

THE
TURKISH PERSECUTION
OF THE JEWS

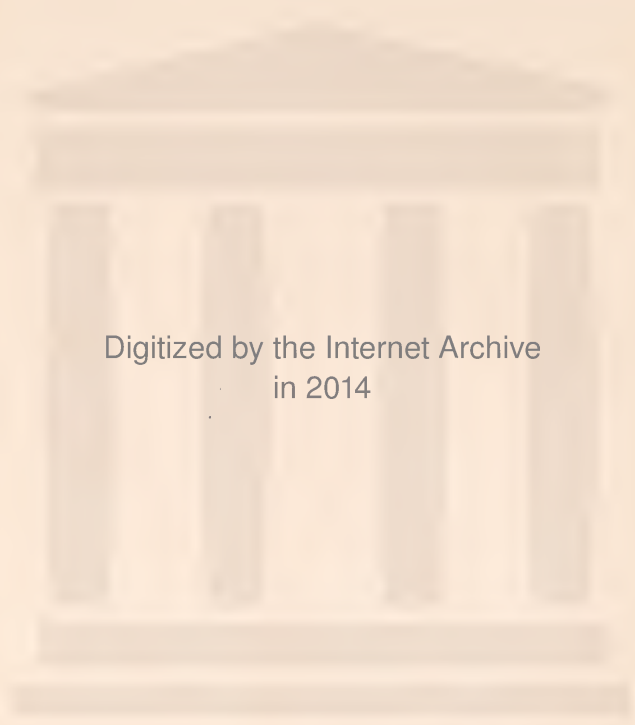
BY
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"ZIONIST WORK IN PALESTINE," ETC.

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THE TURKISH PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

AMONG the many unpleasant surprises that the war has brought about, one of the most disquieting has been the change in the attitude of the Turkish Government towards the Jews. In the history of the Jewish people before the war the Turks had enjoyed a reputation for amity, tolerance and hospitality, which extended back to the Middle Ages. The Jews who were expelled from Spain in the fifteenth century found a peaceful refuge in the dominions of the Sultan, but their modern descendants have unfortunately experienced a radical change in the character of their Ottoman hosts. Amity has given way to spite, tolerance to oppression, and hospitality to expulsion. The fair pages of the Turkish history of the Jews have now been indelibly sullied with a record of outrage and persecution, and the hopes that had been placed in the intelligence and magnanimity of the Sultan's counsellors have been dashed to the ground. For the information that has been obtained through reliable channels respecting the treatment of the Jews in Palestine by the Turkish authorities discloses a policy of ruthless enmity and unrelieved brutality.

The change in the Turkish disposition towards the Jews, it must be pointed out, began many years before the war. It was signalled by an anti-Jewish decree, which was issued on December 1, 1891. According to this decree, every Jew who arrived in Palestine was to receive a permit, known as the "Red Ticket," entitling him to a sojourn of three months, after the lapse of which he was to be expelled by the police or by the intervention of the respective consulate. The object of this decree was obviously to prevent the growth of a

large Jewish community in Palestine, even though such a development was in the highest interests of the country.

It might be urged that this Chauvinistic ordinance was the product of the old reactionary *régime* under Abdul Hamid, and that the Young Turks were in no way responsible for it. The fact is, however, that this decree has never been repealed. Before the war, repeated requests were addressed to the Imperial Government for the abolition of the "Red Ticket," and although they were supported by European and American Ambassadors, they were ignored. Thus, the intolerant policy towards the Jews begun by Abdul Hamid was continued in the reign of his successor. But, worse still, this policy developed soon after the war into a systematic campaign of persecution, the declared object of which was to stamp out all efforts for the rebuilding of Jewish national life in the Holy Land. In other words, the Turks began to wage war against the Jewish nation.

