

Nov. 18, 1938.

Jerusalem, **18**, 11, 1938.

The Old City of Jerusalem has been reoccupied by the military. It is now comparatively safe to enter it and for people to go about their ordinary business. There has, however, been from the time of the reopening of the Old City a steady migration out of it of large numbers of its reputable inhabitants into various sections of new Jerusalem. They no longer desire to be subjected to the mercies of the bands, or live through the days [when the government by force had to recapture Old Jerusalem.

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Conditions in general have improved considerably throughout the country since the arrival of thousands of troops. The state of public security, however, is by no means normal as yet. In fact, so far as general public movement on the highways is concerned, there is hardly any improvement that can be recorded, not to mention the impossibility of undertaking archaeological expeditions in almost all sections of Western Palestine. The government has instituted a system of identity cards and travel permits. At every turn one is required to hand in three pictures to this office, and three pictures to that office in order to secure the necessary passes. All roads leading into Jerusalem, and this is true of all the other cities in Palestine, have now been partly blocked by permanent cement barricades set up by the government, compelling all cars to stop until the travelling permits have been examined by the police and soldiers stationed at each barricade. The general Arab motor-strike is still on. Rather one should say that the bands have threatened to kill any Arab found in possession of an identity card or a travel permit. As a result, there is absolutely no Arab motor-traffic whatsoever, because no Arab driver will apply for such identity cards or travel permits. The catastrophic conditions which have been enhanced by this new measure are reflected, for instance, immediately in the almost 40% rise in food costs throughout the country. The people, of course, who feel it worst, are the poor of the land, least able to pay the additional food costs. The Director of the School is frequently compelled to take the School car and literally go foraging in order to secure for the School a fairly varied amount of greens and vegetables in particular. He does not feel justified in raising the Hostel charges to the students resident at the School, because they are not in a position to pay them. The Hostel thus is for the present suffering a loss.

Despite the military occupation of Jerusalem and the country in general, the shootings and murders still continue. The moderate Arabs are gradually being wiped out by the extremists among their own group. Two days ago, another Nashashibi was shot at not far from our grounds, fortunately escaping, and yesterday one of the professors of the Rashidiyah Boys School, which has taken up quarters in the former Chief Secretary's house a few doors away from our grounds, was seriously wounded while on his way to School. He too, was one of the moderates. It is sad to know that even if complete

peace were to be established tomorrow, there will be blood-feuds among many of the leading families of Palestine, lasting for years to come. The relatives of the murdered will not forget. Some of them have told me so. For those who have long resided in this country, the abnormal seems to have become the ordinary. Thus last night, when rifle and machine gun shots were again heard from a not very great distance, one said merely: "Ah yes, they're at it again". The solution to the Palestine difficulties so hopefully prayed for by all of the world as a result of the long delayed Report of the Woodhead Commission has not come about. In effect, this Commission "repealed" the Report of the previous Peel Commission, and at least for the present, no positive step forward towards restoring real lasting peace in this country has been taken. Thus Commissions come and Commissions go, and confusion - goes on for ever?

Let those, however, who live afar not cavil at conditions here. Palestine is a very live part of the modern world. It reflects its enthusiasms and interests. It mirrors its foibles and faults. European civilization has its counterpart here in all of its aspects. Only here it seems the good and the bad are enhanced or aggravated in the rarefied atmosphere of this unholy Holy Land. How sad this sacred land cannot give example instead of taking example from countries which should be quarantined with the red flag of contagion.

Despite, however, <sup>the</sup> lack of peace, and the troubles which plague Palestine, the work of the School has suffered no real break. It must not be imagined that we sit and mope all day long, or that we are afraid to venture out of the grounds of the School. First of all, beginning on October 10th, regular lectures have been going on to the members of the small, but excellent and capable and enthusiastic student body. Dr. Fisher has been of great assistance to the Director. Whenever conditions have permitted, the students have been taken either by the Director or by Dr. Fisher on various trips, or with the Director's permission have gone out occasionally alone. No one from the School moves without that permission. On October 21st, the entire School under Dr. Fisher's guidance left for a trip to Syria. They remained there for a week, seeing Beirut, the Dog River, Byblos, Tartus, Crac de Chevalier, Daphne, Antioch, Aleppo, Baalbek and Damascus. With the Director or with Dr. Fisher, they have now seen most of the places of historical interest in the Old and in the New City of Jerusalem. On November 11th, the Director drove the members of the School to Solomon's Pools. Any trip these days has its somber aspects. First of all, the formality of getting in or out of the city; then being stopped numerous times along the road by soldiers who examine the travel permits; seeing all the telephone wires down; the telephone poles uprooted; and in numerous places the roads poorly repaired where they have been cut or dynamited by the bands. Returning from Solomon's Pools we drove to Bethlehem, arriving at eleven in the morning, just as the large contingent of British soldiers stationed there was celebrating the declaration of armistice in November 1918. Shades of the peace which was then established! The entire front courtyard of the Church of Nativity has been transformed into a military car-park. It was necessary to secure permission from the Officer in

Command in order to enter the church, which was empty of worshippers. The blackened ruins of the post-office building immediately opposite the church testify to the recent occupancy <sup>of Bethlehem</sup> by one of the bands. The pathetic store-keepers in Bethlehem who are dependent upon tourist trade practically swooned when they saw a carload of visitors drive up. The finances of the students, however, did not permit them to make any purchases, and we were forced to drive away, leaving the store-keepers almost in a state of collapse. On November 12th, we drove to Jaffa, partly in order to see the country on the way and give the students an opportunity to take photographs, and partly in order to get the baggage belonging to Dr. and Mrs. Glidden out of Customs, where it had been gathering storage charges for several weeks. Because of the transport conditions it is almost impossible to send baggage to Jaffa or to receive it from there. On November 17th we joined the convoy and drove to Jericho and the Dead Sea. We only remained in Jericho for a few minutes, because the military having just a few days previously reoccupied the town, were parading over a hundred prisoners through the streets. We then drove to the Dead Sea. In the grounds of the concession area of the Palestine Potash Company, we were hospitably received by the representatives of the Director of the Company, Mr. M. Novomeyski. It was a pleasure to see hundreds of Jews and Arabs working together in perfect harmony. We were shown through the works, and then following the road which leads through the ~~the~~ area, drove down to the banks of the Jordan. For lunch, we were the guests of the Director, to whom and to whose representatives we are most grateful for their gracious hospitality. Before lunch the members of the School had the experience of bathing in the Dead Sea. The Director is planning shortly to take the School for a trip to sites of archaeological interest in Transjordan. He would have the constituency of the Schools feel assured that no trips are taken unless there is practically a certainty that they can be made safely. The Director makes it his business to be informed of what is going on, and receives information from various friends of the School.

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Thus far, thank God, it has been possible to maintain the widely respected neutrality of the School. A member of the Nashashibi family is now one of our students. The Director does not know how properly to thank many friends of the School for assisting him in preserving the School's neutral status. The exacerbated condition of the public nerves is reflected ~~on the~~ other hand by the immediate reaction of the various factions in Palestine to statements from abroad favouring one or another of the issues at stake here. Let it most emphatically be announced again that this School has no partisan interests. We are devoted to scientific study and to nothing else.

As a result of the breakdown of the main pumping station at Ras el-Ain, there has been for almost a week now an extreme water shortage in Jerusalem. Due, however, to Prof. Albright's wisdom, when the School buildings were being constructed, of insisting upon large cisterns being made, we at the School suffer no inconvenience.