consequence of the expulsion a large part of the Jaffa workers left the country, while others dispersed among the colonies, or found employment on public works in Jaffa. From that time the situation of the workers in Jaffa improved

to such a degree that kitchens of this type were no longer necessary. Along with the workers' kitchen a tea room was opened where anyone in need could obtain either gratis or for a small payment two glasses of tea and an okie (275 grammes) of bread twice daily. In this tea room about two hundred persons on an average received their rations.

Flour Committee: In spite of the fact that in peace time the produce of Palestine had sufficed to feed its inhabitants, and even to allow of export abroad, the town of Jaffa was at the very beginning of the crisis threatened with a great increase in the price of bread. The cause of this was the commandeering of a large part of the corn for military purposes, and the difficulties of communication in the country. It became impossible to bring corn from the north of Palestine and from Hauran to the south of Palestine. To relieve the bread scarcity a Flour Committee was founded with the task of procuring sufficient quantities of corn for the maintenance of the Jewish population and of selling it at reasonable prices. A few persons combined forces for this object, and received from the Anglo-Palestine Co. on the strength of private guarantees sums considerably in excess of the usual run of loans. This money was used to purchase large quantities of corn throughout the country, which were ground into flour. The great boon conferred by the Flour Committee consisted not merely in the fact of its selling itself bread and flour cheaply, but in its being able, through the large quantities of corn which it had at its command, to keep the corn prices on the Jaffa market constantly at a low figure. In this way it was found possible to a certain extent to protect the public against speculation. The activities of the Flour Committee were important also for other institutions and committees. The numerous public kitchens, several schools and their kitchens, the Committee for Alleviating the Crisis, and certain trade unions received their flour from this committee, and it was only through the low prices which it demanded and through strict punctuality in the delivery of the flour that the institutions and the Committee mentioned were able to meet the demands made on them. When the Committee had larger stocks than it required, it sold them to the colonies, which it thus saved from a scarcity of food supplies. Altogether the committee bought 5,282 sacks of corn for about 206,000 francs.

The Flour Committee had bread baked in various bakeries and sold the loaves itself, in order to prevent the bakers raising the price of the bread, and in order that people who could not bake at home might still be able to buy bread at the same price as before. The bread was sold to private people at cost price, so that for a full year the price of bread was kept at the same level at which it had stood before the war. The Flour Committee supplied about 20 per cent. of the bread consumed, and reduced the ruling prices by 25 per cent. The amount saved in this way to the Jaffa community may be put down at 33,000 francs.

The fact that most of the corn was bought from the farms conducted by the Palestine Office made the transactions much easier. The business was concentrated in Jaffa, where the cheques of the A.P.C. were current. In purchasing the flour the cheques of the A.P.C. or bills of the Committee of Tel Aviv could be utilised. Had the corn been brought from Hauran there would have been the danger that the Government would commandeer large quantities purchased by the

Committee and pay for them in Turkish paper money. This actually happened on one occasion, and meant to the Committee a loss of 50 to 70 per cent. of the purchase price.

(4) **The American Relief Work.**

In spite of all efforts made in Palestine to cope with the situation, the Jewish population would have succumbed had not financial help arrived from America. From the day when war broke out Palestine had appealed to America for help. America was at that time the one country which through its political and financial position was able to save Palestine permanently from going under. It was stimulated to do so by the deep interest in Palestine which of recent years had been awakened in American Jewry.

The Zionist Organisation in America at once recognised the duty imposed on it by the circumstances of the time, and the need of saving the central Zionist Organisation and its institutions. There happened to be at the critical moment in America a member of the Inner Actions Committee, Dr. Schmarya Levin. Through his efforts, combined with those of the more energetic members of the American Zionist Organisation, the "Provisional Committee for all Zionist Affairs" was founded, with Louis Brandeis at its head.

Great assistance was given by the American ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, who had visited Palestine some months before the outbreak of the war, and had promised his support to the director of the Palestine Office, Dr. Ruppin. Thanks to the efforts of the Zionist Organisation and of men like Jacob Schiff, to whom the Bank, the Palestine Office and the representatives of the Chovevi Zion had appealed, a large remittance of money—the first of many—was sent from America to Palestine. On September 14th, 1914, the Palestine Office received the following telegram: "New York, 3-9-14. In order to save the Zionist Organisation and its Palestine institutions, there has been founded here through a special Zionist Commission a Provisional Committee which will work hand in hand with the I.A.C. Brandeis: Schm. Levin." This message of itself raised the drooping spirits of the Palestinians. On October 6th, 1914, the American warship "North Carolina" landed in the harbour of Jaffa, and the envoy of Ambassador Morgenthau, M. Wertheim, brought 50,000 dollars. Half of this sum had been given by Jacob Schiff, the other half by the Zionist Organisation with Nathan Strauss.

The arrival of this warship and of those that followed it was quite an event in the country. It raised the downcast spirits of the Jews, who saw that they were not abandoned, but could reckon on help from their brethren abroad. These ships also increased the prestige of the Jews in the eyes of the rest of the population and of the local administration. People saw that the Jews through their connections abroad were much more powerful than their numbers would have led one to expect. These American ships continued their good services on behalf of the Jewish Yishub. They brought money from time to time, and hospitably took on board the expelled Jews and the other immigrants who fled from Palestine for fear of starvation and persecution.

It was two Palestinians who did the most important part of this relief work. Levin-Epstein, the treasurer of the Provisional Executive Committee, sent the

money to Alexandria, and there S. Gluskin saw to its further transmission to Palestine. The remittances at first were small. Later on they increased in volume, as they included private remittances which American Jews sent to their relatives in Palestine. The transmission of the money, which was a task requiring considerable address and scrupulous care, was carried out admirably. Besides money, food also came from America on a special ship, the "Vulcan." Altogether, from October, 1915, 3,522,930.03 francs was brought to Palestine in thirteen American ships.

Of even greater importance perhaps for Palestine than the receipt of the American money was its systematic distribution. This began with the first remittance of 251,998.02 francs = \$50,000, which arrived on October 3rd, 1914, on board the ship "North Carolina."

People gradually settled down to the idea that the crisis had come to stay, and realised that a definite method must be given to the relief work. The remittances which at first had been casual and irregular were tabulated in fixed budgets. The general supervision and handling of the accounts of the nine funds and the arrangements for despatching the "Vulcan" were centralised in the hands of the Palestine Office. The remittances can be divided into four periods, in each of which the amount received equalled almost a quarter of a million francs.

Period.	Fund.	Date.	Amount. Francs.	Total. Francs.
A. October, 1914	I.	6/10/14		251,998.02
B. January-April, 1915	II.	15/1/15	88,883.94	230,463.57
	III.	14/2/15	52,059.63	
	IV.	25/3/15	60,360.00	
	V.	18/4/15	29,160.00	
C. May, 1915	Vulcan	12/5/15		267,772.80
D. Sept., 1915—Feb., 1916	VI.	1/9/15	60,000.00	209,000.00
	VII.	25/11/15	50,000.00	
	VIII.	14/1/16	50,000.00	
	IX.	14/2/16	49,000.00	
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			Total	959,234.39

In pursuance of the instructions brought by Mr. Wertheim, who was in charge of the money, it was handed over to a Central Committee, consisting of Messrs. A. Aaronsohn, Ephraim Cohen, and Arthur Ruppin. This Committee, in conjunction with Mr. Wertheim and the American consul in Jerusalem, Mr.

Glazebrook, drew up at the meeting of October 3rd the following rules for the distribution of the sums mentioned :—

Palestine to be divided into three districts :

- A. Jerusalem-Hebron-Mozah.
- B. Jaffa and the Jewish colonies.
- C. Haifa-Safed-Tiberias, the colonies of Lower and Upper Galilee, and those of Samaria.

The Fund to be distributed in the following proportion :

For District A, 47 per cent.

„ „ B, 26 per cent.

„ „ C, 27 per cent.

The distribution in each district to be carried out by a member of the committee, viz. :

In District A, by Ephraim Cohen.

„ „ B, by Dr. Arthur Ruppin.

„ „ C, by A. Aaronsohn.

The Central Committee appointed local committees in every place and every district, for facilitating the distribution of the money. Each member of the Central Committee was chairman of the local committee in his district, or honorary president of it, with power to appoint a deputy. If owing to illness or to being on a journey the member of the Central Committee could not be present at the meeting, he could send his deputy:

At the chief town in each district (Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa) the money had to be handed over to the Anglo-Palestine Co. and deposited in the name of the member of the Committee living there. From this deposit the member of the Central Committee withdrew such sums as were required from time to time and transferred them to his own current account as representative of the American Fund. At the same time he had to enter the rest of the money as deposit account.

The money was handed over to the local committees to be distributed according to their discretion, subject to certain general rules. The President retained a right of veto regarding the outlays decided on by the committees; but where he exercised this veto the majority in such committee had the right to appeal to the Central Committee, whose decision was final. The general principles in accordance with which the American Committee desired to see the money distributed were as follows :—

(a) Twenty per cent. to be used as a fund for the purchase of food stuffs, which should be sold at cost price.

(b) Forty per cent. (in the colonies only twenty per cent.) to be used for distributing food to persons without money, or unable to work; for kitchens; and, further, for distributing food to Mohammedans in a proportion to be fixed by the Committee.

(c) Forty per cent. (in the colonies sixty per cent.) to be utilised as a loan fund for the purpose of enabling private employers or public committees to give employment to Jewish workers. As far as possible guarantees should be obtained from the recipients of these loans that they would repay them not more than three months after the expiry of the moratorium.

The members of the Central Committee had every two weeks to give reports to the head of the Committee, Dr. Ruppin, on their activities, and monthly a detailed account of the moneys that passed through their hands. Dr. Ruppin was to send these reports and accounts to Mr. Louis Marshall in New York. The members of the Central Committee were to transmit to the American consuls in their districts a list of the businesses and provision shops opened by the American Fund. Immediately after their opening all necessary steps were to be taken to secure the protection of the Government for these shops and businesses.

III.

PALESTINE UNDER TURKISH MILITARY RULE.

(1) **Turkey's Declaration of War.**

On October 31st, the seriousness of the situation in Palestine was accentuated by Turkey's entry into the war. Although this step had been anticipated for some time, yet when actually taken it was felt as a terrible aggravation of the existing difficulties, notably through the fear to which it gave rise that now communication with the outer world would cease entirely.

