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MESOPOTAMIA

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Editorial Note.

In the spring of 1917 the Foreign Office, in connection with the preparation which they were making for the work of the Peace Conference, established a special section whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form—geographical, economic, historical, social, religious and political—respecting the different countries, districts, islands, &c., with which they might have to deal. In addition, volumes were prepared on certain general subjects, mostly of an historical nature, concerning which it appeared that a special study would be useful.

The historical information was compiled by trained writers on historical subjects, who (in most cases) gave their services without any remuneration. For the geographical sections valuable assistance was given by the Intelligence Division (Naval Staff) of the Admiralty; and for the economic sections, by the War Trade Intelligence Department, which had been established by the Foreign Office. Of the maps accompanying the series, some were prepared by the above-mentioned department of the Admiralty, but the bulk of them were the work of the Geographical Section of the General Staff (Military Intelligence Division) of the War Office.

Now that the Conference has nearly completed its task, the Foreign Office, in response to numerous enquiries and requests, has decided to issue the books for public use, believing that they will be useful to students of history, politics, economics and foreign affairs, to publicists generally and to business men and travellers. It is hardly necessary to say that some of the subjects dealt with in the series have not in fact come under discussion at the Peace Conference; but, as the books treating of them contain valuable information, it has been thought advisable to include them.

It must be understood that, although the series of volumes was prepared under the authority, and is now issued with the sanction, of the Foreign Office, that Office is not to be regarded as guaranteeing the accuracy of every statement which they contain or as identifying itself with all the opinions expressed in the several volumes; the books were not prepared in the Foreign Office itself, but are in the nature of information provided for the Foreign Office and the British Delegation.

The books are now published, with a few exceptions, substantially as they were issued for the use of the Delegates. No attempt has been made to bring them up to date, for, in the first place, such a process would have entailed a great loss of time and a prohibitive expense; and, in the second, the political and other conditions of a great part of Europe and of the Nearer and Middle East are still unsettled and in such a state of flux that any attempt to describe them would have been incorrect or misleading. The books are therefore to be taken as describing, in general, *ante-bellum* conditions, though in a few cases, where it seemed specially desirable, the account has been brought down to a later date.

G. W. PROTHERO,
General Editor and formerly
Director of the Historical Section.

January 1920.

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I. GEOGRAPHY PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL

(1) Position and Frontiers

The geographical limits of Mesopotamia cannot be precisely defined, except on the east, where the delimitation of the boundary between Turkey and Persia was completed by a Turko-Persian Commission in 1914. The frontier then determined lies along the mountains forming the western rim of the Persian plateau, and reaches the Shatt el-Arab 10 miles above Mohammera. The remaining boundaries of the area dealt with in this account are roughly as follows: to the south the Persian Gulf; to the south-west the desert of northern Arabia; to the west the Syrian desert; and to the north the mountains of Armenia and Asia Minor. The area is approximately 180,000 square miles.

(2) Surface, Coast, and River System

Surface

Mesopotamia as a whole consists of a great depression running south-east from the north-western corner of Syria and the mountains of Armenia down to the head of the Persian Gulf. Under the high mountains which enclose Mesopotamia on the north-east is a belt of lower hill country, varying in breadth from 40 to 100 miles, and below this again are the Mesopotamian plains which form the floor of the depression. Not far to the north of Baghdad the upper plains end in a

drop of 20-50 ft., marking a former coast line, and the great alluvial plain of Irak begins. This district, lying between the Euphrates and Tigris, is exceedingly fertile; its area is about 35,000 square miles. In general the surface of the upper plain country decreases in fertility from north to south.

Lower Mesopotamia.—In Irak the only noticeable eminences are the mounds that mark the sites of dead cities, the high banks of old canal-beds, and here and there knolls or slight ridges of gravel or sand. The slope of the Irak plains from the neighbourhood of Baghdad to the Persian Gulf is very slight. Baghdad is 105 ft. above sea-level, Kut el-Amara on the Tigris 55 ft., Nasrie on the Euphrates 15 ft., Basra 8 ft. There are also very gradual transverse inclines away from the rivers (due to the heightening of the river-beds by the deposit of silt), and a slope from the foot of the Persian hills to the neighbourhood of the Tigris; these, in so far as they determine the present flood-areas and marshes, have great importance for the cultivation of the country as it is to-day, and also for projects of irrigation.

The soil is mainly an argillaceous, calcareous loam of great fertility; but by far the greater part of the country is either marshland or arid waste. In the southern part of Irak there are extensive permanent swamps, the water of which rises and falls with the season. In addition, the winter and spring floods of the rivers overflow into wide inundations, which generally dry up in the latter part of the summer, but sometimes, when they have no adequate outlets, may remain standing for some years. The position and extent of these temporary flood areas vary, within certain limits, from year to year. Where and when the country is not swamp, it is for the most part open plain. Cultivation is almost entirely limited to the neighbourhood of the rivers and canals.

The Arabian desert, where it borders on south-western Irak, is a fairly hard gravelly plain, broken in places by belts and patches of sand. It is inter-

sected by *wadis* (water-courses, dry except after rain) running towards the Euphrates. The rains produce some grass vegetation, which for a time affords a fair amount of camel-grazing. The usual low desert scrub is also found. West of the Euphrates, from Hit down to Nejef, the Syrian desert (Hamad) has the same general character.

Upper Mesopotamia.—The plains of the Jezireh (El-Jezire, "the island"), which lie between the Tigris and Euphrates, extend to about 48,000 sq. miles. They are generally more or less undulating, though they contain some wide expanses of flat country. Here and there they are traversed by ranges of hills; most of these are quite low, but the Jebel Sinjar, a line of basalt hills west of Mosul, rises to some 3,000 ft. above the surrounding country; the surface of the plains is open and treeless.

A great part of the northern Jezireh has a good soil, and large areas could be brought under cultivation by means of irrigation works. South of the Jebel Sinjar and the lower Khabur the plain becomes increasingly arid, and towards its lower end turns to a hard desert, the surface of which is composed of gravel, gypsum, marl, borax, or sand. There are also large areas in which water from *wadis* collects, and on evaporation leaves an incrustation of salt.

On the western and eastern sides of the Jezireh the Euphrates and Tigris have cut for themselves shallow valleys or troughs 1 to 5 miles wide, bordered by low hills or cliffs. At the bottom of these valleys occur stretches of alluvium where the rivers have deposited their sediment in flood-time. Parts of the Euphrates trough are moderately cultivated; elsewhere the valley is either bare or filled with tamarisk and other scrub. There is a considerable amount of cultivation along the banks of the Tigris between Mosul and the mouth of the Great Zab. South of the Lesser Zab, down to the beginning of the alluvial plain near Beled, the river valley is mostly untilled. The southern plains, east of the middle Tigris, are open steppes of clay and

gravel, clothed with grass in spring. The country in the region of the Zabs has a fertile soil.

The lower hill-country, east of Kifri, Kirkuk, Altun Keupri, and Erbil, consists either of rolling downs or of lines of rocky heights in which sandstone predominates. In spring the downs and valleys have much grass on them. Between this region and the higher ranges are the well-watered upland plains of Suleimanie and Rania.

Along the Persian frontier is the high mountain country of southern Kurdistan. It is well watered by numerous streams flowing through deep valleys or gorges into the Lesser Zab. Central Kurdistan is the most difficult section of the mountain barrier that divides Mesopotamia from Armenia and north-western Persia. The mountains rise to heights of 11,000 to 14,000 ft., their sides are generally barren and sparsely wooded; the valleys and lower slopes contain patches of cultivable ground.

The plain of the Jezireh is bounded on the north by the Jebel Tur or Tur Abdin plateau (east of Mardin), and by the hill-country which has its centre and highest point in the Karaja (Qarajeh) Dagh. On the western side of the plateau there is a depression, which affords an important line of communication between Diarbekr on the north and the great Mesopotamian plain. The soil of the Jebel Tur, though much overlaid with stones, is often fertile; but water is scarce in summer. The least stony and best-watered part of the plateau is the north-western, towards Diarbekr.

The country bordering the middle Euphrates valley on the west is arid desert in its southern part, and becomes gradually less arid towards the north.

Coast

Mesopotamia touches the sea only on a narrow front at the head of the Persian Gulf. Desert, marsh, and inundation make the coast difficult of access from the land. Shallows and mud-banks obstruct approach

from the Gulf. The bar at the mouth of the Shatt el-Arab needs dredging to make it passable at all tides by large ocean-going steamers. West of the Shatt el-Arab the Khor Zobeir, which runs up into the desert towards Basra, has fairly deep water for a part of its length; but its approaches from land and sea, its configuration and dimensions, appear to make it unsuitable for regular use as a harbour.

River System

The Euphrates and Tigris drain the Armenian tableland, the western side of the Persian plateau, the hill country of northern Mesopotamia, and the Mesopotamian plains. The two rivers unite at Kurna into a single stream, which reaches the Persian Gulf under the name of the Shatt el-Arab.

The volume of water in the Euphrates and Tigris varies considerably at different periods of the year. The great increase during certain months is caused by rainfall and melting snow in the highlands of Armenia, Kurdistan, and Persia. The low-water season may be said to last from July to November, the high-water season from December to June. Both rivers, and especially the Tigris, are liable to rise in sudden and violent spates, and bring down a great quantity of sediment in the high-water season.

The Euphrates between Feluja and Diwaniya flows at a higher level than the Tigris between Baghdad and Kut el-Amara, and the country between the rivers in north-western Irak is therefore flooded mainly from the Euphrates. Just below Museyib (70 miles by river below Feluja) the Euphrates divides into two large branches, called the Shatt Hindie and the Shatt Hilla, which join again 110 miles further down near Samawa. Between 1865 and 1890 the main stream shifted from the eastern (Hilla) branch to the western (Hindie). After several unsuccessful attempts to check the process, which was threatening to dry up the Hilla branch altogether, the new Hindie barrage and the Hilla regulator were constructed

(1913) to regulate the flow of water down the two channels. From Nasrie downwards the Euphrates, now flowing at a lower level than the Tigris, receives from the north a great quantity of Tigris water, which finds its way through the canals and marshes between the two rivers. The volume of the Euphrates, thus increased, is beyond the capacity of the channel leading to Kurna (called the Old Channel), and most of the Euphrates water is forced southwards, and forms a large area of open water and swamp, through which the New Channel drains into the Shatt el-Arab at Gurmat Ali, a few miles above Basra.

The Tigris is liable to flood more or less of the neighbourhood of its banks from above Baghdad down to Kut el-Amara. At the latter place a large channel, the Shatt el-Hai, branches southward from the right bank of the Tigris and reaches the Euphrates just below Nasrie. Below Kut el-Amara more and more flood-water drains southwards into swamps, and fears have been expressed that unless preventive measures are taken the Tigris may altogether leave its present bed below Amara.

(3) Climate

The climatic conditions of Mesopotamia are those of a sub-tropical area which lies at a distance from any ocean, and they are, therefore, in the plains and lower uplands, of a semi-arid type. The following tables give the mean daily maximum and the mean daily minimum temperature in the hottest and coldest months respectively.

Mean daily maximum, July and August:—

Basra, 104° F. (40° C.).
Baghdad, 110° F. (43° C.).
Mosul, 109° F. (43° C.).

Mean daily minimum, December and January:—

Basra, 47° F. (8° C.).
Baghdad, 40° F. (4° C.).
Mosul, 36° F. (2° C.).

In northern Irak absolute maxima of over 120° F. (49° C.) are reached in July and August. At Basra, however, where the neighbouring marshes keep the humidity of the air at a high level during the summer months, the heat is more trying than in the dryer atmosphere of Baghdad.

In the mountains bordering on the Mesopotamian depression the summer is temperate, and the cold in winter is severe, especially on the edge of the Armenian plateau.

In the plains and lower hills the rainy season lasts from November to April; December, January, February, and March are the wettest months. In lower Mesopotamia many places may have no rain at all from June to October. In upper Mesopotamia there is usually a slight fall in May, and, at least in some places, a very little in June, September, and October, while July and August are rainless.

The amount of rainfall decreases from north to south. At the northern end of the Jezireh plains and in the uplands of Diarbekr the total fall in the year is 13-16 in. (330-410 mm.), in Irak it is only $2\frac{1}{4}$-7 in. (57-179 mm.), and a large proportion of the total often falls in one day.

Snow falls in northern Mesopotamia in December and January, and sometimes in February or even March. The main thaw and heavy rains come in March and April, and cause the great spring floods on the rivers of Mesopotamia.

The prevailing winds in the Mesopotamian lowlands are from the north-west; blowing with some freshness at intervals from June to August, they mitigate the heat and help to reduce the floods.

(4) Sanitary Conditions

The principal disease of the country is malaria. This is worst in the neighbourhood of marshes and inundation-areas, and it is therefore especially prevalent in lower Mesopotamia, and above all in the swamps of southern Irak. In the plains during the

summer months fatiguing work in the open, especially in a humid atmosphere, is likely to bring on heat stroke.

Epidemics of cholera and bubonic plague occur from time to time. On the whole, however, if proper precautions can be taken, particularly with regard to water, the health conditions for Europeans, outside malaria-infested districts, may be regarded as fairly good.

Under Ottoman rule the towns have been left in a most unhealthy condition. Almost the only sanitary measures taken by the Turkish authorities have been those of quarantine.

(5) Race and Language

The numbers of the various races which form the population of Mesopotamia may be estimated roughly as follows :[1]

Arabs	1,450,000	Armenians	57,000
Kurds	380,000	Yezidis	21,000
Turks and Turkomans	110,000	Chabaks	10,000
Persians	70,000	Circassians	8,000
Jews	60,000	Sabians	2,000
Syrian Christians	60,000	Miscellaneous	10,000
Total	2,238,000		

The floating population of pilgrims to the Shiah shrines, which may number 150,000 to 200,000 in a year, is not included in the above estimate.

The *Arabs* are, both numerically and politically, the dominant element in the population. They number probably about a million and a half, and if united among themselves would constitute a factor of the highest importance in the general situation. Differences, however, of religion, character, pursuits, and interests constitute intersecting lines of cleavage which have effectually prevented any enduring combination. Those Arabs who are dwellers in the towns, or settled on the land as agriculturists, are for the most part

[1] In the absence of reliable statistics, no accurate estimate of the population can be given.

satisfactory members of the community; about one-half of the total number consists, however, of nomad or semi-nomad tribes, and it is they who have hitherto placed insuperable obstacles in the way of the development of the country. Beyond the immediate vicinity of the towns, which are few in number, Mesopotamia is a tribal country; the vilayets of Baghdad and Basra are almost entirely apportioned into areas which various tribes occupy in virtue of an ancient prescriptive right. These tribes have maintained for 4,000 years the system of patriarchal government, and, although for the sake of convenience many families are collected together under the rule of one chief, he can only govern so long as he has the majority in his favour. The Muntifik, the Beni-Lam, and the Shammar are among the principal Arab tribes in Turkish territory, and nominally under Turkish authority. The position of the Chaab tribe has been the cause of much friction; originally Turkish, the tribe came after 1740 to acquire a permanent footing in Persian territory near the Karun, and since 1768 has been virtually independent of Turkey. About the year 1745 four-fifths of the land inhabited by the Chaab belonged unquestionably to Persia, and the members of the tribe appear to have been regarded as naturalized Persian subjects, renting certain Turkish property as foreigners. The Ottoman Government has not exercised control over the Chaab since 1768, and Turkish claims to the allegiance of the tribe since that date seem to be unfounded. Indeed, only a limited authority has existed even over those tribes admittedly within the bounds of Ottoman jurisdiction; and tribal jealousies have been deliberately fostered by the Turkish administration from inability to exercise effective control. Each tribe has been assessed at a certain revenue; and, so long as that is paid, it is practically exempt from Turkish authority. The collection of the revenue frequently leads to friction, and sometimes to open rebellion, with disastrous effects on the country. On such occasions

traffic is held up, crops are destroyed, and the banks of the rivers are broken down.

The Arab is generally intelligent, quick, and impressionable; often he has a certain subtlety of mind which is capable of a high degree of cultivation. But he is slovenly and uncreative in practical matters, and is lacking in the power of co-operation and of sustained labour in the face of difficulties. He has a natural bent for intrigue, is much under the sway of personal ambitions and jealousies, and is very much of a time-server. For the wilder tribesman blackmail and thieving are normal and proper ways of earning a living.

The *Marsh Arabs*, or Ma'adam, who are found on both banks of the Tigris between Amara and Kurna and in the neighbourhood of the lower Euphrates below Suk esh-Sheyukh, are a peculiar people, non-Arab in origin, living mainly by fishing and the produce of their herds of buffaloes, but cultivating here and there a little rice.

The *Kurds* predominate in the hills, and, since many of them dwell in Persian territory, their lawlessness has occasioned much trouble on the Turko-Persian frontier. They have little tribal cohesion, and are addicted to blood feuds. The Kurd has not the intelligence, subtlety, and imagination of the Arab, but of the two he is the more industrious and capable worker. In danger he is cooler and steadier, he has a better physique, and altogether has greater physical and mental stamina. But he is also more callous than the Arab, and is extraordinarily reckless about taking human life. He has the makings of a good cultivator and a good workman, but has generally neither the good nor the bad qualities that are likely to make a successful trader.

The *Turks*, as the governing race in Mesopotamia, occupied the majority of the official positions, both civil and military. A few thousand of the inhabitants of Baghdad claimed Turkish origin, often without justification. There is a Turkoman population in the

neighbourhood of Tuz Khurmatli, Kirkuk, and Altun Keupri. Turkomans are also found in the plains east of Mosul, and west of Mosul at Tel Afar.

The *Persians* in Mesopotamia are concentrated especially at the Shiah holy cities in Irak; thus at Kerbela they form the majority of the population, and at Nejef about a third. They number several thousands in Baghdad, where they are for the most part engaged in trade. There are a few Persians in the towns towards the Turko-Persian frontier, and some have recently come from the Gulf coast to work as labourers in southern Irak.

There are *Jewish* communities in the principal towns of Mesopotamia, particularly in Baghdad, where the Jews number perhaps about 50,000. They form an important element in commercial affairs, and the trade of Baghdad and Basra is much under their control.

The Syrian *Christians* dwell principally in northern Mesopotamia. There are also a few thousand in Baghdad. *Armenians* are found chiefly in the Diarbekr vilayet; there are also a certain number in Baghdad, where many are wealthy men of business. There are some thousands of Yezidis in the Jebel Sinjar, and also in the neighbourhood of Mosul. They form a marked group, owing to their peculiar religion. Very few are left of the *Circassians* settled in Mesopotamia by the Turkish Government after the Russian War of 1877. Their numbers have been reduced by their failure to adapt themselves to the climate, and by quarrels with their neighbours. Other groups, such as the Sabians, Chabaks, Indians, Afghans, Pathans, and Lurs, number only a very few thousands, and are of no political importance in the country.

The total number of *Europeans* resident in the country before the war was perhaps about 200; they were missionaries (French, British, and American), representatives of commercial enterprises and engineers (chiefly British and German), consuls, and

archæologists. The missionaries were principally in upper Mesopotamia, the Europeans engaged in business or engineering work were mostly in Irak and in Arabistan over the Persian boundary. The principal European business communities were at Baghdad, Basra, and Mohammera. Except among the missionaries, there were few Europeans who could be regarded as permanently settled in the country.

The distribution of languages in Mesopotamia follows the distribution of races. Arabic naturally predominates, but Persian is of considerable importance for commerce, and Kurdish dialects are commonly spoken in certain districts. The Armenians have their own language. Syriac is spoken by the Christians of the Central Kurdish highlands. Various dialects of Turkish are spoken by Turks and Turkomans.

As regards European languages, the commercial and social predominance of French in other parts of the Turkish Empire has its influence on Mesopotamia. A certain acquaintance with French is to be found among members of the wealthy business class in the chief trade-centres; and the higher Turkish officials usually had some, though often a very imperfect, knowledge of the language.

Some knowledge of English is possessed by persons —chiefly Christians of northern Mesopotamia—who have visited America or have been educated in American Mission Schools. A few men of business are acquainted with English, but it seems to be much less widely known than French, even where, as at Baghdad, British commercial influence has been predominant.

(6) Population

Distribution

The population of Mesopotamia has been roughly estimated at 2,238,000; of this number it is calculated that 1,511,000 inhabit Irak, and the remaining 727,000 are distributed in upper Mesopotamia.

In Irak probably over 90 per cent. of the population is grouped along the rivers and canals. The rural population is on the whole densest in the following areas: (i) along the Shatt el-Arab; (ii) along and near the Euphrates, especially between Museyib and Diwaniya on the Hilla branch and Kufa on the Hindie branch, and again in the Nasrie—Suk esh-Sheyukh area; (iii) on and near the Shatt el-Hai; (iv) to the north and north-east of Baghdad, along the Tigris, and in the country watered by the Khalis—Tawila canal between the Tigris and the Diala and in the Bakuba district; (v) in the country around Amara on the lower Tigris. The neighbourhood of the Euphrates is, owing to natural conditions, far more densely inhabited than that of the Tigris.

The number of pure nomads whose movements are confined to Irak is very small, but the desert south and west of the Euphrates is visited by tribes from the Nejd and elsewhere at certain seasons of the year, and in Irak itself a proportion of the inhabitants still keep to a semi-nomadic life.

In the plains of upper Mesopotamia the sparse population is distributed chiefly in the following areas: (i) parts of the middle Euphrates valley, which in the past forty or fifty years has been gradually recovering a settled population, after being nearly emptied by anarchy; (ii) between the rivers on the north-western and northern sides of the plain; (iii) between the rivers, in the Jebel Sinjar and the country at the foot of that range to south and east; (iv) east of the Tigris, in the Mosul—Erbil plains and southwards to the Lesser Zab; also at various points under

the Kurdish foothills from Altun Keupri down to Kifri.

Both in the plains and the hill-country of upper Mesopotamia nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes circulate on their yearly rounds.

Towns

The position of the chief town of Irak, Baghdad (200,000),[1] is eminently favourable to the existence of a great city. On Baghdad converge naturally, in conformity with physical features, all the lines of communication which enter Irak from the north-west, the north, and the north-east; to the south there is easy communication with the thickly-populated Kerbela—Hilla region; and lastly there is the waterway of the Tigris leading from the Persian Gulf, and navigable up to Baghdad by river steamers. For its food supplies Baghdad can draw easily both on the Euphrates to the south and on the Bakuba—Khalis canal area to the north.

Basra (80,000) is the port at the southern gate of Mesopotamia; ocean-going steamers can ascend to it by the Shatt el-Arab. Kerbela and Nejef (50,000 and 40,000) are pilgrim-centres which attract Shiahs from all parts of the Mohammedan world, but chiefly from Persia and India; Nejef is also the starting-point of a pilgrim-route to Mecca, and both Kerbela and Nejef, situated on the edge of the Arabian desert, are markets for the Beduin. Samarra (3,000) is a place of pilgrimage for Shiahs, but much less important than Kerbela and Nejef. Of the other towns, some are markets along the Euphrates, Tigris, or Shatt el-Hai, the centres of fertile districts, or situated at the junction or diverging-point of waterways; others are strung along the great Baghdad—Kermanshah road; and others are in oases.

[1] The figures given for the population of towns must be taken as guesses, giving perhaps some rough indication of their size; they may often be wide of the truth by some thousands.

The towns of upper Mesopotamia are markets and administrative centres, and support some small trades and industries.

There is a group of towns lying on that caravan-route from Aleppo to Mosul which has avoided the open plains and the southern end of the Karaja Dagh country as too insecure and too waterless, and has gone north by Diarbekr. These towns are Birijik (7,000), Urfa (30,000), Diarbekr (40,000), Mardin (30,000), Nisibin (5,000), and Jezire ibn Omar (5,000).

Mosul (70,000) not only lies on the trade route between Diarbekr and Baghdad, but is the chief collecting and distributing centre for the commerce with central Kurdistan. Bashkala (5,000) lies on the Van—Urmia caravan-route, and its position as a meeting-point of local tracks made it an important military post from which the tribes were watched. Amadia (3,000), on the southern edge of central Kurdistan, is a trading centre for the Hakkiari country.

In southern Kurdistan, Rowanduz (5,000) lies on a caravan route from Mosul to Tabriz, but the roads are bad, and the trade is declining. Suleimanie (12,000) is the chief market of southern Kurdistan, and has a commercial connection with Baghdad and Mosul.

On the edge of the hills, Erbil (6,000), Altun Keupri (3,000), Kirkuk (20,000), Tuz Khurmatli (1,200), and Kifri, or Salahie (4,000), lie along the Mosul—Baghdad road, and from them routes branch eastwards to the hill-towns. On the Tigris, Tekrit (5,000) lives mainly by the down-stream raft traffic from Mosul to Baghdad.

Lastly, there are the towns in the middle Euphrates valley below Birijik: Deir ez-Zor (12,000) and Ana (15,000). They live partly by their position on the valley road from Aleppo to Baghdad and on the water-way of the Euphrates. They are also centres of contact with the Beduin. Deir ez-Zor holds a very important position. Not only is it near the

mouth of the Khabur, but the Syrian desert to west of it, and the Jezireh to east, being less arid here than farther south, are traversed by caravan-routes, from Deir to Damascus on the one hand, and from Deir to Mosul on the other.

Movement

As there are no statistics of births, deaths, or migration, nothing definite can be said about any change in the total number of the population. On the whole, it seems to have been growing slowly in the years preceding the European War, but the increase in some districts had been at least partly counter-balanced by a decrease (generally due to disorder) in others.