The campaign against the Jews in Palestine began immediately after the issue of the order of mobilisation. It was opened up by the soldiery in the form of "requisitions" carried out against private individuals, owing to the insufficient supply of food and clothing provided by the Turkish authorities. When Turkey formally joined the Central Powers and news of German victories was systematically spread through the land, the "requisitions" became an undisguised form of plunder, under which the Jews in the small towns and settlements had particularly to suffer. Among the objects that were requisitioned for military purposes were the barbed-wire fences that had protected the Jewish farms from robbery. These fences were removed for the purpose of barricades on the fighting front, with the result that the farms were exposed to plundering attacks of roving mobs. Moreover, large numbers of Jews were deprived of their carts and draught-beasts, and they were compelled, although many of them were middle-aged and even old men, to accompany their animals on the long and laborious march to the south, to take part in the futile attacks on the Suez Canal. These Jews

were soon overtaken by terrible distress, for they were deprived of all means, and given neither pay nor food, whilst their clothing was quickly reduced to tatters.*

The policy upon which the Turks had determined was manifested by their decision to disarm all Jews, whether soldiers or civilians. The effect of this measure was to make the Jews a helpless prey to the despotism of the local authorities and to the malice of their neighbours. Although the Jews at first were mobilised with the rest of the inhabitants, as soon as Turkey joined the Central Powers they were disarmed, deprived of their uniforms, and put into labour corps. The work to which they were set was the making of a road between Safed and Tiberias, which was part of the military road from Damascus to the coast. They had to work like navvies under the command of armed Arabs, and they were so poorly furnished with the requisites of their labour that they had themselves to provide axle-grease for the carts they used. The disarming of the Jewish soldiers was a comparatively simple matter, and was carried out without resistance. But the disarming of the civilian population was much more serious.

The Jews had found it necessary in peace times to arm themselves because there was little order and less security in the country. Hence, when the regulation was published that they should hand over their arms to the authorities they were reasonably alarmed. Their anxiety was increased by the knowledge that a similar order had been issued in Armenia before the massacres were committed in that country. The consequence was that in many parts the Jews hid their weapons. The methods adopted by the Turks to obtain them are illustrated by the events in the colony of Zichron Jacob. There Mr. Alexander Aaronsohn was seized by an officer at the head of thirty soldiers, and, after being taken into a small room, he was commanded, with a revolver pointed at his throat, to disclose the hiding-place of the weapons. Mr. Aaronsohn resolutely refused, and was ultimately allowed to go. But on the following morning he was arrested again,

* See *With the Turks in Palestine*, by A. Aaronsohn (Constable, 2s. net).

together with three of the oldest men in the colony. They were all handcuffed and chained together like convicts, and dragged for the distance of a day's journey to a prison, where they were put into separate cells. They were all repeatedly subjected to the torture of the bastinado upon their naked soles in order to compel them to betray where the arms were concealed. But they bore the torture bravely and kept their secret.

After several days of ineffectual attempts the Turks adopted what they knew would be an infallible device. They announced that on a certain day they would abduct a number of Jewish girls and hand them over to Turkish officers, who would keep them until the weapons were surrendered. The result was that the Jewish colonists immediately dug the weapons out of the earth where they were hidden and handed them over to the Turkish authorities. The prisoners were thereupon released, and when they dragged themselves back to the village they found that the confiscated arms had been distributed among the Arabs.

Deprived of all means of defence, the Jews of Zichron Jacob became a prey to plunder and attack. A reign of terror was begun in their midst by a Turkish "Junker," Fenzi Bey, a nephew of Kiamil Pasha, who was several times Grand Vizier. The alarm in the colony became so great that Mr. Aaronsohn travelled to Jerusalem to lodge a complaint with the Generalissimo, Djemal Pasha. The latter declared that justice would be done and peace restored. He summoned Fenzi Bey to Jerusalem, to give an explanation. Within a few days Fenzi Bey returned to Zichron Jacob in the uniform of a Commandant of the Religious Militia. Thus was official encouragement given to lawless outrage.

The disarming and the plundering of the Jews were only two of many acts of persecution committed by the Turks. Much more distressing were the forcible evacuations, which were mercilessly carried out, and the false charges of espionage trumped up with the aid of *agents provocateurs*. Thousands of Jews were suddenly and brutally expelled from

the various towns and settlements in the south and deported towards the north. The Russian Jews who had succeeded in leaving the country before these evacuations began, by getting on board some American cruisers that took them from Jaffa to Egypt, were robbed almost of their last penny by the Turkish boatmen who rowed them from the shore to the vessels. But their sufferings were insignificant in comparison with those of their fellow-Jews who were compelled by the military authorities to leave their homes and belongings in Jaffa and Jerusalem and to travel northward. These evacuations took place at different periods, beginning in the winter of 1914 and culminating, in consequence of the victorious advance of the British troops, in the winter of 1917-18. One of the transports comprised 140 persons, who were kept locked in railway carriages and trucks all the way to Damascus, and who not only suffered from hunger and thirst but also from protracted confinement. Seven persons died on the way, and as the corpses were not removed until the journey was over the health of the others was also affected, with the result that twenty-four persons died after their arrival in Damascus, whilst twenty-nine others were laid up in a hospital for several weeks after.