Immensely overrating their own strength, the Turks at that time believed that the day had come when they could sweep all foreigners out of the Ottoman State. In respect of the Jews, this purpose first revealed itself in a series of persecutions and oppressive acts. The Zionist agency in Constantinople and the Actions Committee in Berlin endeavoured immediately to counteract the oppressive measures. Both bodies followed events in Palestine with the closest attention. They laboured with foresight and energy, and managed time after time, with the help of the representatives of foreign Governments, especially the German and the American, to mitigate the hostile attitude of the Turks. Thanks to the efforts of the Zionist representatives in Constantinople and Berlin, the Jewish community in Palestine was constantly enabled through diplomatic channels to furnish timely and detailed information to the outside world regarding events in Palestine, and so to find protection in the hour of need.

(2) **Jemal Pasha and his Subordinates.**

Jemal Pasha, who as Commander-in-Chief of the Fourth Army and Minister of Marine, exercised supreme authority over the whole of Syria and Arabia, came to the country with the idea of fully Ottomanising all Turkish provinces, even those in which, with the exception of some officials, there were no Turks. The object which he set before himself was to root out all foreign subjects and replace them with persons more to the taste of the Turkish Government. He was, however, of an incalculable temper, always acting on the spur of the moment. His commands were self-contradictory. In the most important and critical affairs he decided without consulting experts. His orders, which he issued behind the backs of the army chiefs and experienced officials, were the incarnation of disorder and the negation of discipline.

He had a certain appreciation for the educational work of the Jews, but he was inflexibly opposed to the idea of an extension of the Jewish Yishub. On

this account, he issued a stringent prohibition of all sale of land and all transfer of land through Ottomans to non-Ottoman Jews.

Jemal Pasha made a special point of persecuting the Zionists. He sought to represent them as a revolutionary element, and tried to institute legal actions against them in the same way as against the Arabs. With this object he appointed a special official to conduct investigations.

One of the first acts of Jemal Pasha was to summon a number of Jewish notables to appear before him in Jerusalem. He there announced to them that the next day they would be sent with their families into the interior of Asia Minor. Only through the intervention of Albert Antebi, the representative of the Ica and the Alliance in Jerusalem, was Jemal induced to change his mind, so that instead of thirty people going to Broussa, thirteen finally went to Tiberias "for the benefit of their health." From this time onwards Antebi enjoyed a certain influence over Jemal Pasha, until, like so many of Jemal's favourites, he incurred his displeasure and was sent by him with his family to Constantinople, where he endured great hardships till his death. The whole period of Jemal's domination was marked by similar exhibitions of caprice and arbitrary temper.

Among other things, he was seized with the ambition of introducing improvements into the country. From these the Jewish population also profited, and a number of Jews found employment on them. Among the persons whom he attached to himself as experts there were a whole number of Jews, notably Mr. A. Antebi, whose advice he eagerly sought in economic and general political affairs; further, Aron Aronson, who at his instigation organised for a time the fight against the locusts; Ephraim Krause, who established an agricultural school in Latroun on the model of the Mikveh Israel school of which he was the head, and plantations south of Beersheba; the engineer, Gregor Wilbuschewitz, who drew up the plans for the improvement of Jaffa, Jerusalem, and Damascus; also Dr. A. Ruppin, for whom he procured access to the official archives in order that he might prosecute his economic studies on Syria and Palestine. Besides these he also used the assistance of a number of Jewish experts.

Jemal's period of office was marked by a whole series of Jewish trials. Cases occurred of people being suddenly taken from their houses, and then being shut up for weeks or months in prison, without even being informed of the charge made against them. Many of them were, after weeks or months of detention, sent into the interior of the country. (Hankin, Israel Schochath.)

Beha-ed-Din: A true disciple of Jemal Pasha was Beha-ed-Din, who at the beginning of the war occupied the post of Kaimakam in Jaffa. This man had been trained for a position in Armenia, and he came to Jaffa armed with definite instructions, and with the object of instituting there a reign of terror like that in Armenia. Immediately after his arrival he declared to the Chacham Bashi in the hearing of a number of persons in his office that he was a determined opponent of those Palestine Jews who called themselves Zionists. He had, he said, devoted particular attention to this question while he was yet in Constantinople. He knew the Jews, whose prayer book was full of "Zion, Zion." They came now in order to acquire the land, and founded "colonies" like the Romans, i.e., settle-

ments which were to form a State within a State. But he would deal rigorously with them. His first order was that Hebrew sign-boards should be prohibited (Hebrew was only allowed to take the third place along with Turkish and Arabic, and then only in small letters); that the street name-plates in Tel Aviv should be removed; and that Jewish guards of the Jewish quarter should be forbidden. He further resolved not to allow the Jewish subjects of foreign countries to land. During Beha-ed-Din's period of office about fifty Yememite families came via Egypt to Jaffa. According to Turkish law it was impossible to forbid their entry, as they were Ottoman citizens; nevertheless, Beha-ed-Din forbade them to land. For a long time they remained out at sea in stormy weather in front of Jaffa, until certain influential people by means of a little trickery obtained permission for them to land; and then they were immediately locked up. They were only released after wearisome negotiations, and after the police had made enquiries as to who had brought them. The character of this Turkish despot is well shown by his treatment of Miss M. Schochat, the Palestine woman worker. In compliance with his invitation, she expressed her opinion in his presence with great freedom on the mismanagement of the Turks. He listened to her quite calmly, and then handed her over to the court-martial and had her banished into the interior of the country.

He brought his own career to an end by the great domiciliary search which he instituted in Tel Aviv on November 5th, 1914. On December 17th, he projected a mass expulsion of Jews from Jaffa, which caused a universal commotion. In consequence of the great indignation roused by this action abroad, Jemal Pasha found himself obliged to remove Beha-ed-Din from his post as Kaimakam, though he simply transferred him to the post of head of the information service in the staff of the Fourth Army.

Hassan Bey: The harshest and most cruel of all the Turkish officials was the Commandant of the Jaffa district, Hassan Bey, who for a time was also Deputy Kaimakam in Jaffa. He was the very type of an Oriental satrap. It would suddenly come into his head to summon respectable householders to him after midnight, and hours after they would return to their expectant families with an order to bring him some object from their homes which had caught his fancy or of which he had heard—an electric clock, a carpet, etc. Groundless arrests, insults, tortures, bastinadoes—these were things every householder had to fear.

Like Jemal, he also had an ambition to beautify the towns. For this purpose he suddenly had whole rows of houses pulled down without offering any reason, and forced the owners to sign legal documents stating that they gave up all claim to their property. Both they and the other inhabitants were compelled to provide building materials and money. He forced the labourers under threat of the lash to give work without payment. Agricultural labourers, tailors, boot-makers, and other artisans were called on to work at road making and other Government works.

Hassan Bey continually demanded from the Jewish institutions money for and active participation in the execution of public works (building of a mosque in Jaffa, erection of the Mohammedan schools founded by him, etc.). The Jewish

communal committees particularly excited his wrath. He openly called the members of the Colony Committees "Komitadjes." Every Jewish institution and building was suspect in his eyes.

When Hassan Bey presented a demand to a colony, he usually reinforced it with a threat to attack the colony with his soldiers and wipe it out if his request was not fulfilled.

At the end of 1916 Hassan Bey was removed to Mosul. His intolerance of all opinions other than his own had roused universal opposition against him.

With these Turkish leaders a host of other officials (Turkish) came into the country, among them men of friendly disposition who got on very well with the Jews in every way. Such were, for instance, the deputy and namesake of Jemal Pasha, the Commandant of an Army Corps and several military chiefs in Jerusalem, who to Oriental good nature added a liking for Jewish society, and who on many occasions proved friends in need.

(3) **Persecutions under Jemal's Rule.**

(a) *House Searches in Tel Aviv*: The first official act of Jemal Pasha which threw the Jewish population into a state of terror was the house search in Tel Aviv and the arrest of Zionist leaders. This search was expected to provide proof that the Zionists were pursuing Separatist aims, detrimental to the integrity of the Turkish State. The most convincing proof of their Separatist endeavours was to be afforded by the institution of their own arbitration court, Mishpat Hashalom. Accordingly Hassan Bey, who was in charge of the investigation, examined with special minuteness all the members of the Court who were known to him. A special political significance was attached by the officials of Jemal to the circulation of Jewish National Fund Stamps. The material brought to light by the officials engaged on the investigation was to be made the basis of an important political trial. It was anticipated that in the case of some of the accused it would be impossible to secure a condemnation, but it was hoped that opportunity would be afforded of banishing from the country all who were known as active Zionists. The names of Palestinian delegates to Zionist Congresses, especially the last Congress, were taken from the Congress minutes, and they were put on their trial for high treason. Then there was a domiciliary visit. One morning the residents of Tel Aviv woke up to find the whole quarter surrounded by a cordon of soldiers, while policemen pressed into the houses and began their search. Prominent individuals were arrested and sent to Jerusalem. The search lasted about a week. Although it failed to yield the results expected by the Turks, and although nothing was discovered which was against the law of Turkey or dangerous to the security and welfare of the realm, yet most of the accused were sentenced to exile.

On November 5th, 1914, a second domiciliary visit was carried out. Beha-ed-Din had Tel Aviv encircled on all sides, posted guards at the cross-roads, and began a minute search in the houses. He looked for money, securities, and cheques on the bank. Some people were imprisoned for a time.

Rigorous searches were carried out in several of the colonies. Firearms were particularly looked for there. The search in Mikveh Israel lasted forty-eight hours, and was accompanied by gross insults to the Jews.

(b) *Prohibition of National Fund Stamps*: A further oppressive act of Jemal was to forbid the use of National Fund Stamps on pain of death. This step created extraordinary excitement in Palestine itself and abroad.

Closing of the Bank: An order followed to close all branches of the A.P.C. in ten days. This order threw into consternation not only Jewish circles, but also the numerous non-Jews who had business dealings with the Bank. Apart from the important part played by this institution in the economic life of the country in general, it was rendering particular assistance to the population at that time by issuing cheques for fixed sums. At the beginning of the crisis coin disappeared from the market, and the issue of these cheques was a good means of meeting the need for currency tokens. The Committee of Tel Aviv and the Jewish Food Committee in Jaffa also issued at the same time bills for small amounts. These cheques and bills circulated among the Jews, and in many cases they were accepted by the other inhabitants also, so that they contributed considerably to the facilitating of commercial intercourse in the country. The closing of the Bank and the prohibition of the use of cheques only aggravated the crisis.