There was a tendency among the nomadic population to settle down and take to cultivation. The Turkish Government tried to encourage this tendency, but also in some degree checked it by failing to create confidence or to give adequate protection against disorder.

II. POLITICAL HISTORY

Chronological Summary

2200 B.C. Hammurabi makes Babylon centre of Empire.
539 Cyrus conquers Mesopotamia.
629 A.D. Disastrous floods.
636 Moslems defeat Persians at Kadisiyah.
637 Kufa and Basra founded.
749 Fall of the Omayyads.
762 Caliph Mansur founds Baghdad
c. 836 Decline of Abbasid dynasty.
1258 Capture of Baghdad by Mongols.
Fourteenth century. Tamerlane's invasion.
1520-66 Suleiman I.
1534 Annexation of Erivan, Van, Mosul, and Baghdad by Turks
1603 Shah Abbas of Persia conquers Mesopotamia.
1623 Persians occupy Baghdad.
1638 Murad IV recaptures Baghdad.
1638 Bishop of Babylon appointed. "Permanent peace" between Persia and Turkey. East India Company establishes factory at Basra.
1730-46 Intermittent wars.
1740-94 Bishop of Babylon *ex officio* French Consul at Baghdad.
1796-97 French political mission at Baghdad.
1798 British Residency at Baghdad established.
1802 British Resident recognised by Sultan.
1835-37 Colonel Chesney's expedition.
1837 Destruction of Mohammera by Turks.
1847 Treaty of Erzerum.
1861 Formation of Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.
1881 Russian Consulate established at Baghdad.
1888 Railway Concessions in Asia Minor granted to German Syndicate.
1903 Baghdad Railway Convention.

1913 Conclusion of negotiations respecting Turko-Persian frontier, and navigation of Tigris, Euphrates, and Shatt el-Arab.

1914 Conclusion of Anglo-Turkish negotiations respecting railways, irrigation, and oil concessions. Anglo-German Agreement initialled. Demarcation of Turko-Persian frontier completed.

(1) Introduction

Isaiah, writing of Mesopotamia, speaks of "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency."[1] A recent report describes the same region as "a miserable wilderness of barren desert, alternating with vast swamps." Such is the change that has been wrought in the course of time. The natural resources of the land in early ages brought wealth to its inhabitants, and led to the development of civilization in the very dawn of history. For about two thousand years before, and nearly three thousand years after Hammurabi made Babylon the capital of his empire (about 2200 B.C.) Mesopotamia was a centre of dominion and civilizing influence. The great powers of the ancient world, Sumerian, Assyrian, Babylonian, obtained their riches and extended their sway from the land of the two rivers, which has been considered one of the four earthly paradises.

In 539 B.C. Cyrus the Great conquered Mesopotamia, and incorporated it in the Persian Empire. Neither Achæmenian, Macedonian, nor Seleucid rule affected the general prosperity of the country; a large population continued to flourish; huge canals and dykes were kept in repair; and the crops yielded "for the most part two-hundredfold, and at the best even three-hundredfold."[2] Babylon continued to be the greatest city in the world until the death of Alexander the Great, when Seleucia, on the Tigris, became the centre of Hellenistic civilization in the Seleucid Empire and

[1] Isaiah, ch. xiii.
[2] Herodotus, I, 193.

the greatest commercial city of the East. Ctesiphon, on the opposite bank of the Tigris, was the residence of the Parthian Arsacids, and continued under the Sasanian dynasty of Persia to be the royal capital. For seven centuries Rome fought Parthia and Persia for the possession of this coveted land; there were constant changes of frontier; but from the second century A.D. the north was more or less continuously held by the Romans and the south by the Persians under the Sasanian Kings. Subsequent efforts by the Romans to extend their conquests, particularly under the Emperor Julian in 363 A.D. and under Heraclius between 624 and 627 A.D., produced no permanent alteration in the *status quo*.

The rise of Islam was responsible for the next change of rule in Mesopotamia. In 628 A.D. Mohammed called upon the Persian King to embrace the new religion or prepare for war; various causes combined to postpone the campaign, but in 636 the Moslems defeated the Persians in the Battle of Kadisiyah, and proceeded to occupy the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris. The Arabs eventually extended their conquests to the Taurus Mountains.

The physical conditions of Mesopotamia have altered considerably at different periods. Eridu, the principal seaport of the Sumerians, was 130 miles from the present coast-line; and in Babylonian times the Euphrates and Tigris reached the sea as separate rivers. The alluvial area that now stretches from Beled, north of Baghdad, to the head of the Gulf has been formed by deposits of silt, and is said to increase at the rate of about 72 ft. per annum. Changes have also taken place in the courses of the rivers as the result of floods and the formation or decay of different canal systems. About the year 629 A.D. great floods burst the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris; in spite of the efforts of the Sasanian King to reclaim the land, the swamps thus formed became permanent, and in the ensuing years of warfare the irrigation works fell into disrepair.

During the rule of the Orthodox and Omayyad Caliphs, Mesopotamia was a province of the Arabian Empire. Kufa and Basra were founded as Arab strongholds in 637 A.D., and the country was ruled by governors appointed by the Caliphs. It was on the fall of the Omayyads in 749 that the hegemony passed from Syria to Irak. The Abbasid Caliphs bestowed great care on the irrigation system of the country, and under their rule its ancient prosperity was renewed. In 762 the Caliph Mansur founded Baghdad, which soon rose to a position of eminence and became unrivalled for splendour throughout Western Asia. Northern Mesopotamia paid Harun-al-Rashid as great a revenue as did Egypt, and its cotton commanded the market of the world. The seat of government was temporarily removed in 836 A.D. to Samarra, and the decline of the Abbasid dynasty set in at about that time. The Caliphs were then dominated by their Turkish guard, and Turkish soldiery became the chief power in the country. About the year 1005 A.D. several petty States arose in Mesopotamia; but, in spite of wars and disturbances, Baghdad remained until the Mongol invasions "the metropolis of Islam and the centre of learning and culture."[1]

Early in the thirteenth century a vast confederation of Mongolian nomad clans was formed in Central Asia. These swept westward, spreading ruin and devastation; the Persian principalities were overthrown; a huge horde under Hulaku Khan invaded Irak, and in 1258 captured Baghdad. The city was sacked and burnt; the inhabitants were massacred; the whole system of irrigation was ruined. A second invasion under Tamerlane in the fourteenth century completed the depopulation of the country; and for the next two hundred years Mesopotamia practically disappears from history.

In the reign of Sultan Suleiman I (1520-66) the Ottoman Turks engaged in several wars against the

[1] Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, p. 211.

Persians. Erivan, Van, Mosul, and Baghdad were added to the Turkish Empire; and the Tigris and Euphrates became the boundary between Turkish and Persian dominions. In 1603 Shah Abbas of Persia conquered the greater part of Mesopotamia; and twenty years later the Persians occupied Baghdad. In 1638 Sultan Murad IV undertook an expedition for the recapture of the city, which was effected in December of that year, after a siege of some weeks. In the massacre that ensued almost the whole Persian garrison and 30,000 of the inhabitants are said to have perished. A strong Turkish force was left in Baghdad, which remained from that date until 1917 continuously in Turkish hands.

(2) Early Period of Turkish Occupation, 1638-1834

Since its occupation by the Turks, Mesopotamia may be said to have been without a history. This, however, is no matter for congratulation; rather it is a case of "*ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*" For two centuries after the fall of Baghdad affairs in Europe commanded the attention and the resources of the Ottoman Empire; and the government of Mesopotamia was relegated to the Pashas of Baghdad and Basra, who were supported by a force of Janissaries, and were generally, until 1834, appointed by the Sultan from the ruling families of the country.

In the year 1639 a "permanent peace" was signed between Turkey and Persia, and the common frontier was defined in general terms. This did not entirely put an end to friction between the two nations; the aggressive policy of Nadir Shah led, in 1730, to a war which continued intermittently until 1746 (when the treaty of 1639 was reaffirmed); and on two separate occasions the Persians were in occupation of Basra for a series of years. On the whole, however, neither Turks nor Persians were capable of sustained effort on this frontier.

The influence of European Powers began to be felt in Mesopotamia during this period. The Portuguese, through their position in the Gulf, were able to assert themselves occasionally at Basra; but by 1757 they had disappeared entirely from Turkish Irak. The Dutch had for many years a Residency at Basra, but it was withdrawn about 1752, and they never again established themselves in the country. In 1638 a French Carmelite was appointed the first Latin Bishop of Babylon; and in 1679 Louis XIV by a decree appointed the Superior of the Carmelites at Basra to be *ex officio* French Consul there. About 1740 the office of Bishop of Babylon was combined with that of French Consul at Baghdad; and the double duties appear to have been discharged by a succession of bishops until 1794. In 1796-97 a French political mission visited Baghdad and a "Commissioner for Commercial Relations" was appointed to act as French Consul there. No European Power, however, possessed interests at this time in Mesopotamia in any way comparable with those of Great Britain.

British intercourse with Mesopotamia arose from the dealings of the East India Company's servants with the local Government. The Company established a factory at Basra in 1639; and the agent stationed there to protect commercial interests came to occupy the position of British Resident, and to acquire considerable influence over the local authorities. In 1798 a British Residency was permanently established at Baghdad; and in 1802 the Resident was formally recognised by the Sultan.

After its capture by the Turks in 1638, Baghdad contained only 14,000 inhabitants, and its trade suffered considerably from the massacre of many of the richest merchants. Basra at this time formed a separate Pashalik, the possession of which was frequently disputed by the Arabs and Persians, both of whom occupied the city at different times for periods varying from a few months to several years. The ravages of plague and flood, which the Administration

was unable to combat, increased the disorganisation and anarchy occasioned by the rebellious tribes in Mesopotamia. The dangers of the situation were aggravated by the war with Persia, the aggressions of the Chaab tribe in the south and by the fear of a Wahabi invasion from Central Arabia. By 1834 it was reported that the population of the Pashalik of Baghdad had decreased almost beyond belief; the cultivation had more than proportionately diminished; and almost every vestige of the ancient prosperity of the country had disappeared.

(3) Later Period of Turkish Occupation, 1834-1914

Between 1834 and 1914 increasing attention was directed towards Mesopotamia, both by the Central Government at the Porte and by the Great Powers of Europe. This interest, however, was aroused less by the condition of the country than by its relation to questions of international importance, and may be attributed chiefly to the changed attitude of the Porte towards provincial administration, to the prominence of the Turko-Persian boundary negotiations, and to the development of British interests in the country, combined with a growing connection between Mesopotamia and India, which incited other Powers to rivalry with Great Britain.

(a) *Relations with Persia*

Conditions in Mesopotamia during this period were adversely affected by the disturbances in the Persian frontier districts. The line of boundary was the chief point in dispute; but the territorial question was complicated by religious considerations. The hostility between Shiah and Sunni Mohammedans became invested with a political character, and was aggravated by the attitude of the Turkish authorities towards Persians in Turkish territory, particularly the

pilgrims to Kerbela and Nejef, the Holy Cities of the Shiahs. The destruction of Mohammera by the Turks in 1837, combined with the Persian occupation of the district of Zohab, brought matters to a crisis, and a request was made for the mediation of Great Britain and Russia. Under their auspices a conference between Turkish and Persian representatives was held at Erzerum in 1843; and in 1847 the Treaty of Erzerum was signed, providing for the determination of the frontier by a Turko-Persian Commission, including British and Russian delegates. After many delays and obstructions, an identic map was submitted in 1869 to the Ottoman and Persian Governments, representing a zone of country from 20 to 40 miles broad, within the limits of which it was stated that the boundary lay. A special Commission was appointed for the demarcation of the frontier within this zone, but their efforts towards a settlement were unsuccessful.

In 1905 the situation became disturbing owing to the advances by Turkish troops east of the zone in which the frontier was said to lie. The Turks appeared to covet all territory occupied by Sunnis, and induced many tribes in Persian territory to claim Turkish nationality, with the result that whole districts were in a state of anarchy. Turkish aggressions continued; but Great Britain and Russia finally succeeded in securing the signature, on November 17, 1913, of a Protocol, to which they, as well as Turkey and Persia, were parties, laying down the general line of frontier, and giving specific directions for the settlement of certain details by a Delimitation Commission. The British and Russian delegates on this Commission were empowered not merely to mediate but to arbitrate in cases of dispute between their Turkish and Persian colleagues. In September 1914 the demarcation of the frontier by this Commission was completed.

(b) *British Influence*

The period from 1834-1914 was remarkable for a great expansion of British interests in Mesopotamia, together with increased difficulty in protecting them. This difficulty arose partly from the inevitable multiplication of points of contact and friction; partly from the bureaucratic influence of Constantinople in Baghdad affairs; and partly from the overweening and chauvinistically Turkish spirit of the Pashas now posted to Baghdad by the central authorities. The part played by Great Britain in the Turko-Persian boundary disputes tended to increase her influence, but not to improve her relations with the Turkish authorities. The latter, however, continued, as before, to appeal for British assistance in difficulties; at the beginning of the Crimean War there appeared a probability that Persia might join Russia against Turkey, but the despatch of two British warships to Basra had a tranquillising effect not only upon Persia but also upon certain rebellious Arab tribes in Turkish territory

British official activity was further extended by the influx of British Indians into the Holy Cities in consequence of the Oudh Bequest. This instrument, agreed on by the King of Oudh and the Governor-General of India in 1825, came into operation in 1849, and provided for the monthly payment of sums amounting to £10,000 a year to Shiahs at Kerbela and Nejef. Owing to complaints that the funds were being misappropriated to political or personal ends, the Bequest was in 1852 made payable from the Baghdad Treasury, and the British Resident came to exercise a certain supervision over the expenditure. The development of British and British-Indian trade in Mesopotamia, the navigation by British vessels of Mesopotamian waters, and the measures taken for the suppression of piracy and the protection of traffic on the Shatt el-Arab gave to the British Government "a paramount local influence."[1] This was strengthened

[1] Reported by Colonel Rawlinson in 1852.

by the institution, in 1862, of a British mail service between Irak and India and the construction by British agency of lines of telegraph from Baghdad to India, Constantinople, and Teheran. In the latter part of the century, however, the development of British commerce and influence, together with the emphasising of British protection over the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammera, aroused considerable hostility on the part of the Turkish authorities. This attitude became increasingly pronounced with the growth of German influence at Constantinople.

(c) *Influence of other European Powers*

Until 1881 the only European Power represented at Baghdad besides Great Britain was France, who had no local interests except such as were connected with the Roman Catholic religious orders. Russia obtained a certain influence through her mediation in the Turko-Persian frontier disputes. A Russian Consulate was created at Baghdad in 1881, and was raised in 1901 to a Consulate-General; but the material interests of Russia in Irak were small. Belgium, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the United States of America each acquired certain commercial interests in the country, and established Consulates at Baghdad. During the reign of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, Germany was the only foreign country maintaining constant good relations with Turkey. The beginning of modern German interest in Ottoman affairs may be traced in the writings of List, von Moltke, and others; and when Bismarck had in some measure secured the maintenance of Germany's position in Europe he allowed the rising stream of commercial prosperity to follow its own course. This resulted in the eighties and nineties in the *Drang nach Osten*, which took more definite shape in 1898 on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to Constantinople. Thenceforth Germany's influence was directed towards the furtherance of her designs in the

Near East and the obstruction of British development. Her endeavours in this direction were crowned with success by the Baghdad Railway Convention of 1903. German influence received a check from the advent to power, in 1908, of the Young Turkish party, whose sympathies, it was hoped, might be with Great Britain; but the conflict of British and Turkish aims in Mesopotamia combined with other causes to make this expectation short-lived.

> "On the other hand, the steady penetration of Turkish commerce by Germany; the calculated abstention in German publications and speeches from any comment or criticism on the unconstitutional methods employed by the Turkish Government; the idea, which undoubtedly obtained, that Germany was not 'suspect' as regards Turkish territory, and that her projects in Asia Minor were commercial and not territorial; and the sale of cruisers to Turkey at a time of crisis—all contributed powerfully, it would appear, to cause the Turks to lean towards Germany."[1]

Between 1889 and 1912 German trade in Turkey increased tenfold, but the real purpose of such commercial penetration is demonstrated by Dr. Rohrbach, who stated in his work *Die Bagdadbahn* in 1911: "All economic measures we may take in Turkey are only a means to an end, not an end in themselves"; and went on to show that the end was the establishment of German political ascendancy from the North Sea to the Indian Ocean.

(d) *Internal Conditions*

The main principle of the internal administration of Mesopotamia in this period was the suppression of every kind of influence that competed with the authority of the Porte. Until 1834 the government of the province rested with the Pasha; the Sultan was regarded rather in the light of suzerain than of ruler, and his authority in Irak was constantly defied. In 1834, however, attempts were made to centralize the

[1] *The Baghdad Railway Negotiations* (Quarterly Review, October 1917).

administration of the Empire, and to substitute direct control by the Porte for the semi-independent rule of the Pashas. The latter were no longer to be selected from local families, but were despatched to the province from Constantinople. The efforts of these governors to fill the public purse by a stricter collection of the revenues aroused dissatisfaction among the Arabs; and rebellions were of frequent occurrence.

Midhat Pasha, who had reorganized the civil administration of the Empire in 1867, was sent to Baghdad in 1869 to introduce the vilayet system of government. He caused considerable concern to the British authorities by his efforts to extend Turkish sovereignty along the coast of the Persian Gulf. The policy of centralisation in Mesopotamia was continued by the Sultan Abdul Hamid, during whose reign the Turkish administration became, on the whole, more effective. The Turkish Revolution of 1908 was welcomed by the majority of the population; but the chauvinist policy of the Young Turks disappointed the hopes that had been entertained. The state of anarchy on the Persian frontier exercised a disturbing influence; disaffection among the Arabs was prevalent; and down to 1914 there was general disorder and insecurity throughout Mesopotamia.

(4) Commercial Development

Many enterprises, apparently exclusively commercial, have eventually proved to be of the highest political importance. This is pre-eminently true in Mesopotamia, whether such enterprise has been undertaken for the advancement of purely commercial interests without ulterior motive, as exemplified by the history of British navigation of Mesopotamian waters, or whether, as in the case of the Baghdad Railway, strategic and political aims have been deliberately disguised as commercial projects.

(*a*) *Navigation.*—British intercourse with Mesopotamia was begun by the ships of the East India

Company in the early part of the seventeenth century; the continued navigation by British vessels of Mesopotamian waters has been responsible for the development of British trade and influence, for the measure of improvement effected in the economic condition of the country, and, in a large degree, for whatever has been accomplished in the way of the suppression of lawlessness and the establishment of security of traffic.

In 1639 the East India Company made their first attempt to trade with Basra; and British ships navigated the Tigris and Euphrates throughout the eighteenth century. No opposition on the part of the local authorities is recorded; on the contrary, the assistance of the Company's warships was frequently sought and obtained by the Pasha of Baghdad in his operations against Arabs and Persians. From 1820 or earlier Government vessels, under the British flag, were attached to the British Residency at Baghdad; and in 1840, after Colonel Chesney's expedition[1] to Mesopotamia, a British armed flotilla of four vessels was formed for use on the Tigris and Euphrates. Under the command of Lieutenant Lynch, of the Indian Navy, this flotilla navigated and surveyed the rivers, assisted in maintaining order, and regularly carried the British mails up the Tigris to Baghdad.[2]

For many years previously, British merchant vessels, under the British flag, had plied between Basra and Baghdad; and an agreement executed by the Pasha in 1823[3] indicates that the usage

[1] 1835-37. This expedition was undertaken for the purpose of surveying the route, in order to test whether steam navigation could be established *via* the Euphrates for the conveyance of the Indian mails from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf.

[2] Three of the vessels were withdrawn in 1842, but the remaining steamer continued to carry on its duties as before without restrictions.

[3] This agreement stated that "no tax, except one previously well defined and arranged, should be levied on boats the property of British subjects or protégés; such, for instance, as pass between Basra and Baghdad."

was recognised by the Ottoman Government. From 1842, however, the Turkish authorities showed a disposition to curtail the privileges hitherto enjoyed by British merchant ships; and constant disputes arose over the illegal exaction of transit duties. An agreement was therefore concluded in 1846 between Great Britain and the Porte formally recognising the right of British vessels to navigate Mesopotamian waters. In 1861 Messrs. Lynch Brothers formed the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, whose first steamer was placed on the Tigris in the following year. All attempts to extend or facilitate British commercial navigation in Mesopotamia met, however, with constant opposition from the Turkish authorities. In 1867 a line of steamers was constituted under the Turkish flag and under official direction, and from the time of Midhat Pasha's rule at Baghdad these steamers were used almost exclusively for commercial purposes, with the object of driving the British boats off the river. In spite of the resulting competition, the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company continued to carry the British mails, to develop trade, and to extend British influence in Mesopotamia. From 1907 a fusion of this company with the Turkish Government Company was projected, but negotiations were abandoned in 1910.

The Porte then declared that the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates would be thrown open to Ottoman subjects only; and various permits were issued, to which His Majesty's Government took exception as encouraging unfair competition in view of the restrictions imposed upon the British company.

As the general position was far from satisfactory, it was insisted, in the negotiations between the British and Ottoman Governments which resulted in the Declaration signed at London July 29, 1913, that the rights enjoyed by Lynch Brothers should be specified in express terms and in treaty form, and be recognised as permanent. It was also arranged that all other commercial navigation by steamships should be the

monopoly of a new Ottoman company, with a British chairman recommended by the British Government.[1]

An Anglo-Turkish Convention was also signed at London on July 29, 1913, for the establishment of a Commission to improve the conditions of navigation on the Shatt el-Arab. This river marks the boundary between Turkey and Persia, the whole waterway being *de jure* within Turkish limits; the Sheikh of Mohammera has always exercised a *de facto* jurisdiction on its waters; and by the Treaty of Erzerum in 1847 Persian ships were guaranteed freedom of navigation. The approaches and upper reaches of the river have been charted and periodically surveyed by British agency, which has also been responsible for the maintenance of buoys to mark the channel across the bar. In 1912, 90 per cent. of the ocean-going vessels were British; Germany was represented by 12 steamships, Russia by 5, and France by 1. The proposed Commission was to consist of two members, one of whom should be British; the engineer-in-chief and the inspector of the river were also to be of British nationality. The Shatt el-Arab was to remain open to the vessels of all nations on terms of equality; no dues were to be levied for navigation, but only in payment of services rendered. The terms of the Convention met with no opposition on the part of the interested Powers, whose acquiescence was obtained.

(*b*) *Railway Communication.*—At the time of Colonel Chesney's expedition (1835–37) the question of railway communication between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf was much discussed in England. The Euphrates Valley Railway Company was formed in 1856, and obtained in the following year a general concession for the construction of a railway between Suedia (Alexandretta) and Basra. Without a guarantee, however, which neither the Imperial nor the Indian Government felt justified in giving, British capitalists hesitated to support the enterprise, and no

[1] For details of this agreement, see below, p. 96.

further steps were taken. In the latter part of the nineteenth century British influence with the Porte declined; and Germany seized the opportunity to make a bid for political expansion under the guise of economic development in Asiatic Turkey. In 1888, when direct railway communication was established between Berlin and Constantinople, a German syndicate secured valuable railway concessions in Asia Minor; and in consequence the Anatolian Railway Company was constituted. Further concessions were granted in 1893; and in 1899 a Convention was signed conceding in principle rights subsequently defined by the Baghdad Railway Convention of 1903. By this Convention the Ottoman Government granted to the Anatolian Railway Company[1] a concession for the prolongation to Baghdad and Basra of their existing line. Provision was made for certain branch lines, including one to a point on the Persian Gulf to be subsequently determined. The Company was to be allowed to work all minerals found within 20 kilometres on either side of the line, to establish ports on the Persian Gulf, and to navigate the rivers in the service of the railway. Further, it was stipulated that no section of the line between Baghdad and Basra might be worked before the completion of the main line from Konia to Baghdad; from which it appears that the economic development of Mesopotamia was of secondary importance to the linking up of Constantinople (and thereby Berlin) with the Middle East.[2] German proposals for British participation in this concession were not such as to find acceptance. In 1911 the right to continue the line from Baghdad to the Gulf was surrendered to a suitable Ottoman company, but with the reservation that

[1] It was provided that the Anatolian Company should form an Ottoman joint stock company, under the title of the Imperial Ottoman Baghdad Railway Company, which should take the place of the Anatolian Company in all that concerned the new line from Konia to the Persian Gulf.

[2] For the financial arrangements of the Baghdad Railway Convention, see below, p. 60.

the Baghdad Railway Company should participate therein to an extent not less than any non-Turkish element; the possibility of British predominance in this section of the line was thus eliminated. In 1912, after prolonged negotiations, His Majesty's Government intimated to the Ottoman Government that they were prepared to withdraw their request for British participation in the Gulf sections of the Baghdad Railway, and would agree to an increase in the Turkish Customs if certain specific points at issue could be satisfactorily settled. An arrangement was concluded with the Ottoman Government in 1913, which stipulated, *inter alia*, that—

(*a*) There should be no differential treatment on any railway in Asiatic Turkey.

(*b*) Two British representatives, approved by His Majesty's Government, should be admitted to the Board of the Baghdad Railway Company.

(*c*) The terminus of the Baghdad Railway should be at Basra.

(*d*) No railway should be constructed from Basra to the Gulf without the sanction of His Majesty's Government.

