LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ

On July 4th, 1936, the Council of the League of Nations approved the Committee's proposal for the definite abandonment of the plan for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq in the Ghab plain. It also instructed the Committee "to continue its efforts and, in particular, to undertake a general study of the situation so as to be in a position to inform the Council definitely whether, and, if so, to what extent, the settlement elsewhere than in Iraq of the Assyrians of Iraq who still wished to leave that country was at present practicable".

The Committee entered upon the study which the Council had entrusted to it with a very clear sense of the responsibilities incumbent upon it in virtue of its mission. It did not neglect any solution, however slight the prospects of its realisation, which seemed to it worthy of investigation. It re-examined the result of the previous approaches it had made on two occasions, in 1933 and 1934, to a number of Governments with a view to the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq on their territory. It fully explored the suggestions made in regard to certain countries by persons outside their Governments. All these studies and investigations, however, proved fruitless.

Among the possibilities which have been re-examined have been the various territories comprised in the British colonial Empire. At the January Session the Committee was informed by its United Kingdom member that, in view of the great interest which the United Kingdom Government took in finding a solution of the Assyrian problem, it had, on the breakdown of the Ghab scheme, at once undertaken a new enquiry into the possibility of establishing the Assyrians in some British territory. This re-examination had not led to any hopeful result, although it had been applied to every territory under British administration. All the political and material difficulties that had come to light in the course of the previous enquiries in 1934/35 had proved to be no less formidable, and indeed in many cases had become greater. But as no other scheme had materialised in the meanwhile, the United Kingdom Government had decided to make yet another effort to see whether, after all, another destination could not be found for the Assyrians.

At the session of the Committee in July last, the United Kingdom representative was, however, obliged to inform the Committee that, to its great regret, the United Kingdom Government had been definitely unable to find any new possibility in British territory, as the political and material difficulties already mentioned had been found to be still insuperable.

In these circumstances, the Committee believes that the time has come to inform the Council that, as a result of the general study which it has been asked to undertake, it has reached the definite conclusion that the settlement outside that country of the Assyrians who have remained in Iraq does not at present seem to it practicable, and that it is similarly impossible to arrange for the transfer elsewhere of the Assyrians who are settled in the valley of the Khabur in Syria.

In view of the facts of the situation, the Committee submits to the Council recommendations designed to adapt the future of the Assyrians to the possibilities that exist now. These recommendations differ according to whether they relate to the Assyrians settled in Syria in the valley of the Khabur or to those inhabiting Iraq.

I. ASSYRIANS SETTLED IN THE UPPER VALLEY OF THE KHABUR.

The circumstances in which this settlement has been organised are explained in paragraphs 8, 9 and 21 of Annex I. The Committee desires, however, to emphasise one point—namely, that the settlement on the Upper Khabur was originally founded, without the League's participation...
and some time before the Ghab scheme was contemplated, for the purpose of collecting together the Assyrians who had crossed the Syrian frontier in the summer of 1933, together with their families, who joined them there. Subsequently, in the course of the summer of 1935, the native elements among the Assyrians of Iraq were also transported to the Khabur. When subsequently the Ghab scheme was drawn up, the existing Khabur settlement was incorporated in it as a kind of subsidiary settlement, which was to receive another party of Assyrians from Iraq besides those already established there, until the Ghab lands were ready for occupation. The intention was to abolish this settlement as soon as the Ghab lands had been made ready to receive the whole of the Assyrians transferred from Iraq.

It was on account of the provisional character of this settlement that the costs of carrying out the Khabur settlement were restricted to a minimum, in order as far as possible to avoid sinking capital there which might have proved irrecoverable when the settlement was abandoned (see paragraph 21 of Annex I). In view of the impossibility of providing another home for the Khabur Assyrians, it will be necessary without further delay to ensure for this settlement material conditions such as will enable its inhabitants to provide wholly for their own needs.

For further particulars, the Committee has the honour to refer to the report, attached as Annex I to the present report, which has been drawn up by French and British members after a careful investigation on the spot. This report gives an impartial and detailed description of the present situation of the settlement and sets forth the material and other measures which, in the investigators' opinion, seem indispensable to render the settlement economically self-supporting. The cost of the measures enumerated in Part III of the investigators' report (paragraphs 70-87) is assessed, in an estimate given in paragraph 86 of the report, at £50,930. It is understood, however, that when the plan is carried into effect, efforts will be made to reduce the estimated expenditure to the utmost possible extent, particularly as regards the estimates for the land to be acquired.

After having considered all the details of the projected additional arrangements for the settlement—embodied in a plan which is complete in itself—the Committee unanimously arrived at the conclusion that, in view of the circumstances, that plan provides the only solution which is at present possible and capable of ensuring acceptable living conditions for the Assyrians on the Khabur. Consequently, the Committee proposes that the Council should give its approval to this plan.

As regards the expenditure which the new arrangement would entail, the United Kingdom Government and the Iraqi Government have already undertaken to adopt the necessary measures with a view to taking a share in the financing of the reorganisation plan, in accordance with the procedure proposed at the time when the Ghab plan was adopted. As the Council is aware, according to this procedure, the United Kingdom Government is to share equally with the Government of Iraq in the payment of the costs of settlement, each bearing 42.61% of the total expenses, the balance of 14.78% representing the collective contribution of the League of Nations. The letter stating the United Kingdom Government's point of view is attached to the report as Annex II, and the Iraqi Government's relative declaration is attached as Annex III.

There remains that part of the expenditure which is to be met by the League. In this connection, the Committee desires to recall that last year, when the question of League participation in the cost of settling the Assyrians was raised, the Assembly approved a report of the Supervisory Commission (document A.IV/14,1936), which had made the following proposal:

"The League's subsidy will be regarded as granted in principle for the new settlement plan which the Council Committee has been asked by the Council to prepare. No sums may, however, be paid out of the League's subsidy in respect of any new plan which the Council may adopt without the Supervisory Commission's previous consent."

The Committee therefore requests the Council, in the event of its adopting the reorganisation proposals submitted in this report, to be so good as to communicate the latter, together with its decision, to the Supervisory Commission for the purposes of the agreement provided for in the above-mentioned decision.

II. ASSYRIANS LIVING IN IRAQ.

In view of the impossibility of securing for them a suitable area for settlement outside Iraq, those Assyrians of Iraq who, at the time of the enquiry carried out during the first few months of 1936, expressed the desire to be transferred from Iraq into the Ghab plain, will have to continue to reside in Iraq in the same way as a considerable number of their co-religionists (7,400 out of a total of 21,600 persons consulted), who did not opt for a transfer to another country.

The Iraqi Government, in the declaration which forms Annex III of this report, assumes that, in future, the Committee will not be called upon to deal with the Assyrians who remained in Iraq.

The Committee desires to recall that the principal task entrusted to it by the Council's resolution of October 14th, 1933, was to prepare and carry out, in close collaboration with the Iraqi Government, a scheme for the settlement elsewhere than in Iraq of all those Assyrians who might express a desire to leave the country. Unfortunately, circumstances beyond its control have made it impossible for the Committee to carry out this task. Consequently, once the necessary reorganisation of the Assyrian settlement on the Khabur has been completed, the main reason for the Committee's continued existence will have disappeared.
Genève, le 28 septembre 1937.

SOCIETE DES NATIONS

ETABLISSEMENT DES ASSYRIENS DE L'IRAK

Page 3, paragraphe 4, ligne 1:
Lire "4 juillet", au lieu de "14 juillet".

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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Page 1, paragraph 2, line 7:
Read: "by persons not connected with the Governments of the countries concerned", instead of "by persons outside their Governments".

Page 2, paragraph 1, line 3:
Read: "the indigent elements", instead of "the native elements".

Page 2, paragraph 3, line 2:
Read: "which have been drawn up by its French and British members", instead of "which have been drawn up by French and British members".

Page 3, paragraph 5, line 1:
Read: "the corresponding declaration of the Iraqi Government", instead of "the Iraqi Government's relative declaration".

Page 3, paragraph 2, line 3:
Read: "the limitations imposed", instead of "the responsibility incumbent".

Page 3, paragraph 5, line 1:
Read: "July 4th", instead of "July 14th".

Page 3, paragraph 6, line 3:
The sentence beginning "After the main preparatory work..." should read as follows:
"After the big reclamation scheme, entrusted under the plan to the High Commissioner, had been abandoned, the administration and supervision of the settlement funds by the High Commissioner's services lost their original justification".

Série de Publications de la Société des Nations

VII. POLITICAL

1937. VII. 1. Errata
The Council will recollect that the report adopted on October 14th, 1933, concludes with the following words:

"The Committee might also examine, in consultation with the Iraqi Government, and on the basis of reports furnished by the latter, the measures taken by that Government in order to give full effect to the Council’s resolution of December 15th, 1932, so far as concerns any Assyrians who may wish to remain in Iraq."

The Council will certainly agree that it is desirable that those Assyrians who remained in Iraq should, as far as possible, become incorporated in the Iraqi population as ordinary citizens of the Iraqi State. The Committee, fully conscious of the responsibility incumbent upon it in relation to this matter, feels that it cannot in future usefully contribute to a solution of this aspect of the problem, or be considered as the competent body to deal with it.

In submitting this report to the Council, the Committee therefore recommends that the Council, if it sees fit, should take the necessary steps to terminate such functions as the Committee, by virtue of the Council’s resolution of October 14th, 1933, may still possess in respect of the Assyrians remaining in Iraq. At the same time, the Council will doubtless wish to invite the Iraqi Government to take all necessary and possible steps, in the spirit of the Council’s resolution of December 15th, 1932, to ensure that those Assyrians still remaining in Iraq will be able to settle down within that country as a prosperous and contented community. In this connection, the United Kingdom has made a conditional offer of a financial contribution if required.

By its resolution of July 14th, 1936, the Council also authorised the Committee to adopt any measures of an administrative or technical nature which the abandonment of the Ghab Plan might appear to render immediately necessary, and asked it to give an account to the Council of the measures which the Committee had taken in virtue of this authorisation.

The Committee agreed with the Trustee Board on a plan for a reduction of staff with a view to adapting the latter to the much smaller amount of work to be done on the spot in the future by the Trustee Board. That plan, which would effect a considerable saving of expense, is in course of completion, and, in its next report to the Council, the Committee will be in a position to give a final account of the saving resulting from the reduction of staff, and a better division of its functions.

The abandonment of the Ghab Plan has brought about a fundamental change in the factors determining the main provisions of the Financial Regulations regarding the supervision over the funds intended for the settlement of the Assyrians. After the main preparatory work for the settlement entrusted under the plan to the High Commissioner had been abandoned, the administration and supervision of the funds intended to meet the cost of the High Commissioner’s Office in connection with settlement no longer had the justification which originally determined their establishment. In agreement with the High Commissioner, the Secretary-General and the Trustee Board, the Committee has therefore carried out a reform of the Financial Regulations, under which the control of the funds is being entrusted exclusively to the Trustee Board, and made entirely independent of the High Commissioner’s Office; the reform has also introduced greater elasticity in administration, which has made possible certain further economies in the matter of expenditure on staff. The amended regulations have been in force since April 1st, 1937, and their text is submitted to the Council as Annex IV of this report.