Inhibition of Remittances: One of the annoyances to which the Yishub was subjected under Hassan Bey was the inhibition of the paying out of the money which had been brought by the American ship to Jaffa. Shortly after Hassan Bey had announced his desire that all public moneys should pass through his hands, a ship arrived with money at Jaffa. This was the first new money to reach the country after a long interval, and the head of the Palestine Office naturally sought to transmit the money immediately to the places for which it was intended. A conference was held, as it was difficult to decide how to act. On the one hand, the need for money, after a long cessation of remittances, was extremely pressing, and the refusal to forward it would have thrown several institutions and private persons into the greatest difficulties. On the other side, there was the danger that if the desire of the military commandant were complied with, a large part of the money would not reach Jewish hands. Negotiations went on for ten days. The special intervention of the American ambassador with the central authorities was requested. The Government in Constantinople communicated by telegraph with Jemal Pasha. At length, the following arrangement was come to. The money was to be transferred to the office of the American consul, and the list to be submitted to Hassan Bey. The money was to be distributed under the supervision of a committee composed of representatives of the Jewish community along with Government officials. In this way the money was rescued from the hands of the Government. But the attempt of the Turkish Government to appropriate this money led the Entente Powers to refuse all further permission for the bringing in of money in this way, so that the inflow of remittances was stopped.

(c) *The First Exodus from Jaffa*: Beha-ed-Din's great coup was the expulsion of Jews from Jaffa on December 17th, 1914. On that date at mid-day he suddenly issued an order that all Jews who were subjects of foreign Governments and had not yet become Ottoman subjects must leave the country by the boat which was to come to Jaffa at 4 o'clock. Policemen and soldiers posted themselves in the streets, beat and arrested men and women, old persons and children, and dragged them to the police buildings. They were not allowed to take with them their things, not even a change of clothing. Those arrested in the streets received no permission to inform their families of their arrest and to secure provisions for the journey. Without pity they were all dragged to the Customs House, and from there transferred in the most unfeeling manner on to the ship in boats. The barbarity of the officials who carried out this expulsion passed all bounds. Before their eyes the boatmen dragged the exiles in the darkness of the evening out to sea. They threatened with knives and struck the people who refused to give them what they demanded. The ship could not take in all the victims, and a large part returned to the shore. Many families were separated; either the children remained in the boat while the parents had already been put on board, or the children had to depart while the parents remained behind. This expulsion was all the more unexpected, as a decision was being awaited from Constantinople regarding the naturalisation. Jemal Pasha, as Commander-in-Chief, had simply given the order for expulsion without the Central Government knowing anything about it. The Chacham Bashi of Jerusalem lodged a complaint about the cruelty of Beha-ed-Din with Jemal Pasha, who, however, threatened him with deposition from his office if he dared to meddle with matters that did not concern him. The continuance of the expulsion was stopped by telegraphic order from Constantinople. The fact of the expulsion and the manner in which it was carried out were so strongly commented on in foreign countries that the Turkish Government saw itself compelled to remove Beha-ed-Din from his post, though, as already mentioned, it was only to transfer him to a higher one.

(d) *Trials*: Nothing contributed so much to depress and mortify the Jews under the Turkish rule as the chain of trials of leading Zionists which extended over the whole period. These trials gave a shock to the whole Jewish community, and kept not only the accused but all the representatives of the Zionist Organisation in continuous agitation and unrest. In every case it was necessary to give the accused legal, political, and financial assistance, and the Palestine Office in particular was kept in a constant ferment. The whole of the trials had no other object than to reduce to inaction persons who were known as representatives of Zionism.

Trial of Achduth: For publishing a letter on the expulsion from Jaffa the printing establishment and offices "Achduth," of the Workers' Party, Poale Zion, were closed. The papers in which the letter was published were confiscated. The author, J. Ben Zwi, and the responsible editor, S. Aschuri, were handed over to the law courts. After an examination lasting some months, J. Ben Zwi was

sentenced to imprisonment for two months and a fine of £T15 after he had already been banished from the country for being a member of the Poale Zion Party. The same sentence was passed on the responsible editor. The printing press and office of "Achduth" were closed till after the war.

Trial of "Hapoel Hazair": Similar proceedings were instituted against "Hapoel Hazair," also arising out of the publication of a report on the expulsion. As the editor, Joseph Aronowitz, had been sent away some time before the accusation, the responsible editor, J. Kaschdan, was put on trial. Although he was acquitted twice, he was put on his trial a third time, and was in a most arbitrary manner sentenced to two years' imprisonment and a fine of £T50.

Trial Concerning the National Fund Stamps: On December 20th, 1915, Dr. J. Thon, Feldman, some officials of the Palestine Office, and Ephraim Blumenfeld, representative of the Workers' Fund in Palestine, were summoned before the investigating judge in Jaffa. Investigations and enquiries lasting some days were held regarding the National Fund Stamps, the place of their issue, and their circulation in the country. The accusation rested on the following occurrence. Seven years before the trial, a boy who had served as messenger in the Palestine Office had handed over to the police a number of National Fund Stamps, with the remark that he had obtained them in the Palestine Office. At that time the Turkish officials did not venture to make any use of this information; now, however, they thought the moment had come to institute a charge of high treason against the head of the Palestine Office and his assistants on the basis of the boy's remarks. The imprisonment of the accused was only avoided through vigorous representations and the offer of bail. The State attorney assured the accused that he understood the real circumstances of the case, and that there was no ground for an accusation. Nevertheless, he made the following report:—

"It has been disclosed by the investigation that Dr. Ruppin, Dr. Thon, and Messrs. A. Ulitzki, Ben David, J. Feldman, E. Blumenfeld, and Feingold, circulate in Palestine the stamps of the Zionist Organisation which are printed in Cologne and intended for national purposes. These stamps give the above-mentioned organisation the form of a government which does charitable work as a screen for political objects, and this is one way in which it seeks to achieve them. According to the appendix to Par. 120 of the criminal code, published on 31-3-1329, this constitutes an offence of the second order, and accused must present themselves before the military court in Jerusalem. 3 Ganun Jani 1331."

In consequence of the opinion thus rendered by the State Attorney, the accused were sent under strict surveillance to be tried by the military court at Jerusalem, whither Dr. Ruppin was also summoned. The investigation lasted fourteen days, and was conducted by Ibrahim Bey, who was known to be a strict and harsh judge. The trial was expected to prove that the National Fund Stamps were a sign of participation in the Zionist movement, the object of which was the undermining of the stability of the Turkish monarchy. The accused were thus threatened

with a heavy penalty, as traitors to the country. Meanwhile, the thing became known in Constantinople, and under pressure from the Capital the judges changed their tactics, and construed the indictment to mean that the accused were charged with imitating Government stamps. As, however, they lacked the essential sign of the Government stamps, viz., the "Tugra" (the signature of the Sultan), the State Attorney proposed acquittal and the court agreed.

Trial of the Palestine Office for Conducting the Business of the A. P. C.: A few weeks after the members of the Palestine Office had been acquitted in the matter of the National Fund Stamps, they were again put on their trial on another charge. After the closing of the Bank, persons with claims on the Bank who had been left without means received instalments from the Palestine Office on account of their claims. This gave the administration ground for an indictment, and a searching investigation was set on foot in which the Commandant, Hassan Bey, subjected the chief defendant, Dr. Thon, to every kind of torture in order to obtain from him an admission that the Palestine Office had really carried on the affairs of the Anglo-Palestine Bank after the Government had forbidden it. The whole material was handed over to the military court in Jerusalem, with a denunciation of the Zionist Executive for its dangerous conduct. The report ran as follows:—

"To the Chief Commandant of the Fourth Army Corps. The enclosed letters have disclosed the following facts. After the Government had closed the Anglo-Palestine Co., in Jaffa, Dr. Ruppin secretly opened a bank in his house in Tel Aviv, where all kinds of money dealings were transacted, and where the work of the bank was continued. As a result of the cross-examination of the heads of the Bank, Messrs. Hoolien and Grasowsky, and the clerks, Goldberg and Ulitzkin, combined with entries in the books of Ostrowsky and the other clerks, and with utterances of Dr. Thon, Dr. Ruppin, and Mr. Ostrowsky, it was established that the persons mentioned were continuing the work of the Bank which the Government had declared to be a hostile institution and had closed as such. They work only in the interest of the Jews. In spite of the prohibition of the Government, Dr. Ruppin presides over a Zionist committee, the members of which are enemy subjects who have remained in the Turkish Empire. Their whole efforts are directed to bringing Palestine into the hands of the Jews through the realisation of their plans. They use and circulate special stamps for the Jews, and thereby cause great loss to the State treasury. In order to carry out their political designs, they work hand in hand with the Zionists of America, who are doing all they can for the idea of a Jewish State, and lay out thousands of pounds for the thirty thousand Jews who live in Jaffa and the neighbourhood. The leader and moving spirit in this work is Dr. Arthur Ruppin. The above-mentioned Bank is an example of the activities which he carries on in opposition to the Government. We are awaiting instructions to stop the continuance of a movement which must excite the displeasure of the Government, as those who participate in it take no heed at all of the Government. 23.11.1331. Chaled."

This trial would have been followed by another had not the Governor of Jerusalem interfered and cut it short while it was still in the preliminary stage.

He was against the proceedings being continued, as they could bring no honour to Turkey.

The Thal Trial: At the beginning of 1916, Mr. Thal, an employee of the A. P. C. and a Dutch subject, received some books, such as Herzl's and Nordau's writings, from the Juedischer Verlag in Berlin. The censor of the Post Office in Jaffa notified the State Attorney of the arrival of the books, and the latter considered the order sufficient reason for instituting legal proceedings. The examination was carried on with the usual methods, such as blows and tortures, which often caused the accused to faint. Mr. Thal was three months in prison, and twice he was on the point of being condemned to death as an agitator on account of the receipt of books of Zionist character. Only through energetic representations being made in Constantinople was the sentence quashed and the accused set at liberty.