Both Great Britain and Germany pledged themselves to endeavour to secure that these provisions should be carried into effect, and further arranged that the construction and exploitation of ports at Basra and Baghdad, authorized by the Convention of 1903, should be carried out by a separate Ottoman Ports Company. The German Government agreed not to oppose the acquisition by British interests of 40 per cent. of the share capital of this Ports Company. In return, the Baghdad Railway Company were granted a certain participation in the new Ottoman Company for River Navigation. The Anglo-German Agreement was initialled in London on June 15, 1914, but its ratification depended upon the conclusion of the negotiations between Germany and Turkey, which had not been effected on the outbreak of the European war.

(*c*) *Oil Concessions.*[1]—A German expert, who in 1901 visited the oil-bearing districts of Mosul and Baghdad, reported that "these petroleum regions are among the richest in the world," and subsequent reports tend to confirm this view. The concession of these oil wells was granted by firmans in 1889 and 1898 to the Turkish Civil List, transferred in 1908-9 to the Ministry of Finance, and has since been the property of that Department.

In consequence of a provision in the Baghdad Railway Convention of 1903, an agreement was signed in 1904 between the Anatolian Railway Company and the Civil List for working certain mines in Mosul and Baghdad, the option for which was to be open for two years. At the end of that time the Civil List invited a German syndicate to take up the option, but the offer was declined.

A British subject, Mr. D'Arcy, who had considerable oil interests in Persia, started negotiations at Constantinople in 1902 with a view to acquiring the oilfields of the two vilayets, and received from two Grand Viziers the promise that the concession would be transferred to him. From 1912 onwards attempts were made to effect a fusion of British and German interests, and an agreement was drawn up in 1914. In pursuance of this agreement, a company was incorporated in Great Britain under the name of the Turkish Petroleum Company, Limited; and the British and German Ambassadors at Constantinople were informed that the Porte agreed to lease to the company the oilfields in the vilayets of Mosul and Baghdad. No definite settlement as to the terms of the lease was reached before the outbreak of the European war; and in November 1915 the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, representing Mr. D'Arcy's interests, were informed that the agreement no longer possessed legal validity.

[1] The oil-belts of Mesopotamia are described below, p. 84.

III. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

(1) Religious

Throughout the Ottoman Empire the State religion is Mohammedanism; and since 1517, when Selim I induced the Caliph Mutawakkil to transfer the Caliphate to the Ottoman Sultan and his successors, the Sultan has claimed the position of spiritual head of all orthodox Moslems. The phrase "spiritual sovereignty," as applied to the Sultan, is debatable, for, while his executive and judiciary powers are unlimited, he has never possessed "legislation." For the Moslem, "legislation" means merely the interpretation of the divine law itself by the *'ulama*. It is, therefore, difficult to say in what the authority of the Sultan over Islamic populations resident in non-Turkish countries consists.[1] In Mesopotamia, the home of the Abbasid Caliphs and early stronghold of Islam, Mohammedans constitute an overwhelming majority, and are reckoned to outnumber the adherents of other creeds in the ratio of 10 to 1. Religion in Mesopotamia is for the most part a question of race; with few exceptions, all Arabs, Kurds, Turks, and Persians are Moslems; all Armenians and Syrians are Christians; and Jews, Yezidis, Sabians, and Chabaks have their own distinctive religions. The Koran shows little tolerance for non-Moslems; and, although the law of the Tanzimat (1839) and the Hatt-i-Humayun of 1856 guaranteed freedom of religious worship and perfect equality among all Ottoman subjects,[2] the provisions of these laws were frequently disregarded, and

[1] See Nallino, C. A. *Appunti sulla Natura del "Califfato" in genere e sul presunto "Califfato Ottomano,"* pp. 5-12. Rome, 1917.

[2] See *Turkey in Europe*, No. 16 of this series.

the Koran continued to be both the religious and civil code. In Mesopotamia, however, there appears to have been little persecution; and it has been reported that in Baghdad the Christian and the Jew enjoyed a "rare freedom in comparison with other Mohammedan towns." Notorious Moslem outrages against Christians have occurred in the north, as a rule by the agency of the Kurds; but on the whole the animosity between the two chief Mohammedan sects, the Sunnis and the Shiahs, is more marked than that between Moslems and non-Moslems.

The Turks and Turkomans, the Kurds, and the Arabs of the Jezireh are Sunnis, and are estimated at 1,037,000 persons; the Persians and most of the Arabs of Irak are Shiahs, and are calculated to number about 1,173,000. The political significance of this cleavage is emphasised by the refusal of the Shiahs to recognise the Sultan as Caliph. Further, since the Shiah doctrine is the national creed of Persia, the religious bond between Shiahs in Persia and Mesopotamia has frequently been a cause of serious embarrassment to the Turkish authorities. Feeling between the two sects runs particularly high at the time of the pilgrimages, and in the neighbourhood of the Holy Cities. The principal Shiah shrines are at Nejef, Kerbela, and Kazimain; there is a great influx of pilgrims to these places, particularly during the winter months, from Persia, India, and other Mohammedan countries. The numbers are believed to amount to 150,000—200,000 in the year. The Mujtahids, or chief men of the sect, exercise considerable influence, both religious and political. The Mujtahids of Nejef and Kerbela have authority superior to that of any other Mujtahids throughout the entire Shiah world.

The most important Sunni shrine in Mesopotamia is at Baghdad, and is the resort of pilgrims from regions so remote as Afghanistan and India. The Nakib of Baghdad, the hereditary custodian of the shrine and official head of the Arab community in the city, has a widespread influence among his co-religionists.

The Christian sects in Mesopotamia may be divided into three groups: (1) the independent Asiatic Churches; (2) the Uniates, in communion with the Roman Catholic Church; (3) the Protestant communities. The most important of these religious bodies have at various times obtained the recognition of the Turkish Government, and have been constituted as authorized communities, or *Millets*. The Turkish Government appointed the spiritual head of the Church as civil administrator of the *Millet*, and although his functions were considerably reduced as the law of the Turkish Courts became less entirely based upon the Koran, yet the patriarch remained primarily responsible to the Government for the political control of the *Millet*.

The independent Asiatic Churches include the Gregorian Church of Armenia, the Nestorian or East Syrian, and the West Syrian or Jacobite. The Churches which acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the Pope are the Armenian Uniat, the Chaldean or East Syrian Uniat, and the West Syrian or Jacobite Uniat. Mention should here be made of the connexion between the West Syrian or Jacobite Uniat Church and the ancient Christian community of Southern India, which is a factor of considerable importance in Malabar and Travancore. This community acknowledges the Patriarch of Antioch as its supreme authority; its bishops are appointed from Syria, and the connexion may be noted as constituting an existing link between Syria and the British Empire. Each community has its separate hierarchy, although the Pope exercises some limited power in the appointment of the bishops and patriarchs. Communities of various Roman Catholic religious orders have been established by the Italians and the French in northern Mesopotamia and in Baghdad and Basra. The Protestants in Mesopotamia are mainly Armenians, but include other converts of the American and Anglican missions.

The number of Jews in the country is said to be about 60,000; they are almost exclusively confined to

the towns, particularly Baghdad, where they outnumber the Turks and Arabs. The Yezidis, who are estimated to be about 21,000, are chiefly found in the Mosul vilayet. They have suffered much persecution, and are considered by the Moslems and Christians as idolaters. They have no central ecclesiastical authority, but a hierarchy of castes and sects. The Chabaks (10,000), the Sabians (2,000), and members of other creeds are of comparatively slight importance, and carry no political weight in the country.

(2) Political

The internal administration of Mesopotamia was conducted from 1869 on the vilayet system, which was introduced into the country by Midhat Pasha. Zor,[1] Diarbekr, Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra formed separate vilayets, which were sub-divided into sanjaks and cazas. Each vilayet was governed by a Vali, assisted by an Administrative Council. The Vali of Baghdad took precedence of the other Governors, but each vilayet was placed directly under the central Government at Constantinople. The Vali had no authority over the regular troops in the province, but could call upon their commander for support; attempts at effective action were, however, constantly paralysed by the division of authority. In times of peace the maintenance of law and order depended upon the gendarmerie, who were under the control of the Turkish War Office, but were distributed as military police under the orders of the civil authorities. The Valis had no power to appoint their subordinates, and had no control over the Courts of Justice, the Departments of Land Records, Posts and Telegraphs, Religious Endowments, Customs, Public Debt, the Tobacco and Salt Monopolies, Public Instruction, and Sanitary Service. The local chiefs of these Imperial Departments received their orders direct from Constantinople—an arrangement

[1] Zor was technically a *mutessariflik*.

which had certain advantages, but was frustrated by the difficulties of communication.

In each vilayet the Vali was the political representative of the Ottoman Government, and as such conducted all dealings with foreign Consular officers and with the chiefs of the semi-independent tribes. He also controlled the Provincial Departments, of which the most important was that concerned with the collection of taxes and the keeping of the general accounts. The Turks employed the system of farming the taxes, with the result that bribery and corruption were rife. It has been stated on good authority that in the vilayet of Basra alone, which contained a relatively large settled population, seven-tenths of the people successfully escaped all taxation.

The late Sultan, Abdul Hamid, converted into his private property some 30 per cent. of the best cultivated lands in the vilayets of Basra and Baghdad, and considerable areas in the northern provinces. This estate was called the Da'irat es-Saniyeh.[1] In 1909 the Young Turkish party transferred it from the Civil List to the Ministry of Finance, the management was taken over by the State, and the revenues were expended in the interests of the Committee of Union and Progress.

(3) Educational

The Department of Public Instruction under the Ottoman Government maintained in every sanjak and caza a primary school, in which Turkish and Arabic were taught. There were, in addition, a secondary school for boys and a primary school for girls at Baghdad and at Basra. These were all Government institutions, where instruction was given free of charge. There were also a primary and a secondary military school at Baghdad, and industrial schools at Baghdad and Basra. The committee which managed the Da'irat es-Saniyeh maintained primary schools on some of the rural parts of the estate.

[1] See below, p. 82.

Religious schools were maintained by the Shiahs at Kerbela, where the Sunnis also had one school. At Baghdad the Jewish, Chaldean, Syrian, and Armenian communities each had a school; in that of the Jews English and French were taught, and the general instruction was said to be excellent. There was also a Jewish school at Basra for boys and girls.

The Carmelites, and the nuns who worked in association with them, had several boys' and girls' schools in Irak. These schools were under French protection; and the instruction was in Arabic and French, with a little English. In 1906 the German Consul at Baghdad offered to subsidise liberally the Carmelite schools in the country if they would undertake to teach German. The French Dominicans and nuns at Mosul conducted over a dozen schools in the neighbourhood for boys and girls, and carried on educational work among the Chaldeans and other Uniats. A school for boys and girls was maintained by the Americans at Basra; there were also American schools in northern Mesopotamia. The Church Missionary Society had schools at Baghdad and at Mosul.

In spite of this provision for education, it appears to be generally admitted that Moslem instruction in Mesopotamia has been negligible, and has been restricted almost entirely to the official classes. The education provided by French, English, and American schools has affected only a small proportion of the town populations; and the people as a whole, including all the nomad tribes, are entirely illiterate. The Trade Commissioners reported in 1917 that education was the great need of the country. During the present British occupation thirteen Government primary schools, four municipal State-aided schools, a teachers' training school, and a survey school have been opened. The local demand for education is said[1] to be very insistent, and is being met as rapidly as the supply of teachers will permit.

[1] Statement by Lord Robert Cecil in the House of Commons, July 23, 1918.

(4) General Observations

(a) *Irrigation*

The question of irrigation is intimately connected with the past prosperity of Lower Mesopotamia, and with its present poverty. The ancient civilisations of Babylonia obtained their wealth from the land, and expended this wealth in constructing vast irrigation works, which obtained for the country the title of "the granary of the world."

The Mongol invasions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the Turkish conquest in 1638 destroyed the irrigation works, and with them the prosperity of the country and its powers of recuperation. Attempts have occasionally been made by the Ottoman authorities, particularly by Midhat Pasha when Vali of Baghdad, to irrigate the country, but through lack of resources or a strong administration no success was attained. In 1909 Sir William Willcocks, as Adviser to the Ottoman Ministry of Public Works, submitted a scheme for the irrigation of $3\frac{1}{2}$ million acres at a total capital cost of 26 million pounds. The first portion of the scheme, including the erection of the Hindie barrage, was undertaken by the British firm of Sir John Jackson, Ltd., in 1911, and the barrage was formally inaugurated in December 1913. Tenders for about a third of the whole scheme were invited by the Ottoman Government in 1912, and submitted by two British firms only. The Ottoman Government, for financial reasons, did not then proceed with the work, but in 1914 arranged with His Majesty's Government that all irrigation works in Mesopotamia, other than those already tendered for, should be put up to open tender.

It is held by some competent authorities that the persistent destruction of forests in the highlands of Armenia and Kurdistan by goats (see *Armenia*, No. 62 of this series) has materially affected the rainfall of

the region in which the Tigris and Euphrates have their sources. On this assumption, the volume of water in the Mesopotamian rivers would depend to some extent upon the afforestation of Armenia.

All schemes, however, for the agricultural development of Mesopotamia are conditional on, and limited by, the quality and extent of the labour available, not only for the construction of irrigation works and for the excavation of canal systems, but for the upkeep of such works and for the increased demands of cultivation.

(b) *Labour*[1]

The question of how to obtain the additional labour which is vital to the development of the country presents a serious difficulty. Numbers of Lurs have already settled round Baghdad without opposition on the part of the Arab tribes; and improved conditions in Mesopotamia would doubtless lead to a supply from the border peoples of useful and acceptable labour. As has recently been remarked, "fertility of soil, settled administration, facility of communications, and last, but not least, the possession of pilgrim centres of great sanctity, are all magnets to attract immigration; and nature may safely be trusted to find means of filling the vacuum if it is proved to exist."

Many of the semi-nomad tribes were at one time settled, and might be induced to become so again. Sir Louis Pelly in 1863 expressed the opinion that even the Beduin is capable of adapting himself to a changed environment; and the pastoral population under improved conditions would be an important and profitable element in the country.

(c) *Capital*

The provision of capital is necessary for the restoration of Mesopotamia to prosperity. Almost every

[1] The economic aspect of this question is dealt with on p. 67.

country has discovered as a result of the war that there was a political side to the commercial and industrial enterprise of Germans in its territories. In Turkey, where German trade increased tenfold between 1889 and 1912, and has long been openly fostered as a means to political ascendancy, this policy of commercial penetration[1] has been especially significant for two reasons. Firstly, it has been relatively easy of accomplishment, owing to the temperamental disinclination and administrative inability of the Turks to conduct large commercial enterprises themselves; secondly, it has been openly and widely advocated in Germany as a menace to Great Britain's command of the sea, and as a peril to her connection with Egypt and the East. A constructive commercial and financial policy is the best antidote to German penetration.

(d) *Conclusions*

The ancient prosperity of Mesopotamia, revived under the Caliphs, was finally destroyed by the Mongol invasions, the effects of which were perpetuated by the Turko-Persian wars and subsequent years of Turkish misrule. During the whole period of its inclusion in the Ottoman Empire Mesopotamia suffered from a corrupt administration, internal strife and rebellion, injustice and oppression, poverty and want. It appears to be agreed that the elimination of all Turkish participation in the future administration is imperative; a return after the war to the *status quo ante* would be fatal to the interests of the country.

No Power in the world has any claim comparable with that of Great Britain to control the destinies of Mesopotamia. For over two centuries Great Britain has performed countless services, involving the sacrifice of many lives and the expenditure of much money, in the development of international trade, in the establishment of communication by steamship, post and

[1] This question is dealt with in detail below, p. 98.

telegraph, in the protection of traffic, and in the suppression of lawlessness and piracy on the rivers of Mesopotamia and in the Persian Gulf. The consequently unique position of Great Britain in this region, the peculiar interests—strategic, political, and commercial—which she has at stake, and the intimate connection between Mesopotamia and India combine to make the future administration of the country a matter of vital concern to the British Empire. Moreover, the great improvements effected during the recent military occupation, the millions of money expended upon the port of Basra, the work on the Hindie barrage and canal system, by which 300,000 acres were brought into cultivation in 1918, and the friendly relations established between the British authorities and the Arabs, point to continued progress in the future under British auspices.

IV. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

(A) MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

(1) Internal

(a) *Roads, Paths, and Tracks*

Mesopotamia abounds in tracks, but before the war had very few roads, and those of an indifferent kind, metalled only in small sections. Only upon the trade routes radiating from Mosul and Baghdad was wheeled traffic general, and even upon these much of the transport was carried on by means of camels, mules, donkeys, and, to some extent, baggage ponies.

In Irak or Lower Mesopotamia, when the Tigris and Euphrates are in flood, the roads and tracks are, generally speaking, impassable, but this condition of affairs is less serious than might be supposed, because it is at the time of flood that navigation on the rivers and canals is at its best. During the low-water season wheeled traffic can use the roads between Baghdad and Kut, Hilla, Kerbela, and Nejef.

Away from the rivers, the main difficulties of movement are due to the desert and waterless character of most of the country. Though the going is often rough and (after rain) heavy, the ground is usually more or less passable for wheels in the plains and rolling country of the Jezireh, the Syrian Desert, and the area between the Tigris and the mountains on the east.

The main routes of Mesopotamia are those used either for trade or by pilgrims visiting the different shrines situated in the Delta, of which the most important are those at Kerbela, Nejef, and Baghdad. The

roads can therefore most conveniently be grouped round Baghdad and Mosul, the most important trading centres of the interior.

The chief roads round Baghdad are as follows:—

(1) *Baghdad and Khanikin.*—This is the main route for trade to Kermanshah in Persia from the west and south, and is also largely used by pilgrims visiting the shrines of Mesopotamia. The size and importance of the pilgrim traffic on this route may be judged from the fact that in 1905 no less than 95,000 pilgrims paid sanitary taxes to come into Mesopotamia at Khanikin, bringing with them some 8,000 corpses for burial, some 60,000 beasts of burden, and upwards of 10,000 packages of merchandise. All these pilgrims have to return carrying with them merchandise from Baghdad and the holy places. The distance from Baghdad to Khanikin is about 94 miles, and to Kermanshah about 222 miles. The complete journey to Kermanshah takes about twenty days for camels and about fourteen days for horses or mules. In dry weather the road is suitable for wheeled traffic right into Persia; in wet weather the surface becomes in places impossible for wheeled traffic. A motor service was running between Baghdad and Bakuba (about 31 miles) in 1913.

(2) *Baghdad and Mosul.*—Here there are two routes:—

(*a*) Along the line of the Jebel Hamrin, *via* Kifri, Altun Keupri, and Erbil (293 miles). Though the longer, this is the better and more frequented route, as it is less subject to floods than the lower route along the Tigris Valley, and passes through a well-watered and populous district. The crossings of the rivers which flow down to the Tigris present difficulties, but this route is generally suitable for wheeled traffic, and the

entire journey has been accomplished in a motor-car.

(*b*) Following the right bank of the Tigris, *via* Samarra, Tekrit, and Kalaat Sherghat (230 miles). North of Samarra the route was before the war a mere track, not suitable for wheeled traffic. According to a German map recently captured, it is now fit for wheeled traffic for its whole length.

(3) *Baghdad and Aleppo, via* Feluja, Hit, Abu Kemal, Deir ez-Zor, and Meskene. This is a regular route for caravans, which make the journey in from twenty to twenty-five days; a carriage can cover the distance in about fifteen days, and the section between Ana and Aleppo has been traversed by motor-car in 31 hours. The route follows the Euphrates from Feluja to Meskene, at which point it leaves the river and goes west across the plain to Aleppo.

(4) *Baghdad and Damascus or Homs*, following route (3) to Deir ez-Zor, and thence proceeding south-west to Tadmur (Palmyra). This is a regular caravan route, both goods and passenger traffic being fairly regular. Caravans cross each way every forty or sixty days.

The three chief routes round Mosul are as follows :—

(1) *Mosul and Baghdad* (see above).

(2) *Mosul to Rania, via* Erbil and Keui Sanjak, and thence into Persia. This route is suitable for wheeled traffic only as far as Rania, from which point the route into Persia degenerates into a track.

(3) *Mosul and Diarbekr, via* Nisibin and Mardin, whence there are good roads leading north to Erzerum and south-west to Aleppo and Alexandretta. Before the war this was the chief route from the Mediterranean to Mesopotamia.

(b) *Rivers and Canals*

The important rivers of Mesopotamia are the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the river formed by the confluence of these two at Kurna and known as the Shatt el-Arab. Of less importance are the four tributaries which join the Tigris from the Persian hills on its left bank, the Great and Lesser Zab, the Adheim between Mosul and Baghdad, and the Diala just below the latter town. The length of the Tigris between Mosul and Kurna is about 723 miles, that of the Euphrates between Meskene and Kurna about 1,002 miles; the length of the Shatt el-Arab is 107 miles.

From the economic point of view, the main interest in Mesopotamia centres round the Tigris and Euphrates. Mesopotamia owes its past importance to the wealth won from the rich soil of the Delta by means of the ancient systems of irrigation, of which abundant evidence exists even to-day, and the future progress of the country depends upon the proper utilisation of its rivers for irrigation and navigation.

The Shatt el-Arab is navigable by ocean-going steamers. At Fao the average width of the river is 1 mile, decreasing gradually to ½ mile at the mouth of the Karun River, which flows in on the left bank 49 miles above Fao; above this point the river immediately decreases to a mean breadth of 600 yards. Between Basra and Kurna the river gradually narrows to 250 yards. Its utility for navigation is at present impeded by a bank of silt known as the Fao bar, which lies across the mouth of the river at Fao, and gives at low water a maximum depth of 11 feet only, with the result that vessels of larger draught are compelled either to wait for the tide or to trans-ship a portion of their cargo to lighters outside the bar. The depth of water over the bar at spring tides is 20 ft., at neap tides 17 ft. Beyond the bar there is a depth of from 30 to 40 ft. up to Basra, except at two places, of which the more serious is the Mohammera bar, just below the confluence of the Karun River. Vessels drawing

not more than 15 ft. can get up as far as Kurna.[1] Native craft used on the Shatt el-Arab are mostly *bellams*, long, narrow boats which can be sailed, rowed, or, as is more usual, punted or towed, and which can carry a load of 50 tons. The only places of importance on the Shatt el-Arab are the Persian port of Mohammera, at the junction of the Karun River with the Shatt el-Arab; Basra, the seaport of Mesopotamia; and Nahr Umar, which is on the right bank, 20 miles above Basra, and has been developed as a port since the British military occupation.

The Tigris, from the point of view of navigation, can most conveniently be considered in two sections: first, the section between Kurna and Baghdad, which is at present the upper limit of steam navigation; secondly, that between Baghdad and Mosul.

The distance from Kurna to Baghdad, following the general direction of the river, is under 300 miles; but the frequent bends make the distance by water about 448 miles. Owing to the river's winding course, the silt deposited during the season of flood forms banks which, when the water is low, constitute a great hindrance to navigation.

In high-water season, steamers of not more than 5 ft. draught can navigate the Tigris from Kurna to Baghdad; and the difficulties of navigation are mainly those caused by the swiftness of the current, which, according to some authorities, reaches 6 miles per hour at the height of the flood. At low water, vessels drawing more than 3 ft. cannot navigate the section between Ezra's Tomb and Kale Sale, where the river has been much damaged as a waterway by native cultivators, who have thrown out brushwood groynes in order to assist irrigation or to reclaim the land, and have done other damage by cutting irrigation channels at the concave sides of the bends. Sir William Willcocks, who was called in to advise the

[1] For the terms of the agreement of 1913, under which the navigation of the river was to be surveyed by a special Commission, see above, p. 31.

Turkish Government as to the best method of irrigating the Delta of the Tigris and Euphrates, expressed the opinion that the Tigris would soon cease to be navigable between these two points unless steps were taken to remedy matters. The rest of the river up to Baghdad is navigable at all seasons of the year by vessels drawing not more than 5 ft. of water. There are bridges of boats crossing the river at Kale Sale, Amara, Kut, Gerara, and Baghdad. For steamers with a speed of 10 knots the journey from Baghdad to Basra takes about 47 hours, and from Basra to Baghdad about 78 hours in the low-water season, and about 100 hours in flood-time.

Before the war steam navigation on the Tigris up to Baghdad was carried on by Lynch Bros., Ltd., by the Turkish Government River Administration, and by the Agra Jaffer Company. The last-named company ran three steamers, towing one barge each, on the Tigris, and another on the Shatt el-Arab, between Basra and Mohammera. The Turkish Government. immediately before the war, had a fleet of seven or eight steamers trading on the Tigris. Lynch Bros. have for many years had the right to maintain on the Tigris two steamers, each towing two barges; and recently they were allowed to put on a third steamer, also with the right of towing two barges, on condition that it sailed under the Turkish flag. Some of their steamers could, in favourable conditions of the river, take a cargo of as much as 400 tons. Of other vessels trading on this part of the river the most important types were the native craft known as *safineh* and *quffeh*. The *safineh* are the more important, being large boats, drawing from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft. of water, and capable of carrying a cargo of 100 tons; they can be sailed or rowed with the stream; up-stream they are usually either punted or towed. The *quffeh* is a large coracle, used for the conveyance of passengers. It cannot be used satisfactorily against the stream. The interruption of navigation by the hostility of the Arab tribes inhabiting the river banks has been much less

frequent of recent years, but is reported to have interfered with the trade of the river below Baghdad in 1907, 1908, and 1909. The rates of steamer freight on the river for the four years before the war averaged 27*s.* 6*d.* per ton from Basra to Baghdad, and 15*s.* a ton from Baghdad to Basra.[1]

In 1913 the Turkish Government granted a concession to Lord Inchcape for navigation on the Tigris and Euphrates as far as Mosul and Meskene respectively. The main provisions of this concession are given on pp. 96-7.