In conclusion, as a result of the abandonment of the Ghab Plan, it has been found necessary to liquidate property and material of all sorts which had been bought by the undertaking responsible for carrying out reclamation work in the plain, and which it had transported to the spot for use in the projected work. That liquidation has enabled a sum of 119,000 French francs to be recovered up to the present time, and there may be a slight increase in that sum when the last lot of material is sold in the near future by public auction. The sum thus recovered will be deducted from the amount of expenditure on the reclamation work already begun. The Committee will submit a report to the Council regarding the total expenditure on the preliminary work in execution of the Ghab Plan as soon as the accounts have been finally closed. It will, at the same time, give an account of all the amounts realised through the sale of material bought by the Trustee Board in the spring of 1936 for the Assyrians to be transported into the Ghab region, and of which, in view of changed circumstances, it is no longer possible to make economic use.
REPORT ON VISIT TO THE LEVANT STATES UNDER FRENCH MANDATE OF THE FRENCH AND UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVES ON THE ASSYRIAN COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

1. At the meeting of the Council Committee in January 1937, we were constituted as a special Sub-Committee with a mandate (a) to study in detail the problem of the reorganisation of the Assyrian settlement on the River Khabur on a self-supporting basis and (b) to take (with the approval, where necessary, of the full Committee) such financial and administrative decisions as were called for in connection with the liquidation of the Ghab scheme. Following on a meeting which we held in April, in Paris, with members of the League Secretariat, we arrived at the conclusion that it was essential for the execution of our task to visit the French mandated territories, so as to be able to investigate on the spot the Assyrian settlement on the Khabur and to have an opportunity to discuss the many technical questions involved in our mandate with both the Trustee Board and the French High Commissioner at Beirut. After obtaining the approval of the President and other members of the Committee we accordingly left Paris on May 21st and arrived at Beirut on May 27th. We left Beirut for the Khabur region on May 31st, in the company of M. Cuénod, the President of the Trustee Board, and of M. Burnier, the settlement expert, and travelled by car through Homs, Palmyra, Deir-ez-Zor and Hassetché. Our departure from Beirut was delayed, and our time on the Khabur restricted, by an outbreak of plague near Ras-al-Ain. But we spent two nights at the headquarters of the settlement at Tell Tamer, where we met the High Commissioner's representative on the Trustee Board (Captain Vailloud), and in the course of two full days visited all the Assyrian villages. We returned to Beirut on June 5th via Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo. In the following week, we had frequent conversations at Beirut with the High Commissioner's Delegate-General (M. Meyrier) and with other officials of the High Commission, and we were in constant touch with the members of the Trustee Board. We left the mandated territories by train from Aleppo on June 16th.

2. We are glad to be able to take the opportunity of this report to express our deep gratitude to the officials of the High Commissioner at Beirut, to the members of the Trustee Board and their staff, and to the officers of the French army of the Levant and of the special services, who by their valuable and unstinted collaboration did everything possible to help us in our task.

3. We have devoted the first part of the following report to a description, as exact as possible, of the present Assyrian settlement and to the impression which we received both of the settlement and of the Upper Khabur region in which it is situated. In the second part, we have set out the conclusions at which we have arrived in regard to the settlement and its administration and have indicated our general recommendations. In the third part, we have recommended (so far as is possible on the information available) the various measures of reorganisation and equipment which, in our opinion, should be taken in the event of it being decided that the settlement must remain in being in the future. We attach as an appendix (page 23) to the report a separate note on the work accomplished during our visit in connection with the financial account of the Ghab scheme and (b) of the material purchased for use in connection with the reclamation of the Ghab marsh.

Section I. — SITUATION OF THE KHABUR SETTLEMENT, ITS HISTORY AND PRESENT ORGANISATION.

The Upper Khabur Region.

4. Owing to the almost complete failure of the spring rains, the region in which the Assyrian villages are situated was suffering from a severe drought which had already dried up the greater part of the pasture in the hinterland of the Khabur river and compelled the abandonment of much of the winter corn crops. Nevertheless, we received quite a favourable impression of the Upper Khabur valley. The Upper Khabur itself is an attractive river with clear water and considerable current, running through a winding bed in which there are many islands covered, like sections of the river banks, with vegetation. The river carries a considerable volume of water at all seasons: even at the period of lowest water, it can only be forded in a very few places. It contains many fish of a large, edible species. The banks are high and there is practically never any flooding of the surrounding country. The shallow valley runs back to varying distances in flat expanses of cultivated land or steppe; it is bounded on the west by the steep escarpment of the Jebel Abdul Aziz and on the east by a lower line of hills, features which, although almost entirely barren, at least break the monotony of the steppe. The soil of the valley itself is alluvial and extremely fertile when correctly irrigated.

5. Rain falls normally at the beginning of winter and in the first three months of the year: the spring rains are most important, and when they are normal winter corn crops can be grown with little or even no irrigation and the uncultivated portions of the valley are covered with pasture which offers unlimited possibilities for live-stock. A failure of the spring rains, such as
occurred this year, seems to take place on an average about once in five years in the Upper Khabur, the last bad year being 1932.¹

The band of territory covered by the present Assyrian settlement seems normally the least favoured part of the region: apparently owing to the barrier opposed by the Jebel Abdul Aziz to the rain-bearing westerly wind, it receives, in general, somewhat less rain than either Ras-al-Ain or Hassetché to the immediate north and south. The consequences of a failure of the spring rains are serious since all crops not dependent wholly upon irrigation are lost, and unless the inhabitants are able to take their live-stock into a region where the rain has not failed, they are likely to lose many animals through the virtual absence of pasture.

6. Climatically, the Upper Khabur appears to be a healthy region. The winters are cold, the average temperature sinking to from 8°-11° C. (45°-50° F.) during the three months December-February, with a minimum of —5° to —12° C. (24°-10° F.). The summers are hot, but less so than for example in Iraq: the average temperature is over 25° C. (72° F.) in the months May-October inclusive, the normal highest monthly average being 36° C. (89° F.) in July. The maximum temperature in summer is rarely much above 45° C. (104° F.) in the shade; the atmosphere is dry and the nights are nearly always cool. The three-year experience with the existing settlement has shown that the climate is well suited to the Assyrians, since apart from outbreaks of malarial fever in the autumn, due to the fact that a large proportion of the settlers were already infected with this disease on their arrival from Iraq, the health of the Assyrian community has been satisfactory. (The health of the settlement is dealt with in more detail in paragraphs 34 to 37 below.)

7. The Upper Khabur valley forms part of what is known as the Upper Jezireh.² At some period of antiquity, the Upper Khabur region must have been extremely prosperous, since an almost continuous chain of mounds marks the site of ancient cities along both banks of the river. The winding strip of river between its sources at Ras-al-Ain on the Turco-Syrian frontier and Homs or Damascus through Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo. It is possible to accomplish the journey taken)³ and in twenty-four hours if the railway is used between Aleppo and Ras-al-Ain. The region is administered from Hassetché, a small town 65 kilometres from the Turkish frontier which has sprung up in the last ten years or so and now contains some 6,000 inhabitants, of whom a large part are Christians. Although the Jebel Sinjar is easily visible from the Hassetché district, the Upper Khabur region is isolated from the Iraq frontier by some 70 kilometres of arid desert crossed by a very indifferent track. The main economic outlet for the region is through the Turco-Syrian frontier and the motor-track from Homs or Damascus through Deir-ez-Zor and Hassetché. It is possible to accomplish the journey between the Assyrian villages and Beirut by motor-car in a single day (according to the track taken)³ and in twenty-four hours if the railway is used between Aleppo and Ras-al-Ain. The region is administered from Hassetché, a small town 65 kilometres from the Turkish frontier which has sprung up in the last ten years or so and now contains some 6,000 inhabitants, of whom a large part are Christians. Although the Jebel Sinjar is easily visible from the Hassetché district, the Upper Khabur region is isolated from the Iraq frontier by some 70 kilometres of arid desert crossed by a very indifferent track. The main economic outlet for the region is through the station of Ras-al-Ain and west along the railway to Aleppo. In recent years the establishment of security has led to a great development of the potential resources of the region, both as a granary and for the raising of flocks. The population of the Upper Jezireh is composed to a large extent of communities which are racial or religious minorities in Syria.

History of the Settlement.

8. The Khabur settlement was founded in August 1934 for the accommodation of the band of Assyrians who took refuge in Syria after the fighting in Iraq in August 1933, and their families, some 2,100 persons in all. With the adoption of the scheme for placing the Assyrians in the Ghâb district of Syria, the settlement came to be considered as a purely provisional half-way house to the permanent goal. It was expanded in 1935 to take some further 4,000 Assyrians, who, directly or indirectly as a result of the disturbances of 1933, were in a destitute condition in Iraq; it was again expanded in 1936 to take a further 2,500 Assyrians whom it was considered desirable to set at once on the way to the Ghâb. The transfer of all except the first 2,100 Assyrians

¹ In 1936 (a good year) 176 millimetres of rain (about 7 inches) fell in the settlement in the months of January, February and March. In the corresponding period of 1937, the fall was 30 millimetres or just over 1 inch.

² The following table summarises (so far as statistics are available) the rainfall in recent years at Hassetché, about 18 kilometres south of the existing settlement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total rainfall in millimetres</th>
<th>Approximate equivalent in inches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>over 250</td>
<td>over 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>over 200</td>
<td>over 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>over 300</td>
<td>over 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures can be compared with an average of 6 to 8 inches at Bagdad, Iraq.

² The Jezireh (literally "the island") is the Arabic name for the region lying between the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Turkish highlands.

³ The distance between the villages and Beirut on the usual motor route via Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo is 914 kilometres.
was intended as a purely provisional measure, and in the imperative interest of economy (there being a considerable financial deficit in the budget for the Ghab plan), the minimum of expense was incurred in their installation. Further, the transfers in 1935/36 were carried out at short notice and without sufficient time to prepare villages and lands for occupation.

9. The irrigation facilities and the cultivable area of the settlement were accordingly not expanded in the proportion essential for a self-supporting community and, instead of settlement in the small villages confined to one tribe, or to one sub-section in the case of the larger tribes, which are best suited to the Assyrian mentality, the new arrivals were mainly accommodated by increasing the size of the existing villages. The same causes of need for economy and shortage of time are again responsible for the organisation of agriculture in the settlement, which, as will be seen from paragraphs 14 to 25 below, is still on semi-communal lines unfitted to the Assyrian character or to a lasting settlement.

The Existing Assyrian Villages.

10. The total population of the settlement is now about 8,800. The Assyrians are at present settled in sixteen villages which vary greatly in size. The four largest villages each contain over 1,000 inhabitants. Eight others contain between 300 and 700 Assyrians and the remaining four between 100 and 150. The original villages founded in 1934 were swollen to accommodate the Assyrians transferred from Iraq in 1935/36. Their size and the inevitable mixture of tribes greatly complicated the administration of the settlement and in the last eighteen months the Trustee Board has pursued a policy of decentralisation and the grouping of tribal sections in small or medium-sized villages. With one exception, all the villages are now confined each to Assyrians of a single tribe. The two most prominent tribes in the settlement, the Upper Tiari (2,600 head) and Tkhuma (2,350 head), are represented each by three villages grouped together. The Trustee Board considers it essential, however, to reduce still further the four largest and unwieldy villages by the creation of additional small villages. This would also put an end to overcrowding in the houses of some of the larger villages, where there is an average of 4-5 persons per "dome", as against 2-3 in the case of the more recent smaller villages.

11. Eleven of the villages are on the left (east) bank of the river and five on the right (west) bank. The villages fall into two main groups; a northern group of two large villages (Tell Oumrane and Tell Tcheme) and two smaller villages situated some 18 kilometres from the Turco-Syrian frontier, and a southern group of eleven villages (the most important of which are Tell Tamer and Tell Maghas) which form an almost continuous band on both banks of the river and are situated between 30 and 50 kilometres from the Turco-Syrian frontier. The two groups are separated by a region of about 12 kilometres which is uninhabited, except for one isolated Assyrian village (Tell Oumrafa), situated at mid-distance. The headquarters of the Administration are at the village of Tell Tamer, which is 36 kilometres from the Turco-Syrian frontier, situated towards the northern end of the southern group of villages and in the centre of the present settlement. This village contains the administration building, the hospital, the sheds and garages housing the greater part of the Administration's material, agricultural machinery, supplies, etc., and a post of Syrian gendarmerie, manned at present by eight mounted gendarmes.

