

portant Christian element, there has been a steady immigration of Jews, especially into the vicinity of Jerusalem. Now that the country has come under British rule, there will undoubtedly be a steady stream of Jews from the English-speaking countries and from continental Europe moving back to their sacred land. At present, however, the Moslems are greatly in the majority. Of a total population of six hundred and fifty thousand, at least two thirds are Moslems; the rest are Christians and Jews.

**Mesopotamia.**—This country is of much greater economic importance to Britain than is Palestine. Its agricultural possibilities are very great. The soil is largely deltaic alluvium, deposited by the two great rivers—Euphrates and Tigris. Though the district itself is almost rainless, the steady currents of the rivers, due to the melting of the snows in the Armenian highlands, bring abundant water for irrigation. Indeed, the old irrigation canals which were used in ancient times are found everywhere. Mesopotamia is also important because it is the natural outlet for the immense oil-fields of Southern Persia, which are already controlled by the British Government. The value to Britain of this control of the oil-fields cannot be overestimated. Oil is the fuel of the future for propelling boats, and already the ships of the British navy are being rapidly adapted to burn oil. Since all the other great oil-fields of the world (in the United States, Mexico, and Russia) are outside of the British Empire, it is of vital importance that Britain should own and control her own supply. The mandate over Mesopotamia has accomplished this result. Finally, it is through Mesopotamia that the last six hundred miles of one of the most important Asiatic railways—the Bagdad railway—runs.

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