But the sufferings of those evacuated did not cease with the termination of their journey. On the contrary, they assumed a new and more serious form, owing to the lack of food and shelter and the rigours of the climate. Many of the refugees lived in open shelters covered with eucalyptus trees, which were a very insufficient protection against the winter, and they were exposed to the crossfire of the belligerent forces. In Safed they suffered from the severe cold; in Tiberias they became a prey to cholera; and both in those towns and other centres many died of hunger. The privations that the refugees had to endure, in certain cases after months of wandering, reduced them to such a weakened condition that the rate of mortality rose as high as 3 to 4 per cent. The *Österreichische Wochenschrift* stigmatised the evacuation of the Jews from Jaffa as "an irresponsible and unnecessary

atrocities, which ought to be designated as the 'Third Devastation of the Holy Land.'" The indignation aroused was so widespread that questions on the subject were even asked in the Reichstag, where the Deputy, Oscar Cohn, denounced the evacuation as having inflicted great hardship upon innocent people, and as having been unnecessary from the military point of view.

The man responsible for all the sufferings undergone by the Jews in Palestine was the Generalissimo, Djemal Pasha, who first pretended to be sympathetic towards Jewish national aspirations, but afterwards appeared in his true colours as their most determined enemy. This petty despot began his campaign of persecution on November 5, 1914, by issuing a number of harsh decrees with the object of suppressing all traces of Jewish national life. He forbade the creation of any new Jewish settlement. He ordered the disbanding of the organisation of Jewish guards, "Hashomer," which had performed such necessary and valuable work in policing the Jewish colonies, and he even arrested the leaders on a charge of espionage, which proved groundless. He forbade the use of shop and street signs in Hebrew, and likewise the use of Jewish National Fund stamps. Most of the foreign post offices in Palestine used to accept these stamps for franking letters sent from one Jewish colony to another. But Djemal Pasha called the use of these stamps *lèse majesté*, and he issued a decree stating that "anybody in whose possession such stamps may be found will be liable to death." These early prohibitions were supplemented at the same time by one from the Chief Postmaster of the Jaffa district, forbidding the use of the Hebrew language in private correspondence.

Early in January, 1915, a long manifesto was issued from Djemal Pasha's headquarters, for official publication throughout the country, against Zionism—"that revolutionary and destructive element aspiring to the creation of a State in our country," and confirming that the Government "has ordered the confiscation of stamps, Zionist banners, paper money and banknotes of the Anglo-Palestine Company, and all other

things appertaining to this element, and has proclaimed the dissolution of all Zionist associations."

But the rancour of Djemal Pasha was not aimed solely at purely Zionist institutions. On January 17, 1915, the Jewish "Court of Arbitration," a recognised board for the settlement of civil disputes, was closed, and its archives were confiscated; whilst the same fate befel the "Kolelim," the charity committees which formed the only support of thousands of poor Jews. On the following day Djemal Pasha received a telegram from the Turkish Minister of Finance, ordering the immediate liquidation of the Anglo-Palestine Company under conditions that were obviously intended to render it bankrupt. The Anglo-Palestine Company—the Zionist Bank—with its six different branches, had proved a source of financial strength to the agricultural and industrial development of the country, and hence its enforced closure paralysed the economic activity of the Jewish community. The fact that the order came from Constantinople showed that the anti-Zionist crusade was not merely the whim of the local authorities: it was the deliberate and settled policy of the Ottoman Government.

