

Dr. Ch. Weizmann.

Your Excellencies, Lord Balfour,
My Lords, Honoured Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Board of the Hebrew University, and on behalf of the Zionist Organisation, I bid you welcome, and express to you a heartfelt "Shalom".

We have come together to-day on soil steeped in sacred memories, to inaugurate the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Some of these whom I am happy to see here will cast their minds back to that July afternoon nearly seven years ago, when we laid the foundation stone. Palestine was still a battlefield. Jerusalem itself was within sound of the guns. The ceremony of July 24th, 1918 witnessed to our faith in happier days to come. The intervening years, when throughout the world chaos has been slowly yielding to order, have not been too favourable to our labours. But our faith has been justified. The dreams have already begun to be translated into realities, and the first departments of the Hebrew University have opened their doors.

The University has still a long road to travel before it can realise to the full the hopes of its founders. On that point we are under no illusions. We have made no attempt to extemporise a pretentious replica of one of the great teaching Universities of the West. We have made up our minds that it is for our University to win its spurs and build up its reputation by the distinctive value of its contributions to the common stock of knowledge. We have begun with a group of institutes for advanced research in those branches of science and learning for which Palestine offers peculiarly congenial soil. The building before which we stand is the modest home of three such institutes devoted respectively to chemistry, to microbiology, and to Jewish and Oriental studies, and before these celebrations are concluded, we shall lay the foundation stone of an Institute of Physics and Mathematics to be associated with the name of Einstein. These various departments are served by the Jewish National Library, with its 90,000 volumes and its distinguished collection of

Orientalia. A fitting home for the Library will be built as soon as the architect has made the appropriate plans. Modest, indeed, is our immediate achievement when compared with "the towers and the museums, the galleries of art, and the magnificent endowments" with which the ancient Universities of Europe and their younger sisters of America are blessed. But it is not presumptuous on our part if we hold the conviction that in due course the material equipment and the outer garb of our Hebrew University will be worthy of this site, miraculous in beauty and tradition.

Closely allied to our University, and destined in the course of time to be still more intimately associated with it are our Agricultural Institute at Tel Aviv and our Technical Institute at Haifa. As Tel-Aviv and its Hinterland stand for the application of science to agriculture, so Haifa stands for its application to industry. Patient research in the interests of science, combined with practical service to the people of Palestine and its neighbours, these are tasks to which the infant University is dedicated.

What we are inaugurating to-day is a Hebrew University. Hebrew will be the language of its schools and Colleges. But a University is nothing if it is not universal. It must stand not only for the pursuit of every form of knowledge which the mind of man embraces, but also for a commonwealth of learning freely open to all men and women of every creed and race. Within the precincts of these Schools political strife and division cease and all creeds and races will, I hope, be united in the great common task of searching for truth, in restoring to Palestine the thriving civilisation which it once enjoyed, and in giving it a place of its own in the world of thought and learning. Our University would not be true to itself or to Jewish traditions, if it were not a house of study for all peoples and more especially for all the peoples of Palestine. Conceived in this spirit, and animated by these ideals, the University has before it, if our hopes are realised, a future pregnant with possibilities, not only for the Jews or for Palestine, but also for the awakening East and for mankind at large. But we feel in our innermost being that if this University

is to express us and, by expressing us, look at the world from our angle and make a distinctive contribution to civilisation, it must be through the medium of Hebrew. The Jewish spirit and the Hebrew tongue have never been separated, and this University must witness to their eternal union.

In inaugurating the Hebrew University, we proclaim the fellowship of the Jewish people with the peoples of the world, and the dedication of the Jewish people to the common labour of civilisation. The latest of Jewish academies, it carries on a long tradition of Hebrew learning and of Hebrew striving with the mystery of the universe. It looks back to the schools of the Prophets and the sages, to those who out of the wreck of the Jewish State constituted the Academies of Yabneh, of Nardieh and of Pompaditeh; to those who, in the dark days of the Middle Ages maintained a high and pure standard of intellectual activity in the Yeshibahs and Colleges scattered throughout the Diaspora. Deprived of the material props of Nationhood the scattered hosts of Israel found moral unity, and centred their aspirations round the great schools of thought which sprang up in Spain, Italy and France, in Poland and Germany, in Baghdad and Alexandria. The Schools were resting-places on the long and weary road of persecuted Israel, and within their walls the Jewish genius, prevented from taking part in the life of the ambient, hostile world, built up a world of its own in which, unhampered and unfettered, the Jewish genius could express itself.

Our young Institutes look also for inspiration and guidance to the many Jewish intellectual workers who, in our days, add their effort to the advancement of science and art the world over.

It now only remains for me to welcome in the name of the founders, all those who have honored us to-day by their presence, His Excellency the High Commissioner for Palestine, representing His Majesty's Government; His Excellency the High Commissioner for Egypt, Lord Allenby, whose name will remain for ever associated with the liberation of Palestine and who, in his wisdom, sanctioned the laying of the foundation stone of this University seven years ago; the representatives of Governments;

the distinguished bodies in all parts of the world, whose fraternal greeting—so generously offered—are deeply appreciated; and the leading members of all sections of the population of Palestine.

It is my special privilege to welcome Lord Balfour, and to welcome him not only as an eminent figure in the world of thought, not only as the Chancellor of an historic University, but also as the statesman whose name will for all time be associated with the generous act which changed the face of the Jewish world in 1917. The University which Lord Balfour is about to open is the distinctive symbol, as it is destined to be the crowning glory, of the National Home which we are seeking to rebuild.

Humbly and reverently, conscious of what we owe alike to others and to ourselves, we are seeking to make in Palestine our characteristic contribution to the common stock. That is the spirit in which we approach the task to which we have set our hands. That is the spirit in which I shall ask Lord Balfour to inaugurate the Hebrew University.