12. The division of this settlement into two main groups is extremely striking, and we were impressed by the relatively unfavourable situation of the northern group. Apart from their proximity to the Turkish frontier, these villages are inconveniently close to the Circassian village of Safeh, and the cultivated fields of the Assyrians and of the Circassians (the latter worked by Bedouin tenants who encamp upon them) are contiguous at several points. This has already led to some friction between the Assyrians and their neighbours and on occasion to inconvenience—e.g., when the Circassians refused to allow an Assyrian canal to pass across their land. At the same time, the internal condition of these northern villages appears the least satisfactory in the settlement; their population is relatively crowded and possesses the highest incidence of malaria. Further, the isolation of this group by 12 kilometres from the headquarters of the settlement renders it difficult for the Administration and the doctor to give it equal attention.

13. On the other hand, the southern group of villages already give the impression of a compact group. Their cultivated areas form a continuous band for some 15 kilometres on the left bank of the river, and for some 6 kilometres on the right bank. This part of the settlement could be made into a complete and compact block by the acquisition from their present Bedouin cultivators of the riverain strips on the remaining 9 kilometres on the right bank.

14. The villages themselves make a favourable impression and seem well and substantially built. The settlement authorities have adopted as the standard form of construction the "beehive" dome-shaped house of sun-dried brick, which is of common use in Northern Syria. These " domes " permit of a relatively large and airy construction without the great expense of wooden beams and rafters in a treeless land. Two or more domes are normally joined together to make a single building: windows and doors only are constructed of wood. The houses themselves are set out in the villages in wide and regular lines, with ample space between each building. For reasons of health and to diminish the risk of malaria, the villages have been set as high as possible above the river upon ancient mounds, and vegetation amongst the actual houses has
been discouraged. Most of the villages, however, contain roofed-in wells, which are easily sunk in the vicinity of the river to a good water-supply. The Assyrians are allowed to add on to their houses such additional constructions as they desire and in most cases they have, in fact, constructed dependencies of various sorts, such as porches and verandahs, cook-houses, enclosures for livestock, poultry-houses, etc. The tribal chiefs and individuals with private means have in many cases provided themselves at their own expense with quite elaborate additional constructions or have elected to build themselves flat-roofed houses, which they prefer to the more airy and hygienic " domes " provided by the Administration.

15. The Assyrians are obliged by the Administration to keep their villages scrupulously clean, and their orderliness is in consequence very striking. Moreover, the interiors of such of the Assyrians' houses as we visited were equally clean and in many cases comfortably enough fitted out. The private possessions of the Assyrians vary greatly, however, in individual cases. Those who came with the original band of refugees from Iraq or whose villages were pillaged during the troubles in 1933 lost virtually all their property and are still very scantily equipped, except in cases where they had money in the bank. On the other hand, many of the arrivals in 1935/36 were able to bring with them a great deal of household property as well as most of their live-stock. The marked difference in means between the Assyrians is also shown in their clothing. The actual capacity of the Assyrians to set themselves up is certainly much greater than appears on the surface, since not unnaturally they have been unwilling to spend more than a minimum of their capital on a settlement still officially provisional.

Food Supplies for the Assyrians.

16. The Assyrian immigrants have been supplied with free food rations for a period of eighteen months after their arrival, twelve months on the full standard ration and six months on a " half ration " (costing actually 70% of the full ration). This period compares favourably with that adopted in the case of many analogous settlements—e.g., of the Armenians settled in Syria. The standard ration included flour, rice, sugar and a little tea; its average, per head per day was 80 centimes before the devaluation of the franc in September 1936 and 1.16 francs after. As in the case of all similar settlements, the content of the ration was necessarily kept at a minimum, so as not to weaken the inducement for the Assyrians to work hard and to make themselves self-supporting as soon as possible. It was in any case essential to keep the expenditure on food rations as low as possible—inevitably a very heavy item in the budget—so as to retain as much as possible of the total contributions offered for the final and permanent scheme of settlement.

17. The Committee has, in practice, always voted the credits for food supplies as a lump sum and has left the actual distribution to the Trustee Board. The Committee has also insisted on various occasions that every effort should be made to discriminate between the Assyrians in the distribution of free rations according to the private means of the individual. It must be recalled that only part of the Assyrians arrived in Syria as destitute refugees; many of the settlers, particularly in the most recent transfers, brought with them numerous live-stock and considerable means in cash. The Trustee Board has, however, found it virtually impossible to carry out discrimination, owing to the refusal of the Assyrians to state their resources. At the same time, the Board has avoided a rigid attitude in the matter of rations, and in deserving cases have continued to help the Assyrians beyond the normal period.

18. The present position is that the 6,000 Assyrians who arrived in Syria in 1933-1935 are officially no longer entitled to any free rations after July 1st, 1937, whereas the 2,500 brought over last year are entitled to the half-ration for a further period of six months. The question of free rations is therefore now largely a matter of past history, and with the exception of the latest arrivals referred to above, the settlers should, this summer, have been dependent for food supplies on what was produced within the settlement—i.e., the produce of gardens and fields, of live-stock and poultry. (The economic organisation of the settlement is described in detail below—see paragraphs 20 to 31.) They would not, of course, have been " self-supporting ", since the settlement fund is continuing and must continue for some time to bear the cost of running the irrigation plant and the administration and upkeep of the settlement generally. Moreover, it was necessary to include in this year's budget a special credit to supplement the deficient harvest in 1936 (cf. paragraph 26 below), and owing to the failure of the rainfall in the first quarter of this year, the Assyrians will now require further special assistance if they are to have enough to eat in the period before the 1938 harvest is collected (cf. paragraph 29 below).

19. It is naturally difficult in the course of a short visit to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the sufficiency of the nourishment obtained by the Assyrians in the settlement, taking into account, not only the free supplies distributed to them, but also the produce of the settlement itself. We have, however, no hesitation in recording that we did not see any signs of underfeeding either among the adult population or the children. The children whom we saw in the villages seemed healthy (e.g., the eye disease which is almost universal among children in the Middle East was rarely noticeable) and were running about and playing happily. It is obvious,
of course, that the great difference in material wealth between the individual Assyrian families and their varying capacity for agriculture must result in widely different standards of living, and we do not suggest that all the Assyrians have a full or ideal diet. But on the evidence at our disposal, we agree with the Trustee Board that, while some hardship is inevitable in the early days of a new agricultural settlement, there is no reason, with the agriculture of the settlement organised on its present basis and supplemented by the free supplies distributed by the Trustee Board, why any Assyrian family should suffer detriment from sustained under-feeding.

Economic Organisation of the Settlement.

20. Irrigation is a necessity for any sort of regular or intensive cultivation in the Khabur Valley, where at least five months each year are without rain and the total annual rainfall is uncertain from year to year (for a summary on the rainfall in recent years, see the footnote to paragraph 5 above). In favourable years, winter corn crops might be raised by rain alone and irrigation is normally only an adjunct to rain. But no vegetables, fruits or summer crops can be grown without constant irrigation. As the river runs in a bed below the level of the valley bottom, irrigation by gravity flow is impossible and water must be pumped to a height of 6 to 7 metres. The existing irrigation equipment of the settlement comprises:

1. Three Diesel-motor pumping stations of:
   (a) Three 50 h.p. sets at Tell Tamer;
   (b) Three 25 h.p. sets at Tell Maghas;
   (c) Three 10 h.p. sets at Tell Oumrane;

2. Fifteen small movable Diesel-motor pumping sets of 8 h.p. (intensive irrigation capacity per set about 25 hectares);

3. Three metal
   Twenty-three wood " norias " or water-lifting wheels worked by the river current (intensive irrigation capacity about 10 hectares for metal wheel, 6 to 8 for wooden wheel).

The settlement is still essentially equipped for communal agriculture, with four Diesel-motor tractors and large mechanical agricultural machinery including a motor-driven thresher—so far, only a small number (some thirty pairs) of draught oxen are available, and transport, as well as purely agricultural operations, has also to be mainly carried out mechanically by motor-lorries. There are three motor-driven corn mills in the settlement, a large one at Tell Maghas and small ones at Tell Tamer and Tell Oumrane.

21. The economic organisation of the settlement has been profoundly influenced by the fact that it has hitherto been regarded as provisional in character. When the first villages were built in 1934/35, the settlement was accordingly organised for agricultural purposes on a communal basis with three central motor-pumping stations of large capacity serving for the irrigation of large fields and with motor-tractors and mechanical machinery for ploughing and harvesting. This organisation was both quicker and cheaper than small-scale irrigation and the equipment of settlers with individual holdings and their own agricultural equipment; it was also calculated to keep down capital cost and to make the settlement as soon as possible self-supporting in corn and other essential foodstuffs. At the same time, gardens for the intensive cultivation of vegetables were constructed in the vicinity of each village.

22. Experience soon showed, however, that the Assyrians were unsuited by temperament to communal agriculture and that it was both demoralising and led to considerable waste. Accordingly, the Trustee Board has endeavoured, so far as is compatible with the present equipment and their budget resources, to individualise the agriculture of the settlement. The additional irrigation required by the expanded settlement has been provided by the purchase of small portable pumping sets and the construction of " norias ", both of which would be suitable for operation by the Assyrians themselves if they were grouped in small tribal villages. The vegetable gardens have for some time been divided up among the individual families, and although, in the absence of the necessary equipment, it has not been possible to individualise the actual cultivation of corn and other cereal crops, the Trustee Board has already decided to organise their harvest on an individual basis. The live-stock has always been individually owned.

23. The economic life of the settlement can best be explained in detail under its three main heads: (a) the individual vegetable gardens, (b) the main cereal crops and (c) the live-stock of the Assyrians.

Individual Gardens.

24. The individual gardens were estimated at the beginning of 1937 to cover 215 hectares (538 acres) and are being constantly extended. The gardens are situated along the river banks in the immediate vicinity of the villages, except in the case of the village of Tell Tamer, where some of them extend away from the river to an inconvenient distance from the village itself.

1 The area cultivated on September 1st was 240 hectares.
which makes them difficult to protect from migrant Bedouin. The gardens, which require a great deal of water in the hot summer months, are irrigated almost entirely by the “norias” and by the small portable motor-pumps. Cultivation is carried out by hand (the necessary implements have been supplied to the Assyrians individually), or by ox-drawn hand-ploughs. The gardens make a favourable impression and add greatly to the amenities of the settlement, particularly where, as in some of the older villages, poplars and willows have been grown along the canal banks. Although the inexperience of the Assyrians for this type of culture has proved a drawback, the Trustee Board is satisfied with the way in which most of the Assyrians have recently been working to make their gardens a success. The all pervading and demoralising uncertainty as to the future of the settlement has, however, had its ill effects in this sphere, too, and has made the Assyrians reluctant to embark on investments for the future such as the large-scale planting of trees. The Trustee Board is, however, arranging for a substantial annual quota of poplar and willow cuttings to be planted along the canal banks in the gardens. The gardens produce, with varying success, beans, tomatoes, potatoes, cucumbers, melons, onions, yellow maize, etc. Fruit-trees and vines have been planted with success in some villages, and are being extended this year. Some Assyrians have chosen to grow small patches of corn in their gardens. The Assyrians consume most of what they grow, but quite large quantities of produce, in particular maize, etc. Fruit-trees and vines have been planted with success in some villages and are being extended this year. Some Assyrians have chosen to grow small patches of corn in their gardens. The Assyrians consume most of what they grow, but quite large quantities of produce, in particular

**The Cultivation of Cereal and Other Crops.**

25. Winter corn (wheat, barley) is sown in the autumn after the first rains, and in a favourable year irrigation is only an adjunct to the winter rains in January, February and March. Summer crops, such as white maize (dari), millet, sesame (for oil), are planted after the rainy season and depend wholly on irrigation. The Trustee Board planned to harvest in 1937 some 813 hectares (2,033 acres) of winter crops and 210 hectares (525 acres) of summer crops.