The blow dealt at the financial instrument of the Zionist movement was not the only proof that the Central Government at Constantinople had resolved upon the suppression of this movement. There were other proofs of a still more convincing character. There was a French daily newspaper issued in the Turkish capital, *Le Jeune Turc*, which had occasionally been used by the Government as a medium for the publication of semi-official views. In domestic politics it had always advocated a spirit of amity between the different races; in foreign politics it stood for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. But *Le Jeune Turc* had strong Zionist sympathies and never made a secret of them. Early in the spring of 1915 the Chief Censor summoned the editor, an Ottoman Jew, and ordered him to publish a leading article denouncing Zionism as a revolutionary movement. The editor agreed to publish anything that might be supplied to him officially, but he refused to write an article directed against his own convic-

tions. Thereupon the paper was suppressed by order of the Minister of the Interior. In the days of Tsarist Russia many a paper was suppressed because of articles it had published, but there was never a case of any newspaper that was closed down because of an article that it had not published. That distinction was reserved for Young Turkey, which had prided itself upon its liberal progress since the days of Abdul Hamid.

The anti-Zionist campaign culminated in the expulsion of most of those who had been prominently identified with the Jewish national cause. An order of expulsion was first issued by Talaat Pasha against Dr. Victor Jacobson, the official Zionist representative in Constantinople. Dr. Jacobson had been resident several years in the Turkish capital, was known to be thoroughly loyal to the Ottoman Government, and had always worked in the interest of a friendly understanding between the Government and Zionism. The American Ambassador, Mr. Henry Morgenthau, intervened on his behalf, but in vain. "We have decided to finish with Zionism," were the words of Talaat Pasha to Dr. Jacobson.

The ruthlessness of the anti-Jewish measures aroused so much indignation, not only among the Jews of the Allied Powers, but also among those of the Central Powers, whose sympathy and friendship the Ottoman Government wished to retain, that it was impelled to cancel several of its harshest decrees. To be found in possession of Jewish National Fund stamps was no longer punishable with death; the plan of making the Zionist Bank bankrupt was dropped; and the general order of banishment was reduced to individual cases of expulsion. In a report issued in the summer of 1915 by the Zionist Bureau of Berlin, whose opinion could not, in the circumstances, have been suspected of being prejudiced, the statement appeared: "It was altogether characteristic of the anti-Jewish persecutions that their victims were exclusively passionate Turcophiles, who vigorously propagated the general Ottomanisation of the Palestinian Jews." Many of the victims of the anti-Jewish crusade were even Ottoman subjects. But the Ottoman Government would not allow any

plea of extenuation in the case of prominent Zionist officials, and hence in September, 1916, Dr. Arthur Ruppin, who had so fruitfully directed the manifold activities of Zionism in Palestine, was also expelled from the land.

It has, indeed, been suggested that the anti-Jewish persecution in Turkey was caused by the creation of the Zion Mule Corps, which formed so useful and valiant an auxiliary of the British forces in their attack upon Gallipoli. But this theory is easily disproved by reference to the chronology of the events. The anti-Jewish crusade entered upon its rigorous stage in December, 1914, and it was brought to an end under American pressure in February, 1915. The Zion Mule Corps was organised only in the following month, and it was largely made up of refugees from Turkish tyranny.

There was a lull in the persecutions as long as the military situation in Palestine seemed more or less at a standstill, but as soon as the fortune of war began to turn against the Ottoman Government and the British Army advanced, the policy of oppression was resumed. Djemal Pasha declared that, in case his forces would have to retreat, they would destroy all the Jewish colonies and evacuate the civil population of the entire territory. As he was unable to carry out this threat fully, he decided upon the removal from Jerusalem of all influential personalities associated with Zionist work in order to render its continuance impossible, and he included within the ban not only men but also women, especially doctors and teachers. On November 26, 1917, a number of Zionist officials, principals of schools and public workers were arrested, and, together with a large body of American citizens, they were removed *via* Nablus to Damascus. Many were sent away, in the rain and cold, on the night of December 8th.

That was the night on which the Turks suffered a decisive defeat near Jerusalem and were compelled to beat a sudden retreat. The Governor, therefore, left quickly, together with all officials, without having time to look for certain prominent Zionists who had been marked down for deportation. On the following day the British troops entered Jerusalem, other-

wise the Zionist losses would have been more serious still. The intention of Djemal Pasha had been to remove all persons who could have been helpful in the preservation of communal life, but fortunately it was forestalled by the rapid advance of General Allenby.