Above Baghdad the bed of the river is alluvial up to Beled, above which town the river flows over a bed of either clay, sand, hard conglomerate, or shingle, and there are numerous rapids, islands, and rocks, which render navigation up-stream impracticable by steamers, though a small launch plied between Baghdad and Samarra (90 miles) before the war, and there is a record of a steamer having, in 1838, reached a point 28 miles below Mosul. Commercial traffic on the river between Baghdad and Mosul is carried on, down-stream only, by native *keleks*. These are large rafts of timber or poles and brushwood, supported on inflated skins, and are floated down on the current, being kept in the stream by two rough sweeps. They can carry 5 to 35 tons, according to their size. On arrival at their destination, these rafts are broken up, the timber sold, and the skins taken back to the point of departure. When the river is in flood the journey from Mosul to Baghdad takes three or four days; at low water, when rafts have to lie up at night, it takes between ten and twelve days. The distance from Baghdad to Mosul is 275 miles. The river is crossed by boat bridges at Mosul, Samarra, and Kazimain.

Of the tributaries of the Tigris, the Diala is navigable from the beginning of December to April as far as Bakuba (about 52 miles), and the Lesser Zab

[1] These rates have been very considerably increased during the war.

for rafts down-stream from Altun Keupri (74 miles). Neither the Adheim nor the Greater Zab is navigable.

The Euphrates.—It is doubtful whether the Euphrates has ever been used for navigation to any considerable extent, except by small native craft. Immediately before the war its use as a commercial waterway was insignificant, and was attended by some dangers owing to the attitude of the Muntifik Arabs. A glance at the map makes the idea of the commercial use of the Euphrates between Basra and Meskene very attractive, but it is clear that, before any such scheme could be put into practice, prolonged study of the river would have to be undertaken, and no doubt very large engineering works would be required. It will be convenient here to consider the navigation of the Euphrates in three sections, the first from Kurna to the Hindie barrage, the second from the Hindie barrage to Hit, the third from Hit to Meskene.

(i) *Kurna to the Hindie Barrage.*—Owing to the numerous irrigation canals, which have been cut without system and allowed to fall into disrepair, the river has ceased to be navigable below Nasrie except in flood-time, and Sir William Willcocks reported that the old channel of the Euphrates, from Suk esh-Sheyukh to Kurna, had ceased to carry any considerable quantity of Euphrates water, and that the water was finding its way through the Hammar lake to the Shatt el-Arab at Gurmat Ali. Looking at the question solely from the point of view of irrigation, he proposed to use the old channel merely as a drain for water diverted from the Tigris below Amara for irrigation purposes. Shortly after the British military occupation of Lower Mesopotamia, steps were taken to render navigable this old channel, and for this purpose the Chubaish bar was cut through, and dredging was begun at the northern end of the Hammar lake. This work was, however, discontinued for military

reasons, and the river is in about as bad a condition as before. Between Nasrie and Samawa the river flows in a firm bed, the familiar obstacles to navigation are absent, and a minimum depth of 5 ft. of water can be obtained at all times of the year. Between Samawa and the Hindie barrage all the difficulties of navigation found in the lower stretches of the river recur in an aggravated form. The Hindie branch of the river (the only one upon which navigation can be carried on all the year round) is surrounded by *khors*, or marshes, which are sometimes above and sometimes below water level, and water is drawn off by numerous canals. In consequence, the river between Samawa and the barrage can, at certain seasons of the year, be navigated only by vessels drawing less than 2 ft. of water. There are two locks at the Hindie barrage, which are designed to take vessels of about 5 ft. draught at the period of lowest water.

(ii) *Hindie Barrage to Hit.*—This section is navigable by steamers drawing not more than 4 to 5 ft. at all seasons of the year, though, until the wash of steamer traffic has helped to clear the channel, navigation at some points might be difficult. The river flows between high banks, and its width varies from 150 to 500 yards. The current, which at low water is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour, increases to 5 miles per hour in flood.

(iii) *Hit to Meskene.*—Above Hit the bed of the river ceases to be alluvial, and there are rapids at various places, especially between Hit and Ana, which render navigation extremely difficult and dangerous, except when the river is in flood. Banks of shingle and sand are also found. From April to July, when the river is full, its descent would be easy for light-draught steamers, and could be accomplished at a great

speed, but the journey up-stream would be very slow, and between Hit and Ana would probably be impossible for any steamer whose speed was less than 12 knots an hour. At present practically all traffic on this section is down-stream, and is carried on by *shakhturs*, flat-bottomed boats built at Birijik, which when loaded do not draw more than 1½ ft. of water. These craft carry a load of about 5 tons, are steered by clumsy sweeps in the bows, and are floated down-stream loaded and towed up-stream empty.

Of the channels which take off from the Tigris and Euphrates many are navigable by small native craft at certain seasons of the year, but only the Shatt el-Hai, which leaves the right bank of the Tigris at Kut, and the Saklawie, which runs from the Euphrates, about 10 miles above Feluja, to the Tigris at Baghdad, are navigable for large craft. In flood-time both these are navigable by *bellams*, and it is stated that the Saklawie has been navigated by steamers as recently as 1916.

With the future of navigation in Mesopotamia are involved two questions—first, the requirements of water for irrigation, and secondly, the competition between river navigation and railways. The former would affect navigation from Tekrit and Ramadie downwards, the latter might threaten its very existence as a commercial proposition.

Down to the summer of 1914 the only expert report bearing on these problems was that made by Sir W. Willcocks to the Turkish Government upon the possibilities of reviving the irrigation of Mesopotamia. Sir W. Willcocks' conclusions are summed up in the words "rivers for irrigation, railways for communications"; and his report proposed seven large schemes for the irrigation of the Delta between the line Feluja—Tekrit and Fao, and for the prevention of floods, and one small scheme for the improvement

of navigation on the Tigris between Amara and Kurna. The total cost of the scheme was estimated at £T.29,000,000,[1] and the plan was admitted to depend commercially upon the construction of adequate railways between Baghdad and Basra along the line of the two rivers, and possibly of a further railway from Mesopotamia across the Syrian Desert to one of the Syrian ports on the Mediterranean; the cost of these was not included in the scheme.

Recently Sir W. Willcocks' report has been subjected to considerable criticism upon purely engineering grounds; for instance, it is doubtful, having regard to the enormous quantities of silt carried by the Tigris and Euphrates when in flood, whether his devices for preventing floods would be permanently successful. In any case there are drawbacks to any scheme which accepts as permanent the degeneration of the Lower Euphrates, and is prepared to acquiesce in the abandonment as an irreclaimable swamp of the large area between Suk esh-Sheyukh and Gurmat Ali, which in the past has been a prosperous and fertile agricultural district. Moreover, Sir W. Willcocks' scheme is open to criticism on other grounds. First, it advocates the reclamation by irrigation of enormous areas, for which there is at present no agricultural population, and from which no return could be obtained for a very long time. Secondly, it overlooks the political difficulties to which the introduction of settlers would inevitably give rise. Thirdly, there is no reason why irrigation and navigation should not be effectively combined, and, indeed, be made mutually advantageous for a long time to come.

Recently Sir George Buchanan has made a report on the regeneration of the river systems of Mesopotamia, which throws a great deal of light upon the condition of the rivers to-day, and the possibilities of their utilisation as waterways in the future. He states that the difficulties of navigation on both the Tigris and

[1] Turkish pounds. Normally the Turkish pound = 18*s*.

the Euphrates and their present unsatisfactory condition are due to three causes:—

(1) An enormous quantity of silt is carried in suspension in times and seasons of flood, and is deposited in the bed of the river and over the country in the immediate neighbourhood as soon as the current is lessened from any cause, in consequence of this the level of the river bed has, in the course of centuries, been raised above the surrounding country, so that it is difficult to control floods.

(2) The ignorant Árab methods of irrigation have been allowed to go on unhindered for centuries. Irrigation cuts made during the low-water season have developed in flood-time to broad rivers, spreading uncontrolled over the country, which, by lessening the flow in the river bed, have caused silt to be deposited in such quantities that by degrees the original bed of the river in places has become only a channel for carrying flood-water; of this there are instances both on the Tigris and the Euphrates, the best known being that which has occurred at Hindie, where the main Euphrates river has ceased, except during the high-water season, to flow down the Hilla branch, past the site of Babylon, and now goes down the Hindie branch.

(3) The Arabs had a system of building out *bunds* (hurdle-work projections) into the river, either for the purpose of assisting irrigation, or in order to collect silt, and thereby reclaim land for cultivation.

Owing to the military situation at the time he made his report, Sir George Buchanan had no opportunity of considering in detail the problems presented by the Euphrates; moreover, the whole question of the regeneration of the rivers is one upon which reliable conclusions can only be reached after more careful study of the rivers than has been possible hitherto. But the experi-

ence gained from certain works which were carried out on his instructions for the purpose of improving the navigation of the Tigris between Amara and Kurna, shows (1) that where steps are taken to keep the river within bounds it will quickly lower its bed, establish a better channel, and maintain that improvement; (2) that improvements in the river can be made without sacrificing its use for irrigation, though in some districts this would involve an alteration of the methods of cultivation not altogether to the liking of the Arabs.

It is probably safe to assume that if works are taken in hand with the object of keeping the rivers within bounds in all but the very highest flood-times—a period which may be measured in weeks—and of making them scour out again the channels which they used in the past, both the Tigris and Euphrates might be made navigable throughout the year by steamers of considerable tonnage as far as Samarra and Hit respectively, and in the case of the Tigris this would probably not be a very difficult or expensive matter.

Sir George Buchanan deprecates the adoption of the scheme proposed by Sir W. Willcocks, or of any other scheme, until the problems of regeneration, navigation, and irrigation have been considered in all their bearings by a competent committee of engineers. He is of opinion that it will be many years before the waters of these rivers will be required for irrigation to such an extent that navigation will have to give way.

No reports are available upon the possibility of making the Tigris navigable above Samarra and the Euphrates above Hit. The main differences between the problems of the upper rivers and those presented within the irrigation area are, first, the absence of the competing claims of irrigation and navigation, and, secondly, the difference in the nature of the beds over which the rivers flow. The expense of upkeep of any improvement in navigation made in the upper reaches would be much less than that which must necessarily be involved in the alluvial regions of Lower Mesopotamia.

Lynch Brothers have expressed the opinion that it

would not be difficult to render the Euphrates navigable between Hit and Meskene. The obstructions to navigation to-day are chiefly caused by stone aqueducts, used for carrying water for irrigation from water-wheels working in the river, and, to a less extent, by rocks and the ruins of old bridges in the bed of the river. The actual cost of removing these obstructions would probably be small, but it would be necessary to provide other means for irrigating the land after the removal of the water-wheels and aqueducts. There is to-day a considerable traffic down-stream, but the traffic up-river is very small. Lynch Brothers are of opinion that a river transport service on the upper Euphrates would in time be commercially profitable.

With regard to the Tigris, Lynch Brothers consider that it would be possible at moderate cost to make the river navigable as far as Shirghat (about 80 miles below Mosul). Blasting operations would be necessary, in order to remove rocks in the channel, and a certain amount of dredging would also be involved, but these operations would not be costly. Between Shirghat and Mosul it would probably be found essential to construct some canals and dams, in order to make navigation practicable across the rapids.

As to how far the initial capital outlay on the work of improving the channel could be made remunerative, it is difficult to obtain a reliable opinion. There is no reason to doubt that much of the produce which now goes by caravan to Aleppo would be diverted to Baghdad, and that there would be a large export of grain, wool, &c. On the other hand, the continuation of the Baghdad Railway from Mosul to Samarra would naturally have an important bearing on the commercial possibilities of river transport services.

All questions of navigation must hinge on the question of railway competition. How far railways will in the future supersede navigation in Mesopotamia it is impossible to forecast. Sir George Buchanan expresses the opinion, based on his experiences in India, where the same problems have arisen, that a

well-managed river service would easily hold its own, and thinks that, though at first there might be some difficulty in making both railway and river pay, in the future there would certainly be sufficient trade to keep both well employed.

(c) *Railways*

Baghdad Railway.—This railway enters Mesopotamia at the crossing of the Euphrates at Jerablus; and the distance from that point along the proposed route is about 575 miles to Baghdad, and about 970 miles to Basra, without allowing for curves. Branches to Urfa, Khanikin, and the Persian Gulf, were included in the original concession as part of the line which the company was to undertake to build; branches towards Birijik, Mardin, Erbil, and Tuz-Khurmatli were not obligatory, but the company had preferential rights to construct them.

The line has been completed from Baghdad north to Tekrit, west to Feluja on the Euphrates, south to Hilla (whence a light railway of 2 ft. 6 in. gauge has been completed to Kefl), also from Jerablus east to El-Helif, south-east of Mardin. Of these sections the first mentioned only was built, as far as Samarra, before war broke out. Construction has also been begun upon the section Tekrit to Shoreimie. The gauge is the normal European gauge of 4 ft. $8\frac{1}{2}$ in., and the mode of traction is the usual adhesion system. According to the specification, the line is to be made capable of carrying a very heavy load. At Jerablus there is a bridge about 890 yards in length, consisting of 10 spans with overhead lattice girders. Its width is 20 ft., including a 4-ft. pathway.

The concession for the construction of the line was granted to the Société du Chemin de fer Ottoman d'Anatolie by a convention dated March 5, 1903,[1] but

[1] The political importance of the concessions under which the Baghdad Railway Company was formed is dealt with above, p. 32.

the rights were transferred to a company formed by the concessionnaires, under the title of "The Imperial Ottoman Baghdad Railway Company," with a share capital of 15,000,000 francs, of which the Anatolian Railway Co. was bound to subscribe and hold 10 per cent., and the Turkish Government had the right to subscribe a further 10 per cent. The whole of the capital has been issued and is paid up to the extent of 50 per cent. In 1913 there were 27 directors, of whom the President and 10 others were German, 4 were Turks, 8 French, 2 Swiss, 1 Italian, and 1 Austrian. The concession is for 99 years. The railway was to be constructed in sections of approximately 200 kilometres in length, and it was intended that the whole line with its branches should be completed within 8 years from the date of the convention. The line was to be a single track throughout, but land sufficient for a double line was to be acquired in the first instance, and the company was placed under an obligation to build a second line at its own expense as soon as the gross receipts reached 30,000 francs per kilometre per annum.

The financial arrangements were as follows:—

The concessionnaires undertook to build the railway at their own expense, the Turkish Government guaranteeing an annual sum of 11,000 francs per kilometre constructed and opened for traffic, and a further annual sum for working expenses of 4,500 francs per kilometre. It was arranged that this kilometric guarantee of 11,000 francs should be capitalised, and that the Turkish Government should hand to the concessionnaires State bonds bearing interest at 4 per cent., with a sinking fund of ·0875 per cent., redeemable during the period of the concession. On the basis agreed the Turkish Government was therefore bound to hand to the company bonds of a nominal value of 269,110 francs per kilometre constructed and open to traffic. The issue price of the bonds was agreed at a minimum of 81½ per cent. The convention contained a very indefinite provision to the effect that as soon as the growth of the traffic and receipts and the

financial situation permitted, the concessionnaires should issue bonds of their own to replace the bonds issued to them by the Imperial Government.

The receipts of the line were apportioned between the Turkish Government and the Company as follows:—

(1) The first 4,500 francs per kilometre were to go to the Company in relief of the Government's obligation to cover the working expenses at the agreed rate.

(2) The surplus above 4,500 francs per kilometre up to 10,000 francs per kilometre was to go to the Turkish Government.

(3) Of any excess over 10,000 francs per kilometre the Government was to get 60 per cent. and the Company 40 per cent.

From the point of view of the concessionnaires the bargain was a good one, provided the bonds of the Turkish Government could be realised at a fair price. The bonds necessary to secure the kilometric guarantee were issuable to the concessionnaires on the signature of the special convention relating to each section; consequently the concessionnaires were not under the necessity of finding any money themselves if they could succeed in placing the Turkish bonds upon the European market, and the liberal payment per kilometre allowed for by the terms of the convention gave them an ample margin for doing this.

How far the arrangement was financially sound from the Turkish point of view is matter of opinion. The amount of the bonds issued by the Turkish Government to cover the kilometric guarantee on the first section was 54,000,000 francs, on the second section 108,000,000 francs, and on the third section 119,000,000 francs, or a total of 281,000,000 francs, involving an annual sum for interest of over 11,000,000 francs. It is argued that the kilometric guarantee undertaken by the Turkish Government when the Anatolian Railway was

constructed was higher than that undertaken in this case, and that nevertheless that line has proved a source of profit to the Turkish Government. If the development of agriculture in the districts to be tapped by the Baghdad Railway is equally rapid, the burden which the Turkish Government has undertaken may not prove more than the country can carry, but the large amount of bonds issuable in respect of the guarantee must of necessity prove a hindrance to financial operations required for other purposes.

It is impossible to do more than generalise as to the economic prospects of the line. It will tap a large area, which possesses enormous agricultural possibilities; and its branch lines to the Persian frontier and elsewhere will put it into immediate touch with the places where traffic is most capable of expansion. The flow of pilgrims to Baghdad, Nejef, and Kerbela is also expected to provide an abundant source of revenue. There is a provision of economic importance under which the concessionnaires may work any mines discovered within a zone of 20 kilometres on each side of the line; but this right does not give them any privilege or monopoly.

The Company paid dividends up to 5 per cent. regularly down to 1912, and at the end of that year's working had a reserve of over 6,000,000 francs. The war has naturally had disastrous effects, and at the meeting of the Company held in February 1918 the chairman stated that the receipts for 1916 had been nearly 15,000,000 francs less than those for 1915; he was silent as to the result of the year 1917. He stated, however, that the contract with the construction company had been denounced, and that the railway company was in urgent need of financial help.

Other Railways in Mesopotamia completed or under construction are all the work of the British army of occupation, and have been built for military purposes. With the exception of a small 2ft. 6in. line between Sadiyeh on the Tigris and Shahroban on the Khanikin road they are all of 1-metre gauge.

Proposed railways.—As has already been said, Sir William Willcocks, in connection with his irrigation schemes, proposed the construction of a considerable system of railways in Lower Mesopotamia, and of a trunk line, connecting Baghdad by the Euphrates valley with either Homs or Damascus and the Mediterranean. Commercially all these proposed lines depend upon the development of Mesopotamia and the adequacy or otherwise of the rivers for the conveyance of goods; and upon these points it is at present impossible to arrive at any useful conclusions.

(d) *Posts, Telegraphs, and Telephones*

The Turkish postal service in Mesopotamia was extremely uncertain; special messengers, travellers, and passing muleteers were much used to supplement it.

There used to be a fortnightly camel-post from Hit to Damascus for letters only, but this was discontinued in 1912 owing to the frequency of attacks by Beduins; between 1912 and 1914 the Baghdad-Damascus post adopted the long Aleppo route, of which the Baghdad-Aleppo section alone required eight days in summer, ten in autumn, and fourteen in winter.

There was a parcel-post from Europe to Baghdad either by Brindisi, Bombay, and Basra, or by Beirut and Aleppo; the former, being safer, was usually preferred.

Money orders could be obtained from the Anglo-Indian Post Office at Baghdad; the Turkish Post Office would only issue money orders for inland use.

Fao is the terminus of the Indo-European Telegraph Department (cf. *Persia*, No. 75 of this series); the office, formerly Anglo-Turkish, is now wholly British.

Before the war the Turkish main telegraph lines ran as follows:—

(1) Fao — Basra — Kurna — Baghdad — Kirkuk —Erbil—Mosul.

(2) Baghdad — Feluja — Hit — Ana — Meskene— Aleppo.

(3) Baghdad—Khanikin—Kermanshah—Teheran.

(4) Mosul—Nisibin—Mardin—Diarbekr.

There was a loop line from Kurna to Baghdad round the Euphrates towns — Kurna — Suk esh-Sheyukh — Samawa — Hilla — Kerbela — Museyib —Baghdad.

Erbil had two lines towards the Persian frontier, one to Rowanduz, the other *via* Rania to Kaladiza.

Kerbela had lines to Baghdad *via* Hilla, and to Kufa *via* Nejef.

The working of the telegraph was often unreliable.

There were no telephones in Mesopotamia before the war.

(2) External

(a) *Ports*

Basra is situated on the right bank of the Shatt el-Arab, 70 miles above Fao. With the possible exception of Nahr Amr (*see* below), Basra is the only port of Mesopotamia which can be used by deep-sea steamers. Its population in 1914 was about 80,000, mostly Arabs.

Basra is not only the centre of the import trade of Mesopotamia, but the port to which are consigned practically all goods destined for Kermanshah in Persia, such goods being trans-shipped to river steamers for Baghdad, whence they are forwarded into Persia by road. The imports consist chiefly of Manchester goods, sugar, wood, gunnies, indigo, iron and steel, and general merchandise; exports are cereals and rice, dates, wool, gall-nuts, hides, and horses.

The following statistics of the trade and shipping of Basra for the years 1906 and 1911-1913 are taken from the Consular Reports:—

—	1906.	1911.	1912.	1913.
		TRADE.		
	£	£	£	£
Imports	1,511,545	2,855,677	2,653,984	3,899,273
Exports	1,644,220	2,525,847[1]	3,246,560[1]	1,939,259
		SHIPPING.		
Total				
Number	668	569[2]	578	445
Tonnage	257,222	332,807	324,457	346,939
British				
Number	243	259[2]	294	300
Tonnage	218,711	265,308	253,649	266,309
German				
Number	6	15	12	20
Tonnage	9,411	41,249	30,948	55,149

Before the war there was no accommodation for steamers, and the loading and unloading of cargoes was done in the river by means of lighters and native craft. The inadequacy of the service of river steamers for the forwarding of goods up-country gave much ground for complaint, especially during the low-water season, as goods had often to remain at Basra for so long that the market at Baghdad was lost, and consignees were compelled to store goods until the following year. In 1906 as much as 3,000 tons of cargo were lying at one time at Basra awaiting trans-shipment by the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Co. Matters were subsequently improved by the grant of permission to Lynch Brothers to run an extra steamer.

A further source of complaint has been the Turkish Customs House at Basra. Until the completion in 1913 of the new Customs House (the construction of which was begun in 1905), the old Customs House had been left untouched for 25 years, and much damage

[1] The export figures for 1911 and 1912 are inflated owing to the exceptional harvest of 1911, which affected the shipments of 1911 and 1912.

[2] Includes steam lighters to and from the bar.

was done to cargo owing to its inadequacy and bad state of repair. Since the military occupation wharves have been built, where vessels can lie alongside and discharge their cargoes at all states of the tide, whilst there is mooring accommodation in the river opposite Basra for 24 sea-going steamers.

The future of Basra depends upon the removal of the bar at the mouth of the Shatt el-Arab, so as to make the river navigable by large vessels at all states of the tide. Assuming that this is done, Basra has a great future before it. Sir George Buchanan, in a report upon the development of Basra as a port, has expressed the view that, under favourable conditions,

(i) Basra will become the principal seaport of Persia as well as of Mesopotamia.

(ii) The Persian Gulf ports will be largely served by coasting steamers from Basra rather than from Europe or India direct;

(iii) There will be a great increase of trade with the Far East and India, and India will find in Mesopotamia and Persia a ready market for manufactured goods;

(iv) There will be a large passenger traffic between Basra and ports in India;

(v) The trade of the port of Basra will have nothing to fear from railway competition *via* the Baghdad Railway.

Nahr Amr, on the right bank of the Shatt el-Arab, twenty miles by river above Basra, has recently been developed as a port of discharge for ocean-going steamers. Particulars as to the accommodation there are not available, but recent information is to the effect that the capacity of discharging cargo at Basra and Nahr Amr is equal to about 150,000 tons per month.

(b) *Shipping Lines*

The steamship lines which had regular sailings to Basra before the war were as follows:—

The British India Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.
The Ellerman and Bucknall Steamship Co., Ltd.
The Strick Line.
Marcus Samuel & Co.
Andrew Weir & Co.
The Arab Steamers, Ltd.
The Bombay and Persia Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.
The Haji Sultan Ali Shustari Line.
The Hamburg-Amerika Line.
The Russian Steam Navigation Co.

The quarantine regulations for vessels entering Basra from India used to be very onerous and involved considerable delay, but in 1909 they were modified so as to enable all vessels not less than ten days out from India to obtain free pratique after medical inspection.

(c) *Cable and Wireless Communication*

There were wireless stations at Baghdad and Basra before the war. Cable communication with all parts of the world was available from Fao.

(B) INDUSTRY

(1) Labour

The agricultural development of Mesopotamia is conditioned and limited by the capacity, character, and temperament of the inhabitants; agricultural regeneration can only be effected if labour is available, not only for the construction and upkeep of irrigation works, but for the constant and exacting toil upon the land which the extension of cultivation will involve. The population of the vilayets of Baghdad and Basra does not exceed 1,500,000, and is probably not more than 1,000,000; this gives a density of less than 10 persons per square mile, which is quite insufficient for any far-reaching scheme of agricultural development. Of this population Arabs form the vast majority, but Kurds, Turkomans, Persians, Jews, and Armenians are

largely intermingled, and amongst the Arabs, in addition to the barrier interposed by differences of religion, there are lines of cleavage between the town-dweller and the nomad or semi-nomad, which hinder combination and progress.