Trial of the American Relief Committee: In February, proceedings were instituted against the members of the American Relief Committee because it had ventured to receive money from abroad in order to relieve the distress in Palestine. At the same time the branch of the Palestine Office in Jerusalem, where money was paid out against the cheques of the Provisional Committee in America, was closed. As a result of strenuous efforts made on the spot, and on a hint being received from Constantinople, the court contented itself with inflicting fines on the members of the American Committee. The Committee was dissolved, and its chairman, Mr. David Yellin, sent with his family to Damascus.

Dr. Thon was also condemned to leave the country, as being responsible for the activity of the Palestine Office. He was first summoned to appear before Jemal Pasha at Damascus. The latter, after a conversation with him, withdrew his expulsion order, and gave instructions that from now on all payments should be made under supervision of a committee to be appointed by the Governor of Jerusalem. There was no trial in which Jemal did not seek to involve the Palestine Office, which consequently was always in trouble. It was clear to Jemal Pasha and his subordinates that the Palestine Office was the centre of all Zionist activity in Palestine. All the more annoying was it to them that they could not fix any definite charge on it, as its head, Dr. A. Ruppin, was a German subject. In their most arbitrary proceedings, the domiciliary search of Tel Aviv, the arrest of Zionist leaders, etc., they had to leave the Palestine Office unmolested. As he could not touch it directly, Jemal Pasha sought to obtain his end by indirect means. Through the mouths of well-known Jews, especially Antebi, he gave it frequently to be understood that he could not allow Ruppin, as a foreign subject, to stand at the head of the Zionist work. He must, therefore, either give up his post or adopt Turkish nationality. He did not venture to speak to Ruppin himself for fear of the German ambassador. But he allowed it to be clearly discerned that he would take his revenge on Zionist and Jewish institutions if Ruppin remained longer at his post. This led the latter to promise him in the course of a conversation in September, 1915, that he would withdraw from Zionist work. Jemal Pasha was anxious that Dr. Thon should take over the work and become

a Turkish subject. It was arranged that the work should have a purely economic and not a political character. Ruppin remained another year in Jerusalem, and was able to continue his studies on the economic conditions of Syria and Palestine. This seemed for a time to pacify Jemal. In reality, however, he was not satisfied, and a year later, in September, 1916, Ruppin had to give way to him, and leave Palestine. He went to Constantinople, where his activities, both political and economic, were invaluable in keeping the Zionist work in Palestine going. The direction of the Palestine Office remained up to the end of the war and the amalgamation of the Office with the Zionist Commission in the hands of Dr. Thon.

(4) Ottoman Naturalisation.

On Turkey's entry into the war, an order was issued that all male subjects of enemy countries should be sent into the interior. Women and children were to be permitted to remain where they were. As regards the Jews, through the influence of the American and the German consuls, certain concessions were secured by virtue of which the men received permission to naturalise themselves and remain in the country. Whoever refused to become an Ottoman subject was to leave the country.

Even before the war several Zionists had endeavoured to become Ottoman subjects. This, however, was a matter of great difficulty, as the consuls opposed any efforts of the subjects of their respective countries to shake off their allegiance. The Russian consul was particularly active in persecuting those persons who tried to become Ottomans, spying on their correspondence, holding back the remittances of money sent to them and so forth.

When the Jews of Palestine were officially given permission to become Ottoman subjects and remain in the country, a large section of Zionists saw in this the salvation of the Yishub. The men were prepared to let themselves be enrolled in the army if necessary, only so as not to have to leave the country. But, as was usual with governmental orders in Turkey, this rescript also came from Constantinople without proper explanations, so that room was left to the officials to interpret it as they wished, and to proceed arbitrarily in carrying it out. The line adopted in conferring the naturalisation varied according to the character and inclination of the officials. In some places concessions were granted, in others, obstacles were raised. It was only after repeated telegrams had been sent to the Chacham Bashi in Constantinople that in November, 1914, the Kaïmakam in Jaffa issued instructions to the Chacham Bashi in Jaffa regarding the establishment of a registry to deal with naturalisation. People came in crowds to apply at this office, but the difficulties in obtaining naturalisation were still very great. The staff of officials and secretaries was quite inadequate to cope with the rush, and the direction of the work was entrusted to a young man without experience. The thing dragged on for months; people were sent from one office to another, and the inhabitants of the colonies had to come to

Jaffa five or six times during the period. It was only when the Jews managed to get the business into their own hands that the naturalisation was at last effected smoothly.

Exceptional difficulties attended the naturalisation of the women and children who were living in the country without their husbands, fathers, or guardians. The Jewish community maintained that it was impossible to naturalise women and children without the consent of the head of the family, but the Turkish officials would not listen to them, and insisted that even small children should become naturalised or leave the country. People in charge of children whose parents were away were in a quandary. To send them by ship to Egypt and there let them shift for themselves was out of the question. It was also a serious step to naturalise them without the knowledge of their parents. Accordingly the teachers and committees of the various schools in which such children were being brought up decided to deal with them as if they were their own children, and thus saved many of them for their parents and relatives. The children of the various schools were naturalised *en masse* under the auspices of the heads of the educational institutions (Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa, Teachers' Seminary in Jerusalem, etc.).

Naturalisation Fees: The payment of naturalisation fees caused serious difficulties. At first, just when money was most scarce, the fee demanded was 37½ francs, a sum with which a middle-class family in normal times and a poor family at that time could have lived for a whole month. At this rate, a family of five souls would have to pay 185 francs, which would have been an impossibility for most people at this time. It was calculated that there would be 20,000 candidates for naturalisation, requiring a sum of 600,000 francs for fees. Of this sum, only a quarter could be looked for from the applicants themselves, the rest would have to be provided from public funds, which was quite impossible. Great efforts were made in Constantinople to get the fee reduced, and these were so far successful that it was made payable not for each individual but for each family, while the very poor were exempted from it altogether; in their case, however, large sums had to be disbursed for stamps. The Palestine Office alone expended about 50,000 francs in this work. This was provided from various sources, chiefly from the American Fund, which was used for this purpose with the consent of the American ambassador, Mr. Morgenthau. The number naturalised amounted in Jerusalem to about five thousand persons; in Jaffa and the neighbourhood to five thousand; and in Samaria and Galilee to about two thousand; apart from those who were naturalised through the Jewish institutions.

(5) **Military Service.**

The most serious consequence of accepting Ottoman citizenship was the obligation of military service which it involved. Before the Young Turk Revolution, the duty of service under arms was on religious grounds confined to Mohammedans, while non-Mohammedans had to pay a military tax. The new

regime introduced universal military service without distinction of creed. When Turkey entered the war, Jews as well as Christians were held liable to active service under arms. A difference, however, was made between Mohammedans and the adherents of other religions as follows :—

(a) Jews and Christians of the same age classes as those in which Mohammedans were liable to active service could obtain exemption through payment of a ransom.

(b) Jews and Christians, with the exception of those who had to serve only a short period (like the one-year volunteer service in European States), were for the most part not placed on active service but assigned to various labour battalions. The members of these battalions were the pariahs of the army; their clothing, feeding and general equipment was abominable, and they were treated worse than slaves. The Jew would sell his last stick in order to scrape together enough money to ransom him from the slavery of this battalion. But there were still many who could not raise sufficient, and who had to serve in the labour battalions; and these had to leave their families behind entirely unprovided for. The government, it is true, had assigned separation allowances to families of soldiers, but most of this money remained in the hands of the officials.

A large part of the Jews in the workers' battalions never returned. They fell victims to epidemics and starvation. A large part of the families of these soldiers also perished from poverty and sickness. Those Jews who had become naturalised before the order came from Constantinople had been allowed to postpone taking up military service for one year from their naturalisation by an express stipulation made at the time. In spite of this, however, they were called to the colours before the expiration of a full year.

The pupils of the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa and of the Teachers' Seminary in Jerusalem, who under the existing regulations were privileged to attend the military school in Constantinople in order to be trained there for officers, were the first to answer the call to military service. These young people suffered great hardships under the command of Turkish officers; nevertheless most of them by great determination overcame all obstacles and distinguished themselves in the war. In many cases exemption from military service could be obtained not by payment of ransom, but by taking shares in certain financial undertakings of the military administration. For this purpose large sums were sometimes required which had to be paid in monthly instalments, and many people were in this way reduced to poverty. Later on, instead of money payment a certain quantity of corn was demanded. This method of securing exemption cost from £150 to £200. Only a few could afford so much; most sought to escape the labour battalions by taking shares in the undertakings of the military administration. Naturally desertion was rife in Syria and Palestine.

The treatment of the Jews on military service became most humiliating in the fourth year of the war. On receipt of a secret order of March 1918, the war minister in Constantinople collected all Jewish soldiers and officers, and sent them

into the interior of Anatolia, where they were handed over to the command of the 3rd Army Corps. In this way the supreme Turkish Army Command desired to show its mistrust of the Jews, as it had on other occasions shown its mistrust of other subject peoples. This order affected not only the young people who from a feeling of duty had saddled themselves with the Turkish yoke, but also high officers who had already volunteered to serve in the Balkan war. It applied not only to Palestinian Jews and new Ottoman subjects who were suspect as Zionists, but also to Jews from other Turkish districts whose parents were Ottomans before them, and whose patriotism the Turks had always been ready to acknowledge.

IV.

WORK OF THE PALESTINE OFFICE DURING THE WAR.

(i) **Preservation of the Yishub.**

Co-operation of Zionist bodies: In this war period, when any expansion of the Yishub was not to be thought of, all energies had to be concentrated on the task of conserving as far as possible the moral influence and material position which had already been won. For this purpose it was essential that the Zionist Organisation should preserve an attitude of strict neutrality. Realisation of this fact led to the most harmonious co-operation between the principal offices of the Zionist Organisation and the Central Office in Berlin, the Zionist Agency in Constantinople and the Palestine Office in Jaffa, while the Bureau in Copenhagen and the newly-formed Provisional Executive Committee of General Zionist Affairs in New York also joined in. This co-operation made it possible to keep the whole Jewish public fully informed, during the period of the blockade and of the Turkish military censorship, of every movement of Jewish life in Palestine. In this way opportunity was given to appeal for help from abroad on every occasion of serious political or economic danger. Only through the protection thus afforded by the Zionist Organisation can the fact be explained that the war period left the Yishub in Palestine practically intact. The part played by the Palestine Office in bringing this about may be described as follows.

