

industry, his absolute impartiality between all sections of the community, and his enthusiasm for the development of the country entirely changed the face of that little country from what it was under Turkish administration, from the condition in which it was left after the war, to the really progressive, contented, and prosperous little country that tourists visit to-day. I had the privilege of visiting it last year, and was immensely struck by the signs of development in every direction, by the contented look of the population, by the way in which the official world—not only the very small handful of British officials but the native officials too—were throwing themselves into their work, confident in the future of that country. Sir Herbert Samuel was succeeded at the end of last year by Field-Marshal Lord Plumer, and I think Palestine is very fortunate in having as its second High Commissioner an officer with so distinguished a record of public service and of such high administrative ability.

#### Trans-Jordan.

I do not think I need say more than a word about Trans-Jordan, which, under His Highness the Amir Abdullah, is governed separately from Palestine and forms a territorial link between Palestine and Iraq. The chief events in its history since the last Conference have been the inclusion in its administrative area of the Maan Vilayet, to the south of Trans-Jordan, which brings Trans-Jordan down to the Red Sea, and the final settlement of the frontiers between Trans-Jordan and Nejd, the Sultanate of Ibn Saud, which was negotiated by Sir Gilbert Clayton at the end of last year, and will, I trust, put an end to the desert raids which added so much to the burden of administration in Trans-Jordan previously.

#### \* Iraq.

I now come—and it is the last item in my survey—to the Kingdom of Iraq. Since the last Conference the political progress of Iraq has been very rapid. When the last Conference met elections were proceeding for the Constituent Assembly of Iraq. That opened in March, 1924, and the Treaty of Alliance between this country and Iraq was accepted and duly ratified by the Assembly towards the end of that year. It was submitted to the League of Nations as a document giving effect to the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant, and, consequent upon the sitting of the Constituent Assembly and the passage by it of organic and electoral laws, elections followed for the first Parliament of Iraq, which was opened by King Feisal on the 16th July of the present year, and which has worked successfully since.

#### Negotiations regarding Mosul Frontier.

The one difficult problem which the Duke of Devonshire mentioned in his last survey, and which, paralysed progress in Iraq, was the question of its unsettled northern frontier. In the Treaty of Lausanne it was stipulated that this frontier should be laid down by friendly arrangement between the British and Turkish Governments within a period of nine months, and, failing such agreement, should be referred to the Council of the League. Negotiations with the Turkish Government proved fruitless. The Turkish Government claimed the whole of the old province of Mosul—something like a third, certainly more than a quarter, of the territory of that State—a territory without which, from the economic as well as from the revenue and defence point of view, that State could really not have carried on its existence. Therefore, with every desire to meet the Turkish Government and to find a friendly accommodation, it was impossible for the British Government, in the position both of alliance and of trusteeship which it had towards Iraq, to accept the claim which Turkey put forward. The matter was brought before the Council of the League in September, 1924, and they decided to appoint a Frontier Commission to examine the problem on the spot and report. While that Commission was being appointed and the Council actually in session Turkey endeavoured to alter the *status quo* by an invasion with armed forces into northern Iraq. A further emergency meeting of the Council was called in the following month, and a temporary line, known as the Brussels line, was laid down to be observed by both parties until a final decision was reached. The Commission visited Iraq in the early part of 1925, and its report substantially was that the wishes of the inhabitants and the economic interests of the country were that the whole of the Mosul Vilayet up to the Brussels line should remain as it has been since the war—part of the territory of Iraq. They further expressed the view that this desire on the part of the inhabitants was almost universally coupled with a strong desire that the British influence over the Administration, and the British connection established by treaty relationship, in general terms though not quite accurately referred to as the mandate, should be maintained as long as possible; and they recommended that this connection should be maintained over a period which they did not wish to define precisely but which they thought perhaps might be as long as twenty-five years. The whole matter was taken into consideration by the Council of the League in September of last year. While it was being considered reports were received of wholesale deportations by the Turks of the Christian population along the northern frontier, and in some instances of violations of the Brussels line. A protest on that subject was addressed to the Council by His Majesty's Government, and at the request of His Majesty's Government the Council of the League sent a further small commission of inquiry, presided over by General Laidoner, a distinguished Estonian, to that frontier to report on the situation. In December the Council, having before it the report of the Laidoner Commission, as well as the report of the original Commission on the whole question, and the opinion of The Hague Court on certain legal points referred to it, after full consideration decided that the Brussels line should remain the northern frontier of Iraq, subject to the conclusion of a new treaty between Great Britain and Iraq, which would ensure the continuance, if necessary for a maximum period of twenty-five years, of the existing relationship between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Iraq. A new treaty, consequent on this decision, was