The impression created even in the countries of the Central Powers by the futile brutality of the Turks was one of undisguised astonishment and indignation. The Vienna *Morgenzeitung* published, on January 30, 1918, a notable exposure of these Ottoman tactics, entitled "The Truth about Palestine," in the course of which it said:

Turkey does not suffer from a superfluity of friends, and has certainly no better friends in all the world than the Jews. One would think it would be greatly to the interest of Turkey to maintain its most trustworthy friends among the nations. The system pursued by Djemal Pasha in Palestine proves the very opposite of this, or rather this dreadful system forces one to have grave doubts as to the humane character of the Turkish Government as a whole.

Enough has already been written in the Jewish press throughout the world about Djemal Pasha's system, and we do not think that the acts of the little despot of Palestine shed any lustre on the Turkish Government. The wholesale expulsion from the country of large bodies of Jews and the imprisonment of some of the most highly respected persons in the land have greatly discredited the Turkish Government.

In spite of his inhuman actions, the Government in Constantinople has never interfered with him, and must therefore be held responsible for his doings. Djemal Pasha displays an almost insane antipathy to Jewish colonisation, and on that account he accuses the whole Jewish population of Palestine of treachery and espionage. That is sufficient excuse for the little Asiatic despot to persecute the entire Jewish population to his heart's content.

We need not here refer to the earlier misdeeds of Djemal Pasha against the Jews, from the outbreak of the war. He is known to have incited the Turkish soldiers against the Jews, and it must not be forgotten what this means in such a war-zone as Palestine. The Jewish colonies have often suffered and still do suffer from the enmity of the soldiers, to large numbers of whom they are often forced to give food and quarters, and, indeed, owing to the bad commissariat service of the Turkish Army, this is of very frequent occurrence.

The Vienna paper then referred to various charges of espionage brought against the Jews in the later months of the summer and autumn of 1917, concerning which it had received information from a colonist who had left Palestine only a few months before. It observed: "We cannot judge as to the facts of the case, and whether espionage was practised or not," and gave the names of those who had suffered on account of these charges. "Belkind and Lizensky were both hanged at Damascus; two others who were accused, Sara Aaronsohn and Schwarz, committed suicide in prison, but there is reason to believe that the latter died in consequence of tortures applied to them. Old Aaronsohn, an innocent Jew, went insane owing to ill-treatment, and died. . . ." (Here followed a long space, left blank by the Austrian Censor, which had doubtless contained a further indictment of Turkish methods.)

In its issue of the following day, January 31st, the *Morgenzeitung* continued:

As already stated, we are unable to decide whether the accused individuals have actually been guilty of espionage or not. Statements of accused persons, who have been tortured with red-hot bars on the chest, scourging on the heels, with blows and every sort of cruelty, constitute no proof in the eyes of thoughtful men. . . . Even if the defendants were proved guilty, the adoption of inquisitorial methods against the accused calls for definite protest. And here it is a question of suspects only, and Djemal is known to hold the entire Jewish population in suspicion. Indeed, a large number of the colonists in Galilee, especially members of the "Hashomer," have suffered intensely from the inquisition. . . .

The proceedings against the "Hashomer" show how easily and groundlessly under Djemal's rule one can come under suspicion of the most varied crimes. Despite all the barbarous inquisitorial methods employed every one of the accused watchmen was acquitted. The courageous and heroic bearing of these men, who bore the severest tortures with indifference and laughed in the faces of their tormentors, deserves the respect of the whole Jewish people. Certain persons have, however, been imprisoned for no cause whatever. At Tiberias Ben Towin, the Jewish bank manager, was put into prison, because English money had been found in the country. In another place an engineer was held responsible because a photographic apparatus was found in his possession.

In many cases the charges against the Jews were brought by notorious criminals, especially Bedouins, who were bribed to act as informers against them. The unfortunate suspects were often tortured until they invented a confession, after which they were hanged, and in this way entire families were exterminated.

According to the information supplied to the Vienna newspaper, the soldiers employed in this work of inquisition behaved with the utmost cruelty and shamelessness towards the Jewish population. At Kinnereth, Channa Meirel, a respected school-mistress, was flogged and insulted by a young officer. In another colony the officers had the impudence to demand that the women of the colony should be handed over to them, a demand that naturally aroused the anger and the hostility of the colonists and "Hashomer." In the Medjed, in Jerusalem, a Pasha incited all the people assembled to hatred of the Jews. These are but a few of the proved instances of outrage and persecution committed against innocent Jews.