Information Service: The first task of the Palestine Office was to take steps for keeping the outer world well informed of affairs in Palestine, and for securing protection and help in the country itself. It was essential that the news sent from Palestine should be prompt and correct, and should above all avoid exaggeration, in order not lose the reputation of reliability.

It was further of importance to the Jews to be on a proper footing with the authorities in the country, and not to appeal for protection against them before absolutely every hope of obtaining satisfaction in the country itself had failed. The Palestine Office did its best to remain loyal to the Turkish Government, and to confirm the Yishub in this sentiment, sometimes in the teeth of the greatest provocation.

Dealings with Representatives of Governments: The Palestine Office had to maintain relations not only with the Turkish military and civil authorities, but also with the representatives of foreign countries who were still in Palestine.

Among the Consular representatives were several who during the whole period of their stay in the country showed themselves always ready to help, and performed valuable services for the Jewish Yishub. Especially deserving of mention are the

German vice-consul Schabinger in Haifa, and the Consul Brode, who at the outbreak of the war was head of the German Consulate in Jaffa, and subsequently after the death of the well-known consul Schmidt became General Consul in Jerusalem. The Jewish population also benefited by the presence of the head of the German military mission, Colonel Kress von Kressenstein, who on several occasions exerted his influence on behalf of the Jews. Extremely valuable help was given by the American consular representatives, especially by the consul in Jerusalem, Mr. Glazebrook, who always warmly supported Jewish interests, while consul Hardeg was of great assistance in the forwarding of the American money remittances. Special thanks are due to the Spanish consul, Count von Balobar, who supplied accommodation to the American Relief Committee, and through whose guarantee Messrs. Hoofien, Meyuchas and Thon escaped being expelled from the country. The Spanish representative Kuebler in Jaffa and the Austrian Consul Krauss in Jerusalem frequently lent their assistance. The German officials in general received during the war instructions from the Foreign Office and from the Embassy and Military Mission in Constantinople to promote Zionist interests. These instructions were on the whole punctually obeyed by all officials, no matter whether as individuals they sympathised or not with Jewish aspirations.

In this period the Palestine Office was a tower of strength to all Jews in difficulties, whether in public or private affairs. In the sphere of finance it played a most important role. It had not only to maintain all the institutions which it had established or which stood in connection with it, but to provide support for other institutions and persons in need, the number of whom had increased considerably. On this account and especially through the fact that it had become the head office for the American Fund, its sphere of activity was suddenly extended far beyond the confines of the new Yishub.

Great circumspection was required in order to meet all requirements with the means available. Catastrophies followed one another in quick succession—the locusts, the naturalisation, the expulsion from Jaffa, the depreciation of the Turkish paper money—and it was often a riddle how the means required for parrying these disasters were to be raised. Although therefore the calls made upon it were great enough to drain its resources to the last penny, yet it was always necessary to keep in the Palestine Office a small reserve fund to meet sudden emergencies when assistance could not be obtained quickly enough from abroad. Yet economy could not be carried so far as to allow institutions or persons depending on the support of the Palestine Office to perish. On the whole the Palestine Office performed its task successfully. It managed to preserve the main part of the Yishub through the period of war, a feat which was only rendered possible by the devotion with which all members of the staff threw themselves into their work.

Improvements in the Yishub: Although progress in colonisation was for the time brought to a standstill, yet it was found possible to make certain necessary adaptations and to remedy some long-standing defects. Thus, for example, the landworkers were employed continually at the same place, and so were able to become attached to their work and to the ground which they tilled. To improve the food supply, vegetable gardening and poultry-keeping were introduced, branches the need of which had long been felt and which were of great benefit

to the settlers. The workers' kitchens, which had been badly managed for years, were greatly improved. The emergency works were utilised for the carrying out of operations which had long been required in the country, e.g., the laying down of roads, draining of swamps, amelioration of soil for plantations, etc. All these things kept the Palestine Office busy; and it was largely due to its untiring activities that the catastrophies of the war exercised a far less devastating effect on the Jewish Palestine than had been anticipated.

The necessity of providing from organisation funds for a number of schools which formerly had been supported by private committees led to the creation of a single school system embracing all the schools in the country, supported by the Zionist Organisation. Thanks largely to this unremitting care for the schools, it was found at the end of the war that the knowledge of Hebrew in the country had increased considerably in all sections of the Jewish population. In the welfare work, which assumed such increased dimensions owing to the war conditions, it was always the particular endeavour of the Palestine Office to preserve the independence of the recipients of relief, and on no account to give its work the character of almsgiving. The Office therefore avoided as far as possible direct dealings with individual applicants for assistance and made them form classes and groups whose representatives were accorded a voice in the direction of the welfare work. Of particular importance was the organisation of the labourers and artisans of the colonies, which was greatly strengthened during the war. By learning thus to work together, the various classes came to sink their differences, and this contributed much to the preservation of the Yishub in the hour of danger.

(2) **The Economic Catastrophies.**

As if in itself the war was not a sufficient catastrophe, others, due partly to natural and partly to human causes, came to aggravate it. Chief of these were the plague of locusts and the depreciation of money.

The Locusts: On Purim, 5678-1917, immense swarms of locusts suddenly covered the heavens, and soon after settled on the earth. The population turned out with tin vessels and sticks to chase them away. They had, however, already fixed themselves on the trees and bushes, and could not be dislodged. The fight against them was taken up with extraordinary energy, the whole Yishub joining in. The schools were closed, so that the children could be sent to the colonies and farms. The work was tedious and exhausting. Innumerable locusts creeping on the earth were killed, and the eggs which had been laid were dug out of the clods. The fight was waged with peculiar intensity against the locusts that had just been hatched. Canals were dug and fences were raised in order to bury or burn them. This spell of energy was, however, succeeded by one of corresponding slackness and despondency; for, after the locusts had been removed from the Jewish fields, new swarms came from the fields of the Arabs, who, in spite of the orders of the Government, had done nothing to combat the plague. The Jews in despair saw the plantations on which they had worked for decades ruined in a few hours. Luckily, the new generation of locusts did not remain long in the country, and as soon as their wings grew, they flew away from Palestine.

This was at the end of June. The locusts caused enormous loss in Palestine. The vegetable fields were almost stripped bare, while the corn fields lost from a quarter to a third of their crops. In the plantations, however, the trees remained for the most part uninjured and were not spoilt, as had been feared at first. But that year's crop was lost, and those of the succeeding years suffered a diminution.

The amount of damage suffered by the Yishub may be estimated from the fact that of 6,000 dunams of oranges in Petach Tikvah, only 1,700 remained uninjured; while of the orange groves in the neighbourhood of Jaffa only a few were saved, the Montefiore orange grove near the German colony of Sarona and the orange grove of Mikveh Israel.

The total loss may be put in figures, as follows:—

	Francs.
Damage to winter and summer corn	150,000
Vegetables and fodder	150,000
Orange groves	1,700,000
Vineyards	530,000
Almond Groves	225,000
Cost of fight against locusts	200,000
	<hr/>
	2,255,000
	<hr/>

Depreciation of the Currency: A further economic catastrophe befel Palestine through the depreciation of the currency. Before the war the gold coins in use were: The French Napoleon (20 francs), the Turkish pound (23.75 francs), and the English pound (25.16 francs). The value of the Turkish metal coins was fixed correspondingly. Turkish paper money was scarcely ever seen on the market. At the beginning of the war Turkish banknotes began to appear. This money was accepted by the public with undisguised reluctance. The inhabitants of the villages refused it altogether. In the first year of the war paper money circulated only in limited amount and there was a plethora of gold, the quantity of which was augmented especially by the consignments on the American ships. The whole of this gold was placed on the market, as it was distributed in small sums to private persons or used to assist various institutions and pay the salaries of officials and teachers. This gold came for the most part into the hands of producers and circulated in large quantities on the market, in contrast to paper money, which at first was used in small quantity only, and therefore was at no great discount as compared with gold.

As soon, however, as the American ships ceased to appear in the harbours of Palestine, the quantity of gold in the country decreased. A similar decrease took place in the quantity of the money which had flowed from various sources into the hands of the Administration, which now sent it to Constantinople. Instead of gold, the market was now flooded with a large quantity of paper money.

When ships ceased to call from foreign countries, money came from America and other countries via Constantinople in the form of bank drafts to the Palestine Office, and was paid out in Palestine in banknotes. Through this the value of

the Turkish banknote began to drop from day to day, and the fall was so pronounced that in November, 1917, only 7.3 bishlik (3.90 francs) was paid for a Turkish pound, of which the nominal value was 22.75 francs (43.2 bishlik).

The drop in the exchange was accelerated by the shortage of small change. Even in peace time the position in respect to small change had been unsatisfactory, different rates of exchange prevailing in towns quite close to one another, so that money-changers and all kinds of speculators were able to make big profits. At the beginning of the war the position was rendered still more acute by the prohibition of the use of foreign coins, and the Government made matters worse by issuing banknotes. The first banknotes were for five pounds; only with great difficulty could single pounds be obtained for them, so that a comparatively high price had to be paid for changing, and this depreciated the value of the banknotes.

At length, after a long interval, the Turkish Government put small banknotes in circulation, but they came too late to be of any use.

In practice, the order to accept paper money at full value had no validity, and was almost universally disregarded, both by private individuals and business men. This was a new source of income for the officials. It was well known to the public that any service could be obtained from an official if he was paid with gold instead of paper.

The currency reached its lowest point in the winter of 1916-1917. The Jewish consumers were the worst sufferers from this state of affairs. The producers were for the most part non-Jews who used no paper money, but sold the products of their work only for gold. They made a further profit by paying their taxes to the Government in paper, which they obtained on the market for a low price.

People who made their living by trade and industry, such as merchants and artisans, also demanded coin for their work. The Civil Servants, who received their salaries in paper, obtained permission to buy provisions in the Government stores. The chief sufferers were the people whose income came from abroad, those who were dependent on some institution, and those who lived from their bank deposits. These received their whole income in paper money, in expending which they lost considerably, sometimes obtaining only a fifth or sixth of the nominal value. A person, for instance, who, in 1917, received from abroad money in Turkish bank-notes obtained as the equivalent in bishliks or francs—

for 100 dollars=	20 Turkish pounds	140 bishliks	or	75 francs.
„ 100 marks	=4.75	„ „	32.25	„ „ 17.25 „
„ 100 kronen	=2.95	„ „	20.65	„ „ 14.04 „

At the same time the prices of all foodstuffs rose, and this brought all institutions and public bodies into a critical position. They would not have been able to survive had not in the meanwhile an opportunity presented itself of bringing in money *via* Constantinople.

