

for its northern frontier would run defenceless against the foot of a great mountain-wall. But in any case the argument for a Judæan buffer to Egypt is not conclusive. A friendly State in southern Syria would indeed be a support, but not an indispensable support, to the security of the Canal or of Egypt.

If Lebanon, or the Lebanons, be created a Christian province which they essentially are, and already in 1860 were recognised to be by the Great Powers of Europe, the natural boundaries would be those which have frequently formed political frontiers—the Nahr-el-Kebîr to the north and the Nahr-el-Kasimiyeh on the south; and Beyrout would have to be brought in. But how is Damascus to be related to such a province? Bound to the Lebanons by many ties of neighbourhood and trade, as well as by the blood of a large part of its population, Damascus carries far wider responsibilities than these both to the rest of Syria and to Arabia, and therefore in any reconstruction of the nearer East stands a problem by itself.

North of the Lebanons the possible frontiers are two¹—first the westward bend of the Orontes to the sea, and then the Taurus itself. But the questions they raise, with the kindred question of Aleppo, depend for their answers on the settlement of the political future of Mesopotamia—a subject beyond the scope of our present inquiry.

Finally, there is the Eastern frontier. This can hardly be the Jordan-Orontes Valley. It is impossible to conceive of the provinces over Jordan and the Orontes as excluded from the New Syria. But if they are included her government must be of a power sufficient to render their open borders on the desert secure against tribes of whom there can be no hope for some time that they will respect civilisation's ideals of disarmament. Even if a stable government be founded in the Hejaz,

¹ See above, pp. 12, 20.