26. For reasons outside its control, the Trustee Board has not been able so far to put on a satisfactory basis the cultivation of cereal crops which is at present undoubtedly the weak link in the economic organisation of the settlement. The difficulty here, as throughout, arises from the settlement having been founded on a provisional basis. As mentioned above, the quickest and cheapest way to make the settlers self-supporting in cereals is through installation in 1934/35 of the three large fixed pumping-stations and mechanical cultivation on a communal basis. The drawbacks of this organisation have proved numerous. The Assyrians have proved temperamentally unsuited to communal work; despite favourable climatic conditions, the 1936 harvest gave a disappointing yield, and the Council Committee was obliged to vote for the 1937 budget 180,000 French francs to allow of the purchase of corn to supplement the proceeds of the harvest for the maintenance in flour of those Assyrians no longer entitled to free rations. Moreover, mechanical cultivation by tractor-drawn machinery calls for the minimum of human labour and still further reduces the individual stake in the crops. Again, the provision of fixed pumping-stations has entailed large fields which have to be shared between villages and between tribes. Finally, the total area of cultivable land capable of irrigation is too small for the existing population, due to the original settlement having been hastily expanded to take more immigrants without the acquisition of sufficient additional lands.

27. The Trustee Board has done all in its power to remedy the situation. With the very limited credits at its disposal, it has already provided the Assyrians with a small number of draught oxen (some thirty pair), hand-ploughs, and carts, which are used as far as possible in place of motor tractors and lorries. But to equip the present settlement on a completely “individual basis”, it will be necessary to buy nearly 300 further pair of oxen, as well as many additional ploughs and carts: the Trustee Board has indicated that a capital sum of some 45,000 would be required to equip throughout the present number of settlers. In present circumstances, therefore, the Trustee Board has no alternative but to continue to cultivate with the tractors, and as even after the voting of the necessary credit it would be a matter of months before the necessary oxen and equipment could be acquired, it is evident that mechanical means will have to be employed at least for the winter crops of the coming agricultural year. This incidentally obliges the Trustee Board to incur the expense of thoroughly overhauling the hard-worked tractors. The actual harvesting of the crops lends itself more easily to individual methods. The Trustee Board has decided to divide all standing crops between the Assyrians organised in small tribal groups and to leave to them the responsibility for reaping and gathering their own share. In the absence

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1 Composed of wheat (646 hectares), barley (167 hectares), beans (45 hectares), onions (62 hectares), potatoes (8 hectares).

2 Including white and yellow maize, beans, millet, sesame, melons, marrows. (N.B. — See later footnote on page 10 regarding area under cultivation.)

3 An “individual basis” would mean, in practice, the allocation of a set of equipment (pair of oxen, plough, small cart) to each standard group of fifteen settlers, or three families.
of oxen, it will, however, still be necessary for the threshing to be done by the Trustee Board's motor-driven machine and for the corn to be transported for the most part by lorry. Further, while obliged to retain the original three fixed pumping-stations, the Trustee Board has brought additional areas under cultivation on a basis of smaller fields confined to individual villages and irrigated by "norias" or by the small portable motor-pumps which it is considered could eventually be taken over and operated by the Assyrians themselves.

28. Apart from the question of equipment and its psychological reactions, a further difficulty arises in regard to the area of land capable of cereal cultivation. Experience has convinced the Trustee Board that, given the characteristics both of the Assyrians and of the Khabur region, the settlers would be more likely to prosper by concentrating on the production of vegetables and fruits and on the raising of live-stock than on the extensive cultivation of cereals. In years of deficient rainfall on the Khabur, it would probably be uneconomic to grow wheat or barley by irrigation alone, since, normally, corn could be bought in the market which had been raised by rain alone in neighbouring regions: a settlement which was making money by the sale of vegetables or from its flocks would find it better to use its irrigation in the gardens or on growing fodder and to buy most of its necessary corn in the market. Nevertheless, if the settlement is to be equipped on a self-supporting basis, it is clearly essential that each village should have for itself a sufficient area of cleared land, capable at least in part of irrigation, so as to be able in years of normal rainfall to meet its own requirements in winter corn and to cultivate by irrigation summer crops such as white maize and sesame, which give a high yield of both human food and animal fodder. The present organisation does not permit this: it is to a great extent centralised on the three fixed pumping-stations and, in any case, disposes (cf. paragraph 26 above) of an insufficient total area; only some 3,200 hectares (3,000 acres) of cleared and cultivable land, capable at need of irrigation, being available for 8,800 persons. A radical reform of this situation depends on the difficult question of the future of the fixed pumping-stations. Here, however, it may be pointed out that the existing settlement needs a greater area of cultivable land in easy reach of the river and capable of irrigation by "norias", small pumps or animal-drawn water-lifts. The acquisition and allotment of this land would be bound up with the policy of creating further small villages to reduce the size of the larger centres, which is referred to in paragraph 10 above.1

29. Meanwhile, the failure of the rainfall in the earlier part of this year has introduced a temporary and unattended difficulty into the situation. In the virtual absence of rain, the area sown in the autumn with winter crops could not be maintained by irrigation alone, moreover, as has been already mentioned, the growing of winter corn by motor-pump irrigation is an uneconomic proposition. The Trustee Board has done its best to remedy the situation; it has had to abandon much of the area sown of winter crops, but it has extended, as far as possible, the area of the irrigated summer crops, in particular of white maize (dari), which gives the best yield in grain in return for irrigation and of which the stalks can be used for fodder. Nevertheless, it is evident that the settlement cannot this year provide its own requirements in cereals, particularly as, with the exception of half-rations for a further six months for the 2,500 Assyrians who arrived in 1936, the distribution of free rations to the settlers came to an end officially on July 1st. It is also evident that, at this early stage in the settlement, the community has not the reserves necessary for it to meet the exceptional situation by the purchase of cereals. Accordingly, the Trustee Board has felt obliged to ask for a special credit for 300,000 French francs to enable them to purchase corn and to assist those of the Assyrians no longer entitled to free rations when the proceeds of this year's inadequate harvest are exhausted in the latter part of the year.

Live-stock.

30. The Assyrians at present possess over 11,000 head of live-stock, originating mainly in the flocks and herds transferred from Iraq. This total is at present made up chiefly by some 6,100 goats and 4,400 sheep; there are also some 470 horned cattle and a small number of horses, mules and donkeys. The Assyrians have much poultry, mainly hens, but also turkey, geese and ducks. The flocks have already become an important element in the economic life of the settlement, and as the Khabur region is, in normal years, particularly suited to the rearing of sheep and goats, the Assyrians, who are essentially a pastoral people, should be able to develop this side of their economy with success, particularly as good markets exist for sheep; for example, there is a large annual export of sheep from the northern part of Iraq and Syria to Western Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. At present, however, owing to the varying circumstances in which the settlers came from Iraq, the live-stock is very irregularly distributed and, at the most, only about a third of the Assyrian families possess what the Trustee Board considers to be a satisfactory minimum of four sheep or goats per family. Further, the live-stock is very irregularly distributed between individual villages—in one village, there is an average of over three animals per head; in seven villages, an average of over one animal per head; and in five villages, an average of under

1 The area under cultivation on September 1st, 1937 (according to the Trustee Board) showed a considerable increase over that recorded in paragraph 25 above. On that date there were 459 hectares of summer crops and 930 hectares were under preparation for winter crops.
half an animal per head. The Trustee Board has calculated that to equip the remaining families with a minimum of live-stock 6,268 sheep would have to be bought at a cost of about £7,490. Such a measure would, however, go far both to relieve present discontent at the material conditions of the settlement and to help the community as a whole to become self-supporting and prosperous in the future.

31. The flocks normally find sufficient pasture in the vicinity of the villages. Years of drought such as the present one are naturally a serious obstacle, and some losses of animals are probably inevitable, although in the present year a temporary remedy has been found by moving about half the flocks to a considerable distance northwards into a region where the grazing is normal and can be obtained against payment to the local tribes. Such periodical droughts are, however, inevitable in the Middle East, where the flock-owner must hope to recoup his losses in the good years. Such of the Assyrians' flocks as we saw during our visit appeared to be in good condition and not to have suffered so far from the shortage of grazing (the lambing season passed successfully this spring), although the problem will not become acute until later in the year. The Assyrians brought with them a small number of draught-animals from Iraq and, as mentioned above, the Trustee Board has, from time to time, supplemented them by the purchase of draught-oxen, with the result that some of the ploughing is already done by draught-animals instead of by the tractors.

Title to Lands occupied by the Settlement.

32. If the Assyrians are to continue on the Khabur, it will clearly be of great importance to secure an unassailable title to their lands. As a result of the study which we gave to this point in conjunction with the High Commission, it appears that the settlement authorities merely possess at present the right of occupation of their lands, which has been acquired either by taking possession of uncultivated land or by purchase from the previous Bedouin cultivators. The right of occupation refers essentially to the strip of river frontage and carries with it the possibility of practically indefinite expansion away from the river at right angles to the frontage, provided that the land has not already been occupied. The fact of occupation, and the indemnities wherever paid, are recorded in a register kept by the Special Service Officer at Hassetché.

33. But the legal ownership of the lands in question belongs to the Syrian State, and to convert a right of occupation into a firm legal title, it will be necessary for various formalities to be fulfilled which will not be without cost. The lands would in any case remain in the ultimate ownership of the State, the law providing that failure to occupy and cultivate for five successive years causes domain lands to revert to the State. It is not necessary here to go into the various technical possibilities; the question is being examined at Beirut and will be pursued further as soon as its study has been completed.

Health of the Settlement and Sanitary Organisation.

34. As already mentioned, experience hitherto of the settlement seems to show that the region is fundamentally healthy and suitable for the Assyrians. The number of deaths is entirely normal and the population is increasing. The Assyrians are, in general, healthier than the other elements inhabiting the region and the only illness which is at present widespread in the settlement is malaria. There is one leper in the settlement, who was sent over, surprisingly enough, in one of the convoys from Iraq without any previous warning to the settlement authorities.

35. With a very few exceptions, the Assyrians suffering from malaria arrived on the Khabur already infected, and there seems no reason to consider the region of the settlement as fundamentally malarial. The statistics show that the main seat of endemic malaria in the settlement is in the northern group of four villages, and although the infection here, as in the other villages, is antecedent to the settlers' arrival on the Khabur, there seems some reason to believe that this particular locality may be somewhat favourable to malaria, owing to the presence of semi-stagnant water in an old arm of the river. The malarial danger of the Khabur must not, however, be exaggerated: it must be recalled that endemic malaria is the rule rather than the exception among the population of the Near and Middle East. Although a large proportion of the

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1 Recent vital statistics are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Births</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1936</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1936</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1936</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1936</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1936</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1937</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1937</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1937</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

or an excess of 46 births in eight months.
Assyrians (varying from 15% to 70%, according to the villages) are endemically infected with the disease, its ill-effects are confined to periodical crises which the existing medical organisation in the settlement seems adequate to alleviate, specially as a considerable quantity of an anti-malarial preparation has been taken over from the supplies purchased for the Ghab plan. The settlement authorities are not aware that any Assyrian on the Khabur has so far died directly from malaria and, as already mentioned, the total death rate is entirely normal.

36. The sanitary organisation of the settlement has undoubtedly been greatly improved under the present doctor, a former Russian subject with good qualifications who took over on the Khabur some months ago. The main hospital, situated at Tell Tamar, has been reorganised and enlarged under his direction and impressed us very favourably. A small operating-theatre has now been prepared, and minor operations with anaesthetics are regularly performed. The main activity of the hospital is in connection with out-patients and the dispensing of medicines, but beds exist to accommodate ten persons, a number which it is hoped shortly to extend. It is intended to bring to the Khabur some camp equipment left over from the Ghab scheme, which will provide greatly increased accommodation if required. The policy of the Trustee Board, which seems to us undoubtedly correct, is, however, to make the Assyrians as self-reliant as possible in medical matters and to discourage recourse to the medical organisation in trivial cases. For the present medical organisation cannot be maintained indefinitely and, as the Assyrians will eventually be dependent on the medical services of the Syrian State (which inevitably are somewhat limited in a thinly populated and distant district like the Upper Jezireh), or on any private doctors who may practise in the small towns of the region, it would be no kindness to endow them at present with an elaborate but temporary organisation.