Help from Constantinople: The importation of gold in large quantities from Constantinople through the agency of the German and Austrian military gradually stabilised the bank-note and prevented its complete depreciation on the market. The Palestine institutions were able, thanks to the presence of Dr. Rupp in

Constantinople, to import gold, and this saved the schools and other Zionist institutions from ruin.

(3) **Distress in the Towns.**

Jerusalem and Jaffa: The distress caused by the war assumed its worst forms in Jerusalem. In that city the contrast between the old and the new Yishub is most clearly apparent. From the beginning of the war the new Yishub in the colonies and Jewish settlements braced itself to extraordinary exertions in order to cope with the situation, whereas in Jerusalem the efforts made were only feeble. The contrast between Jaffa and Jerusalem in this respect is illuminating.

In Jaffa all sections of the population, artisans, merchants, property owners, each class within itself and the whole population together, from the very first moment joined forces to stave off disaster. All were animated by a common desire to save themselves by their own efforts and by mutual help, and all classes and sections worked harmoniously together. But in Jerusalem every attempt to organise public activity came to grief through the indifference of the population. Even in this hour of stress its energy was wasted in petty quarrels. Every group remained isolated, so that all efforts to alleviate the distress were greatly hampered.

In Jaffa every individual and the whole Jewish public collectively helped to take care of the orphans and families in distress. When illnesses broke out a systematic sanitary service was immediately instituted. In Jerusalem, on the other hand, dozens of children lay starving in the streets without anyone noticing them. Typhus and cholera carried off hundreds every week, and yet no proper medical aid was organised. The number of doctors who offered their services was too small to meet the needs of the whole population. Through this lack of organisation a considerable portion of the Jerusalem population perished. The number of orphans at the time of the capture of Jerusalem by the English Army was 2,700.

A certain improvement took place in the situation in Jerusalem after the evacuation of Jaffa, as some important institutions with their leading men removed to Jerusalem. Among them were the administration of the American Relief Fund and the Palestine Office. These, in conjunction with the Jerusalem administration of the German-Dutch Kolel, organised systematic relief for the population of the town.

Safed and Tiberias: In Safed conditions were similar to what they were in Jerusalem; if anything, worse. Unemployment and poverty were even more rife there, and led to a great exodus, especially of the members of the Austrian and Hungarian Kolelim. The death-rate here also was appallingly high; towards the end of the war the number of orphans was five hundred. The removal to Safed of the persons evacuated from Jaffa with their relief committees brought to this town also a more liberal distribution of relief.

Tiberias profited by its situation in the midst of young productive settlements, and through its business relations with these was saved from the distress of the other towns of the old Yishub.

V.—END OF THE TURKISH RULE.

(1) **Evacuation of Jaffa.**

From the beginning of the war Jemal Pasha had been resolved to make Palestine Turkish. His intention was to send a large portion of the inhabitants of the country into distant Turkish provinces, and to settle Turks in their place in Palestine. With this end in view he was always expelling Arabic and Jewish families. This was only a preliminary to the mass expulsion which he intended to order at the propitious moment. For the expulsion of the Jews, he chose the moment when in March, 1917, the British were preparing their first serious invasion of Palestine. On March 29th, the order was issued that all Ottoman inhabitants not of the Moslem religion, and all Jews without distinction of nationality, must leave their abodes in Jaffa and the colonies of the Jaffa *Kaza*. This order was generally interpreted as the prelude to a repetition of the Armenian massacres.

The Consuls of the neutral States and the German and Austrian Consuls immediately lodged a protest. This caused Jemal Pasha to alter the form of the order in such a way as to reveal his real intention. According to the revised text of the order all inhabitants of Jaffa without distinction of religion and nationality had to leave the town, and only the agriculturists in the villages and colonies were allowed to remain in their abodes till after the harvest. In regard to the main point, Jemal Pasha still remained inflexible. Every attempt to baulk his intentions only made him more obstinate. All telegrams, even those of friendly consuls to their Governments, were held back by him for some days.

Although the military situation in Palestine underwent such an alteration during these days that there was no longer any strategical ground for the evacuation of Jaffa, yet the expulsion order still remained in force. Some days were allowed to the Jews of Jaffa to make their preparations, after which they would have to leave their houses and businesses and go into exile. On the evening before Passover the last train left the town. The inhabitants had to carry out their removal from the town at their own expense. Only very few railway carriages were provided for conveying the fugitives, so that hundreds of men, women, and children had to sit about on the station without protection from the weather and without food, and to depend on the kindness of the station officials for any small comforts.

Help from Galilee: One trembles to think what the fate of the exiles would have been, had not the settlers of Galilee come to their aid. The Committee which had been formed for the purpose of helping those who had been evacuated in Galilee placed dozens of railway coaches at the disposal of the Evacuation Committees in Jaffa and Petah Tikvah. These travelled day and night without inter-

ruption, and brought the persons evacuated from Jaffa to Galilee. They met with a particularly hospitable reception in the new farms. Yet in spite of the fraternal welcome which was accorded them in the Galilean colonies, and in spite of the great efforts to help them which were made, particularly at the beginning, by the whole Jewish population, their situation became more and more desperate. As a consequence of the conditions under which the evacuation had been carried out, epidemics broke out which, along with lack of food, caused a serious mortality among them.

Results of the Evacuation: The terrible rise in the cost of food, especially of bread, made it impossible for the Relief Committee, in spite of all efforts, to procure even a minimum of subsistence for the refugees. Through illness, lack of housing and lack of food, many of them were doomed to a life of misery. In this way the fifth part of the Jews of Jaffa perished. Of those who survived, many became beggars.

Removal of the Palestine Office to Jerusalem: After the evacuation of Jaffa the Palestine Office removed its headquarters to Jerusalem, where Dr. Thon and a number of his assistants took up their residence. There the Palestine Office continued to maintain its relations with the administration and the consulates, and from there it had the best opportunity of keeping in touch with Constantinople and the Zionist officials in other countries.

Branch in Petah Tikvah: The work of the Palestine Office in the neighbourhood of Jaffa was taken over immediately after the evacuation of that town by a branch in Petah Tikvah, of which Bezalel Jaffe, an old and tried friend of the Palestine Office, took charge, supported by a number of assistants who removed to Petah Tikvah with him. Here, too, was located at first the Central Committee for the Evacuated, of which Dizengoff was the head, and in which Bezalel Jaffe also took an active interest. Agencies of the Palestine Office, chiefly for managing farms and for looking after the workers, were established in Ben Schemen (under Mr. Wilkansky), Haifa, Tiberias, and Safed; in the last two places they were largely occupied with distributing money from the Relief Fund. In Jerusalem itself, the Palestine Office was suspect to the Government, and had frequently to transfer its documents and account books from one place to another surreptitiously. In spite of all difficulties, however, the integrity of the organisation was successfully maintained.

(2) **The Last Persecutions in Judea.**

Trials for Espionage: In September, 1917, a young man from Rishon le Zion was arrested on the Egyptian border as he was about to cross into Egypt. It was disclosed in the examination, which lasted some months, that besides him a number of people, including Turkish officials and Jewish and Christian inhabitants, had made the attempt to transmit information from Palestine to the British Army, which the inhabitants of the country regarded as their deliverer.

This discovery gave Jemal Pasha and his subordinates a good opportunity to proceed against the whole Yishub. For several weeks the colonies Zichron Jacob, Rishon le Zion, and Petah Tikvah, the colonies of Lower Galilee and the Jewish inhabitants of Haifa and Tiberias were subjected to bitter persecution. Several persons were arrested, including the heads of the colonies, the members of the various committees, the heads of the Federation of Jewish Colonies (D. Lubman and M. Meirovitz), the leader of the guards in Petah Tikvah, Abraham Shapira, and members of "Haschomer."

Proceedings against those evading Military Service: Along with these arrests and examinations of persons suspected of espionage, Jemal Pasha began to proceed with greater harshness against Jews liable to military service. Repugnance to service in the Turkish Army was equally strong among all sections of the population of Syria and Palestine—Mohammedans, Christians, and Jews. In the third year of the war the number of deserters in Syria and Palestine is said to have reached 100,000. Every Arab village harboured a large number of deserters. Most of those called to the colours escaped back to their villages in a short time. Equally great was the number of deserters in the towns. The officials who were charged with the search for deserters turned this activity into a new source of income for themselves. The Government knew all that was going on, but could not do anything to prevent it. Only against the Jews were energetic steps taken. In the last few weeks before the arrival of the English, when Jemal's irritability and his fury against the Jews were at their height, these persecutions became particularly severe. Under the pretext of looking for shirkers, attacks were made on the colonies, and the people there arrested in crowds. Those arrested were tied to one another or to a horse and beaten mercilessly. Jerusalem was filled with crowds of prisoners from the colonies, who came from all ends and corners of Judea. The streets were empty. Everyone hid in holes and cellars, in wells and garrets. For weeks together people did not venture to show themselves in the street.

(3) **Persecutions in Samaria.**

In Samaria the search for spies was placed under the charge of the Kaimakam, who had also learnt his trade in Armenia. One day about midnight, he attacked Zichron Jacob with a company of soldiers. The Aronson family was tortured in mediæval fashion. The daughter, Sara Aronson, was mercilessly beaten before the eyes of her aged father, and after three days of the most terrible agony, found an opportunity of escaping from her tormentors by committing suicide.

In Lower Galilee the military doctor, Hassan Bey, was put in charge of the search for firearms. He also conducted it to the accompaniment of cruel tortures of old men and women. Hundreds of young men were sent to Nazareth, and from there to Damascus for a continuance of their examination.

Only the liberation of Judea and the capture of Jerusalem put an end to these persecutions. But before it could take effect some hundreds of young people were sent to Damascus. They had to pass many days in closed railway carriages without

food and water. The dead and those suffering from infectious diseases remained among the living and healthy. In Damascus a special cemetery, with sixty graves, bears witness to the effects of this expulsion.

Several prominent Jews were sent away along with the heads of the Christian communities. Another long list had been drawn up of persons to be sent away, but owing to the conquest of the country it was left in abeyance.