Before the war it was said of the Arab that he was averse from hard manual labour, and was imbued with an optimistic fatalism destructive of all material progress. On the other hand, it was found that, where he had learnt to appreciate a greater standard of comfort, his Semitic instincts acted as a spur, and he became industrious. It must, however, be remembered that conditions have not been favourable; the climate in the south is enervating, the soil is rich, and under the system of agriculture adopted by the Arabs sustained effort has so far been unnecessary. Moreover, the general feeling of insecurity to which the vagaries of the rivers contributed in no small degree, and the absence, under Turkish rule, of any redress against the depredations of envious neighbours, discouraged efforts towards material prosperity.

The Arab has, however, come remarkably well out of the tests which have been made of his industrial capacity, both immediately before the war, when there was a large demand for labour in connection with the construction of the Hindie barrage, and since the military occupation by the British armies. Sir John Jackson's firm, which constructed the barrage for the Turkish Government, found that labour was plentiful and good, except during the seed-time, harvest, and irrigation periods. The employment of Arab labour for military purposes on a large scale, and under organized conditions, has brought out the following instructive facts:—

(1) There is a considerable surplus of labour beyond that required at present for the tilling of the soil.

2) If the demand for labour is made with reasonable consideration for the habits of the people,

and for the fluctuating requirements of agriculture at different seasons, no unwillingness is shown in meeting it.

(3) Arab labour is extremely efficient and can command high wages on piece-work. Those responsible for the recent organization of this labour pay high testimony to its merits. They say that the Arab is cheerful, uncomplaining, and willing, that he does more than the average Indian coolie, and is easy to handle if properly treated, and provided that somebody is placed over him to whom he can explain his grievances in his own language, and scrupulous attention is paid to tribal distinctions.

The Arab is less conservative than the Indian coolie, is easily taught, and readily adapts himself to modern methods.

There has been from time immemorial a certain amount of immigration of the surplus Arab population into Mesopotamia, and even to-day the Shammar tribe, which is settled on the right bank of the Tigris south of Mosul, is looked upon as part of the tribe of the same name which is found in central Arabia. Immigration of this kind will no doubt continue, and will provide some additional small sources from which labour will be available.

The rates of wages for unskilled labour before the war were from 3 to 4 G.S.P.[1] (6*d*. to 8*d*.) per day. Skilled labour was paid from 5 to 10 G.S.P. (10*d*. to 1*s*. 8*d*.) per day.

(2) Agriculture

According to Herodotus, the yield of the soil of Mesopotamia in his time was as high as 200 or even 300 to 1. Even to-day, although a great part of the country is an arid waste, the chemical constituents of the soil are such that only irrigation and tillage are

[1] Grand Seigneur piastres.

necessary to bring out its potential fertility, and reproduce former conditions.

In north Mesopotamia agriculture is in a less deplorable condition than in the south and is improving, but there the soil is more stony and less fertile, the rivers do not lend themselves so easily to irrigation, and the country suffers from drought. The latter difficulty is to some extent being overcome by the introduction of centrifugal pumps driven by oil engines.

The decay of agriculture in Lower Mesopotamia has been progressive since the beginning of Turkish rule in the year 1258. Under the Turks both irrigation and river conservancy have been neglected, and tract after tract of once fertile land has fallen out of use, until to-day only about 1/25th of the country is cultivated. The richest soil is found in the alluvial plains of Irak, but only 5 per cent. of the cultivable area of Basra vilayet is now tilled. Great permanent swamps have been formed, and, even where the swamps are not permanent, the evaporation of flood-waters has left in the soil deposits of salt, which are detrimental to agriculture, whilst the lack of irrigation has turned thousands of acres of fertile land into desert. German writers have variously estimated the *sabad*, or rich alluvial soil of Mesopotamia, at from 25 to 60 million acres in extent; but these are probably over-estimates; in any case, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to nearly 5 million acres are continually flooded.

Of the other causes which have contributed to the decay of the country the following are the most important:—

(*a*) In the days of her prosperity Mesopotamia was the centre of trade between the East and the West. The course of trade, however, was altered by the discovery of the route by the Cape of Good Hope, and subsequently by the construction of the Suez Canal, and Mesopotamia is to-day in a backwater.

(*b*) No attempt has been made until quite recently to develop adequate internal communications.

Turkey has been quite apathetic about the needs of the country in this respect, and even so late as 1912 was placing every possible difficulty in the way of an adequate steam transport service on the Tigris.

(*c*) The absence of a Government strong enough to prevent the feuds between neighbouring tribes, and incursions of Kurds from the hills, has created a sense of insecurity fatal to the development of agriculture. The vagaries of the rivers also contributed to this feeling, because districts which in one year were rendered fertile by irrigation might in the next year be either arid wastes or under water for months together.

(*d*) Owing to the uncertainty of land tenure, there has been no incentive to improve the soil. Even the sheikhs rarely held land on more than a five years' lease, and their tenants often only yearly.

(*e*) The Government system of farming out its land taxes offered every opportunity for exaction and oppression.

(*f*) The scarcity and uncertainty of labour frequently caused the postponement of wheat and barley sowing till long past the date when it was most advantageous to sow. Moreover, it prevented attention being given to the intensive cultivation of cotton, tobacco, &c.

(*g*) The lack of agricultural credit facilities discouraged the cultivator.

(*a*) *Methods of Cultivation*

In Mesopotamia there are two harvests. Wheat, barley, and miscellaneous crops, such as beans, are sown in the autumn or winter, and are harvested in April and May; rice, peas, and maize are sown during the spring floods, and are harvested between August and November.

Cultivation is primitive, and intensive methods are unknown outside the immediate vicinity of the towns. This is largely due to the uncertainty of tenure, but

also to the ease with which the Arab, thanks to the fertility of the soil, can obtain a crop sufficient to satisfy his needs. The ground is given only one very light ploughing, and is never properly broken up, and the upturned soil is not exposed to the sun and air for any length of time. Moreover, the practice of waiting for the first rain before sowing often results in the seed being put into the ground much later than it should be. Wheat and barley are often sown so late as March. This is because the population is in many places insufficient to look after both the rice crops and the spring crops. The wheat and barley tribes migrate to the rice tracts after the spring harvest, and do no ploughing for their spring crops until the work of gathering and threshing the rice crop has been finished. Thus nothing is done towards the preparation of the soil for the young crops until about the end of December.

Irrigation is the basis of cultivation, and the crops grown are conditioned by the possibilities of obtaining water. The main systems of irrigation practised in Mesopotamia to-day are the following:—

(1) Irrigation by means of *cherrads* or water lifts with pulleys and buckets. This system is mainly used for date gardens, and only to a small extent for the irrigation of arable lands. It is found in Lower Mesopotamia (i.e., south of Baghdad), and also higher up the rivers, especially along the Euphrates above Hit. The system is expensive in labour and leaves little profit to the cultivator; it is being to a small extent supplanted by the use of centrifugal pumps driven by oil engines.

(2) Irrigation by means of channels along which the fresh water is forced by the rise of the tide on the Shatt el-Arab.

(3) Irrigation by canals. The silt brought down during the annual floods has raised the rivers and their branches above the surrounding country, so that there is a gradual descent from the borders of all rivers and canals to the swamps.

The higher ground is only irrigated at the time of full flood, and is always dry during the cold weather; the intermediate slopes can usually command water for irrigation during most of the spring and summer; the low land is always wet. There is, therefore, from every channel a graduation of slopes, of which the higher are suitable for growing wheat and barley, the intermediate for such crops as millet and maize, after the floods have somewhat subsided, and the lower for rice. The rice land is again subdivided into two classes, the higher land which can command water throughout the rice season, but is not always under water, and the lower land which is always under a certain amount of water. In the higher land rice is sown broadcast, while in the lower it is transplanted.

(b) *Products of Commercial Value*

Dates.—The cultivation of the date palm is the most important branch of agriculture in Mesopotamia, for dates are the chief article of food, and usually the most valuable export. The export averages about 60,000 tons annually, and is capable of considerable expansion. It has been said that Mesopotamia grows 80 per cent. of the world's total produce in dates.

Dates require a plentiful supply of water, and therefore their cultivation is general only in the alluvial tracts bordering the rivers in Lower Mesopotamia, although the date palm is found elsewhere also. On the other hand, flooding is bad for the trees, and causes "date fever." Consequently the groves have to be protected against floods by large dykes or *sudds*. The fertilisation of the blossom is done by hand, a few male trees being planted among the female.

The chief centres of cultivation are:—

(1) The Shatt el-Arab Belt. On the right bank the date palms form a continuous grove, half a mile to two miles wide, between the river and the

desert. On the left bank the groves are younger and more broken. The immediate neighbourhood of Basra is probably the finest date-growing region in the world. The date gardens of the Shatt el-Arab are intersected by irrigation trenches, connected with creeks along which fresh water is forced by the rise of the tide, and by this means fairly satisfactory irrigation is obtained.

(2) The Baghdad Belt. On the right bank of the Tigris at and below Baghdad there are eleven miles of date groves; north of the town they become less continuous until at Beled only isolated palms are met with.

(3) On the Euphrates Kufa, Kefl, and Kerbela are centres of date-growing, and so is the country watered by the Dujeil Canal. Groves also occur in patches as far north as Rawa, opposite Ana. The date groves of the Euphrates have suffered from the drying-up of the Hilla branch of the river.

The Mesopotamian date is inferior in quality to those of Egypt and Algiers, but varieties from these countries could be introduced into Mesopotamia. The finest are said to come from Mendali, near the Persian frontier, where satisfactory irrigation is obtained by a canal taking off from the Ab-i-Gunjir. Dates are not only the staple diet of the Arab, but are used as fodder for cattle and for the manufacture of a native spirit called *araq* (see *infra*, p. 87).

The packing is done by women and desert Arabs in temporary huts built along the river banks. The fruit is packed damp, and evaporation causes the crystallization of the sugar present; no sugar is added. Wood for date-boxes is imported.

The total crop in 1913, if we estimate it as being twice the export, would be nearly 128,000 tons. The average crop is probably about 91,500 tons; much higher figures have been given, but these are probably over-estimates.

The date palm supplies timber for building and furniture, but it is difficult to fell, and too valuable to be freely cut. The foot stumps furnish fuel and fibre from which cordage is made, while the leaves are used for matting, beds, and thatch. Dry branches are also used as firewood.

Rice of coarse quality is grown in large and increasing quantities in Irak, where its importance is second only to that of the date palm. It is also grown, but to a considerably smaller extent, in Upper Mesopotamia. As has already been said, rice is grown on the lowest of the slopes which descend from the raised river channels to the swamps.

It is very difficult to form any accurate estimate of the area under rice. At a very rough estimate it may be said that, in the Basra vilayet, it amounts to about 100,000 acres, from which the total production averages about 195,000 tons. Rice is cultivated in the land bordering upon the marshes of the Tigris below Amara, and in the marshy districts of the Euphrates between Hilla and Suk esh-Sheyukh. For the rice fields of the vilayet the markets are Amara and Qual'at Salib.

The figures of production of rice in the vilayet of Mosul are very uncertain; it is all sold within the country at absurdly low prices.

It is impossible to say what the production of rice to the acre is; the natives have the vaguest ideas of measurements, and their estimates show great variations. In any case the yield is very heavy, and the rice tribes are by far the wealthiest. Rice is the rival of wheat and barley, and, though primarily grown for home consumption, is exported to an increasing extent; 67,000 tons were loaded at Basra in 1912.

Wheat and barley are the chief crops of northern Mesopotamia, that is, of the vilayet of Mosul and the Mutessariflik of Zor, but the difficulties of transport have hitherto rendered impossible any considerable export from these districts, and much of the crops is

at present wasted. In the vilayet of Mosul the desert wastes alternate with large fertile valleys, and the rainfall is in general sufficient to bring the crops to maturity without irrigation; consequently, when adequate means of transport are available the cultivation of these cereals should be profitable.

On the Upper Euphrates barley and wheat are not much grown between Feluja and Birijik, owing to the difficulties of irrigation. North of Birijik conditions are more favourable, and the lack of water is to some extent overcome by the use of pumps. Consequently, wheat is grown there in larger quantities, and there is a considerable traffic in grain down-stream from Birijik.

In Irak the wheat crop is of less importance than dates, rice, and barley, and consequently suffers from a certain amount of neglect, but wheat and barley are sown on the banks of the rivers and canals where the ground is dry enough to admit of sowing before the rain comes, and is clear of floods before harvest-time in April and May. There are grain stores at many places on the Tigris and Euphrates, but these, as a general rule, do not adequately protect the grain stored in them against the weather.

Mesopotamian wheat is red, and of a hard quality; only small quantities are exported, as it is almost all converted into flour and consumed in the country. The barley is generally of excellent quality, and if properly cleaned would command the best prices in the markets of the world. Before the war the trade in grain from Mesopotamia suffered from the insufficiency of internal transport, and the consequent deterioration of the grain before shipment, and also from the custom of deliberately mixing dirt with the grain in order to increase the weight, a practice which rendered Mesopotamian grain unpopular in the market.

Other cereals are maize, millet, and sesame, which belong mostly to Irak, and are grown almost entirely for home consumption, though there is some export of millet and sesame.

Flour milling of a primitive kind is carried on all

over Mesopotamia, wherever corn is grown. In Baghdad there are over 100 mills, and Mosul boasts more than 300. The only modern mill is that at Baghdad, recently owned by the Turkish Government.

Two kinds of *cotton* are at present grown, one from native seed and the other from Bombay seed. The latter is of much better quality, but does not easily work off the native carding instrument, and is therefore little grown. Egyptian seed has given good results, but is not popular commercially.

The best cotton is grown in the Khanikin districts; it is also grown on a small scale at Shakhlawa, near Rania, and in the irrigated plain near Feish Khabur; the total area under cultivation for cotton is probably not much more than 1,000 acres. The product is used for stuffing pillows and coarse clothing; none is exported. The possibilities of cotton-growing in Mesopotamia are discussed on p. 126.

Tobacco is grown round Kerbela and Nejef, in the Diala valley, and in the north-east of Mosul vilayet, where the chief collecting centres are Golan, Keui Sanjak, and Taktak; the two latter stand on the Lesser Zab, and send tobacco down that river and the Tigris to Baghdad. The Public Debt Administration has a monopoly of the manufacture and sale of tobacco, which business it manages through the Tobacco Monopoly, or Régie, whose officials supervise the cultivation and collect the taxes. Of the crop the State gets approximately 1/6th, the proprietor 4/6ths, and the cultivator 1/6th. The total output is probably about 1,550,000 kg. per annum. This output could be increased with expert instruction and more intensive cultivation. Baghdad, Mosul, and Suleimanie are the distributing centres.

Other important crops are *opium* and *hemp*, both successfully grown in the Belikh Delta, north of Rakka, *lubiyeh*, a kidney pea cultivated in Irak on river banks and land liable to floods, and *mash*, a sort of vetch or pea (sometimes described as a lentil), which grows in damp, sandy plains, and requires little water.

Fruits and Vegetables.—The variations of climate between Diarbekr in the north and Basra in the south are well illustrated by the wide range of fruits produced. Grapes, olives, figs, melons, pomegranates, apricots, and apples are common to all parts of the country; the rest are confined to one or more tracts. It is noteworthy that at Mosul, where the climate is milder than in the foothills of the Taurus, the orange appears for the first time; other fruits belong essentially to the South European type, e.g., pears, pistachio nuts, almonds, raisins, walnuts, quinces, and cherries. Proceeding southward other fruits appear—mulberries and citrons at Baghdad and Basra—while the orange becomes universal. Orchards line the banks of the Euphrates continuously from Ana to Hit, and the fruit trees in and about Baghdad are said to number 130,000, mainly figs, pomegranates, plums, and apricots. Below Baghdad the date palm predominates.

There is hardly less variety among the vegetables, which include onions, radishes, beetroot, cucumber, cabbage, carrots, tomatoes, artichokes, lettuces, potatoes, &c. The potato is a recent introduction.

Except in the immediate neighbourhood of large towns, fruit and vegetables were, before the war, cultivated only for the needs of tenants and owners, and were treated as an entirely negligible quantity, being neither assessed to revenue by Government nor to rent by owners, who were usually satisfied by presents in kind in lieu of rent. A tax was imposed by the Turkish Government on vegetables brought to market in the big towns, and owners in like manner demanded a share of vegetables and fruit grown within easy reach of markets; elsewhere fruit and vegetables as agricultural assets were ignored. Under the British occupation efforts have been made to stimulate vegetable production in southern Mesopotamia with very satisfactory results.

Timber.—Chesney,[1] describing his journey up the

[1] See above, p. 29.

Tigris, speaks of that river as flowing between high, well-wooded banks. To-day, the only trees remaining in Irak are date palms, tamarisks, and a few poplars, which provide a scanty supply of fuel. Northern Mesopotamia has occasional oak-groves, especially east of Suleimanie; the slopes of the Kurdish hills were formerly well-wooded, but are being stripped; and the herds of goats kept by the Kurds do much damage to young growth. Pistachio trees, poplars, planes, and sycamores are found, but the staple tree is the stunted oak, chiefly valuable for gall-nuts. Large areas of tamarisk shrub line the middle course of the Euphrates.

It is known that in ancient days trees abounded in Mesopotamia, and the reafforestation of Irak will no doubt form part of any plan for the regeneration of the country, both as a means of assisting the control of floods, and as an important adjunct to the schemes for increasing the humidity of the soil.

Animals.—Live-stock is the principal or sole source of wealth of many of the inhabitants of Mesopotamia. There are, however, no reliable statistics as to the number of animals or their distribution before the war, and the following table should be taken merely as a rough indication :—

——	Baghdad.	Basra.	Zor.	Mosul.
Cattle	155,000	120,000	10,000	500,000
Buffaloes	80,000	80,000	4,000	
Horses ..	85,000	88,000	1,700	260,000
Donkeys	100,000	110,000	8,500	6,000
Mules	4,000	..	..	16,000
Camels	95,000	125,000	4,000	90,000
Sheep	2,100,000	1,200,000	450,000	1,500,000
Goats	4,000	..	..	

The wholly nomad Arabs in the western desert, the Upper Mesopotamian plains, and the drier parts of

Irak keep and breed camels, horses, sheep, some goats, and donkeys. The semi-nomad Arabs own camels, horses, cattle (in proportions varying with the nature of the district they frequent), sheep, some goats, and donkeys. The settled cultivators own cattle (buffaloes in the marshes), sheep, goats, donkeys, horses, and a few camels. In the hill country of northern Mesopotamia the semi-nomadic or nomadic Kurds breed sheep, goats, cattle, horses, and mules. The settled population of the hills and the edges of the plain own chiefly cattle (including buffaloes), sheep, goats, and mules.

The camel may be said in general to be characteristic of the dry, uncultivated plains (desert or steppe). The nomad tribes who breed camels depend on them for travel in the desert, for milk (the basis of the nomad's diet), and for hair for cloth-weaving. Different types of camel are bred, suitable respectively for riding and for transport purposes.

Good breeds of Arab horses are found both in northern and southern Mesopotamia, though they are said not to be up to the standard of the best breeds of the Nejd and Syria. The Kurdish horses are small, but are said to be strong and serviceable.

Sheep are kept in immense numbers by the Arabs. In Irak the most common breed is the *arabi* or *sheffal*, yielding a fine wool. The *awassi* breed, a cross between the *arabi* and the coarse-fleeced *karadi* sheep of the hill country, is found in the plains of Upper Mesopotamia.

Goats are chiefly kept by the hill tribes. The common type is the mohair, which yields a fine silky wool of considerable commercial value.

Cattle are found in the plains, chiefly in the better-watered grazing grounds near the rivers. They are used for ploughing, irrigation, and draught work, as well as for their milk and hides. The hill cattle are generally small. Buffaloes are characteristic of the marshes, where they are kept in great numbers, and form the main wealth of the inhabitants. In parts of Mosul buffaloes are used for agricultural work.

Donkeys are very common in Irak. The ordinary

breed (black or dark brown) is much used for transport and other labour. A large white riding donkey is also bred.

There is very little mule-breeding among the Arabs, the mules found in the plains coming for the most part from the hill country of Persia and Kurdistan. In some districts mules are used for work in the fields.

The supply of fodder for cattle in Mesopotamia presents considerable difficulties, as the grass which is found in early spring soon dries up in the hot weather. The problem of feeding their flocks and herds is at the root of the nomadic habit of the Arab, who solve it by migration to the submontane districts. Amongst the settled tribes green barley, rice, straw, millet, and dates are used as food for cattle. Lucerne is grown to a small extent in the neighbourhood of Basra, and flourishes in the climate of Mesopotamia; it is deserving of a much wider cultivation, both on account of its value as a forage crop and also because, being a leguminous crop, it would prove beneficial to the soil. If Mesopotamia is to become the home of a settled population, early attention should be given to devising a means to provide fodder in the hot weather, especially for sheep.

(*c*) *Land Tenure*

In Mesopotamia, nominally, at any rate, the same system of land tenure was in force as exists throughout the Turkish Empire; that is to say, all lands and buildings were divided into one of five classes of property according to their situation and the use to which they were put. The whole system of land tenure in Turkey has been dealt with in *Turkey in Europe*, No. 16 of this series, and all that is necessary here is to refer to the incidence of that system in Mesopotamia.

In the immediate vicinity of towns like Basra, and to a less degree in provincial centres like Amara, the Turkish system of land tenure was effective. Beyond these limits Mesopotamia is still a tribal country; that is to say, the tribes claim a prescriptive right to the

occupation of large areas, cultivated or uncultivated, the latter being the undisturbed haunt of nomadic tribes, or of the nomadic sections of half-settled tribes. Almost the whole of the vilayets of Basra and Baghdad are apportioned in this manner. Theoretically the Turks ignored tribal claims; in practice they were forced to acknowledge them wherever the tribes were grouped into large and powerful units, as was the case on the River Tigris. In such cases they found it impossible to lease lands to any but the tribal sheikhs. The sheikh thus occupied much more than his nominal possession as tenant holding from the State. He was the representative of a corporate right, which the State could not disregard. Where the tribes were split into many sections, as was the case more especially upon the Euphrates, the Turkish Government attempted to set aside their tribal right to certain specified lands. The result was acute discontent, which kept the Euphrates valley in a constant state of disturbance, and recently had reduced ordered government there to a mere pretence. On the Tigris, however, there has been a certain amount of assimilation of cultivators belonging to other tribes, a fact which suggests the possibility of a gradual assimilation of the Arab tribes in Mesopotamia.

A very considerable portion of Mesopotamia (it is said, as much as one-third of the cultivable area) was owned by the late Sultan Abdul Hamid; this estate was known as the Da'irat es-Saniyeh, and was managed by a committee in Baghdad. By degrees the most prosperous portions of Mesopotamia had been by some means or other acquired by the late Sultan; and in 1904 the Saniyeh enlarged its activities by acquiring the whole stock and assets of the Oman Ottoman branch of the Ministry of Marine, and beginning to trade on the Tigris. The activities of the Saniyeh were not, however, popular in Turkey; and it is stated that the fact that Abdul Hamid had become possessed of so much of Mesopotamia had much to do with his downfall. After he had been deposed, the property forming the Da'irat es-Saniyeh was transferred to the

Ministry of Finance, and was nominally administered as State property for the benefit of the Exchequer.

(3) Minerals

Little information is available with regard to the minerals of Mesopotamia. Lack of means of transport, insecurity, and other causes have combined to hinder their exploitation; and the deposits which have been worked have been dealt with by more or less primitive methods. Scientific examination of mineral fields has only been carried out in a very few districts, and the statements as to the existence of oil are largely based upon conclusions arrived at from a knowledge of the general geological structure of Mesopotamia, supported by the uncertain evidence of surface indications of oil or bitumen in different places. In these circumstances it is impossible to do more than indicate the regions in which minerals are reported to exist.

There is apparently a good deal of *borax* in the desert north-west of Baghdad.

Building-stone is rare in Irak. It is reported that below Baghdad stone is found only at Samawa, and at the Jebel Sinam, about 30 miles south-west of Basra. Limestone can be quarried at Hit, and accessories for building, such as sand, shingle, and lime, can be obtained on the edges of the desert. In Upper Mesopotamia the principal quarries are those in the hills near Mosul, where a hard limestone and a soft marble are obtained. Building-stone can be found in the Euphrates valley between Feheme and Ana, and farther north at Deir ez-Zor and Kishla Maden. Basalt is common in the hill country south of Diarbekr, and in parts of the northern Jezireh plain. Lime, plaster, and marble are found in Kurdistan along the Turko-Persian borderland.

Coal is worked at Nasale, near Kifri, and there is said to be a good deal in the hills near Halebja, south-east of Suleimanie.

North of Mosul deposits of coal exist over a fairly wide area. They are reported in the Dohuk district, at Harbol and Sheranis, north of Zakho, and farther east, in the country north of Amadia. The quantity in the neighbourhood of Harbol is said to be large, but the quality is at present poor.

Brown coal has been noticed in the neighbourhood of Mardin.

Copper is reported from the Shemdinan and Oramar districts of central Kurdistan, and also in the Dohuk district, south-west of Amadia.

Gold was worked in the past in the Bohtan valley, but the enterprise was abandoned for want of transport.