37. The doctor is assisted by a number of Assyrian men and women with some experience of nursing and dispensing and in each of the larger villages there is a resident "infirmier", an Assyrian with medical experience who holds a small stock of dressings and is qualified to deal with minor emergencies and to act generally as the doctor's local representative.

38. As already mentioned, our visit to the Khabur coincided with an outbreak of pneumonic plague on the Turco-Syrian frontier near Ras-al-Ain, some twenty-five miles north of the settlement. This outbreak, which was arrested in its very early stages by the energetic measures taken by the French military authorities, is surprising and unaccountable. There appears to be no reason to conclude that the region has any special disposition to the plague, which must have been introduced from without.

Churches and Schools.

39. There are one or more churches in every village in the settlement, with the exception of five of the newer and smaller villages. The church buildings are constructed either of a number of "domes" joined together, or with a flat roof specially built by the Assyrians themselves. There are fifteen churches of the Nestorian rite and three churches for those Assyrians who are of the Chaldean or Uniate rite. We visited a number of churches, and we were struck with the trouble which had been taken to equip them. Most of the Assyrian tribes in the settlement were able to bring with them from Iraq their church furnishings and their religious books, some of which have been handed down for many generations. According to a census taken by the Trustee Board, there are nineteen priests and sixty-five deacons of the Nestorian rite, and six priests and four deacons of the Chaldean rite.

40. We are not aware of the exact proportion of the Assyrians on the Khabur who belong to the Chaldean Church, but it seems that they are concentrated in three villages (Tell Oumrane, Tell Tchemé and Tell Chamran). The Chaldean community are in touch with the Roman Catholic authorities in Syria and receive some assistance from them. There appears to be some rivalry between the Chaldean and the Nestorian clergy in the settlement. The Nestorians are handicapped by poverty and by the absence of any higher clergy, which prevents the ordination of fresh priests.

41. At the present moment, education in the settlement is confined to elementary teaching given to a proportion of the children by priests and by a few lay-teachers, the church buildings being generally used as class-rooms. The Trustee Board makes small grants for education to the various village headmen, who are responsible for spending the money either on small salaries to the teachers or on the purchase of school-books and utensils. The schools maintained by the Chaldean community are subsidised by local Roman Catholic sources. Figures furnished by the Trustee Board show that in the whole settlement 755 girls and boys attend school 1 and that there are seventeen recognised teachers. There are one or more schools in all except six villages, four of which are in any case too small to justify a separate school.

42. The Trustee Board has not felt able to recommend hitherto increased expenditure on education in view of the urgent material requirements of the settlement and the restricted funds

1 This figure may be low, as the statistics are missing in the case of certain villages.
available. We understand that in their view (with which we entirely agree) any eventual extension of education should be on practical lines and should concentrate, in particular, on the teaching of Arabic and of agricultural subjects. This would be more calculated to help the Assyrians in their everyday lives and to facilitate their relations with the other elements in Syria than mere expansion of the facilities for education in the Syriac language.

**Security of the Settlement.**

43. Ordinary security is maintained and police functions executed in the settlement by a unit of eight mounted Syrian gendarmes, installed in a special building erected by the Trustee Board outside and near the village of Tell Tamer. The gendarmes are at present under the orders of the High Commissioner’s representative on the Trustee Board, who holds the rank of captain in the cadre of Special Service Officers. Since the arrival of the gendarmes and the issue to selected Assyrian watchmen of some 120 rifles, there have been virtually no cases of thieving or incursions by Bedouin, such as occurred on several occasions in the earlier days of the settlement. At times of drought, such as the present year, irrigated fields and gardens such as the Assyrians’ inevitably tempt the migrant Bedouin as pasture for their flocks, but this has not led to any serious trouble so far. Occasional disputes with neighbouring tribesmen over the occupation of land or grazing have been virtually confined to the northern group of villages (cf. paragraph 12 above) and have not hitherto had any serious consequences.

**Attitude of the Assyrian Settlers.**

44. We gave particular attention to the state of mind of the Assyrian settlers and their attitude towards the settlement, since the successful administration and development of the settlement in the future will inevitably depend almost entirely on their co-operation. It is not easy to give a general and comprehensive picture of this aspect of the settlement. Conditions vary greatly between the different tribes and villages and between the individual Assyrians. With the exception of a visit by two of the leading tribal chiefs authorised by the council of village headmen to act as their delegates, the petitions which we received either orally or in writing from Assyrian groups and individuals were of little value in helping to assess the situation; they were usually couched in ridiculously exaggerated terms and were often flatly contradicted by subsequent counter-petitions. The main subjects which pre-occupy the Assyrians fall, however, broadly under the following two distinct heads, which can best be examined separately: (a) their material circumstances in the settlement and (b) their political future in the Syrian Republic.

45. We will consider first the material or economic aspect. The settlement has suffered from the initial handicap that, whereas it is of necessity purely agricultural and pastoral in character, over half of its Assyrian population had lost touch with the life of a cultivator or a shepherd, either through continued service in the British Levy force in Iraq or through forsaking the country for work in the Iraqi towns. The former Levy element have, on the whole, reverted satisfactorily enough to agricultural life and among the most hard-working and amenable on the Khabur to-day are the bulk of the Assyrians who crossed into Syria in 1933. But the real town-bred elements, who grew up after the war in Bagdad or Mosul as servants, shop-keepers, clerks or labourers, have remained fundamentally discontented with their new life. They seem mostly either incapable or unwilling to work on the land for their own subsistence and the present special regime by which the Assyrians are not allowed to travel outside the Khabur region, except for medical reasons, prevents them from settling in the towns. These people number not more than a few hundreds in a population of nearly 9,000; but they have lost most of their tribal status, are out of control of their chiefs and, by virtue of the smattering of learning which distinguishes them in an almost entirely illiterate population, are able to form a vociferous and aggressive minority, whose fundamental grievance against life on the Khabur has been greatly sharpened by the prospect of the end of all free food supplies. They are, moreover, mostly able to speak a little English or Arabic and this enables them to waylay outside visitors to the settlement and, as experience has shown only too often, to convey the impression that their discontents and grievances are shared by the whole population. Included in this minority of malcontents are a number of individuals who can better be described as professional agitators and who are responsible for fomenting much of the discontent. This most unwelcome element seems to have come over almost entirely with the last transfer in 1936. The object of this transfer was mainly to relieve the situation of the Assyrians in Bagdad and Mosul, but it is certainly regrettable that the occasion was also taken to include notoriously troublesome individuals who had lost both tribal discipline and contact with the soil and whose presence in the purely agricultural, provisional settlement on the Khabur could only lead to unrest and difficulty.

46. As against the small minority of what may be termed "professional malcontents", we have the impression that the great majority of the Assyrian settlers—whether they came from the villages in Iraq or from the Levy force—have retained their traditional character of an agricultural and pastoral community and have no fundamental prejudice on material grounds against the
Khabur region. Indeed, many appear to realise its economic possibilities in view of the market for vegetables and for live-stock. Most of the Assyrians have come to appreciate the value of the irrigated gardens which have already been made over to them individually, and, although this is a form of cultivation which is new to them, they are gaining experience and have begun to sell some of their produce. We were told of the case of an Assyrian with private means who is already contemplating buying for himself a pumping-set to irrigate additional land in the event of his remaining on the Khabur. But, unfortunately, an unhappy combination of adverse circumstances has come greatly to complicate the problem of building up the settlement. As in other respects, the uncertainty about the future of the settlement has had unfortunate results. The Assyrian agriculturist is hard-working and thrifty on his own land and for his own benefit. As has been explained above, the provisional character of the settlement and the uncertainty as to its future has hitherto sapped the general incentive of self-interest and prevented the economic organisation of the settlement from being put on a wholly individual basis and the Assyrians from being supplied with the essential agricultural equipment. Uncertain whether their work would have lasting value, lacking a sufficient total area of arable land, much of the essential agricultural equipment and, in many cases, even a minimum of live-stock, it is hardly surprising that the Assyrians felt insecure about their material future. When the Assyrians came to realise recently, first, that free food rations were coming to an early end, and, secondly, that the drought was likely to ruin much of the winter crops and to cause losses among the live-stock, their feeling of insecurity turned in many cases rapidly into one of alarm.

47. The actual incidence of this feeling of material insecurity and of the discontent and reluctance to work to which it can lead in practice varies very much as between the different tribes and the different villages. Much depends on the character and influence of the tribal chiefs and village headmen; on the amount of property and live-stock in the individual villages and on the size and composition of the villages. Another important element is the relative distance from the headquarters of the Administration at Tell Tamer, since the small and over-worked staff cannot inevitably give quite the same degree of attention and supervision to the outlying villages. For example, the three villages of the Upper Tari tribe (the most numerous in the settlement) are at present the best-ordered and least troublesome, due to the favourable combination of good chiefs, relatively numerous live-stock and a situation in and adjacent to the centre of the settlement at Tell Tamer. The small villages recently created to relieve the overcrowding in the original villages are also proving very easy to administer. The villages where discontent is most apparent and which are most difficult to set to work, are, for example, Tell Um'rané, at the northern end of the settlement far away from the Administration, where the influence of the recognised chiefs is slight and there is free scope for agitators, and where there are also very limited flocks; or again Tell Maghas, which is the only village still containing a mixture of different tribes and where the flocks are still less numerous. The personal importance of the chiefs is shown by the fact that the village of Tell Tchémé, although next to the discontented Tell Um'rané in the northern group and of the same tribe, has been kept well in hand by the good sense and authority of its headman. So far, the material discontent has only gained three or four villages to any serious extent. But unless something is done to stabilise the situation and reassure the Assyrians, the feeling of material insecurity may extend and go so deep as to prejudice the hope of inducing the bulk of the Assyrians to accept the material conditions of life on the Khabur.

Political Attitude of the Assyrians.

48. Nevertheless, despite the increasing concern over economic conditions, it is clear, as well from the petitions which we received during our stay from all classes of Assyrians as from the evidence of the Trustee Board, that it is, above all, their future political situation which at present pre-occupies the Assyrians. It is evident that the prospect of coming under the control of the mandatory Power inspired to a great extent the desire of the Assyrians to emigrate to Syria. The Assyrians have retained as a community their primitive simplicity in political matters and they clearly did not envisage an early termination of the mandate. They were therefore considerably disillusioned to learn last year that it was intended that the mandate over Syria should end in three years, and they became at once apprehensive as to their future. Their apprehensions seem to have been increased by the visit to the Khabur settlement of certain Syrian politicians, whom the Assyrians understood to advise them that, if they wished to remain and prosper in Syria, they would do well to abandon their own special customs, dress and language. Some of the Assyrians seem even to have interpreted these visitors—though doubtless quite erroneously—as advising them to give up their religion. The present position is that there is undoubtedly a feeling of political insecurity among the Assyrians on the Khabur. We observed, moreover, that this feeling of political insecurity was general among all tribes and villages. It was not connected with the special local conditions in the individual villages or tribes, as in the case of the feeling of material insecurity (cf. paragraph 47 above), although the manner in which it was expressed and its effect on the current outlook of the settlers was naturally very much stronger and more evident in the villages where material discontent and indiscipline were already present.
The feeling of political insecurity has been greatly enhanced by the general uncertainty as to the future of the settlement. If the Assyrians knew definitely that they had to remain on the Khabur and possessed the essential equipment to develop their individual lands, they would probably not be so pre-occupied by their political future. As it is, the feeling of material and economic insecurity analysed above reacts on and enhances the feeling of political and religious insecurity.

