

His Excellency

**Sir Herbert Samuel.**

I desire, on behalf of his Majesty's Government, to convey their good wishes on this occasion. The Colonial Secretary has written that "he regards with great

interest the inauguration of a new centre of learning at Jerusalem; he trusts that the project will meet with all success in spreading culture and enlightenment on the historic soil of Palestine."

The Government of Palestine also rejoices at the establishment of this institution, founded under good auspices, and destined, we hope, to render illustrious service to science and to scholarship.

This occasion is indeed inspiring. The presence of the distinguished statesman, who has travelled thousands of miles in order to show by his participation how deeply he sympathises

with the purpose this University has in view; the presence of Lord Allenby, the results of whose brilliant military leadership have made this possible; the chairmanship of Dr. Weizmann, who embodies in his own person the spirit that has created this University, and much more as well; the presence of honoured representatives of Governments and learned institutions of many countries; the intense interest, which we know is taken in the ceremony of to-day by millions of Jews throughout the world; the surroundings of Nature about us; and the University itself, typifying the aspirations of Man—all these combine to make this occasion inspiring and memorable.

The University is to be of gradual growth. It begins with four Institutes; three more are soon to be added; importance will be attached to the study of the Arabic language and literature. With its seven Faculties here upon Mount Scopus, it calls to mind an apposite passage in the Book of Proverbs:

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: . . . she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live; and go in the way of understanding."

In the Middle Ages, if a chemical laboratory was established, it would probably have been in the hands of an alchemist, engaged in the search for a Philosopher's Stone which would transmute the base metals into gold. The faith, the enthusiasm, which we see at work in Palestine, they are the true Philosopher's Stone. They have already turned swamps and barren sand into gardens; before our eyes they are turning this poor and backward land into a thriving and progressive state; they will yet succeed in turning animosities into friendships.

In this House of Wisdom there will be studied and taught the most ancient literature and the most modern science side by side. It cannot fail to be of value to all sections of the population of Palestine; it is hoped that it may prove of value to mankind

in general; no doubt it will be of most direct and immediate value to the Jewish people. Too long has Jewry been regarded as a ruin, interesting, remarkable as a survival, but a thing of the past and unconnected with the present or the future. A ruin may be picturesque but one does not wish to live in it. So the Jewish people have set their hands to the task of re-building a Home, and in it this University will be one of the noblest parts.

In every synagogue, for thousands of years, there has burnt before the Ark that contains the scrolls of the law, a little light. It is called the Everlasting Lamp. Day and night, year after year, century after century, millennium after millennium, that small flame has flickered. How many humble people, in how many countries, for how many generations, have tended it as a symbol. They have lived, and one by one they have died, with hopes mostly unfulfilled, but with faith wholly unshaken. Now in our own day, we seem to see that little flame growing and brightening, till, we hope and believe, it may yet throw illumination upon the world.

Happy are we that in these years have been privileged to tend it. "Blessed art Thou who hast preserved us unto this season".

