

Storrs of Jerusalem

[Editor's Note.—The following article from the New York Times will be read with interest by our readers. General Storrs is the son of the Very Reverend Dean Storrs, of Rochester, England, who was born in Cornwallis; grandson of Reverend Rural Dean Storrs, for 35 years rector of Cornwallis; and nephew of Mr. R. W. Storrs, of Wolfville.]

One of the several picturesque figures brought into world view on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean during the war was Ronald Storrs. He was "Brigadier General Storrs" during the latter months of his service as Military Governor of Jerusalem. But with the coming of formal peace, he doffed both his military title and khaki and continued uninterruptedly his constructive service as Governor—the first Governor, since the deliverance of the Holy Land by Lord Allenby, of what has been appropriately called the "City of Cities".

Storrs was a highest honor man in his day in Cambridge, and, serving under a succession of pro-consuls in Egypt and the Near East, including Cromer and Kitchenner, he came to know intimately all sections of the Oriental public. He spoke not only all the European languages in wide use, but also Arabic and Turkish, had the English scholar's acquaintance with Greek and Latin and was found in the Governorate in Jerusalem one morning composing a greeting in Hebrew to the Jewish community on one of their festival days. His accomplishments as a musician and his appreciation of other arts give him other avenues of appeal to his variegated constituency. He is one of the few Englishmen to have honorary membership in the American Phi Beta Kappa Society.

At a public reception in his honor in London, upon his return to England on a brief furlough, Lord Northcliffe summarized his unique service as follows:

"It is easy to see that among the two-and-seventy jarring sects" which inhabit the Holy Places any new Governor must be regarded with a suspicion, which rapidly matures in the minds of each section, that he is unduly prejudiced in favor of all the others. His success is a high tribute to his tact and administrative skill.

"But Mr. Storrs has done more than preserve his neutrality. While we were still at war in the summer of 1918 he formulated and began to carry out a scheme of town-planning in Jerusalem such as here in English towns had been discussed for years but had ended mainly in discussion. Town planning anywhere means a battle against vested interests, and I do not suppose that anywhere in the world there is a greater congestion of vested interests than within the dour walls of Jerusalem. With a real knowledge of Oriental art, he has stimulated the revival of many of its forms, notably in encouraging and making possible the preservation of old buildings, as when he set town-makers to work to renew the tiling of the Mosque of Omar.

"These activities, although striking in a time of universal war, are, perhaps, of minor importance. What is of permanent value is the fact that now, after two years of peace, while the world still seethes with unrest, Palestine, which more than any other country ought to be in the melting-pot, is quietly enjoying an unlooked-for prosperity. This, I think, shows the supreme importance of personality in government, as opposed to mere technical efficiency. Experts can be obtained at a price for any duty, but the man who can enter bodily into the life of a strange community, with a reciprocal sympathy and affection, is harder to find. The Govern-

nor of Jerusalem must be a man accustomed to speaking in public, and to speaking in many tongues. In Arabic he answers the Arabs, in Hebrew the Jews, the Franciscans in Italian, the Dominicans in French, the Orthodox Christians in Greek, and the Armenian community in their own tongue."

How thoroughly, intimately and effectively Mr. Storrs has entered into the life of Jerusalem this fuller statement of his policy suggests:

"Over and above the normal official activities of Government, every effort has been made to get into touch with the people, and to give them interests and recreation tending to bring them into contact with each other and with the governing race. A chess club has been founded and a school of music for both sexes, at which three or four scholarships are open to talent. A salon, or academy of painting, sculpture, textiles, architecture and town planning, will be held next Spring, and every effort is being made to develop the civilized and cultural side of the people. He has found it necessary quite early in the day, with the object of preserving intact the traditional appearance of the city, to forbid by proclamation the use of stucco and corrugated iron within the walls, as also the destruction or erection of any buildings without his permission in writing. This prohibition and other like precautions had necessitated three things: First, a technical adviser to instruct him and then to carry out his instructions; secondly, the active co-operation of the various heads of communities; and, thirdly, money.

"He has formed the Pro-Jerusalem Society, membership in which is open to all, and on whose councils sit next to one another in friendly conclave the Grand Mufti, the Orthodox and Catholic Patriarchs, the Grand Rabbi, members of Franciscan and Dominican orders, French and Italian architects, members of the Zionist Commission, and the Mayor of Jerusalem, by whom all projects having to do with the welfare of the city are discussed. The official language found to be most convenient is French, but animated asides are from time to time discharged in Arabic, Hebrew and even Armenian.

"With the money collected the weaving industry has been restarted. The famous Mosque of Omar, known by the Arabs as the Dome of the Rock, and built over the summit of Mount Moriah, was covered largely with brilliantly colored tiles, whose date extended over many centuries. Neglect by the Turks and exceptionally severe Winters has damaged both towers so badly that one of the faces of the mosque is now almost deluded. An Armenian expert from Damascus has found near the mosque the original ovens, deserted and buried for centuries, in which many of the tiles must have been fired. With money from

the society those kilns have been restored, and tiles are now being made in the ancient manner. These, so soon as they reach a sufficiently high standard, will be used, with the approval of the Moslem authorities, to cover the bare spaces of the mosque. The work actually carried out by the society is of importance, but of still more importance is the innovation that round the same table, seated in a German hospice, on chairs stamped or branded with the crown and monogram of Wilhem II., can be gathered the chiefs of various and opposing sects, sinking their differences and working together for the good of Jerusalem."

Those whose faith had its cradle in this land (whether Christian, Jew or Mohammedan) must have a real satisfaction that a man of such pious heritage, rich experiences, fine instincts and broad sympathies is the Governor in its capital. It is characteristic of his attitude that when a request was made of him as Military Governor for a concession to run a street car line to Bethlehem and to the Mount of Olives, he replied that the first rail section would have to be "laid over the dead body of the Military Governor."

A SUGGESTION

To the Editor of THE ACADIAN.

Dear Sir,—Allow me to suggest to the civic fathers the wisdom of securing the two wrecks of the recent auto accidents and locating them, the one at the western entrance to the town and the other at the eastern entrance, as an object lesson to careless or reckless drivers. They would point a moral that ought to be understood and appreciated.

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