The result of these various disquieting influences is a general feeling of insecurity and vague apprehension for the future. This sort of malaise is undoubtedly spreading rapidly, taking advantage of every little incident, such, for example, as the disappointment that, when questioned by a delegation of their chiefs, we were unable to say anything definite about the future of the settlement. The ground is naturally fertile for every sort of intrigue and the opportunity of making trouble is unfortunately not lost upon the professional agitators mentioned in paragraph 45 above. Some of these agitators present the danger that it is in the interest of the Assyrians to make trouble and to refuse to settle down, since the League of Nations will then be forced to remove them elsewhere and, even if they do not obtain a better settlement, they will at least receive free food supplies over a further period. The Trustee Board, loyally supported by most of the tribal chiefs and by the reasonable and genuine element among the Assyrians, does its utmost to combat this insidious propaganda with its appeal to the refugee mentality which their history since the war has engendered in many Assyrians. But it is seriously handicapped by the uncertainty about the future which, as shown above, has deprived the Assyrians both of the will and of the means to fend for themselves. If the situation is allowed to continue much longer as indefinite as at present, subversive intrigues will inevitably spread and undermine the whole administration of the settlement, which cannot proceed without the co-operation of the great majority of the Assyrians.

Assyrians Anxious to return to Iraq.

51. It remains to allude in this section of our report to a difficult problem closely concerning the Government of Iraq. The Trustee Board has a list of twenty-nine Assyrian men known to have left the settlement and returned to Iraq, while leaving their wives and families on the Khabur. It is not known for certain what reception they have been accorded by the Iraqi authorities, but it is rumoured that, after a short term of imprisonment, they have been found work in the vicinity of Mosul. The settlement authorities are considerably embarrassed by having to maintain the destitute families of these absconders, and it is clear that they cannot be left separated indefinitely from their men.

52. A further question is raised by the petitions which we received from a small number of Assyrians, particularly of the Marbishu tribe, stating that they preferred to live in Iraq and to resume their Iraqi nationality and requesting that the Government of Iraq might be moved to allow them to return. The exact scope and importance of this petition is uncertain, since the chief of the tribe in question himself expressed to us his vigorous disapproval of it, and the validity of some of the signatures was doubtful. But if the Government of Iraq is willing to re-admit Assyrians who are in fact anxious to return, and if land is available for them in Iraq, there will certainly be no advantage in retaining them on the Khabur. It should, however, be made entirely clear to them that they would in no circumstances be allowed to change their minds once again.

The Administration of the Settlement.

53. It is the Trustee Board and its staff who have to bear the main brunt of the difficulties and complications which beset the Khabur settlement and of which some idea will have been obtained by the preceding paragraphs of our report. Our visit to the Khabur and the view which we were able to have of the working of the settlement Administration have impressed us with the devoted and conscientious manner in which the Trustee Board and its staff, both at Beirut and on the Khabur, have worked to make the settlement as successful as possible. We were also glad to observe that in their work the settlement authorities have consistently received the unstinted co-operation and assistance of the officials of the High Commission at Beirut and of the officers of the French army of the Levant with whom they have come in contact.

54. The task of creating the settlement was entrusted in 1934/35 by the French High Commission to M. Burnier, the Swiss expert who has been employed by the Nansen Office for many years past for the settlement of Armenians in Syria, and we feel that the Committee owes much gratitude to M. Burnier for taking on that difficult and thankless task. On January 1st, 1936, the present Trustee Board came into existence, with M. Henri Caénod (a Swiss subject of long experience in refugee work) as President, Captain Duenez as representative of the French High Commissioner, and Dr. Bayard Dodge (President of the American University at Beirut) kindly consenting to act as honorary third member: M. Burnier has continued to serve as the expert and adviser of the Trustee Board. In October last, Captain Vuilloud took over the functions of French
representative on the Board. The subordinate staff employed by the Board has recently been reduced as a result of the simplification of the financial regulations and the suppression of certain posts. The chief members of the staff are at Beirut: a secretary-accountant; on the Khabur: an agricultural expert, a doctor, a surveyor and irrigation expert, a chief mechanic, a secretary-accountant, and an interpreter (Assyrian).

55. At the meeting which we held as Sub-Committee in April last in Paris, we arrived at the provisional conclusion that the settlement Administration might be reorganised by its concentration on the Khabur. As a result of our visit, we are disposed to agree with the Trustee Board that this would not be practicable and that the Beirut office must be retained as the headquarters of the Board. The Board is obliged to keep in constant touch with the High Commission over innumerable questions both of policy and of detail, and this contact could not be maintained satisfactorily over the great distance which separates the Khabur region from Beirut. Further, an office on the coast is in any case most desirable in connection with the ordering, inspection and forwarding of stores for the settlement. Both these considerations will become much more important if and when the reorganisation of the settlement is undertaken. Moreover, the main weakness in the present system of divided staff—the lack of superior supervision in the actual settlement—has been, in our opinion, largely remedied in recent months by the prolonged residence on the Khabur of Captain Vuilloud, who has established a most valuable system of supervision of every side of the life of the settlement and by his personality succeeded remarkably in gaining the respect and confidence of the Assyrians. M. Cuénod himself is obliged, as President of the Board, to spend most of his time at the Beirut office; he is accustomed, however, to pay regular monthly visits to the settlement.

56. Of the leading members of the Trustee Board’s staff mentioned in paragraph 54 above, three are of former Russian nationality and two are Armenians. We formed a high opinion of the merit of these gentlemen. We agree with the Trustee Board that they are at present insufficient to cope with the work of the settlement: they are obliged regularly to work very long hours, and there are no substitutes to allow of regular leave or of replacement in case of sickness. Moreover, it must be remembered that, although healthy, the Khabur region is extremely isolated and primitive and offers no form of social life or distraction.

57. We think that the Trustee Board are following the best policy in dealing with the Assyrians as far as possible through their tribal chiefs, the senior or most appropriate of whom is appointed headman of each village and is responsible for the execution of the orders of the authorities in his village. A meeting is held of the village headmen at least once a month, when instructions are given and explained to them and they are free to raise any questions they desire to in connection with the administration of the settlement. These chiefs are generally of some intelligence and education and possess, for the most part, authority over their tribesmen. The Assyrians on the Khabur are, in the great majority, extremely primitive and backward. There is not in the settlement a single Assyrian who has passed any academic test, however simple; not 2% can sign their names, and the great majority speak only their own language (Syriac). There are not 150 Assyrians in all with any sort of artisan knowledge and, as already mentioned, their agricultural capacity was also very limited on their arrival. This backwardness naturally makes it much more difficult to build up a really self-supporting settlement and increases the need for instruction and supervision in the early stages.

Section II. — Conclusions and General Recommendations.

58. The broad conclusion which we reached was that, while the Assyrian settlement on the Khabur is it present definitely not self-supporting or capable of being left to itself, it should be possible, from the purely material and economic point of view, to place it on a complete and reasonably satisfactory self-supporting basis, provided a limited further capital expenditure were authorised for the purchase of additional land, equipment and live-stock, and the reorganisation of certain of the villages were undertaken, including the removal southwards of the population in the four present most northerly villages. We should explain that re-settlement of the population in the northern villages seems to us just as essential (for the reasons given in paragraph 22 above) as the provision to the Assyrians of adequate lands and agricultural equipment. We are recommending in a third section the detailed measures which in our opinion, should be taken to put the settlement on a satisfactory self-supporting basis, in the event of it having to continue, and to give it the best chance in the future.

59. We consider that the authorities who have been responsible for administering the settlement (since January 1936, the Trustee Board and its staff) deserve much credit for the work which they have accomplished in very difficult circumstances. The fact that the settlement is not already self-supporting and that further capital expenditure is essential is due to no fault of the Administration, but, as has been shown, purely to the special circumstances in which the Assyrians were settled on the Khabur as a provisional stage on their way to their permanent home. As has been pointed out in the preceding paragraphs, the Administration has been
harpered at every turn by the provisional purpose of the settlement and the uncertainty regarding its duration and scope, which has prevented it from grouping the settlers on the best lines and from equipping the settlers with the essential individual equipment and live-stock. Moreover, it has had to deal with extremely heterogeneous Assyrian elements of whom many had no taste for the life of a cultivator and at least half had lost touch with the land.

60. We believe that, given the required additional funds, the Trustee Board could, in a period of from one to two years, carry out the necessary transformation and put the Assyrians into a material position where, so far as can be foreseen, they would be economically self-supporting and capable with hard work of becoming a prosperous community by the standards of the Middle East. We visited in the Sanjak of Alexandretta an Armenian village established some ten years ago by M. Burnier on the site of a swamp, and were much impressed at its flourishing condition as the result of hard work by the settlers combined with judicious outside aid. The soil of the Khabur is fertile and water is plentiful and there seems prima facie no economic reason why the Assyrians could not also be successful. The uncertain factors in the case of the Khabur settlement are the rainfall of the region and the attitude of the Assyrians towards their new life. The first, however, is a risk which must be accepted in most parts of the Middle East and which can be normally met without disaster once settlers have accumulated some reserves. As regards the second factor, we have already mentioned that we believe that most of the economic grievances of the Assyrians could be met by the reorganisation of the settlement and the end of the present uncertainty.

61. But we must emphasise that the above conclusion is confined to the material and economic aspect. Equally if not more important is obviously the political aspect—that is, the question whether this colony of Christian immigrants settled in an isolated and alien district can count in the future upon full security and whether the Assyrians will be able to settle down politically in their new environment as subjects of the Syrian State. We feel that this purely political problem is really outside both our mandate and our competence. In view of our relatively favourable conclusion on the economic prospects of the settlement, we feel, however, obliged to record that we do not feel able to take the responsibility of making any forecast as to the political future of the settlement. Apart from the fact that they belong to a racial and religious minority, the Assyrians on the Khabur will also be in the delicate position of any settlement of sedentary agriculturists in an essentially nomadic region. They can only maintain themselves against the nomadic tribes and the central Government maintains security. Furthermore, the success in the future of the settlement on the Khabur depends essentially on the Assyrians accepting their situation and to recognising the obligations which they will have to assume in due course as nationals of the Syrian State. Meanwhile, it is not possible to overlook the fact that the Assyrians have come to develop a state of mind which may render this process more difficult. We have already described (paragraphs 48 to 50 above) the apprehensions of the Assyrians and we feel that, in their present state of mind, some elements among them may be difficult to convince of their own best interests. But in the absence of any alternative destination, it is clear that the only practicable policy is to make every effort to stabilise, as far as possible, the political situation of the Khabur settlement and to develop harmonious relations between the Assyrians and the Syrian authorities. As mentioned in paragraph 49 above, it is probable that the present acute feeling of political insecurity would be to some extent diminished if the feeling of economic insecurity were removed and the necessary measures of reorganisation were carried out in the settlement. Further, the removal southwards of the population in the four northern villages and the transformation of the settlement into a continuous band on both banks of the river would give it increased political solidity and confidence and would make it less liable to incursions or attacks from outside.

62. We consider it most important, in any event, that a decision be taken shortly about the future of the settlement. If it has to continue in the absence of any solution, it is essential that the necessary reorganisation be carried through as soon as possible and that funds be supplied to the Trustee Board at an early date to enable a scheme of reorganisation and equipment to be begun without delay. As already mentioned, the combined economic and political uncertainty is causing the progressive demoralisation of the Assyrians, which, if not promptly arrested, will certainly end by undermining the whole life of the settlement and produce something like a crisis. Meanwhile, it is evident that, in the present state of uncertainty as to the future, visits to the Khabur by outside persons are likely to cause a false impression among the Assyrians and to unsettle them still further.

