

**ENGLAND AND PALESTINE:
ESSAYS TOWARDS THE
RESTORATION OF THE
JEWISH STATE**

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England and Palestine: essays towards the restoration of the Jewish state by Herbert Sidebotham

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HERBERT SIDEBOTHAM

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BY

HERBERT SIDEBOTHAM

(*"STUDENT OF WAR"*)

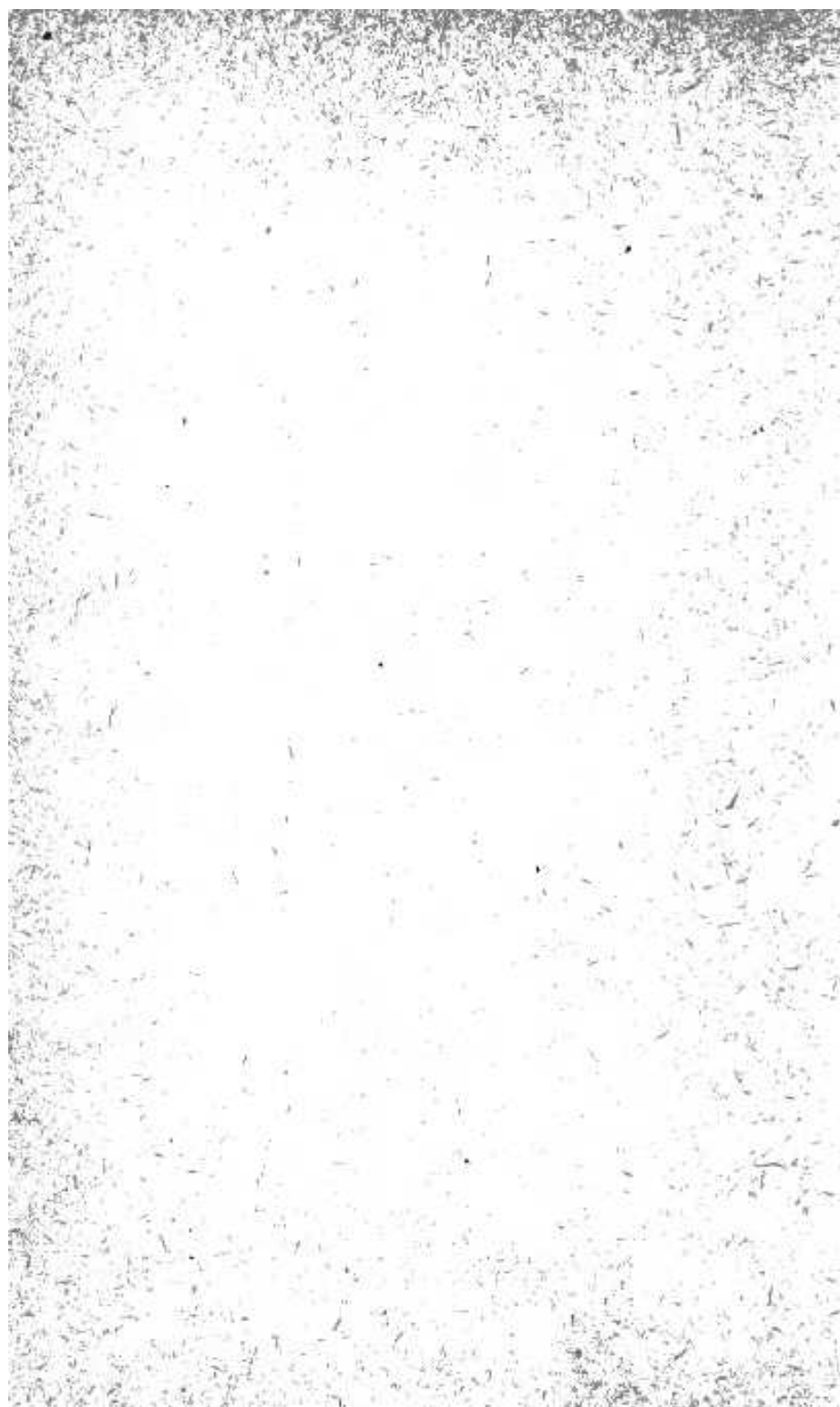
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1918