By Chanukah, 1917, this chapter of sorrows for the Yishub in Judea was closed by the British occupation, whereas Samaria and Galilee remained under the Turkish yoke about a year longer.

VI.—RELIEF WORK IN DAMASCUS AND CONSTANTINOPLE.

(1) **Damascus as Centre for Palestine.**

With the removal of the chief command of the Syrian army to Damascus, this place became more and more important for the administration of Palestine, and so for the fate of the Jews of that country. Again and again the representatives of the Evacuation Committee, Dizengoff and Kalvarisky, had to wait on Jemal Pasha in order to induce him to countermand severities which had been threatened by the officials, or to obtain concessions and facilities for the Evacuation Committee. As time went on a group was formed in Damascus of prominent public workers who had been expelled from Palestine and lived in exile in Damascus, along with others who occupied posts there in the military or civil administration. They found much to do in Damascus. A number of Jews involved in the espionage trials had been dragged to Damascus, as also a large number of young people charged with evading military service. Numbers of Palestine Jews who were supposed to be going to Constantinople passed through Damascus. All these had to be looked after.

A special tribute for their devotion, courage and address in carrying on the relief work is due to Ben Jacob, member of the trade union of Deganiah, and Herzfeld, member of the Central Committee of Agricultural Workers. Many Palestinians who otherwise would have perished in military service, in hospitals, or in distant provinces had to thank these young men for their lives.

After the conquest of Judea by the British, the Relief Committee in Damascus had to keep the rest of Palestine in touch with Constantinople. This Committee saw to the transmission of money for Galilee and Samaria, which were still under Turkish rule, and of Zionist funds and other assistance for those who had been evacuated and expelled, for emergency works and schools, and for farms and other undertakings run by the Organisation. It also had to supply the Zionist Agency in Constantinople with news of conditions in Palestine.

The Relief Committee under Dizengoff undertook at this time to work for the Palestine Office in Galilee. It received devoted help from Joseph Bussel, of Deganiah, whose premature death is still deplored, and Glickin, the head of the farm Migdal; also from Wilhelm Hecker, Daniel Auster, and Dr. Biram. Special thanks are due to the German Consul, Graf von der Schulenberg, who defended the interests of the Jews with great energy. Until the final conquest of Galilee through the decisive victory of Allenby in September, 1918, Damascus remained an important administrative centre of the Palestine Office, with branches in Galilee and Haifa, and the expelled Jews found there a protecting hand.

(2) **Palestine Work in Constantinople.**

The political reasons for which the Zionist Actions Committee gave special attention during the war to its agency in Constantinople are not far to seek: Constantinople was the seat of the Government, and the place of residence of the influential German and American embassies, to which appeal could be made in the hour of need. But on the economic side also the work done in Constantinople for Palestine was of the utmost importance.

When Dr. Ruppin, in September, 1916, had to leave Palestine in obedience to the wishes of Jemal Pasha, he removed to Constantinople, where previously to his arrival the Zionist Organisation had been represented first by Dr. Jacobson and then by Mr. Lichtheim. When Mr. Lichtheim left Constantinople, Dr. Ruppin remained there as sole Zionist representative. The situation in Palestine became more and more threatening, and the difficulties in procuring money, especially on account of the constant depreciation of the Turkish currency and the severing of diplomatic relations between America and the Central Powers, became almost insuperable. To make matters worse, Constantinople was continually receiving fresh arrivals from Palestine in the shape of those who had been expelled or prosecuted in the courts or seized for military service or who were passing through, and all these had to be looked after by the Zionist Agency.

Dr. Ruppin succeeded in establishing the most cordial relations with the diplomatic representatives and the military missions. He found out the quickest ways for transmitting money to Palestine, and in spite of all obstacles, the money he sent used to arrive with great punctuality.

When the remittances from abroad were no longer able to keep pace with the growing depreciation of the Turkish paper money, and fell far behind the requirements of the country, Dr. Ruppin, in conjunction with the Central Office in Berlin, obtained permission from neutral countries to transmit Zionist funds in gold.

In this way the value of the money sent by the Zionist Organisation was increased four- and five-fold. To this fact alone the Hebrew schools, all the Zionist institutions, and the larger part of the Yishub, owed their survival at a time when the fountain of relief seemed to have run dry.

B. 1917—1919.

I.—OCCUPATION OF JUDEA BY THE BRITISH.

(1) **The Position in Judea.**

The persecution to which the Jewish population of Palestine had been exposed during the closing period of the Turkish regime made them all the more thankful for the liberation of the country by the British troops. The capture of Jerusalem on the first day of Chanukah was hailed with particular delight, and was celebrated by all the Jews in the liberated area as a national holiday. The rejoicings were greatly heightened by the news of the Balfour Declaration of November, 1917, which reached Palestine while the advance of the English was taking place.

The hopes, however, which were entertained of an immediate alleviation of the distress, of free intercourse with England, etc., were doomed to disappointment. Weeks and months went by without the arrival of any news from the Zionist Executive, or of money or drafts for the Zionist institutions. The improvement in the exchange was counterbalanced by the universal rise in prices. The general distress was very great. In this crisis the money which the Palestine Office had put aside from the drafts in Constantinople proved very useful, being drawn on to defray the expenditure of the schools and other Zionist institutions, and to relieve the most pressing cases of distress.

(2) **Special Committee.**

At this time news came to Palestine that a "Special Relief Committee" had been formed in Egypt. The fear that this Committee, without authorisation from the Zionist Executive and without the consent of the population of Palestine, might be entrusted by the Occupation Authorities with the administering of the money sent for the Jewish Yishub, caused general concern. The representative of the American Relief Fund, Mr. Hoofien, obtained permission to travel to Egypt, where he had conversations with the members of this Committee. Negotiations were continued in Palestine by the representatives of the Special Committee, Messrs. Jack Mosseri, Alexander, Pascal, Gluskin, and Judelovitsch, and the representatives of the Palestine Office and the recently formed Committee for Judea, "Vaad Hazmani": Dr. Thon, and Messrs. Hoofien, Bezalel Jaffe, Meerowitsch, Eisenberg, Sverdlorf, and Sprinzak. As a result, an understanding was arrived at by which the Palestine Office was recognised as the administering centre for the Relief Fund. Only insignificant sums, however, were for some time put into circulation, partly with the help of the British Occupation Authorities. The situation was not materially changed till the arrival of the Zionist Commission.

(3) **Arrival of the Zionist Commission.**

On April 4th, Prof. Chaim Weizmann arrived in Jaffa at the head of the "Zionist Commission to Palestine" (Vaad Hazirim Erez Israel), a body which had been invested with special powers by the British Government. After a welcome from the representatives of all societies and organisations, a triumphant reception was prepared for Dr. Weizmann and the other members of the Commission (Joseph Cowen, Leon Simon, Dr. Eder, and Prof. Sylvain Levy) along with Major Ormsby-Gore, who had been deputed by the British Government to accompany the Commission, and Major Rothschild, by the whole Jewish population of Tel Aviv. An address of welcome was delivered by the President of the Vaad Hazmani and head of the Palestine Office, Dr. Thon, and was answered by Dr. Weizmann and Major Ormsby-Gore and Major James Rothschild in words which aroused the greatest enthusiasm among the assembled multitude. A few days later many thousands of persons assembled to greet the Commission on the University site in Jerusalem.

On Ijar 3rd, 5678, the first meeting was held of the representative body of the Jews of Judea, "Vaad Hazmani," in which Dr. Weizmann spoke at length on the origin of the Balfour Declaration, and on the powers and intentions of the Zionist Commission, and Dr. Thon and Mr. E. Berlin spoke on the situation in Palestine.

II.—AMALGAMATION OF THE ZIONIST COMMISSION AND THE PALESTINE OFFICE.

(1) **Division of Functions.**

The Zionist Commission took over all the political work which previously the Palestine Office had looked after as representing the Zionist Organisation. According to the programme which had been approved by the Foreign Office, the Zionist Commission was to form the connecting link between the Jewish population of Palestine and the British authorities in the country. The permanent and principal function of the Zionist Commission was to defend the interests of the Jewish population both at the headquarters (G.H.Q.) of General Allenby and with the subsequent administration of the occupied territory (O.E.T.A.), and with the local officials and the heads of individual departments. Money from the Executive of the Organisation, which hitherto had been sent direct to the Palestine Office, was now placed in the hands of the Zionist Commission, and this body passed it on to the Palestine Office, the finances of which it controlled. The whole internal management of the schools, the agricultural work, the relief funds, the information service, and the issue of forms for the collecting of statistical material, remained under the charge of the Palestine Office. The Central Office, along with Dr. Thon, was transferred back to Jaffa in the spring of 1918. A branch was left in Jerusalem under the charge of the Hebrew writer Mordecai ben Hillel Hacohen, who was appointed to this post with the consent of the Zionist Commission.

It was at this period that the schools of the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden* were taken over by the representatives of the Zionist Commission. What with this and the opening of new schools, as well as the taking over of the schools in the colonies soon afterwards, the network of the schools under the Zionist Commission was soon extended very considerably, and embraced about three-quarters of the Jewish school children of the whole country.

After the British conquest of Judea, preparations were made in the Palestine Yishub for a great constructive effort which should realise the prospects held out in the Balfour Declaration. This effort was continually deferred, owing to the general situation. So long as Galilee remained in Turkish possession, Judea was in close proximity to the theatre of war. The fear of a military counter-stroke and the general uncertainty were of themselves sufficient to prevent the inception of any constructive work on a large scale. After the liberation of Galilee and the decisive victory of the Entente Powers, people waited for the settlement of the political future of Palestine by the Peace Conference and the assignment of the Mandate. The military administration of the country took up the standpoint that according to international usage its whole duty in the occu-

pied district was to maintain the *status quo*. The chief obstacle in the way of constructive work was the impossibility of buying land and bringing new settlers into the country. The Land Registry Office remained closed till October, 1920, and till then there was no legal possibility of acquiring land, as even private transactions in immovable property were forbidden by the authorities. Immigration was confronted with great difficulties. Only the repatriation of Palestine refugees was permitted. Other people received permission to enter Palestine only exceptionally and after great trouble. The final settlement of the Mandate question was expected in Palestine every month. Meanwhile, a demand was raised that plans should be prepared by experts for constructive work in every field. This was the cause of the Palestine Office at the beginning of this period undergoing a complete internal reorganisation. Hitherto it had been conducted by a single head with a number of expert assistants, now it ramified into a number of departments with responsible heads, who, under the presidency of the head of the Palestine Office, formed a Board. All school affairs were at once placed under the charge of Dr. Turof, who was later succeeded by Dr. Lurie. The agricultural department was placed in charge of Messrs. Oettinger and Wilkansky, who had long been engaged in the Palestine Office; while for engineering and scientific questions a separate department was formed under Mr. Gregor Wilbuschewitz.