Palestine is not the only country in which the Jews have been ill-treated by the Turks. They have been subjected to different forms of persecution in Mesopotamia too, an illustration of which is afforded by the following authentic account of occurrences in Bagdad. All the Jews in the city were ordered to hand over their gold and silver money, and they were given notes in exchange. These notes had already depreciated, and the sudden flooding of the market with additional paper produced chaos. The inevitable result of this debased currency was that the whole credit system collapsed and business became almost impossible. The Turkish Government was annoyed by this and sharply reprimanded the local officials.

The latter thereupon resolved to remove the stigma on their reputation by drastic means. One night they summoned a number of rich Jews to the Court of the Prefect of Police, and accused them of trafficking in the notes, which was construed as a deliberate attempt to impair the credit of the Ottoman Government. The Jews were tortured and mur-

dered, and their bodies thrown into the Tigris. Some of the mutilated corpses afterwards floated ashore, where they were discovered by the British upon their entry into Bagdad.

The boast of hospitality towards the Jews that Turkey has always set up is, unfortunately, now seen to be a mere hollow pretence. The duty of a host towards his guests applies equally well towards the relations between a country and its inhabitants. This duty has been shamefully violated by the Ottoman Government. Since the issue of the memorable declaration by the British Government in favour of the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, the Turkish authorities have tried to efface the memory of their terrible misdeeds by making further protestations of friendship. In an interview published a few months ago in the *Vossische Zeitung*, Talaat Pasha declared that the Turkish Government had always been in favour of Jewish immigration into Palestine, and that should the land be reconquered by the Turks, the Jews would be allowed to come and stay and enjoy the same rights as other inhabitants. The sincerity of this conditional promise has been amply illuminated by the events of the last few years. But Talaat Pasha was candid enough to add an important proviso: he said that the admission of the Jews would be subject to the country's economic capacity.

In principle this is a wise policy to pursue. But who is to decide what the economic capacity of Palestine will be? If the decision were to rest with the Turkish Government, then we can be sure that the land would again be doomed to neglect, stagnation and corruption. The Government would assume the right to shut the door of the Holy Land under the pretext of national economy—a trick too obvious to succeed. The real economic capacity of the land will depend upon the application of the labour, enterprise and capital that the future Jewish settlers will bring with them. That is what the Allies understand, and that is why they have pledged their word in favour of the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. The realisation of this ancient ideal will then form a glorious solace for all the sufferings of the past.

APPENDIX

I.—GOVERNMENT DECLARATION AGAINST ZIONISM

*Published in No. 98 of the Jerusalem daily paper
"Hachéruth," in January, 1915*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL "HACHÉRUTH," AT
JERUSALEM

You are requested to translate verbally what follows and to publish it textually:—

The Supreme Government, in combating the actions of the revolutionary element which is trying to create, in the Palestinian part of the Ottoman Empire, a Jewish Government under the name of "Zionism," and which can thus injure likewise its own co-nationals, has ordered the confiscation of the stamps, of the Zionist flag, of the paper money, of the bank-notes of the Anglo-Palestine Company in the form of cheques, and of the other things that had been spread among these elements, and has proclaimed the dissolution of all the Zionist associations and organisations that existed secretly.

Now we have learned that some intriguers, guided by an evil and base aspiration, are falsifying the facts and saying that the order has been directed against all the Jews. Nothing is more natural than that this order does not affect all those Jews who are in our alliance and are, together with us, children of the Fatherland and enjoy equality of rights and will always remain, with the help of God, our fellow-citizens. The orders published are directed exclusively against the Zionist ideas, organisations and acts. As for all the other Jewish children of our Fatherland who have nothing in common with the destruction and the revolution of this kind,

we ask them and we wish of them that they shall always be peaceful as before. We, all Ottomans, are with all our heart friends and fellow-citizens of all the Jews who are within our alliance. And it is only of Zionism and of the Zionists, of that destructive element of disturbance and revolution and aiming at the creation of a Government in the midst of our Fatherland, and of all the other groups which aim or will aim at similar fantasies, that we are their enemies for ever.

The 8th day of Canon II of the year 1330.

(Signed) BEHA ADDIN.