Gypsum of poor quality abounds along the Persian foothills from the Persian Gulf to the neighbourhood of Kirkuk, and is also found on the edge of the Arabian Desert, where the deposits have been worked to a small extent.

Iron ore is found in the Sergusa hills, to the north of Amadia; it used to be worked, but the mine was abandoned owing to insecurity. It is said that there are large quantities of the ore. Other deposits are reported east of Amadia and in the Dohuk district. Iron is also found in the Bohtan valley.

Lead occurs in the neighbourhood of Amadia, and in the valleys of the Bohtan and Zab. It is said that there are also valuable deposits in the hills south and south-west of Diarbekr.

Oil and Bitumen.[1]—There are extensive belts of country in Mesopotamia where the presence of oil is known or suspected, but the examination of those belts is still very incomplete. Thorough geological examination and testing have been carried out by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company near Shushtar in Arabistan, and there seems to have been careful inspection of the country round Kasr-i-Shirin, on the Persian side of the fron-

[1] The history of the oil concessions in Mesopotamia 1889-1915 is summarized above, p. 34.

tier near Khanikin. So far as such investigation goes, the results are said to be promising. Elsewhere there has been thorough examination only at a few scattered points. The petroliferous areas may be conveniently considered in three main belts:—

(*a*) *The belt between Kirkuk and the Persian Gulf.*—This belt, extending north-westwards to Kirkuk from the Gulf, is certainly petroliferous in some parts, and may be in others also. One large section (the Shushtar—Ahwaz—Ramuz district) falls outside the boundaries of Mesopotamia, and is dealt with in *Persia*, No. 75 of this series. Exploitation work has been done in the Kirkuk—Mendali—Kasr-i-Shirin area, north of Baghdad, and though production has not been attempted on any scale in this region, some experts are inclined to think that it may prove richer than the Shushtar area. It lies on the line of the caravan route, between Baghdad and Kermanshah, and is also easily accessible from Mosul.

Down to the outbreak of war, the wells on the Turkish side of the frontier had not been exploited by modern methods. The springs were apparently owned by the Turkish Government, and were leased to contractors. The oil was collected in skins from pits and was carried by donkeys to the refineries. There are stills at Kirkup, Tuza Khurmatli, and Mandali. The yield has so far been very small; the Kirkuk wells, in 1910, were producing only about 130 gallons per day, and those at Tuza Khurmatli about 150. The refined oil was used, according to quality, for illumination, lubrication, or as a specific for mange.

(*b*) *The Middle Tigris belt.*—This belt extends up the river from the Fatha gorge in the Jebel Hamrin almost to Mosul. At present oil is worked only at Kaiyara (Guyara), about 50 miles south of Mosul by river and 40 miles by road. There are oil oozings in the warm springs of Hammam Ali (15 miles south of Mosul), and at El-Hadhr, and at the Fethah gorge. It is possible that the whole line of the Hamrin hills is petroliferous. The economic prospects of this area are

quite uncertain, and in 1910 the output of a primitive refinery at Kaiyara was insignificant.

(*c*) *The Euphrates belt.*—A petroliferous area extends along the river from a few miles south of Hit to some distance above Deir ez-Zor. The economic prospects here, too, are quite uncertain. Hitherto the only important exploitation of this area has been at Hit. Before the war there were five bitumen springs in this neighbourhood. In 1909 these were stated to be capable of an output of 2,000 donkey-loads a day, but the actual production was probably considerably less. Owing to lack of transport the bitumen was used locally only, chiefly for pitching boats, bridges, &c. There is now a refinery and petroleum store at Hit.

Orpiment was at one time mined in the Julamuk region, but the enterprise was abandoned owing to lack of transport.

Ozokerit is said to be obtainable in large quantities at Gulraman in the Dohuk district.

Potash is found in the deserts.

Salt is produced by evaporation from numerous saltfields covering large areas both in Irak and in upper Mesopotamia. The inhabitants of the country districts are allowed to collect what salt they need for their own use, but the supply of salt for the town markets is in the hands of the Public Debt Administration. There is also a group of saltfields in central Kurdistan, on the lower Bohtan. Rock salt is found at Taza Khurmali, south of Kirkuk.

Tin is reported from the Shemdinan and Oramar districts of central Kurdistan.

(4) Manufactures

The manufactures of Mesopotamia are few and of a primitive kind. They fall into two main categories; first, those which are incidental to the simple existence of the pastoral or agricultural Arab; and secondly, those which are designed to meet the love of ease and ostentation which is very strongly developed in the Persian, and is to a less extent a characteristic of the town-

dwelling Arab. In the former category may be placed the milling, tanning, cloth-making, boat-building, and brick-making industries, in the latter the manufacture of silk goods, metal-working and the production of *araq*.

With the exception of a military cloth factory belonging to the Turkish Government at Baghdad, Mesopotamia has no manufacturing industries in which steam is used; indeed the only other steam machinery devoted to industry is that used in the Government flour-mill, the ice factory at Baghdad, and the wool presses at Baghdad, Basra, Kut, and Amara. The chief manufactures and handicrafts are as follows:—

Boat-building is carried on at many places on the two rivers, notably at Kale Sale, Shatra el-Muntifik, Nasrie, Suk esh-Sheyukh, and Hit; at Hit a branch of the bitumen industry is the caulking of boats.

Distilling is done on a small scale at Qarareh, on the Tigris near Baghdad. The spirit produced is called *araq*, and is obtained from dates, other ingredients being aniseed, mastic, cardamoms, and orange-peel. Some distilling is also done at Hilla, but the produce is said to be inferior.

Metal-working in gold, silver, and copper is carried on in all the principal towns of Mesopotamia, the Sabian gold and silversmiths of Suk esh-Sheyukh, Amara, and Shatra el-Muntifik being the best. At Amara a speciality is made of inlaying silver with antimony, while Kerbela is chiefly engaged in filigree work and the engraving of mother-of-pearl.

Pottery and brick-making.—Earthenware drinking vessels and water coolers are made at Baghdad and tiles at Baghdad, Kerbela, and Kasimain. Rough bricks are made all over Mesopotamia, and are either used unburnt or burnt in rough wooden kilns. Sir John Jackson found the native method of making bricks to be the best and cheapest when his firm was constructing the Hindie barrage.

Silk and other textiles.—Seventy years ago the cultivation of the silkworm was one of the most important

industries in Irak, but the industry suffered from a long period of depression, and only in recent years has a revival taken place. The most important centre of the cultivation of silkworms is Bakuba, and before the war broke out the cultivation of mulberry trees in that district was extending. The quality of the eggs and cocoons produced is very high.

The weaving of silk is carried on at Baghdad and Mosul. The silk fabrics of Baghdad are famous for their beauty of colouring and workmanship, the best known manufacture being the *ezar*, a silk cloak largely worn by native women, and the *abas*, an Arab cloak made either of silk or wool and embroidered with silk or gold. The latter are made at several places besides Baghdad, notably at Kerbela, Nejef, Amara, Suk esh-Sheyukh, and Kurna. The reeling of silk is primitive, and the silk is badly yarned. Some silk weaving is also done at Kazimain. Woollen rugs and coarse carpets are manufactured at Kut, Samawa, and Amara. Other textiles are manufactured in large quantities at Baghdad. These include men's garments, jackets, veils, shawls, belts, and handkerchiefs, all of fine cotton, wool, or silk, and in addition coarse cotton cloth for the use of the poorer classes, and canvas for tents.

Tanning is one of the most solid industries of the country. There are forty tanneries near Muadhdem (a suburb of Baghdad), and others at Kazimain and Mosul. The chief raw materials used are sheep and goat skins, buffalo, ox and cow hides, and fox, otter, and stone-marten skins. The industry is in a primitive state, the skins are badly handled, and the leather is only roughly tanned. It is used locally in the manufacture of boots and shoes, and is also exported to Europe. The industry suffers from the want of good tannin.

(C) COMMERCE

(1) Domestic

(*a*) *Towns*

Amara, on the left bank of the Tigris, 92½ miles above Kurna, is only of importance as a centre for the collection and shipment of cattle and native produce, consisting chiefly of wheat, rice, barley, sesame, wool, ghi, skins and hides. The population was estimated in 1915 at about 28,000 (mostly Arabs). No statistics of the trade of the town are available. Along the whole river frontage runs an embankment faced with brick, alongside which steamers can lie in a depth of from 13½ feet of water at high and 6½ feet at low water seasons. There are no facilities for dealing with cargo. The manufactures of the town consist of Arab cloaks, rugs, and silverware. The town possesses a telegraph office, and is at present the terminus of the metre-gauge railway from Basra.

Baghdad lies on the Tigris, 448 miles by river above Kurna. The population, which is very mixed, is estimated at 200,000; the Jews form the largest racial group (about 55,000), and the Arabs come next (about 39,000). Before the war the town was connected by telegraph with Basra, Mosul, Kermanshah and Teheran, and with Aleppo, *via* Feluja and Deir ez-Zor. The town lies on both sides of the river and a bridge of boats 240 yards long connects the two parts of the town. This bridge consists of 24 pontoons moored to both banks and to buoys in the river; a section of three boats can be swung down-stream to let vessels through. The whole bridge is removed during very high floods. The regular mooring-place for steamers is on the left bank of the river below the bridge, but a wharf about 200 yards long has recently been constructed on the right bank near the railway station, with which it is connected by a single line of track. This wharf

is equipped with two travelling cranes. The depth of the river at low water is from 12 to 15 feet.

The streets of the town are narrow and ill-kept; in the better parts there are houses of considerable size, but in the poorer parts the houses are low and are built of unburnt brick. The water supply is taken from the Tigris, and is unfiltered, and there is no modern drainage. Electric light has only been installed since the military occupation of the town by the British army. A horse tramway runs to the north-western suburb of Kazimain.

Baghdad is the chief religious centre in Mesopotamia of the Sunni sect of Mohammedans, and is visited by Sunni Mussulmans from regions as remote as Afghanistan and India. It is also visited by pilgrims from Persia on their way to the shrines at Kerbela and Nejef. It could therefore be used as a starting-point for the commercial penetration of Persia and India.

Industrially and commercially, Baghdad is the chief town of Irak and the centre of the trade of Lower Mesopotamia. There are 116 flour-mills worked by horses, besides the steam-driven army mill, formerly owned by the Turkish Government, a cloth factory, an ice factory, wool presses, and tanneries, and the manufacture of silk, cotton, and woollen goods, and canvas, and of earthenware and copper goods is carried on. Baghdad is the centre of the export trade from central Mesopotamia, and receives large quantities of goods sent down-stream from Mosul, or by caravan from Kermanshah in Persia. It is also a distributing centre for the whole of Irak and for Persia *via* Khanikin. The value of the Persian transit trade may be gathered from the table on the next page, compiled from the Consular Reports :—

Year.	Exports to Persia.	Imports from Persia.
	£	£
1904	836,949	224,469
1905	745,674	165,032
1906	1,014,336	294,857
1907	1,240,445	230,679
1909	1,259,138	321,662
1910	1,433,201	280,188
1911	1,236,691	206,699
1912	962,833	302,087

The important trade of the town is in the hands of Jews, Arab merchants being chiefly concerned with retail business. In 1914 there were only 8 European business houses of importance in the town; of these 6 were English, 1 German, and 1 Austrian. Statistics are given below (Appendix, Tables I and II) showing the total export and import trade of Baghdad, with the destination or origin of the goods, and the percentage of trade done by the countries principally concerned.

Basra has been described above, in the section on ports (p. 64).

Kirkuk lies on the main route from Baghdad to Mosul, 187 miles north of Baghdad. The population is probably 20,000, and is very mixed, Kurds forming the largest portion. The town is a centre of the cultivation of corn and fruit, and there are numerous flour-mills. It is also the centre of a sheep-rearing district. The chief exports are corn, fruit, gall-nuts, oil, and wood. The chief imports are cotton goods, Kirkuk being the distributing centre for Kurdistan.

Kut el-Amara, on the left bank of the Tigris, 284 miles above Kurna, has a population of about 6,000 Arabs. Before the war, the town was the centre of a considerable grain traffic, corn from the Euphrates country being brought up by way of the Shatt el-Hai for distribution in the neighbourhood, as the local crop was not usually sufficient. Large grain stores were owned by the Da'irat es-Saniyeh. Woollen rugs and

coarse carpets are manufactured. The town is at present the eastern terminus of the metre-gauge railway, which has been built by the British army of occupation down-stream from Baghdad. It possesses a telegraph office. The depth of the river at low water is about 5 ft.; there are no facilities for handling cargo.

Mosul lies on the right bank of the Tigris, some 230 miles north-west of Baghdad. The population is variously estimated at from 70,000 to 90,000, nearly all Mohammedans. The town possesses a post-office and telegraph. The river, which is about 675 yards broad, is crossed by a bridge of boats. The streets are narrow, undrained lanes, mostly unpaved. The houses are built of sun-dried bricks or of local stone set in gypsum cement. The town is reported to be unsanitary.

There are about 200 flour-mills in Mosul, and the town is the centre of trade in corn, fruits, sheep and goats. A considerable amount of weaving is done on hand-looms, other industries being shoemaking, tanning, and metal-working. Mosul is a centre of trade (1) from Beirut on the Mediterranean by rail to Aleppo and thence by mule, camel, or caravan; (2) from the Persian Gulf by river steamer to Baghdad and thence by land; (3) from Samsun on the Black Sea by mule or waggon transport to Diarbekr and thence by raft down the Tigris; (4) from and to Persia *via* Erbil and Rowanduz. The following statistics are taken from the Consular Reports:—

IMPORTS

——	1906.	1907.	1909.	1910.	1911.
From the—	£	£	£	£	£
United Kingdom	58,079	56,230	42,140	37,850	43,015
India	17,914	16,350	32,900	35,800	38,850
Other countries..	34,387	35,830	45,720	43,890	53,825
Other parts of Turkey	26,525	24,890	26,550	24,400	29,250
Total ..	136,905	133,300	147,310	141,940	164,940

EXPORTS

——	1906.	1907.	1909.	1910.	1911.
To the—	£	£	£	£	£
United Kingdom	184,916	195,400	164,300	176,500	163.500
India	40,000	42,000	35,000	30,000	25,000
Other countries..	51,103	52,690	50,040	49,980	43,480
Other parts of Turkey	211,478	218,220	322,500	352,950	111,350
Total ..	487,497	508,310	571,840	609,430	343,330

The chief imports are cotton goods, iron and copper, carpets and gunnies.

At present the trade of Mosul suffers from the drawbacks of its geographical situation, to which are added the insecurity of the districts through which caravans must pass, especially on the routes between Baghdad and Aleppo. In consequence there is hardly any direct dealing with Europe. The building of the Baghdad Railway will no doubt stimulate the trade of Mosul and remove the chief obstacle to its commercial development.

Suleimanie is situated 60 miles east by north of Kirkuk, on the Turkish side of the Turko-Persian frontier. No accurate estimate of the population is available. The town consists of about 2,500 houses. It was formerly a large centre of trade with Persia, but in recent years the trade has diminished, partly owing to an imposition of 15 per cent. Customs duty. An important local industry is the manufacture of firearms, especially rifles; about 9,000 are manufactured per annum. Shoemaking and saddlery are also important occupations.

The following list gives the remaining towns of any importance:—

—	Situation.	Estimated Population.	Communications.	Industries, &c.
Ana ...	On the Euphrates, 119 miles above Hit, 192 miles below Deir	About 15,000 Sunni Arabs	1. Caravan routes (*a*) Baghdad-Aleppo route (*b*) Track to Mosul across the desert 2. River Euphrates 3. Telegraph	Cultivation of cereals, fruit, dates. Export of wool, butter, dates.
Birijik ...	On the Euphrates, about 15 miles above the railway bridge at Jerablus	About 10,000 mixed Turks, Arabs, Kurds, Armenians, and Jews	1. River Euphrates 2. Land routes to Aleppo, Diarbekr, &c. 3. Telegraph	Cultivation of wheat and barley. Trade in olive oil, grapes, butter and sheep. Boat-building.
Erbil ...	48 miles east by south of Mosul	About 25,000, mostly Kurds	1. Caravan routes (*a*) Mosul-Baghdad (*b*) Mosul-Rowanduz 2. Projected terminus of branch line of Baghdad Railway from Mosul	Cultivation of quantities of wheat and barley, rice and fruit; export to Baghdad *via* the Tigris.
Hilla ...	On the Hilla branch of the Euphrates, 11 miles below the bifurcation at Hindie	About 30,000, mostly Shiah Arabs	1. Land routes to Baghdad and up and down the river 2. River Euphrates 3. Telegraph and Post-office	Wheat, barley, rice, and animals of all kinds. Large bazaar, 120 grain stores. Manufacture of saddles.
Kerbela	On the Huseiniyeh Canal, 20 miles west of the Hindie branch of the Euphrates, on the edge of the Syrian desert	About 50,000 ($\frac{3}{4}$ Persian, the rest Shiah Arabs)	1. Routes to Hilla, Baghdad and Nejef 2. Post-office and Telegraph	A centre of pilgrimage for Shiah Moslems. Imports, piece-goods, carpets, candles, spices, coffee, and tea. Exports, dates, hides, wool and consecrated articles.
Mardin	About 50 miles south-south-east of Diarbekr	About 30,000 Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, and Jacobites	Routes to Diarbekr, Nisibin, &c.	Agriculture; wheat, barley, sesame, rice, vegetables, some cotton and wool weaving.

—	Situation.	Estimated Population.	Communications.	Industries, &c.
Nejef ...	About 7 miles south by west of Kufeh on Lower Euphrates	Over 30,000 (⅔ Arabs, remainder Persians); all Shiah Mohammedans	Routes to Kerbela and Hilla for Baghdad, and to Basra Horse tramway to Kufeh Post-office and Telegraph	The tomb of Ali is the richest and most splendid of the Shiah holy places, and the town is a pilgrimage centre for Shiahs of all Moslem countries. Imports, Manchester goods, sugar, spices, hardware. Exports, skins and wool. Manufactures, Abas cloaks.
Samawa	On the Euphrates, 71 miles by river above Nasrie	About 10,000 Arabs	1. River Euphrates 2. Land routes to Hilla, Nejef and Basra 3. Telegraph and Post-office	A centre of the trade in wheat, barley, rice, and vegetables. Skins are also exported. Imports, Manchester goods, sugar, indigo, and coffee. Manufacture of woollen carpets.
Suk esh-Sheyukh	On the Euphrates, 63 miles by river above Kurna	About 12,000, mostly Arabs	1. River Euphrates 2. Land routes to Basra 3. Telegraph and Post-office	Manufacture of Abas cloaks, boat-building, metal-work.
Urfa	On the northern edge of the Harran plain, north by east of Birijik	About 40,000 Kurds, Turks, and Armenians	1. Many routes to Syrian towns, and to Mosul and Diarbekr 2. Telegraph	An important point of transit trade east and west. Wheat cultivated largely. No industries.

(*b*) *British Interests*

The interests of Great Britain and India in the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia originated with the East India Company, which from the middle of the 17th century onwards possessed established commercial interests there. In the latter part of the 18th century the Pasha of Baghdad was on more than one occasion glad to have the help of the vessels of the East India Company to protect him against the Arabs and others.

The rights of British vessels to navigate the Tigris and Euphrates had, however, never been clearly defined, and had been the subject of controversy between London and Constantinople. In recent times there have been persistent efforts on the part of the Turkish Government to whittle down such rights as were possessed by treaty, agreement, or custom by Great Britain and her subjects.[1] These attempts were due partly to a general desire to limit the interests of Great Britain in the trade of Mesopotamia, but partly also to the increase in importance of the trade done on the rivers by the Turkish Hamadie Company. which was owned by the Turkish Civil List. From a British point of view, the question became suddenly extremely urgent when the Baghdad Railway Convention gave the concessionnaires the right to construct harbours at Baghdad and Basra and on the Persian Gulf as an integral part of the railway scheme. It was clear that the control of these harbours, when built, would mean the control of the rivers, and probably the ultimate exclusion of Great Britain from the trade of Mesopotamia.

Ultimately, in 1913, negotiations were entered into in London between representatives of the British and Turkish Governments, the outcome of which was the grant by the Turkish Government of a concession to Lord Inchcape (the Chairman of the British India

[1] The history of the navigation controversy down to 1913 is dealt with in detail above, p. 28.

Steam Navigation Company, and therefore the representative of the strongest interest in British trade in Mesopotamia). Its principal terms were as follows:—

1. Lord Inchcape was granted

(*a*) The exclusive right of navigation by steamers and the like (with or without barges in tow) on the Tigris from Kurna to Mosul, on the Euphrates from Kurna to Meskene, on the Shatt el-Arab, and on their navigable tributaries and canals, for a period of 60 years in the first instance, and thereafter for successive periods of 10 years unless and until determined by the Turkish Government by 5 years' notice.

(*b*) The right to carry out dredging and conservancy works over the waters included in the concession (provided that such works should not interfere with irrigation), and to make the regulations necessary for the proper control of navigation. The Turkish Government on its part undertook not to permit the use of the rivers for irrigation to the prejudice of navigation.

2. The concession was without prejudice to the rights of Lynch Brothers,[1] which were to remain unimpaired.

3. Lord Inchcape undertook to form a company under Ottoman law to exercise the rights granted by the concession, the Turkish Government and Lord Inchcape having each the right to nominate half of the directors of the Company, and the shares of the Company to be held approximately equally by the representatives of English and Turkish interests.[2]

4. The Company was to take over the vessels of the Turkish Government (the Hamadie Company) engaged in the trade of the Tigris and Euphrates,

[1] For the history of this firm, see above, p. 30.

[2] In the Anglo-German Convention initialled in London, June 15, 1914, His Majesty's Government undertook not to oppose the acquisition by the Baghdad Railway Company of 40 per cent. of the share capital to be allotted to Turkish interests, i.e., 20 per cent. of the whole capital of the Company.

together with that Company's lands, buildings, plant, &c.

The rights of Lynch Brothers which the concession confirmed and acknowledged were the following :—

(*a*) The right to run two steamboats, each towing not more than two barges, under the British flag on the Tigris, Euphrates, and Shatt el-Arab, with a further boat flying the British flag in reserve to replace either of the above vessels if out of service.

(*b*) The right to run one steamboat, also with barges in tow, on the rivers under the Ottoman flag.

(*c*) *Methods of Economic Penetration*

The struggle between German and British trade in Mesopotamia is particularly instructive and interesting, for it was of the nature of a duel between the commercial methods of the two countries, since England for more than a hundred years had had a practical monopoly of the sea-borne trade of Mesopotamia.

Germany's interest in the commercial development of Turkey dates back so far as 1888, when M. Kaulla, acting on behalf of the Württembergische Vereinsbank and the Deutsche Bank, obtained the concession over the railway from Haidar-Pasha to Ismidt with the right to extend it to Angora (300 miles). This was the beginning of a process which culminated in 1903 in the grant to German interests of the Baghdad Railway Concession. So far as Mesopotamia was concerned, however, it was not till 1906 that German activities made themselves seriously felt. At that time European trade with Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf was carried almost entirely in British bottoms. The Consular returns show that, excluding Turkish sailing vessels, out of the 233 vessels from European waters which entered Basra in 1904 and 308 in 1905, vessels flying the British flag numbered 210 and 283 respectively, the majority of the remainder being French.

In April 1906 the Hamburg-Amerika Steamship Company announced its intention of running a service

between Europe and the Persian Gulf. At that date German trade with Basra was worth annually about £145,000, as against British and Indian trade of a value of about £3,000,000. The first steamer arrived in the Gulf in August, 1906, and at the same time an agent was installed at Bushire. The first noticeable effect was the shipment of Belgian sugar from Antwerp by the Hamburg-Amerika line at a freight rate of 20*s.* per ton. In consequence the British lines, which had previously charged 37*s.* per ton of 15 cwt., had to reduce their rate.

Partly owing to the regularity of their sailings, the German line began to attract trade from the British almost at once; and it was stated in 1907 that though the outward trade was run at a loss the Germans were making progress with cargo for Europe. German commercial travellers soon began to appear at Baghdad, and were without doubt welcomed, as it was felt that the British lines had abused the monopoly which they held, and moreover German goods were proving popular in a market where cheapness is of more importance than quality.

The most important branch of British trade in Mesopotamia has for many years been the trade in Manchester goods. In 1907 the Germans attacked this trade, first by making Manchester a port of call, and secondly by introducing a German traveller for an Anglo-German firm with instructions to push his German goods first, only offering his British goods as a last resort. Every effort was made by the German agent to the Hamburg-Amerika Company to conceal the amount of trade which was being done.

The result of the first year's working was that Germany had certainly made a loss, but that three of the British lines engaged in the trade had reduced their rates from 30*s.* to 20*s.* per 40 cubic feet of space.[1]

[1]As an illustration of the effect of German competition, it is remarkable that in 1907 the freight for general cargo carried in a British ship from Manchester and from Antwerp, both in the same bottom, was respectively £1 15*s.* 2*d.* per ton from the British port and £1 per ton from the Belgian port.

Nevertheless the German line was still disposed to cut rates, and was more liberal in the matter of weights. Within the country their methods of advertising were admitted to be superior to the British, and they were beginning to make headway with German imitations of Manchester goods.

By the end of the year 1907-8 it was seen that the homeward cargo carried in German bottoms had doubled, and that they had captured practically the whole of the continental trade to Mesopotamia.

