

My last news-letter was not unduly optimistic, but I did not dream that the political situation in Palestine and the lack of public security already become well nigh intolerable, could within a few days become radically worse. All thought of returning to Transjordan had to be given up when the Government vacated the police-posts between here and the Jordan, and the bands took over Jericho, and celebrated their control by burning the public buildings there. Ramallah, Bethlehem, and up till a few days ago even the Old City of Jerusalem passed into their hands, ~~not to speak~~ ^{of most of the rest of the country,} where strong Government forces ^{or armed resistance} were able to maintain ~~the order~~ ^{order}. Reports of savage attacks on peaceful citizens, accounts of the uprooting ~~xxxx~~ or cutting down of thousands of trees and of the gutting by fire of practically every Government agricultural station, not to speak of other public and private properties, ~~were~~ composed, the fare served up to us in the official communiqués.

Meanwhile, the students of the School arrived, namely the Thayer Fellow, Dr. Harold Glidden and his wife, ~~and~~ the Two Brothers Fellow, Mr. Donald West and his wife, and Rev. F. Ellerman. Class-work began on October 10th, and I have not known a nicer or more enthusiastic group at the School during previous years. There is much work to be done here at the School, actually handling archaeological materials, in addition to the formal lectures which are being given. Prof. Fisher has as always been most helpful. Up till now there has been no possibility of traveling around the country. Indeed, no one has been allowed to leave our grounds unless I was previously informed, ~~and~~ ^{with} approval. I have taken the students around Jerusalem in the School car as much as possible. They have all been good sports about the situation, ~~which I had reason to believe would improve~~. The tennis-court has been of much help, and we have not missed a morning even during the last few hectic days.

Within the last few weeks, English troops have been poured into the country. Two days ago, the recapture of the Old City of Jerusalem was undertaken. I shall let the newspaper headlines tell the story, - or some of it.

Oct. 18, 1938. CURFEW IN JERUSALEM.

Oct. 19, 1938. JERUSALEM PUT UNDER MILITARY CONTROL.

Oct. 20, 1938. TROOPS OCCUPY OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM.

RAPID AND SYSTEMATIC ENTRY.

CORDON ROUND HARAM AREA.

ACTION TO CONTINUE TODAY

These are the headlines, and I could write reams about what has actually gone on behind them, ~~xxxx~~. Two days before the troops entered into the Old City, there was an incessant buzzing of airplanes overhead as they circled round and round the Old City, and dropped pamphlets warning the public to keep away from the walls, in as much as the military intended to take action. The tower of the Museum, a few minutes walk from our grounds, occupies a strategic point, and commands a view over much of the Old City. There are about seventy five soldiers billeted in the Museum, and there are four machine guns on the tower. The soldiers fire at anybody who pokes his head above a wall in the Old City, and the members of the bands in the Old City return scattered rifle shots. The lads behind their machine guns on the tower of the Museum let fly apparently at the least provocation. There ~~are~~ ^{are} other similar posts all around the walls of the Old City, and for two days before the troops entered, there was an incessant roaring of the airplanes, ~~and~~ a continuous rat-tat-tat of the machine guns, ~~and~~ sharp explosions of rifle fire, and the occasional ~~bursting~~ ^{bursting} of a bomb. Most of this has stopped since the troops entered into the Old City yesterday, and there is much hope now that order will be restored. ^{long before this letter reaches its destination, the world public will have learned what has happened.} The fracas is by no means over. ~~As I~~ ^{As I} write there is a burst of machine-gun fire somewhere near Herod's gate, and Verey lights are being shot off.

from the Museum tower to illuminate the wall of the Old City opposite ^T, and prevent any of the ~~bands~~ members of the bands from escaping. It can, however, only be a matter of a day or two before the military have the situation completely in hand.

Meanwhile, we at the School are cut off from the ^{usual} source of our supplies of meats and vegetables. No one can enter or leave the Old City, where our cook Shukri used to make these household purchases. All of the other Arab shops outside of the Old City are closed, ~~are~~ only about one eighth open, which means that you have to sneak around the back way to get in and make your purchases. In addition, our servants are terrified at leaving the grounds, and so for the last few days, I, perforce, have been doing the shopping in various quarters of the town. A candid shot during the last few mornings would have revealed the Director of the School buying carrots, ^{and} saying to the vendor, "no, I think you're charging me half a piastre too much". However, thus far, I have, so to speak, succeeded in bringing home the bacon.

~~Meanwhile~~ The rest of the country has become markedly more quiet. The main highways are being heavily patrolled by the new troops, and it is again becoming possible to travel between the main towns with a reasonable degree of safety. In fact, I have arranged for the students to take a trip ~~xxxx~~ to Syria, to visit archaeological sites, ^{and} Dr. Fisher has kindly consented to conduct them this time. They are going in the School car, and our faithful Ylias Tutunjian is driving. They will be gone about a week, and I am hoping that ~~by then, or~~ soon after that, we shall be able to go to Transjordan again. On the whole, I feel, that we shall be able to carry out most of the program of work, particularly in Transjordan, that we have planned for this year. It is our hope and prayer, that after civil order has been reestablished in this country, all those concerned with its welfare may come together in council tempered with reason and charity, and find a way towards lasting peace.