TO
REBECCA SIEFF
AND
MIRIAM MARKS

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PREFACE

THIS collection of essays has been written in the interstices of a busy year, and the excuse for its appearance must be the writer's hope that it may help to form opinion on an aspect of our war policy that has been unduly neglected. Some of the subjects chosen for the essays could only be treated justly by lifelong study and profound learning; but lack of scholarship may perhaps be forgiven to the desire to meet an immediate political need. It seemed better to risk inaccuracy and incompleteness for the chance of seeing some of the great events of our day in a better perspective.

When this book was begun a year ago its main argument seemed more uphill than it has since become. The case for Zionism has often been presented from the point of view of Jewish Nationalists, but never before as a branch of the foreign policy of the Entente Powers in this war. The conversion of the Governments to the one central idea urged in this book—namely, the need for restoring Palestine as a national home to the Jews—has moved more rapidly than the writer's pen.

On November 2, Mr. Balfour, the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, wrote the following letter to Lord Rothschild—

" I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of his Majesty's Government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet—

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

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

This Declaration has since been confirmed by members of the Government, notably by Lord Robert Cecil, who at a great meeting of Jews in London at the beginning of December last declared the recognition of Zionism to be the first constructive effort in what he hoped would be the new settlement of the world after the war. Moreover, the victories of General Allenby and the occupation of Jerusalem by his army have brought its age-long aspirations almost within the grasp of the Jewish nation. Much history is behind the Declaration of the British Government and for the present must remain behind, though the curtain has occasionally been lifted far enough to reveal at work a group of earnest and patriotic Jews under the advice and encouragement of Dr. Weizmann, President of the

English Zionist Federation. In all its arrangements with regard to the future of Palestine the British Government, it is hardly necessary to add, has acted with the full concurrence of the French Government. No Declaration by the French Government corresponding to that made by Mr. Balfour to Lord Rothschild has yet been made public, but the writer is allowed to quote the following letter written by M. Jules Cambon from the French Foreign Office to Mr. Nahum Sokolov, who has acted as an ambassador of the English Zionists. The letter is dated June 4, 1917—

“ You were good enough to present the project to which you are devoting your efforts, which has for its object the development of Jewish colonization in Palestine. You consider that circumstances permitting and the independence of the Holy Places being safeguarded on the other hand, it would be a deed of justice and reparation to assist, by the protection of the Allied Powers, in the renaissance of the Jewish nationality in that Land from which the people of Israel were exiled so many centuries ago.

“ The French Government, which entered this present war to defend a people wrongfully attacked and which continues the struggle to ensure the victory of right over might, can but feel sympathy with your cause, the triumph of which is bound up with that of the Allies.

“ I am happy to give you herewith such assurance.”

This letter, written, it will be observed, before the British victories in Palestine, is cautiously worded,

but it leaves no room for doubt that the attitude of the French Government is in full sympathy with that of the British. One of M. Cambon's provisos—"circumstances permitting"—has already been satisfied by the British occupation of Jerusalem.

The Entente between the Allies and Jewish Nationalism is thus complete on its ideal side, and the sails of Zionism are full. But the vindication of a great ideal like this of a Jewish restoration to Palestine does not quite cover the whole subject, as it presents itself to the non-Jewish mind, or even for that matter to the mind of the English or French Jew whose devotion to his adopted country is none the less real because he has also an allegiance to another country of his dreams and of his prayers. To such Jews it would be an additional stay for their idealism if they felt that their ideal could be anchored on the hard and stony ground of modern politics; nor would the Englishman's devotion to liberty and justice for the Jews be contaminated if he were convinced that he had a common interest with them and that the cause of the Jews were also the cause of the Allies in this war. It is with these submerged facts of history that this book deals. Its object is to bring Jewish Nationalism into association with our Eastern policy, and its age-long aspirations with modern "real-politics."

In the later months of 1916 there was formed in Manchester a British Palestine Society whose main object was to establish this community of ideals and interests between Zionism and British policy. Of that Committee the writer has been a member from the beginning, and he has assisted in the bring-