The result of three years' trading showed that the Hamburg-Amerika line was prepared to face a loss over an extended period, provided that they could claim a vested interest in the trade of the Gulf, and it was upon that basis that they began to take an interest in the buoying of the Shatt el-Arab and the navigation of the Euphrates.

By the autumn of 1913, in spite of the fact that the respective tonnages of British (or Indian) and German vessels entering and clearing at Basra showed a preponderance in favour of British lines of not less than 5 to 1, it was clear that the German line was getting stronger. In spite of organized effort to combat the increase of the German trade in Belgian sugar, more than 50 per cent. of the imports of sugar arrived in German bottoms. The German line had secured a portion of the import of Manchester goods and was constantly shipping produce from the Gulf to London and Red Sea ports. Baghdad Jews were beginning to do business in Hamburg and elsewhere in Germany; and it was stated that the German line had bought up some of the vessels of the Strick line, one of the most important in the trade of the Gulf.

By the end of 1913 the position had become so serious to British shipping interests that the shipping lines concerned came to an agreement with the Hamburg-Amerika line in defence of their own interests. The terms included (*a*) an agreement on freight rates from Europe to the Gulf, and (*b*) an agreement that German lines should not load at English ports. Information

goes to show that these terms were practically dictated to the British lines as to beaten enemies. This was admitted by Lord Inchcape in a letter to the India Office dated December 29, 1913, in which he wrote: "If the British lines had not come to terms with the Hamburg-Amerika line, it would have been impossible for them to maintain a position in the trade."

It may well be asked by what methods a single German line had been able in barely seven years to bring about this result. The usual reply of "German subsidies" is insufficient, for the French Government has for many years heavily subsidised the Messageries Maritimes line to Australia, and yet British lines have made perfectly successful headway against it. The German line began operations with everything against it. It had no large contracts to support it. The British lines, on the other hand, had the assistance of large Manchester freight contracts, a large Marseilles sugar-carrying trade, the carrying trade with India, the mail contract, and a highly profitable pilgrim traffic.

Sir George Lloyd's report attributes the German success to State organization of production and transit, and in particular to the so-called "through rate system." The methods pursued are as follows:—

During the early years of the invasion of any area a direct subsidy is given by the German Government to the German line sufficient to enable it to cut rates and underquote its competitors throughout the area. It can thus draw away traffic from competing lines, and also flood the invaded markets with cheap German goods. The line works in connection with a trading house established in the invaded area. This house arranges for the distribution and sale of cargoes which come unconsigned, and collects export by means of a low rate of return freight. The object of all this is to persuade the competing lines to enter into a rate agreement. As soon as this has been secured, the German direct subsidy is replaced by an indirect subsidy system, known as the "through-rate system," which is

designed to enable shipping companies ostensibly to observe their rate agreement, but in practice to under-quote their rivals whenever they choose. As the outcome of a scientific organization of land and sea transit, through-rates can be quoted for the whole journey: and, if necessary, a reduction is made on the freight charges over that part of the journey which is not affected by the agreement (e.g., on the railway charges for conveying the goods to the port of loading). If there is any loss on the working out of the transaction as a whole it is apportioned, as between the State Railways and the Shipping Company, to that part of the transit which can carry it without injury. Thus, while competing lines have to work to a fixed rate, the German rate is flexible, and can be adjusted to suit the requirements of the situation from time to time.

Similarly, the "through-rate system" can be used by the Germans to circumvent the agreement not to load at English ports. The London merchant is offered through terms from London to Basra by the agent of a line allied to the Hamburg-Amerika line, and ships of that line collect cargo in the port of London, and transport it to Hamburg or Antwerp for trans-shipment. The London merchant will benefit by a lower rate of freight, but he is providing the Germans with the means of ultimately substituting German-made goods for his own commodities.

It will thus be seen that the "through-rate system," worked in conjunction with rate agreements, is the chief weapon of the German competitive policy, and it follows that every effort should be concentrated on refusing to make rate agreements with German lines, even if as an alternative a subsidy of the British lines engaged in the trade over a period of years should become a necessity.

In a report made to the Advisory Committee on Commercial Intelligence of the Board of Trade, after a visit to Mesopotamia in 1907, Sir George Lloyd pointed out various other methods by which the Ger-

mans had secured trade. These may be summarized as follows:—

(1) The Germans realised the fact that the main demand in the East was for cheap goods of low quality.

(2) They closely studied native habits and language, and made personal acquaintance with their customers, so that they could safely offer longer credits than their rivals.

(3) They were willing to deal in any and every article, to take small orders, and to have new patterns made to please customers.

(4) They obtained more elaborate show-cases and ranges of samples than the English.

(5) They quoted in local currency, written in Arabic, and made full use of the natural aptitude of the Armenian and Jew for commercial transactions.

(6) They were able, whatever the reason, to offer lower rates of freight by German ships than British merchants could offer by British lines.

Sir George Lloyd also suggested the following reasons for the failure of British firms to cope with foreign competition:—

(1) The British traders, satisfied with the profits which they were making in the cotton trade, and in the export of native products, would not take up small lines of new business, or experiment in the introduction of cheap goods at a small margin of profit.

(2) British merchandise was imitated shamelessly and openly.

(3) The British shipper and importer, whose dealings were mainly with Baghdad, appeared not to recognise fully that the volume of trade in Baghdad was largely at the mercy of the prevailing influences in Basra. Latterly, however, there had been a tendency on the part of the consignors to despatch wares to Basra for sale there in the event of a favourable market, or for despatch to Baghdad, if expedient.

(4) British firms overlooked the fact that cheaper Continental manufactures would not be easy to dislodge

if they acquired a footing in Mesopotamia, and might in time compete with British wares in Persia also.

(5) Dealers in the Baghdad market complained that English manufacturers would not send samples of cotton clothing to meet the demand for gaudy designs and colouring.

Sir George Lloyd recommended that British merchants should strengthen their position by more general trading, setting aside for a few years a portion of their profits for the purpose of the trade in hardware, fancy goods, and quincaillerie. They should insist upon cheap, low-class goods being manufactured for them, and, wherever possible, should co-operate in keeping the supply of country produce for export in British hands. Baghdad might be made an almost exclusively British market if the trading were all-round trading instead of being based, as formerly, on Manchester goods alone. Travellers should be sent out to report on local requirements, and catalogues printed in Arabic should be circulated. The experience gained by selling small quantities of cheap goods in this market would be very valuable as enabling firms to obtain extensive knowledge of the methods, currency, demands, &c., of the market, and to get in touch with the small traders. Fraudulent imitation might be prevented by some system of standard trade-mark. Advertisements should be printed in Arabic, in bright colours, with sketches of Eastern subjects in illustration of articles on sale. Every business communication should be in a language suitable to the country dealt with. Attention should be paid to the Constantinople market. The native buyer from provincial towns visits Constantinople annually to buy his year's stock, and is apt to deal with large wholesale establishments maintained by Germans, because he does not know his way about while in the capital, and finds it easier to buy all his supplies under one roof. Facilities should be given to buyers to see samples before they place their orders. Finally, British transport communications with the Persian Gulf should be maintained in an effective and satisfactory condition.

High rates for ocean and river freight have handicapped British trade in the past.

(2) Foreign

The external trade of Mesopotamia through the port of Basra for the period 1904-1913, as shown by the figures given in the Consular Reports, was as follows:—

Year.	Exports.	Imports.	Excess Exports.	Excess Imports.
	£	£	£	£
1904	1,305,781	1,260,709	45,072	—
1905	1,504,795	1,387,589	117,206	—
1906	1,644,220	1,511,545	132,675	—
1907	1,970,315	1,879,565	90,750	—
1908	1,783,972	2,411,568	—	627,596
1909	1,504,004	2,360,102	—	856,098
1910	1,668,624	2,634,596	—	965,972
1911	2,525,847	2,855,677	—	329,830
1912	3,246,560	2,637,809	608,751	—
1913	1,939,259	3,899,273	—	1,960,014

These figures, however, do not represent the volume of the foreign trade of Mesopotamia, for they do not take into account (*a*) the import and export trade of northern Mesopotamia with Europe, which normally enters or leaves Mesopotamia by Aleppo, Diarbekr, or Samsun, and the trade with Egypt and Arabia in live-stock across the Syrian Desert: no returns of this trade which would be of any value as a guide are obtainable; (*b*) the considerable trade between Mesopotamia and Persia *via* Khanikin and Kermanshah, some particulars of which are given on p. 90, under the trade of Baghdad. It is not claimed that the figures are either accurate or reliable; for instance, the method of arriving at the value of the import of cotton goods was altered in 1908, and from that date onwards these goods are priced 30 per cent. higher. As cotton goods normally form over 40 per cent. of the imports, the

alteration has an important bearing on the returns, but owing to the inefficiency of the Turkish Customs House system at Basra, it was impossible to obtain accurate returns there of the volume of trade, and the figures given were to a large extent obtained from private sources. Furthermore, any examination of the conditions of foreign trade in Mesopotamia and the important Persian transit trade is rendered difficult by the absolute lack of official information. Turkish customs statistics are too inaccurate to be of much value, and the information given in the British Consular Reports for Basra is meagre. Comparative statistics as between Great Britain and her competitors are not given there at all, and the effect of German competition upon British trade is not discussed, though this has been the great subject of interest and discussion among politicians and the local trading community from 1907 onwards. The figures given are, however, useful as showing (1) the marked development of Mesopotamian trade during the period immediately preceding the war, and (2) the impetus given to trade by the revolution of 1908, and by the entry on a large scale of Germany into the trade of the country in 1906.

In the period 1904-13, the years 1905, 1906, 1907, and 1910, were normal; 1904, 1909, and 1913, were abnormally bad, the first two owing to bad harvests or low water in the rivers, and 1913 owing to the dislocation caused by the Balkan wars; the harvest of 1911 was so exceptionally good as to affect that and the following year, and traders further benefited in 1911 by exceptionally high prices. The very large increase of imports in 1913 was due to the construction of the Baghdad Railway, which caused the imports of iron and steel goods to rise from an average of £34,000 for the period 1909-12 to £1,207,882 for 1913.

A large proportion both of the export and import trade through Basra is consigned from or destined for Baghdad, as is shown by the following figures taken from the Consular returns :—

Baghdad.	Imports	Exports.
	£	£
1906	1,856,849	847,392
1907	2,312,380	710,288
1908	1,912,360	555,802
1909	2,152,732	765,388
1910	2,736,414	853,963
1911	2,661,401	746,824
1912	2,822,817	930,760
1913	2,914,536	755,501

The Consular Reports give very few weights of imports to and exports from Baghdad, so that no accurate assessment is possible of the relation which the Baghdad trade bears to the whole trade through Basra; and it must be remembered that values of imports and exports (as compared with Basra) are affected by the high rate of river freight.

A very important quantity of the trade at Baghdad annually consists of imports to and exports from Persia *via* Khanikin. The chief imports to Persia from Turkey, as given in the trade returns for Kermanshah (almost all of which pass through Baghdad), consist of sugar, tea, cotton goods, indigo, and tobacco, of which over 75 per cent. normally come from Great Britain or India. The chief exports from Persia to Turkey are carpets, gums, silk, opium, and skins. Imports to Persia normally average about £1,000,000, and exports from Persia about £250,000.

The following table, taken from the Consular Reports, gives approximate returns of the share in the trade of Mesopotamia enjoyed by Germany, Russia, and the United States from 1906 to 1913. These are the only particulars available:—

Year.	EXPORTS[1] from Basra.			IMPORTS[1] to Basra.	
	Germany.	Russia.	United States.	Germany.	Russia.
	£	£	£	£	£
1906	100,900	—	—	108,650	—
1907	153,082	57,320	—	168,000	42,848
1908	156,019	31,706	91,165	235,530	65,676
1909	83,239	67,606	{ 130,499 / 116,619 }	{ 228,700 / 228,863 }	50,838
1910	{ 187,242 / 170,222 }	78,920	{ 138,250 / 161,593 }	315,563	51,584
1911	294,142	113,368	134,388	397,961	60,199
1912	375,760	123,842	•128,940	528,415	76,658
1913	226,112	158,505	171,800	1,957,489	98,129

It will be seen that both in the export and import trade Germany made great strides during the period. The export trade consisted very largely of grain, seeds, and dates. Imports were sugar, iron and steel, cheap glassware, soap, provisions, matches, and German imitations of Manchester goods. In 1912 and 1913 the imports included material for the Baghdad Railway. The value for 1913 was probably not less than £900,000.

Russian trade also increased, but to a less extent, the exports being chiefly dates, skins, carpets, silkware, and ghi, and the imports oil, glass, wood, provisions, and furniture. The imports from the United States consist almost entirely of oil, for which no figures are available. The exports were dates, millet, liquorice, seeds, and carpets.

Other countries which have made progress in trade with Mesopotamia are Belgium, Austria, Italy, and Japan. Belgian imports came almost entirely in German bottoms, and trade was nearly all confined to sugar, and iron and steel. Austria made steady progress in wool, linen and silk goods, hosiery, hardware,

[1] Alternative figures are given in brackets.

&c. Japan was sending silk and cotton goods, tea and cheap fancy goods. Since war broke out she has largely increased her trade in the country in every direction, and will prove an important competitor in the future. The trade of France in Mesopotamia has decreased considerably, her large import of sugar having been replaced by Belgian sugar.

The bulk of the trade of Mesopotamia is still in the hands of Great Britain and India, but British trade has tended more and more to confine itself to special lines, and Germany has taken full advantage of the failure of traders to study and supply the expanding demands of a country advancing towards civilisation.

The staple trade from Great Britain was in Manchester goods, but this was being persistently and successfully attacked by Germany; only in machinery was Great Britain making really good progress against all competitors. India takes large quantities of Mesopotamian exports of dates, ghi, opium, horses, hides, &c., and supplies large quantities of cotton goods, indigo, silk, and (when the local crop fails) rice. Indian trade has suffered very much from bad packing and thefts, and from damage in transit between India and Mesopotamia.

(a) *Exports*

A list of the chief exports from Mesopotamia will be found in Table III of the Appendix (p. 130). They consist very largely of agricultural or animal products. Other important exports are carpets, gall-nuts, gums, and liquorice. Of agricultural products the most important exports are dates, cereals, seeds, and opium.

Dates.—For the period 1907-1913 the weight of the annual export of dates has been about 60,000 tons, averaging a value of over £450,000. The bulk of the export goes normally to the United Kingdom, other important markets being the United States, Russia, Egypt, Tunis, Oran, and Australia.

Cereals.—Of these the barley trade is the most important, and has in recent years exceeded the combined

trade in wheat, rice, paddy (unhusked rice), and seeds. Before the inauguration of the Hamburg-Amerika line at Basra the United Kingdom took almost the whole of the export of cereals, but in recent years a very large part has been diverted to Hamburg. Jedda is also a considerable buyer of Mesopotamian cereals. The Consular Reports give the following figures for the export of grain for the years 1911-13:—

—	1911.	1912.	1913.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
To London	90,000	92,700	20,350
Hamburg	78,000	58,000	4,800
Antwerp	2,000	9,300	—
Jedda	18,000	40,000	20,100

The trade in cereals has in the past suffered from transport difficulties, which caused great delays in getting the crops to Basra, from the lack of proper granaries for the storage of corn pending shipment, which involved heavy losses owing to the deterioration of the grain, and from the dirty condition in which grain was shipped. (*See* p. 76.)

Seeds.—There is a considerable export of many kinds of seeds, including coriander, cummin, fennel, hoortman (a kind of oat), linseed, poppy, quince, mahleb, and alfalfa. The statistics of exports of seeds from Basra represent an average annual value of £119,000 for the period 1906-1912, but the figure includes maize and millet, and the latter no doubt forms a large proportion of the total.

Opium.—The export of opium is important, and averaged £117,000 annually for the ten years ending in 1913. The opium is almost entirely in transit from Persia, and is shipped to Hong-Kong. Practically the whole trade is in British hands.

The chief animal products are live-stock, ghi, hides and skins, wool, and mohair.

Horses are all exported to India. The trade has fluctuated in the past, owing to various restrictions placed upon it from time to time, but has been steadier in recent years. The horses exported are almost entirely Arab, though there are also a few Persian and Kurdish ponies. The average of the trade is about 1,750 animals of an annual value of £50,000.

Other animals are exported *via* Syria or Erzerum, and do not appear in the Basra returns; no recent figures for this trade are available.

Ghi, a kind of clarified butter, is exported *via* Basra to Bombay, the Red Sea, and the Levant. It has practically no sale amongst Europeans. The trade is on the increase. There is also a considerable overland trade with Syria, of which no particulars are available.

Hides and Skins.—This is an important branch of trade, and the returns of exports *via* Basra do not include the whole of the trade, a good deal of which goes overland to Constantinople and Russia. Sheep and lamb, goat, fox, and stone-marten skins, and ox and cow hides, are the articles of this class most commonly dealt with at Basra. The trade in untanned skins has decreased in recent years. The skins are exported to England, France, Germany, Austria, the United States, and the Levant ports, as well as to Russia and other parts of Turkey.

Wool.—The average annual export of wool from Basra amounted for the period 1904-13 to £238,000. The wool is of three kinds. The Arab wool, clipped from the Arab sheep reared in the plains, has a crinkly staple of fine fibre and a bright appearance. Karadi wool, clipped from the Kurdish hill sheep, has a long, coarse, and hairy staple, and is chiefly used for carpets and other heavy goods. Awassi wool, clipped from sheep which are a cross between the Arab and Kurdish sheep, possesses some of the characteristics of both.

Mohair is clipped from the Angora goat. The value of the export from Basra has decreased in recent years, and averaged only £11,400 in value for

the period 1909-13 as against £28,000 for the previous five years. The export mostly goes to Great Britain, Germany, and France, and to other parts of Turkey.

Among miscellaneous exports are carpets, gall-nuts, gum tragacanth, and liquorice.

Carpets.—This branch of trade represents a value of about £52,000 annually. The import of Persian carpets from Kermanshah fell off very much between 1910-14, and the trade is now mostly in carpets manufactured in Mesopotamia. The chief buyers are the United States, Great Britain, Egypt, France, Germany, and India.

Gall-nuts are produced by the eggs deposited by the gall-fly on the oak-trees growing in the hills of northern Mesopotamia and Kurdistan, and are used in tanning. They are collected by the tribes, and are sold to dealers in Mosul and other towns in the vicinity of the hills. Their commercial value depends upon their colour; blue galls are most valued for tanning and form the bulk of the export; greens are less valued, but are exported to a small extent; whites were not exported at all until Germany took to buying them. The value of the trade is increasing, and in 1912 reached a total of £150,000, as compared with an average of £44,000 for the previous five years. Germany was the largest buyer.

Gum tragacanth is obtained from the *Astragalus*, a bush which grows in northern Persia, Kurdistan, and northern Mesopotamia. The better-class gums come from the Persian frontier and Persia, the gums obtained in northern Mesopotamia being of low quality. The collection is in the hands of the nomad or semi-nomad tribes, and the incision of the bark necessary to obtain the gum is not done scientifically, with the result that full quantity is never obtained. The export from Basra has averaged £21,000 in recent years. The bulk goes to London and Marseilles, but recently Russia has become a buyer of importance.

Liquorice.—The liquorice plant grows wild in patches all along the banks of the Euphrates, from

Meskene to Diwanie, and along the Tigris, from Mosul to Kut el-Amara. It is also found on the Khabur and Diala Rivers, and on the Shatt el-Hai. The root is dug by Arabs, and is brought to receiving stations, where it is weighed and then cured. Later it is shipped down to Basra, where it is pressed into bales for export. About 85 per cent. of the export goes to the United States. The trade, which annually amounts to about £55,000, is almost entirely in the hands of Messrs. MacAndrews & Forbes, of Baghdad and Basra.

(b) *Imports*

A list of the chief imports will be found in Table IV of the Appendix (p. 131).

Cotton.—The import consists chiefly of cotton piece-goods. The statistics seem to indicate that this branch of imports doubled between 1904 and 1913, but the impression given is not accurate, because in 1908 the basis of valuation of cotton imports for the purpose of statistics was changed, and an addition of 30 per cent. was made to the import price. Until Germany appeared in the Gulf trade, the import of cotton goods was entirely in the hands of Great Britain and India, and even immediately before the war Manchester was still providing more than ten times the amount supplied by any other country except India. Austria comes third, but usually considerably below India.

Sugar.—Down to 1905 nearly all the sugar imported came from France and Great Britain in British bottoms. After 1906 the Hamburg-Amerika line began to push Belgian sugar, which was imported from Antwerp at a freight of 20*s.*, as against 35*s.* per ton charged for French brands shipped at Marseilles, and by this means, in the space of a few years, practically captured the whole of the trade. Austrian and Belgian sugars were popular mainly because they were cheaper, but also because they were harder and less liable to injury by rough transport. The total import of sugar increased from a value of £121,000 in 1904 to £721,000 in 1913.

Iron and Steel.—This branch of trade is still comparatively unimportant, averaging in normal years only about £21,000. By 1914 the trade was almost entirely in Belgian, German, and Swedish goods, and British goods had been ousted. A large portion of the trade was in iron girders, which are largely supplanting wooden beams for building purposes in Baghdad and elsewhere; the demand for these was almost entirely supplied by Belgium. The great increase in 1913 in imports of iron and steel was mainly for use on the Baghdad Railway. Both Germany and France had, in 1914, sent representatives to study the market.

Machinery.—This branch of trade is mostly in the hands of Great Britain, though Belgium, Germany, India, France, Austria-Hungary, and the United States also contribute. In recent years the trade has included a large number of oil engines and centrifugal pumps for irrigation. In 1911 £25,000 worth of machinery came from Europe for the Government military factory at Baghdad. At Baghdad, in 1912, there were 5 ice-machines, 24 flour-mills, and 6 rice-mills, working with British machinery. A British firm had set up an engineering workshop, and had also started motor-cars and 'buses daily between Baghdad and Bakuba (31 miles). German success in sewing-machines has been considerable. There will no doubt be a large opening for trade in machinery in the near future, particularly in motor ploughs, threshing-machines, and other agricultural machinery.

Wood.—The chief import under this heading is date-boxes. At one time these came almost entirely from Bukovina, and were shipped at Fiume, but recently Sweden and Norway have begun to compete. The wood is imported in cut lengths ready to be nailed together in Basra. The transport of date-boxes was before the war falling more and more into German hands, as many as 173,000 being carried by them in 1912. A trial shipment from Mysore (State Forest Department) proved unsuccessful, as the boxes were too heavy, the workmanship was inadequate, and the

Department could neither turn out sufficiently large quantities nor compete with German freights.

For boat-building Malabar wood is chiefly used, and is imported roughly sawn into the shapes required, as sawing is very costly in Mesopotamia. Planks for other purposes came largely from Russia (Odessa wood) and India. In 1913 Russia supplied nearly all, owing to an increase in the price of Indian teak. There has been a large increase in the import of planks, due to building activity in Baghdad and elsewhere.

Poles and rafters were originally brought from Kurdistan, but the Kurd hillsides being now nearly stripped of timber, cheap Russian wood was being imported in its place. India should be able to export her wood advantageously to Mesopotamia in the native sailing-vessels which go to fetch dates.

Woollen Goods.—In 1906 a considerable impetus was given to the import of these goods owing to their introduction into Persia by the Persian pilgrims. Their use became increasingly popular in the succeeding years, and the trade was recognised as capable of great development. The chief sources of supply were the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, and Austria-Hungary, the three latter sending cheaper qualities at prices with which the British manufacturer could not compete. German half-mixed woollen cloth was especially popular with the poorer classes.

In 1913 Italy supplanted the United Kingdom as the greatest supplier of woollen goods.

Yarn and Twist.—Normally about 7,000 packages are imported, of the value of about £70,000, the suppliers being the United Kingdom, Germany, India, and Italy.

Gunnies, made of jute, and used for the packing of goods for mule and camel transport, are imported from India. The amount imported varies with the export of grain. The average value of the import is about £75,000. In 1911 it rose to £111,000.

Petroleum was formerly imported almost wholly from Russia, but a shortage in the supply of Russian

oil in 1906 gave American and Austrian low-grade oils a chance to get a footing; more than half the cases imported at Basra in that year were American. In 1907 American and Austro-Hungarian oils were rapidly advancing in favour at the expense of Russia. In 1909 there was still sharp competition between American, Austrian, and Russian oils; Russia sent 45,000 cases, America 35,000, and Austria 22,000. In 1910 there was a decline in the import of Austrian oil, which in the following year ceased altogether. In 1911 two oil steamers brought over American petroleum. The growing demand for oil engines and the use of oil lamps were the chief factors in the increased consumption. In 1913 the Anglo-Persian Oil Company reached the producing stage, with the result that the American imports dropped from over 150,000 cases in 1912 to 66,000 in 1914, in which year the Anglo-Persian Company provided more than 50 per cent. of the country's requirements.

Coal.—The coal imported is chiefly Welsh, but a little comes sometimes from India. The burning of bricks for the Hindie barrage led to a largely increased consumption in 1910 and 1911, and the increase of river launches and establishment of arsenal stores also led to an increased demand.

Rice is imported wholly from India. In 1909 the Mesopotamian rice crop failed, and a much larger quantity was imported than in the preceding year. The quantity imported has remained high, in spite of a large increase of export in the succeeding years. In 1913 another and more complete failure of the rice crop led to an abnormally large import. The export of rice and paddy is usually largely in excess of the import.