*Attached to the General Staff of the 4th Army
for affairs of information.*

II.—OPEN LETTER OF THE HAHAM BASHI (CHIEF
RABBI) OF JERUSALEM, MOSES FRANCO

*Published in the Jerusalem Hebrew daily "Hachéruth," in
February, 1915*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY MIDHAD BEY, GOVERNOR OF
JERUSALEM

I take advantage of the occasion that is given to me to express my lively satisfaction at the arrival of your Excellency, whose personality affords a guarantee for a just and energetic exercise of office, in order to submit to your Excellency at the same time a petition of my brethren, whose interests, in virtue of the office of Haham Bashi of Jerusalem, which the Government has entrusted to me, I am obliged to take to heart.

We have been living for centuries under the protection of the noble Turkish sovereignty, and enjoy as full citizens, in liberty and peace, the rights which it has granted us without restriction, like all its other subjects. We therefore regard ourselves as the faithful sons of our dear Fatherland and we offer thanks constantly to God for having placed us under the protection of such a Government.

Unfortunately, acts have recently taken place such as nobody would have expected, acts that are calculated to tarnish the honour of my people in the eyes of our fellow-citizens and to make it suspected of things unworthy of it. This is certainly not in accordance with the spirit of equality and fraternity inscribed in golden letters on the banner of the Sublime Porte.

It has been decreed that the Jews may not correspond in Hebrew, whilst the other nationalities of the Empire are free to make use of their own languages (such as Greek, Armenian,

etc.). They are even permitted to write in the languages of the belligerent nations.

Important Jewish financial institutions, which, even during the recent terrible crisis, brought much money into the country, have been closed. Certain portions of the non-Jewish population are suffering on account of this just as much as all the Jews.

What affects us most painfully are the decrees, the declarations published against us, as well as the domiciliary searches in institutions and private houses. No hesitation even is shown in arresting esteemed members of the community and imprisoning them. This procedure, which is calculated to serve as a proof to the other citizens that there prevails against a part of the Jewish population—namely, the Zionists—a strong suspicion of treacherous practices, at the same time lowers in their eyes the honour of the whole of Jewry and must finally make them think that everything is allowed against the Jews.

As spiritual head of my community, I must lodge an energetic protest against this sort of procedure. Both I and the other leaders of the community, who are acquainted most intimately with all that happens in Jewish life, can solemnly testify, with a quiet conscience and before the whole world, that it lies absolutely far from our people to foster even the shade of opposition against the State authority, and that it would be utterly repugnant to our people to favour any secret actions or conspiracies directed against the spirit of the Government and the welfare of the people. We all, whether old or young, whether established here for centuries or only recently settled, are devoted to our Government with honest and self-sacrificing loyalty, and we all, without exception, desire with all our heart the happiness of our State and its victory. We also pray to God that it may always be vouchsafed to us to be sons of this Fatherland and subjects faithfully serving its interests.

If the Government finds it proper to issue prohibitions or to suppress anything, then it is understood that all my

brethren will accept this with amiability and without murmuring and be prepared to comply most carefully with all regulations. And if the Government, furthermore, considers it right to carry out searches in any direction whatever, we can only rejoice thereat, as we know that the right of all our brethren will shine forth as bright as the sun. But all this could have been done quietly, and without depriving of their liberty the persons subjected to investigation.

For this reason I, as Haham Bashi, who am just as responsible to the Government as to the community, consider it my duty to make the following request of your Excellency, as the highest State official in our province, upon whom devolves the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and order, namely, that instructions shall be issued to the quarters concerned to refrain henceforth from everything that might affect the honour of the Jews and contribute to the excitement of spirits. For it is really only a question of things that always used to be done publicly, and of which the Government also had knowledge, without ever having had occasion to intervene.

Such a procedure is particularly demanded at the present time, when the welfare of the Fatherland demands peace and quiet at home and when harmony of thought and action must form for the citizens the basis of their actions. Under this supposition we shall all be best in the position to work in love and devotion together for the welfare of the Fatherland and to contribute to its victory over its enemies.

Then will our Government brilliantly emerge from this war great and powerful, truly worthy of the title "Osmanli" Government, in memory of the name of the celebrated Osman Khan the Victorious.

I am, with feelings of the profoundest respect,

MOSES FRANCO,

Haham Bashi in Jerusalem.