63. We also consider that, if the settlement is to continue it will be desirable to regularise, as soon as possible, (a) the title of the Assyrians to the lands they occupy (cf. paragraphs 32 and 33 above) and (b) the national status of the Assyrian settlers in Syria. The end of the present special regime of forced residence in the Khabur and the acquisition of the normal rights of a Syrian subject, including the right to live where they like, would allow the discontented elements to leave the settlement where their presence is a standing nuisance. Meanwhile, we think that the Government of Iraq ought to be approached, as soon as possible, in regard to the families of the twenty-nine
Assyrians who have returned to Iraq (cf. paragraph 51 above) and their views sought at the same time about the future of those other Assyrians on the Khabur who are petitioning to be allowed to go back.

64. Apart from the all-pervading element of uncertainty and insecurity, we do not think that the Assyrians have so far had legitimate cause for complaint about their treatment in the settlement. Not, indeed, can the Committee be blamed for the continued uncertainty, which has been due to its desire, even after the failure of the third settlement project, to find a satisfactory permanent home for the Assyrians. As shown in the first part of the report, the Khabur region has many advantages for an agricultural settlement, and we have no doubt that, from the point of view of climate, health and economic opportunity it is much superior to the lowlying plains in which many of the Assyrians were living in Iraq. We have described in detail in paragraphs 20 to 31 above the efforts which have been made to develop agriculture in the settlement, and in paragraphs 16 to 18 we have explained the arrangements, past and present, for the distribution of free food rations to the Assyrians. In view of the allegations as to insufficient food supplies which have been current and the complaints of some of the settlers themselves, we looked carefully for signs of under-feeding among the Assyrians. As we have recorded in paragraph 29 above, we did not see any. We do not pretend that the Khabur region is a paradise or that there have not been cases of individual hardship, particularly in view of the great difference in the private means of the settlers and in their relative capacity for agriculture. But we feel that everything possible in the especially difficult circumstances has been done for the Assyrians and that, as regards in particular free food rations, they have had a fair minimum ration over a proper period. We doubt very much whether it would have been expedient and in their own best interests to give the Assyrians a larger ration over a longer period, even if it had been financially possible. As we have said, the Trustee Board has not been rigid in the matter of food supplies; it has in hard cases continued assistance after the normal period and it has not hesitated to ask for extraordinary credits for special relief when the harvest has proved deficient. It is important moreover, to recall again that it was the lack of solidarity among the Assyrians which prevented the Administration from discriminating in the distribution of rations in favour of the hard cases.

65. Meanwhile, it is clear that the drought will cause a serious deficiency in this year's harvest; and, for the reasons given in paragraph 29 above, we fully endorse the application of the Trustee Board for a special credit for the purchase of corn. We recommend, moreover, that the credit be approved as early as possible, as it is most desirable, in view of the state of mind of the Assyrians, to re-assure them quickly as to the immediate future. It must, however, be made absolutely clear to them that the assistance is of an extraordinary character and does not imply that free food rations are being resumed.

66. The scale on which the sanitary organisation of the settlement should be maintained is a difficult problem. The health of the Assyrians must necessarily be a matter of close concern to the Council Committee so long as it is responsible for the settlement. At the same time, we are convinced that the view of the Trustee Board mentioned in paragraph 36 above is correct and that it would not be in the ultimate interest of the settlers to expand medical assistance beyond a certain point. In the light of our visit to the Khabur, we are satisfied that the reorganised medical service is being capably and zealously conducted by the new doctor. We have confidence both in the judgment of the Trustee Board and of Dr. Vinogradoff, and we consider that the question of what further medical facilities are desirable can be left to their recommendation. The Council Committee has never yet refused to grant a credit sought for the sanitary service and we are confident that it would be equally sympathetic to any further requests under this head. We think that, in particular, favourable consideration ought to be given to any demand for an increased credit for the purchase of drugs and medical stores.

67. Meanwhile, we consider that the statistics show that the Khabur region is climatically suitable for the Assyrians and that the health of the settlers is not unfavourable, having regard to the fact that so many of the Assyrians arrived on the Khabur region has many advantages for an agricultural settlement, and we have no doubt that, from the point of view of climate, health and economic opportunity it is much superior to the lowlying plains in which many of the Assyrians were living in Iraq. We have described in detail in paragraphs 20 to 31 above the efforts which have been made to develop agriculture in the settlement, and in paragraphs 16 to 18 we have explained the arrangements, past and present, for the distribution of free food rations to the Assyrians. In view of the allegations as to insufficient food supplies which have been current and the complaints of some of the settlers themselves, we looked carefully for signs of under-feeding among the Assyrians. As we have recorded in paragraph 29 above, we did not see any. We do not pretend that the Khabur region is a paradise or that there have not been cases of individual hardship, particularly in view of the great difference in the private means of the settlers and in their relative capacity for agriculture. But we feel that everything possible in the especially difficult circumstances has been done for the Assyrians and that, as regards in particular free food rations, they have had a fair minimum ration over a proper period. We doubt very much whether it would have been expedient and in their own best interests to give the Assyrians a larger ration over a longer period, even if it had been financially possible. As we have said, the Trustee Board has not been rigid in the matter of food supplies; it has in hard cases continued assistance after the normal period and it has not hesitated to ask for extraordinary credits for special relief when the harvest has proved deficient. It is important moreover, to recall again that it was the lack of solidarity among the Assyrians which prevented the Administration from discriminating in the distribution of rations in favour of the hard cases.

68. We have supplied details in paragraphs 39 to 41 of the religious and educational facilities available in the settlement. We think that the organisation of the Nestorian Church on the Khabur would greatly benefit if a suitable dignitary with at least the rank of Bishop could live in the settlement, or at least pay it a visit of some weeks. We think that the initiative in building any further churches, if and where required, can be left to the Assyrians, although the Trustee Board might help at its discretion by providing "domes", if acceptable to the Assyrians. As regards education, we entirely agree with the opinion of the Trustee Board (cf. paragraph 42 above) that the urgent material requirements of the settlement should take precedence over the extension of education, but that when the latter takes place it should be on practical lines and include the compulsory study of Arabic and some elementary agricultural teaching. We recognise that in the future

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sympathisers with the Assyrians may wish to assist them particularly with respect to religious and educational facilities. Such assistance would be most useful, provided it were given so as to avoid giving the Assyrians the impression that they were under special Christian protection and of causing suspicion among the Syrian Moslems. It is also essential that nothing should be done to stimulate rivalry between the Nestorian and Chaldean elements among the settlers.

69. Finally, we would like to record once more the favourable impression which we received of the work of the Trustee Board and of its administrative staff, and of the co-operation which they have received from the civil and military authorities of the mandatory Power. We consider that it is impossible at present to consider any further reduction of administrative personnel and that it may indeed be desirable to augment slightly the present staff in connection with the proposed reorganisation of the settlement.

Section III. — Detailed Measures recommended for the Economic Reorganisation of the Khabor Settlement on a Fully Self-supporting Basis.

I. Regrouping of the Existing Villages.

70. The general object, we consider, should be to group the settlement, as far as possible, as a compact band of territory on both banks of the river. If the complete frontage on the river were obtained on both banks throughout the length of the settlement, there could be no Bedouin enclaves, as in certain places at present, and the possibility of friction with the surrounding population would be greatly reduced. Moreover, possession of the river frontage gives the settlers the possibility of extending their cultivated area, wherever physically possible, back into the hinterland. Inside the settlement, each village should contain not more than 600 Assyrians, all of the same tribe or sub-tribe, and should be composed of elements who are normally on good terms with each other. Each village should have its own gardens and fields entirely separate from those of any other village and should also, in default of exceptional circumstances, possess an independent irrigation system. The necessary steps should also be taken to end the present differences between the number of houses and the population in the various villages and to establish a satisfactory uniform proportion of persons per "dome" or equivalent house.

71. In order to achieve these ends, it would be necessary, in our opinion:

(a) To resettle the population of the existing four most northerly villages on new lands to be acquired at the southern end of the settlement and in not less than six new villages, thus rendering the settlement much more compact and enabling a reduction in size of the two large villages of Tell Oumrane and Tell Theme (the various considerations which make the transfer of these villages desirable are set out more fully in paragraph 12 above). Apart from the purchase of the necessary additional land, the transfer of these villages has been estimated to cost about £3,000 for the construction of new houses, plus transport costs;

(b) To continue the process of reducing the size of the larger villages in the rest of the settlement—in particular, the villages of Tell Tamer and Tell Maghas. This would entail the building of a number of further small villages, the number and location of which would depend on the area and situation of the additional lands which might be made available.

II. Provision of Additional Lands.

72. A sufficient additional area of irrigable land would be required, not only (a) for the resettlement of the population in the four northern villages (about 2,600 head) and (b) for the creation of a number of small additional villages for the better grouping of the population in the rest of the settlement, but also (c) to increase substantially the total area available for cultivation per Assyrian family in the settlement (as regards the total area of land required by the settlement, see paragraph 28 above).

In pursuance of the general policy of organising the settlement as a compact group of contiguous villages and of keeping it as far away from the Turco-Syrian frontier as possible, the additional lands can only be acquired (i) in the enclaves of land between the existing Assyrian villages, which are at present either cultivated by the autochthonous inhabitants of the region or are left uncultivated, and (ii) at the southern end of the existing settlement by extension in the direction of Hassetché. The lands which fall within these two classes and which are actually available and suitable for cultivation are:

(a) A number of enclaves on the right (west) bank of the river, which are at present cultivated by Bedouin and total 225 hectares, with nine wooden "norias". The price
demanded by the present cultivators for their right of occupation is about £1,800. It is estimated that the cultivable area could be somewhat extended by the use of motor-pumps;

(b) Certain parcels of land, totalling 33 hectares, with three wooden "norias" at the southern end of the existing settlement and belonging to the chief of a Bedouin tribe who is demanding 1,000 Turkish gold pounds (or about £1,550);

(c) An estate lying on both banks of the river further south in the direction of Hassetché, the cultivable area of which at present amounts to about 350 hectares, irrigated by twenty-four wooden "norias" (with ten out of order) and one motor-pump. The cultivable area could, it is estimated, be raised to 600 hectares by the expansion of irrigation facilities, and it is estimated that room could be made on this estate for at least some 7 or 8 small or medium-sized villages. The estate already contains a fair number of trees. The owner has the complete title deeds for his property and is at present demanding 15,000 Turkish gold pounds (or about £23,250).

73. We recommend that if the settlement is to be placed on a fully self-supporting basis, negotiations should be begun as soon as possible for the acquisition of all these lands. The prices asked for the properties under (b) and (c) above seem, however, to be by way of an opening maximum, and it is to be hoped that, if the negotiations are skilfully conducted through a qualified intermediary, a reduction in price might be secured. The acquisition of these lands would immediately increase the area of good irrigable land in the settlement by 600 hectares, an area which could be extended to over 1,000 hectares. These lands would be particularly suitable, since they could be, to a great extent, irrigated by "norias" which, as they are cheap to construct and easy to maintain, are the ideal means of irrigation for a people such as the Assyrians.

74. We recommend the suggestion of the Trustee Board that, if these lands are acquired, a crop of corn should be cultivated and harvested as quickly as possible by purely mechanical means to provide sur place the chopped straw which would form the most expensive element in the construction of mud-brick houses for the new villages. Until this crop were harvested, the future inhabitants of the lands would most profitably stay in their existing villages and cultivate their present lands to the last.

III. Title to Assyrian Lands.

75. We recommend that every effort should be made to convert the right of occupation at present possessed by the Trustee Board in respect of the lands cultivated by the Assyrians (cf. paragraph 32 above) into a secure legal title in accordance with Syrian law. The same procedure should be carried out in the event of the right of occupation being purchased in respect of the lands mentioned under (a) and (b) in paragraph 72, but would not be necessary in the case of the estate under (c), as the complete title deeds would be taken over from the present proprietor. We understand that the mandatory authorities in Syria are already studying this problem, and the Committee will doubtless wish to await, in the first place, the outcome of this study.