Coffee.—An average of 15,000 bags is annually imported, at an average cost of £53,000. The price has risen considerably of late years. A good deal is now exported to Persia, but Persian and Kurdish troubles checked this in 1913. Indian coffee has been completely driven out of the market by the cheaper

Brazilian brand, which was imported in great quantities, largely through Great Britain. A little coffee was also obtained from Germany and Arabia, and Germany also supplied some Brazilian brands. Coffee is slowly being supplanted in favour of tea.

Indigo.—The value of the average annual import for the last eight years was £20,000, but the trade has steadily decreased, that for 1906 amounting in value to £24,000, and that for 1913 to £15,000. All is imported from India, chiefly for Baghdad. The natives are beginning to prefer printed European goods to the cloths dyed at Baghdad, and synthetic dyes imported from Germany proved to be cheaper than indigo.

Aniline dyes were also imported directly and indirectly from Germany, and had entirely supplanted madder, which was formerly imported from Persia.

Matches.—Before the war Swedish matches almost had a monopoly of the market, Belgium, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Japan furnishing only small quantities. The trade was originally done through Germany, but was latterly done directly with Sweden. Persia was a considerable importer. Japan is now supplying the country with large quantities of a cheap but unsatisfactory match.

Copper was imported from the United Kingdom, India, Belgium, and France to the extent of about 8,200 bundles, value £45,000 annually. Most of it went to Baghdad to make cooking utensils. A good deal is now being imported from Japan.

Leather and Leather Goods.—The import fluctuates a good deal. France has long been established as the chief supplier of leather at Mosul. The United States, very successful at Beirut, was gradually extending her leather supplies over the north. Cheap leather for common shoes came mainly from India. China and Singapore sometimes supply buffalo hides for shoes. The United Kingdom, Belgium, and India did all the leather trade through Basra in 1909, but since that date Great Britain has rapidly lost ground. In 1913 leather supplies came from France, Belgium, the

United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, India, Germany, and the United States.

Provisions (tinned meats, &c.) were obtained from India, the United Kingdom, and Germany. The average annual value for the six years from 1906 to 1912 was about £75,000; but the general scarcity in 1913 led to an increased import of provisions, viz., £100,000 worth.

Spices are imported wholly from India. The annual value of the import for some 11 years past has been about £27,000; there was a fall in 1913 on account of general trade depression.

Stationery.—The import of stationery, after remaining at a uniform level for four years, rose in 1907 from £20,000 to £50,000, a figure which it has not attained since, having kept an average of a little under £40,000. It was supplied by Germany and Austria-Hungary, with a little from the United Kingdom, and German imports were increasing steadily up to 1914.

Tea.—The value of the tea import steadily rose from 1904 to 1908, since which date it has remained almost stationary. India has always been the principal supplier; Russia formerly sent some, but has ceased to do so; China has recently done a considerable trade. In 1913 India sent 82½ per cent., China 17 per cent., and the remaining ½ per cent. came from Japan. The total value in 1913 was £48,986. Consumption has been steadily increasing of late years among the Arabs.

Tobacco is nearly all imported from Persia, though a very little comes from Constantinople. In 1907 the import showed a notable increase, which was not maintained in the three following years. The value of the tobacco imported in 1912 was £27,600, but in 1913 this fell to £8,970, probably on account of the insecurity of traffic and the general trade depression.

(D) FINANCE

(1) *Public Finance*

This subject is discussed in *Anatolia*, No. 59 of this series.

(2) *Currency*

Turkish currency is discussed in detail in *Turkey in Europe*, No. 16 of this series, but the subject requires some notice here owing to the complication which, under the Turkish regime, was caused by the large use of Persian and, to a less extent, of Indian coinage at Basra and even at Baghdad.

Before the war the coinage both at Baghdad and Basra was based upon the Turkish lira: one Turkish lira=100 gold piastres=4,000 paras. The medjidieh (the 20-piastre piece) was reckoned officially as worth 19 gold piastres, and was chiefly used in payment of customs duties and other taxes. The par exchange to sterling was 110 Turkish lira=£100 sterling. Banking accounts were kept in liras (100 piastres=1 lira), but for business transactions the number of piastres in the lira varied, 103½ being usually reckoned in wholesale transactions and 108 in retail.

Small coins were very scarce, and their use was practically confined to revenue purposes, so that it was necessary to employ the silver and copper coinage of other countries in giving change in bazaar purchases, although such coins were nominally prohibited. The foreign coins chiefly used were the Persian kran, the Indian rupee, and the sovereign, the rates of which were fixed weekly according to supply and demand.

At Basra the Persian coinage was even more in use than at Baghdad, and Indian silver was also current, though occasionally impounded under the regulations. Certain fictitious coins were also used as units of computation in particular classes of transactions, with a view to lessening the inconvenience caused by fluctuations in the value of actual coins.

Since the British occupation Indian currency has been established in the country, the exchange of the lira being provisionally fixed at Rs. 13–18, the Turkish coinage being accepted in payment of revenue. All liras received were kept in deposit, as there were obvious objections to permitting Turkish coins to circulate; and at the present time the circulation of Indian coins and notes is on much the same footing in the occupied part of Mesopotamia as in India. Indian notes have been absorbed in large quantities, the rate of exchange is maintained at a regular level, and merchants are thereby enabled to work on a narrower margin of profit. New notes are put into circulation as frequently as possible, and every effort is made to meet promptly a demand for notes or cash when it arises. Merchants are in the habit of sending their remittances by means of notes, and at one time notes were at 1 per cent. premium at Amara. Every effort is made to provide sufficient quantities of small change by issuing packets of mixed change as part of rupee payments.

The wide use of the Persian kran, coupled with the wide fluctuations of its exchange value, have been a source of embarrassment to trade in the past, and it is important that means should be found of steadying the exchange, in view of the importance to Mesopotamia of the Persian markets.

(3) *Banking*

Before the outbreak of war, the only banks of importance established in Mesopotamia were the Imperial Ottoman Bank, with branches at Baghdad, Mosul, and Basra, and the Eastern Bank, which had recently opened a branch at Baghdad. Banks were indeed scarcely used for the purpose of trade, and their place was partially filled by *saraps*. These, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, were mere money-changers, but they acted as private bankers, taking charge of cash or securities, against which the customer could draw by chit. Trade credit was carried on also by means of

commission houses, which collected orders from all quarters, taking payment from the traders by means of a deposit with the order and by a Kompiala bond for the balance, the bonds being redeemed by instalments. The Kompiala bond, which is a promissory note payable at date, could be discounted at rates of from 6 to 12 per cent., and was a good security in certain hands. The Imperial Ottoman Bank, for example, could put in motion the legal machinery to protest and recover; in some other hands the bond might be a source of expense.

At the present time (1918) there are three large banks represented in Mesopotamia, viz., the Imperial Ottoman Bank, with branches at Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul; the Eastern Bank, with branches at Basra, Amara, and Baghdad; and the Imperial Bank of Persia, also with branches or agents at Basra, Amara, and Baghdad. The development of Mesopotamia after the war should create opportunities for a wide employment of capital in banking business of the trading kind. Agriculture in particular is in especial need of financial support. It has hitherto been an established practice for the cultivator to borrow money on the security of his crop before it has matured, giving a Kompiala, bearing a high rate of interest, as security. There is probably a good opening for the introduction of some system of agricultural banks on recognised lines, and this question should engage the early attention of those concerned with the government of the country.

(E) GENERAL REMARKS

The future economic possibilities of Mesopotamia have formed the subject of the following reports made to the Governments of either Great Britain or India in recent years:—

(*a*) Report upon the Conditions and Prospects of British Trade in Mesopotamia, by Sir George Lloyd, published in 1908.

(*b*) Report on the Development of Mesopotamia, with special reference to the Regeneration of the River Systems, by Sir George Buchanan, K.C.I.E, M.Inst.C.E., published in 1917.

(*c*) The Prospects of British Trade in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf, by R. E. Holland and J. H. Wilson, published in 1917.

(*d*) Report on the Future Development of the Port of Basra and its communications by Land and Water, by Sir George Buchanan, K.C.I.E., M.Inst.C.E., published in 1917.

These reports have dealt at considerable length with various aspects of the problems involved, and summaries of some of the conclusions arrived at have already been given.

The future of Mesopotamia depends upon four conditions:—

(1) Security of administration, and a sympathetic attitude on the part of the Government to the economic needs of the country.

(2) The increase of the cultivable area by the creation of a system of irrigation capable of expansion as the needs of the population require.

(3) The capacity of the inhabitants to undertake the heavy work which the proper development of the country will involve.

(4) The improvement of means of communication.

Of these conditions the first may be assumed, and the question of the improvement of means of communications has been dealt with under the headings of navigation and railways. The economic capacity of the inhabitants is at present an unknown factor, but the conclusions arrived at by competent observers (see pp. 42, 68) are supported by the following extracts from a report on the prosperity of the Euphrates which appeared in the *Times* of May 1, 1918:—

> During the summer we have been at work on the irrigation scheme connected with the Hindieh barrage. The barrage, which was designed by Sir William Willcocks and constructed by Sir John Jackson's firm, was finished before the war, but the Turk neglected to profit by it. The canalisation work connected with it was left incomplete, and the area to be cultivated was never brought under irrigation.
>
> This year nearly a hundred canals on the Hilleh branch, which had fallen into disuse, have been dug out, 300,000 acres have been brought under cultivation, and there is promise of the greatest harvest in the memory of man, possibly the greatest since the days of Nebuchadnezzar.
>
> But the Shatt el-Hilleh developments are only part of the scheme. For several years the land on both banks of the Hindieh branch below the barrage down to Kifil has been out of cultivation, as the canals provided in the Willcocks scheme to irrigate that area were neglected. We were not long in getting to work at them. In May, as soon as the Tigris operations were completed, we began to open posts on the Euphrates. The work on the canals was started early in June; they were finished by the end of October, and the ground they irrigate is now under cultivation.
>
> Needless to say, the Arab cultivators welcome the new régime. Their property, which has lain fallow for years, will become rich and profitable. All the summer and autumn they were busy getting their water channels clear. Below the barrage some 14,000 Arabs were engaged in making the new canals and clearing the old ones. Nearly every able-bodied man in the district is working for us.
>
> The Arabs are an eminently sensible people. The Turks, when they evacuated the district, were for destroying the Hindieh barrage, but the tribesmen preserved it. The Arab knew the Turk would do nothing for him, and he would not pay him revenue if he could help it; but the collection of revenue on the Euphrates no longer calls for an armed force. Paying taxes has become an investment. For there is no cultivator in

the world who will not lend a hand at getting water into his own fields. The Arabs appreciate the art of irrigation, though they do not excel in it; and we have come to them on the Euphrates as fertilisers of the soil.

The cardinal question in relation to the future of Mesopotamia is the development of irrigation.[1] At the time Sir William Willcocks was in Mesopotamia, the only evidence of the prosperity which in ancient times made the country famous were the traces of the great cities, which in the time of Herodotus studded the country, and the silt banks of countless canals, which had been used in the past to make the country from Beled to the Persian Gulf one continuous forest of verdure. From that point down-stream the greater part of the country consisted at first of nothing but bare plains of clay, ridged and furrowed with the remains of ancient irrigation channels, and destitute of all vegetation except leguminous thorn-bushes or jungles of liquorice near the rivers, with occasional belts of poplar or willow. Farther south, salt lands and marshes increased, but of cultivation or date palms there was hardly a vestige, except here and there by rivers or canals. Only along the lower reaches of the Euphrates and the Shatt el-Arab was there any appearance of prosperity. The general impression was one of blight, failure, and neglect.

The investigations of Sir William Willcocks led him to believe that, if the available water supply could be properly utilised, it would permit of the irrigation of 7 million acres of winter crops, and of summer crops 1 million acres of rice, or 3 million acres of millet, sesame, cotton, &c. It should, however, be noted that Sir William Willcocks held the view, which has been controverted by other experts, that the full development of irrigation in Mesopotamia is incompatible with

[1] For further observations on this question, see above, pp. 41, 56, 72.

navigation.[1] Whether his calculations are accurate or not, there is no doubt that, given satisfactory irrigation, it will be possible to render available for cultivation areas far in excess of the present requirements and capacity of the inhabitants.

What will be probably more difficult will be the harmonisation of the costs of irrigation and the revenue from cultivation. Upon this point the views of Rohrbach, set out in *Die Bagdadbahn*, are of interest. Assuming that the irrigation and economic development of Mesopotamia would fall to Germany, he suggested the formation of a German canal and corn-exporting company, which would undertake the irrigation of the country, charging for the water supply 10 per cent. of the value of each harvest. In order to avoid disputes with the Government, the company would arrange to substitute a fixed annual payment for the State taxes, making itself, instead of the landowners, responsible for these to the Government. It would then claim from the small owners one-fifth or one-quarter of the harvest. Plenty of tenants would in all probability be forthcoming, for corn cultivation and speculation are not new to the richer Arabs. The Sultan himself would probably be the first and largest owner, and the workers on the Baghdad Railway could be settled as colonists in suitable places along its length. Rohrbach calculated that 300,000 to 400,000 tons of corn could be raised, which would be worth from 15 to 20 millions of marks on the spot, and three times that amount in the European markets. He estimated that the company would require a capital of about 30 million marks, and that the cost of irrigation would be about 1 mark per hectare.

As regards crops, it should be easy to extend the cultivation of those already grown. But it is chiefly round

[1] "You cannot leave the waters of the rivers in their channels and irrigate the country with them. For navigation you may substitute railway transport; for the purpose of irrigation nothing can take the place of water."—*The Geographical Journal*, August 1912, p. 144.

the possibilities of Mesopotamia as a cotton-growing country that hopes have been centred. It was upon this that Germany was counting. She wished, it had been said, to make herself independent of other supplies by turning Mesopotamia into one huge cotton-field. Rohrbach quoted the case of Turkestan, whence Russia had recently imported 600,000 to 700,000 bales of cotton annually. He suggested that German companies should obtain large concessions, which they could let out in small parcels to natives. Germany, it was thought, should look to Mesopotamia for cotton if her own colonies failed her, and in 1912 the Baghdad Railway Company was reported to be already encouraging cotton-growing in the north.

Mr. S. P. Foaden, late of the Khedivial Agricultural Society, gives the following as the climatic advantages which Mesopotamia possesses for cotton growing:—

(1) The length of the growing season—six or seven months of high and rising temperature. Both Egyptian and American cotton suffer from an excess of cold during the period.
(2) No sudden fall of temperature during the period.
(3) A fall of temperature after growth is completed, which helps to ripen the fruit.
(4) The absence of summer rain.
(5) Mesopotamian cotton would receive the greatest moisture at the time when moisture is most needed, viz., from March to June.

Mesopotamia is, it is true, hotter and drier than most cotton-producing countries, but not more so than Upper Egypt, where cotton is now successfully grown.

The soil of Mesopotamia contains a good proportion of phosphorus, potash, and nitrogen, but a very large percentage of lime (12 to 14·03 per cent.), the effect of which on cotton-growing cannot be satisfactorily foretold, although cotton is cultivated in some parts of America where the percentage is higher. The soil, a deep loam of a light nature, not retentive of

water, but needing a plentiful supply, is precisely the kind most suitable for cotton.

Cotton-growing in Egypt brings in 7 to 8 per cent., but in Egypt there is good communication and a teeming population. Returns in Mesopotamia would be slower, and the labour supply is much more limited. It is also considerably cheaper, but the natives would expect to receive a proportion of the crop.

Other directions in which expansion has been suggested are—

(1) In the natural products of the country, i.e., gall-nuts, liquorice, and gum tragacanth.
(2) In the export of dried fruits.
(3) In the trade in wool. It must be remembered that sheep-farming is the natural occupation of the Arabs, and is to-day the principal source of livelihood of the nomad and semi-nomad tribes, and irrigation schemes must be conceived so as to conserve for afforestation and pasturage large areas in addition to those under cultivation. The possibilities of sheep-farming in Mesopotamia are prodigious, since not only the wool but also the skins are known and approved in European markets, and the quality could doubtless be improved considerably if expert knowledge were available.

Under the head of industries small development is to be looked for until much more is known about the mineral resources of Mesopotamia than is known to-day, and the country will remain for a long time essentially agricultural.

APPENDIX

TABLE I.—EXPORTS TO PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES FROM BAGHDAD DURING THE YEARS 1909–13.

—	1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	Value.	Percentage of Total Value.	Value.	Percentage of Total Value.	Value.	Percentage of Total Value.	Value.	Percentage of Total Value.	Value.	Percentage of Total Value.
	£		£		£		£		£	
United Kingdom	255,744	33·4	330,361	38·6	284,347	38·6	285,620	30·7	246,001	32·6
United States	135,946	17·7	155,049	18·1	95,520	12·3	120,646	13	139,223	18·4
France	117,540	15·3	132,131	15·4	113,539	15·2	222,825	24	146,532	19·4
China	104,029	13·5	61,540	..	81,773	10·9	5,744	..	60,182	..
Turkey	45,469	..	63,379	..	62,022	..	..	..	..	..
India	35,400		25,938	..	32,906	..	159,441	17·1	30,491	..
Germany	28,644	..	30,441	..	36,915	..	38,239	..	46,997	..
Egypt	23,880	..	20,340	..	16,291	..	30,057	..	4,176	..
Austria-Hungary	13,684	..	14,591	..	11,200	.	16,792	..	20,694	..
Netherlands	3,469	..	3,069	..	1,916	..	1,396	..	3,254	..
Belgium	941	..	3,077	..	10,395	..		..	23,610	..
Other countries	642	..	13,097	..	—	..	—	..	34,341	..
Total	765,388		853,963	..	746,824	..	930,760	..	755,501	..

TABLE II.

IMPORTS FROM PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES TO BAGHDAD DURING THE YEARS 1908–1913.

	1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	Value.	Percentage of total value.	Value.	Percentage of total value.	Value.	Percentage of total value.	Value.	Percentage of total value.	Value.	Percentage of total value.	Value.	Percentage of total value.
	£		£		£		£		£		£	
United Kingdom ..	931,424	48·1	1,201,316	55·8	1,317,762	48·5	1,199,597	45·1	1,415,288	50·1	1,314,138	45·1
India, China, Japan	465,163	24·0	461,668	21·0	664,147	24·2	740,565	27·8	666,135	23·6	572,761	19·6
Germany	49,484	..	36,705	..	53,705	..	91,060	..	115,725	..	144,115	..
Austria-Hungary ..	97,666	..	123,312	..	180,011	..	232,391	..	206,801	..	264,234	..
Belgium	81,756	..	109,764	..	211,835	..	183,921	..	176,806	..	328,719	..
France..	184,416	..	120,199	..	203,284	..	72,998	..	64,005	..	82,176	..
China	—	..	—	..	—	..	6,960	..	40,760	..	37,263	..
Russia.. ..	14,085	..	26,334	..	13,260	..	9,122	..	34,885	..	20,496	..
Turkey	36,396	..	36,868	..	54,510	..	46,187	..	34,540	..	32,313	..
Japan	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	7,382	..	4,739	..
Sweden	—	..	3,315	..	18,924	..	10,975	..	5,021	..	21,911	..
Egypt	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	3,921	..	—	..
Netherlands	1,753	..	623	..	255	..	230	..	3,610	..	7,801	..
Italy	3,445	..	7,673	..	1,900	..	15,242	..	300	..	29,341	..
United States.. ..	1,685	..	215	..	806	..	6,864	..	9,262	..	8,045	..
Other countries ..	45,087	..	24,740	..	16,015	..	45,289	..	38,376	..	45,984	..
Total	1,912,360	..	2,152,732	..	2,736,414	..	2,661,401	..	2,822,817	..	2,914,036	..

Statistics of the import of India, China, and Japan are not given separately before 1911.

Table III.—PRINCIPAL EXPORTS FROM BASRA.

—	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Barley	217,719	226,062	192,737	426,079	370,977	82,788	220,954	772,025	1,118,490	362,690
Carpets	48,300	41,338	37,325	33,480	34,230	86,520	80,384	76,224	35,008	47,530
Dates	312,767	345,184	436,512	438,410	385,617	414,700	423,233	456,795	471,119	582,074
Gall-nuts	49,813	51,727	49,538	36,090	33,106	33,287	47,600	71,056	152,219	66,393
Ghi	25,717	33,273	25,371	30,226	12,022	31,617	25,409	86,230	54,038	59,933
Gum	30,732	30,716	40,016	17,408	24,623	20,844	17,368	27,536	26,432	19,528
Hair and Mohair	34,976	32,296	32,360	22,608	20,032	13,736	11,064	10,480	11,928	12,072
Hides and Skins	54,822	62,512	65,059	46,590	31,488	56,574	54,258	53,070	46,056	57,594
Horses	53,640	49,764	43,525	66,700	55,425	51,075	53,075	36,500	35,325	43,725
Liquorice Root	23,659	48,957	27,477	43,337	25,932	48,778	47,476	44,530	13,052	36,521
Opium	107,200	111,100	110,700	151,600	90,900	128,800	125,300	117,500	97,600	137,500
Rice	12,755	8,525	8,589	23,950	20,370	19,285	12,584	17,589	16,684	128
Paddy	—	—	44,490	91,658	65,598	30,375	65,823	109,501	324,980	19,122
Seeds	87,588	114,272	116,573	83,910	190,039	106,173	82,629	97,290	156,614	37,990
Wheat	40,683	76,163	106,675	208,647	241,093	11,531	66,907	195,339	243,054	10,069
Wool	182,502	243,696	250,273	182,364	123,368	288,022	253,651	246,449	303,030	310,744
Other articles	22,908	29,210	57,000	67,258	59,152	79,839	80,909	107,733	140,931	135,706
Total	1,305,781	1,504,795	1,644,220	1,970,315	1,783,972	1,504,004	1,668,624	2,525,847	3,246,560	1,939,259

Table IV.—PRINCIPAL IMPORTS INTO BASRA.

——	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cotton goods	504,300	631,700	592,700	781,200	1,065,925	1,079,400	1,104,810	1,128,470	1,028,195	745,955
Woollen goods	25,920	26,760	34,020	40,020	46,080	54,400	60,720	90,080	107,920	79,360
Coal	20,954	19,614	26,306	21,822	36,778	30,575	46,805	45,032	52,974	39,904
Coffee	51,152	52,393	57,263	50,340	45,696	53,456	54,911	72,688	58,540	33,080
Copper	27,172	29,444	33,136	29,364	48,912	48,342	50,526	51,540	47,778	54,168
Gunnies	58,128	73,548	82,314	84,950	86,862	65,816	83,134	111,027	95,784	76,992
Indigo	22,025	20,050	24,500	21,600	23,600	19,900	20,250	21,150	19,875	15,575
Iron and steel goods ..	19,539	15,472	17,480	17,427	15,907	23,734	39,923	54,677	20,325	1,207,882
Petroleum..	15,369	15,920	36,075	25,074	51,773	26,119	27,100	13,769	57,530	91,484
Machinery	11,108	11,284	13,764	11,916	15,140	24,590	47,439	59,275	64,830	96,873
Matches	18,639	18,540	25,392	26,367	20,352	14,373	21,315	22,368	20,838	16,878
Provisions..	46,434	44,292	47,706	53,058	102,456	71,937	68,439	74,886	80,385	100,562
Rice	14,662	13,441	9,992	6,205	4,470	20,446	25,680	24,608	18,792	126,371
Soap	11,500	10,006	10,448	10,288	11,796	11,342	11,754	11,856	12,460	9,158
Spices	27,326	27,120	26,502	28,579	28,915	28,951	28,330	27,668	26,888	19,791
Stationery..	23,440	23,296	20,433	51,506	39,150	33,510	38,172	41,310	38,154	30,360
Loaf sugar	77,274	84,521	110,145	67,090	115,969	58,486	221,382	361,196	230,195	240,100
Crushed sugar	44,012	43,666	58,885	184,324	179,284	300,654	227,631	172,961	62,032	480,999
Tea	16,890	18,172	20,732	25,401	28,512	22,609	22,752	24,431	23,846	12,404
Tobacco	24,415	20,500	23,160	32,745	25,610	21,630	29,240	28,255	27,600	8,970
Wood—										
For date-boxes	54,311	39,361	55,511	66,317	116,741	91,240	123,734	120,589	148,160	48,354
Building, &c.	6,970	7,709	27,322	29,274	54,657	37,658	22,342	33,337	70,092	86,911
Yarn and Twist	33,440	32,530	31,310	53,860	65,680	63,860	70,310	70,520	73,980	70,600
Other goods	105,729	108,250	126,449	160,838	181,303	157,074	187,897	193,984	250,636	206,542
Total	1,260,709	1,387,589	1,511,545	1,879,565	2,411,568	2,360,102	2,634,596	2,855,677	2,637,809	3,899,273

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MAPS

The map on the scale of 1 : 2,000,000, in one sheet, published by the Royal Geographical Society (1910), is the best general map of Mesopotamia.

The following sheets of the map on the scale of 1:1,000,000 (G.S.G.S. 2555), published by the Geographical Section of the General Staff, cover Mesopotamia: Tiflis (K. 38), Erzerum (J. 37), Tabriz (J. 38), Esh Sham (I. 37), Baghdad (I. 38), Tehran (I. 39), Basra (H. 38), Bushire (H. 39).

There is a map on the scale of 1:250,000 published by the Geographical Section of the General Staff in 49 sheets (G.S.G.S. 1522, 1522a), which covers an area from Latitude 31° North to the Black Sea.

PEACE HANDBOOKS.

The following is a complete list of the Handbooks prepared under the General Editorship of Sir George W. Prothero, late Director of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office.

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