During the early period of the Zionist Commission's stay, the Palestine Office represented the principle of continuity in the work of colonisation. This point is important, as the Zionist Commission altered its personnel repeatedly in a very brief space of time, and the changes in the views and inclinations of its leaders and members gave occasion to frequent modifications and fresh starts in its system and policy. Dr. Weizmann and his Secretary, Mr. Sieff (who remained longer than the other members of the Commission, Simon, Cowen, etc.), were succeeded by Dr. Eder, with Mr. Jack Mosseri as Secretary; these were soon followed by Mr. Levin-Epstein, who later was assisted by Mr. Gluskin; these were soon replaced by Dr. H. Friedenwald and Mr. Robert Szold, from America, who, again, were followed by Dr. Eder, the reins being finally taken in the autumn of 1919 by Mr. Ussishkin. The existence during this period of the Palestine Office—although its attempts to do positive work were hampered by internal and external obstacles such as had never before been experienced—at least preserved the internal work from the utter disorganisation which otherwise would have resulted from the divergent tendencies of the leaders.

In October, 1918, the Palestine Office was finally amalgamated with the Zionist Commission. All departments, with the exception of that for immigration, were removed to Jerusalem. The Zionist Commission, with Mr. Ussishkin at its head, took the place of the Palestine Office as sole representative of the Zionist Organisation in all affairs both internal and external.

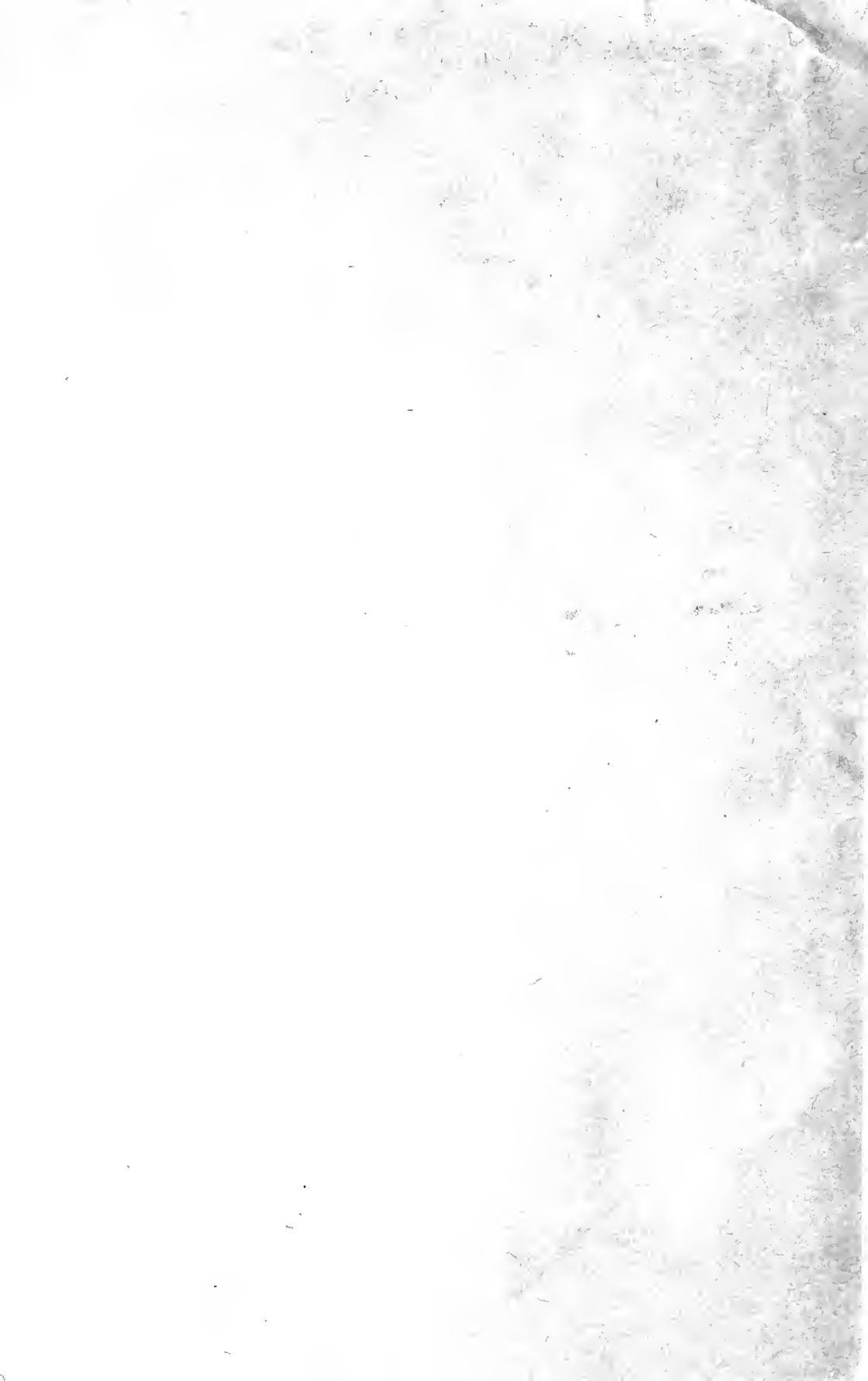
III.—THE ORGANISATION OF PALESTINE JEWRY.

The Palestine Office had always cherished the idea of strengthening the organic cohesion of Palestine Jewry by means of a truly representative council. The favourable moment for this seemed to have arrived with the new order introduced into the country through its occupation by the English. The Palestine Office joined hands with the most active elements in the Yishub, and sought to further their efforts in this direction. The demand for a representative assembly was one of the first put forward to the Zionist representatives by the leaders of the Palestine Office, who were regarded as the spokesmen of the Yishub.

The Jewish Communal Representation in Jerusalem.—A few days after the entry of the British into Jerusalem, members of various circles in that city met together on the invitation of the Palestine Office and determined to appoint a Committee for the purpose of drawing up rules for the election of a Jewish Communal Representative Body, and of making preparations for the election, in which the whole Jewish population was to participate. Dr. Thon and Messrs. Hoofien and Meyuchas were chosen to preside over this Committee. The task before the Committee was no easy one—to fight against the tradition of the Kolelim, which had been firmly rooted for centuries, to overcome the tendency of the community to split into disconnected groups, and to arouse the interest of all classes in the creation of a common representative body. In the attempt to unify the Jerusalem community, the most persuasive means had to be used in order to avoid the arousing of bitter animosities. The representatives of the Vaad Kol Hakolelim demanded the creation of separate communities, Ashkenazic and non-Ashkenazic, the representatives of which should meet from time to time for deliberation on definite matters. This proposal for a division into Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Gruzian Jews, etc., was rejected, and the vast majority of the population was won over to the idea of a unified representation. Out of some five thousand entitled to vote, over three thousand actually took part in the election, and so was formed the “Vaad Hair Liyehudei Jerushalaim.” A communal council of forty-five members was elected, representing, with one small exception, all classes of the old and new Yishub. Only a minority of Ashkenazim, mostly from the Hungarian and Austrian Kolelim, held aloof and formed an “Ashkenazic Committee” of their own. It is this same group which to the present day has opposed every attempt at cohesion and union, and which separated from the rest of the community in the elections for the Asefath Hanivcharim, and the creation of a joint Rabbinate.

Vaad Hazmani.—Immediately after the liberation of the Jewish colonies from the Turks on December 31st, 1917, a meeting, presided over by Dr. Thon and Mr. M. Meirowitz, was held in the Palestine Office of representatives of the colonies, of the workers, of the town of Jaffa, and the most important public bodies, to discuss the convening of a constituent assembly of Palestine Jews. In this meeting a Provisional Committee (*Vaad Hazmani*) was chosen to prepare the way for the *Asefah Meyassedeth*. As, contrary to expectation, Galilee remained separated from Judea for another nine months, the idea of the constituent assembly had to be postponed. Instead, a second preliminary Conference was called together in July, 1918, in which, besides representatives of Jaffa and the colonies, representatives of the new *Vaad Hair* in Jerusalem also took part. Dr. Weizmann and Major Ormsby-Gore made speeches on the political situation. The *Vaad Hazmani* was re-elected. After the union of Judea with Galilee, a Conference of representatives of the whole of Palestine, 104 in number, took place. Even the extreme orthodox section of Jerusalem was fairly well represented. At this Conference Dr. Weizmann and Mr. Sokolow were chosen to represent the Palestine Yishub at the Peace Conference at Versailles, and a special delegation, consisting of Messrs. Yellin, Berlin, Wilkansky, Eisenberg, and Dizengoff, was sent to London to confer with the Executive of the Zionist Organisation on the most important political questions.

Asefath Hanivcharim.—Owing to internal opposition, particularly of the orthodox section against the women's franchise, and to the prohibition of the military administration, the constituent assembly was not able to be convened for a long time. Its programme meantime was considerably cut down. It was to be merely an "assembly of deputies," "*Asefath Nivecharim*," the chief task of which should be to elect an officially recognised representative assembly. The *Asefath Hanivcharim* was not actually convened till after Sir Herbert Samuel had taken up his office. It was opened on October 7th, 1920. About three hundred deputies attended; in the election seventy-one per cent. of the Jews entitled to vote had taken part. Sir Herbert Samuel sent a letter of greeting to the assembly. The *Asefath Hanivcharim* has, after many struggles, effected the unification of Palestine Jewry. In the *Vaad Leumi*, of which Messrs. Ben Zwi, Yellin, and Thon are the presidents, the Jewish Yishub has an official representative body. Prior to the *Asefath Hanivcharim* it had been represented provisionally by the *Vaad Hazmani*, at the head of which stood for almost three years the director of the Palestine Office, Dr. Thon, and in his absence, his deputies, Messrs. Oettinger and Bezalel Jaffe.



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Palestine during the war :

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