76. The legal ownership of all lands in the settlement would presumably have to be vested in the Trustee Board, since the Assyrians are still under a special regime and do not possess the rights of Syrian citizens. It seems to us, in any case, desirable that the lands should be held by the Trustee Board, and that it should be left to the Board to decide in the future, in conjunction with the Council Committee, how the ownership of the lands should eventually be made over to the individual Assyrian families.

IV. Irrigation.

77. The general proposal mentioned above of organising the settlement in medium- or small-sized villages with fully separate lands requires the reorganisation to some extent of the irrigation system of the settlement. The double object of giving each village an independent water-supply and at the same time of keeping the means of irrigation as simple and as cheap as possible requires that irrigation shall be supplied, as far as possible, by the wooden "norias" or water-raising wheels, customary in the neighbourhood, each of which can irrigate intensively about 6 to 8 hectares, and are estimated to cost only between 1,000 and 2,000 French francs each. In addition to the twenty-six "norias" already working in the settlement, the purchase of the lands listed under (a), (b) and (c) above would carry with them thirty-six further "norias" in working order and ten requiring repair. This number could certainly be extended considerably, both as a means of replacing the existing fixed pumping-stations and also on any additional lands purchased in proportion as the cultivable area was extended. We consider that the Trustee Board should be invited to consider this question of the construction of further "norias" in relation with the other arrangements for equipping the Assyrians. The existing metal "noria" at Tell Oumrane would of course be re-erected on the new lands.
78. The "noria" is, however, only able to irrigate land in the immediate neighbourhood of the river bank, and if the settlement is to be self-supporting and to attain any measure of prosperity, it must continue, as at present, to depend to a considerable extent upon motor-pumps. Experience has shown that the small portable pump of 8 h.p. (with a capacity for irrigating intensively 25 hectares) is cheap in initial cost (about £80 per set), cheap and reliable in operation and easy to maintain. The Trustee Board considers that, if left to themselves, the Assyrians ought to be able to run these pumps on a co-operative basis by groups or by villages, and to earn sufficient from the sale of their produce to provide for the operation costs and any necessary repairs. As a part of the reorganisation of the settlement, they accordingly propose that at least eight further sets of these small motor-pumps should be bought and installed on the additional lands. The estimated total cost of the purchase and installation of these eight pumping-sets is estimated at £1,370. We support the suggestion for the purchase of this extra equipment, which would bring the total number of small portable pumps in the settlement to twenty-three.

79. The main problem concerning the future irrigation of the settlement arises out of the three large pumping-stations, the origin and nature of which are described in paragraphs 20 and 21 above. These large fixed stations complicate the administration of the settlement, and also form a serious problem for the future, owing to the virtual impossibility of the Assyrians maintaining them without assistance.

80. The smallest of the three stations at Tell Oumrane would in any case have to be dismantled if the northern villages were removed as recommended. At the same time, little or nothing could be obtained by the sale of the machinery if it were dismantled and sold, and the best course would appear to be to re-erect the three sets forming the northern station individually on a movable basis on some part of the additional lands to be acquired. This would avoid the considerable cost of erecting a new permanent station building and the necessary piping, etc. As regards the two remaining stations, it is clear that they cannot possibly be dispensed with at present, and the only possible course seems to be to continue to keep them in service but, at the same time, to reduce, as far as possible, the dependence of the settlement upon them, a process which would take place automatically if the large villages of Tell Tamer and Tell Maghas were reduced in size. Eventually, these two stations might be reduced mainly to the rôle of reserve for use at times when an exceptional amount of irrigation was required in case of drought. The difficulty of maintenance in the future, once the Assyrians have been left to themselves, may to some extent be overcome if one or other of the Armenian mechanics at present employed by the Trustee Board were to remain in the vicinity of the settlement as a private expert. The administration of these large stations by the Assyrian community presents, however, a formidable problem, particularly so long as they continue to serve, as at present, for the irrigation of several villages. Before any final decision can be taken as to their future, it will, however, be necessary to see how the reorganisation of the settlement progresses, and we do not think that any concrete and final recommendation is possible at present.

V. Agricultural Equipment.

81. It has been made clear in paragraph 27 above that, if the settlement is to continue, the Assyrians must be completely equipped as soon as possible, both for psychological reasons and as a further step towards self-sufficiency, with the necessary draught-oxen, ploughs and carts. The Trustee Board considers that one pair of oxen, one plough and one light cart is a minimum for every fifteen persons (i.e., about three average families) and that this set of equipment would cost approximately £15. There are already in the settlement about thirty pair of oxen and a number of ploughs and carts: the balance necessary will therefore be some 550 pair of oxen and a similar number of ploughs and carts, and the total cost may be expected to be in the neighbourhood of £9,000.

82. The four tractors now used in the settlement will fetch little or nothing, since they were mostly already second-hand when acquired. But they will be required, in any event, for ploughing in the season 1937/38 on the existing lands, and they would further be essential for the first quick harvest on the new lands proposed in paragraph 74 above.

83. The other existing machinery consists of three corn mills, attached to the three fixed pumping-stations. The northern mill would be re-erected on the new southern lands, the two other mills could remain where they are. The ownership of the mills could eventually either be vested in the village concerned (with a safeguard of the right of all other Assyrians to use them against a fee) or could be sold to an individual Assyrian to exploit as a commercial proposition. We consider that it can best be left to the Trustee Board to propose measures eventually for liquidating the other agricultural machinery in their possession at present, including the threshing-machine and the lorries. For the present, all this equipment will, of course, be required, and in the event of new villages being built in the south, we consider that it would in fact lead to economy to buy a harvester, so as to permit of a quick harvest from the new lands, to give primarily straw for building, while enabling the bulk of the population concerned to cultivate their existing lands to the last.
84. Of the two large metal sheds installed by the Trustee Board, that at Tell Oumrane would have to be re-erected elsewhere, though this would appear to cost some £360. The other would remain at Tell Tamer, and both would presumably have to be made over eventually to the communities where they are situated.

85. The existing resources of the settlement in live-stock and the proposal of the Trustee Board for the purchase of 6,268 sheep for distribution to the poorer Assyrians were summarised in paragraph 30 above. We fully support this proposal and consider it an essential element in making the settlement a success. The other essential element in live-stock—draught-oxen—has been already dealt with above.

Cost of Suggested Measures.

86. The cost of the measures advocated above is most difficult to estimate at all closely, owing particularly to the uncertainty as to the cost at which the lands could actually be obtained by negotiation. Further, the indications supplied by the Trustee Board date from between the two devaluations of the franc in the past twelve months. The following figures, which are based on the Trustee Board's information, may nevertheless be taken as reasonably accurate estimates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Indication of cost in £ sterling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of lands:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) In paragraph 72</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) In paragraph 72</td>
<td>1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) In paragraph 72</td>
<td>23,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B. — These totals are apparently high maxima.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of new villages:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Six new villages to house population removed from existing northern villages</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Small villages for settlement on new lands of surplus population in larger villages</td>
<td>2,000 (very rough indication).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport costs, extra fuel for lorries, etc.</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Purchase of eight further portable pumping-sets</td>
<td>1,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Construction of additional &quot; norias &quot;</td>
<td>500 (very rough estimate).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Dismantling and re-erecting as three portable units pumping-station at Tell Oumrane</td>
<td>200 (rough minimum estimate).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural equipment and live-stock:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Provision per fifteen settlers of one pair of oxen, one plough and one small cart</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Purchase and distribution of sheep among poorer Assyrians</td>
<td>7,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Removal and re-erecting of steel shed at present at Tell Oumrane</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50,930</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87. On the assumption that some reduction could be obtained in the maximum prices asked for the lands, and allowing a margin for unforeseen expenditure, it seems therefore that, to carry through the transformation of the settlement to a fully self-supporting basis, the Committee would require a sum in the neighbourhood of £50,000. The salaries of the administrative staff and the cost of the current upkeep of the settlement would, of course, have to be added to the cost of the actual capital expenditure. The cost of this "continuing" administrative expenditure in the present 1937 budget was about £14,000, exclusive of provision for free food supplies for the Assyrians, which should normally cease at the end of 1937.

88. We have not discussed in our report the question of a further transfer of Assyrians from Iraq to the Khabur, since we do not feel that it falls strictly within the scope of our mandate, which concerns essentially the existing settlement. Nevertheless, we consider that it may be useful to note here that the additional lands, the purchase of which has been proposed above, could probably be expanded, with the provision of the necessary irrigation facilities, to take some 2,000 further Assyrian cultivators and that the cost of establishing them on a fully self-supporting basis (i.e., with draught-oxen, live-stock and full equipment) has been estimated to be some £23,400.


(Signed) F. De Panafieu.
(Signed) J. G. Ward.
End of June 1936. — At the time when the abandonment of the Ghab scheme was under consideration, the Chairman of the Committee of the Council was anxious to know what would be the cost of liquidation. The French representative on the Committee then stated officially that a sum of 500,000 French francs would have to be provided in addition to the 1,000,000 in respect of which commitments had already been entered into.

On August 11th, 1936, the Delegate-General of the High Commission submitted to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations an estimate amounting to 410,000 French francs made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowances and transport</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoppages of works and return of plant</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unforeseen</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As there was available at this date a credit balance of 189,587 French francs out of the 1,000,000 placed at his disposal at the beginning of the year, the Delegate-General asked only for the difference between 410,000 French francs and 189,587 francs —i.e., 220,000 French francs in round figures.

On August 21st, 1936, the High Commission repeated its request by telegram.

On August 24th, 1936, the Secretariat remitted to the High Commission a sum of 100,000 French francs, while expressly reserving the position that the Committee might take up after consideration of the letter of August 11th.

In a telegram dated September 16th, the High Commission pressed its request for the payment of the balance of the sum asked for on August 11th—i.e., 120,000 French francs.

On September 19th, the Secretary-General replied to the High Commission: "The Committee of the Council will meet on September 22nd; I will submit your telegram to it immediately ".

On September 22nd, the High Commission repeated its request in a telegram that, owing to the extension of the time-limit for the liquidation of the Ghab works scheme and having regard to certain unforeseen expenditure, the sum still required in order to complete the work of liquidation amounted to 270,000 French francs instead of 120,000.

On September 22nd, on receiving this telegram, the Committee decided to remit 120,000 French francs and to await the High Commission's explanations before remitting the balance.

The sums actually paid up to this date by the Secretariat thus amounted to 1,220,000 French francs.

Finally, in a letter dated March 4th last, the High Commissioner of the French Republic in Syria and the Lebanon stated that, owing to the inadequacy of the funds placed at his disposal, he had not been able to meet all the payments due and that, in particular, he had been unable to settle the account presented by the "Régie générale de travaux publics et chemins de fer", which had been responsible for the execution of the work. In these circumstances, the High Commissioner asked that an amount of 210,000 French francs should be placed at his disposal with a view to the final settlement of all the charges relating to the Ghab scheme.

This sum of 210,000 French francs was made up as follows:

I. Expenditure by the "Régie générale de travaux publics et chemins de fer":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance of statement No. 6 for the month of August 1936</td>
<td>100,267.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement No. 7 for September 1936</td>
<td>68,662.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest on arrears due:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to November 30th, 1936</td>
<td>3,036.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the month of December 1936</td>
<td>1,192.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For January and February 1937</td>
<td>2,385.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For March 1937 (if necessary)</td>
<td>1,192.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Cost of guarding and upkeep of plant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure effected up to February 28th, 1937</td>
<td>10,848.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure to be provided for up to May 31st, 1937</td>
<td>11,100.—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Unforeseen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unforeseen</td>
<td>1,313.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand total                           | 210,000.—   |

As soon as we arrived at Beirut, we examined the different items in this statement, in close collaboration with the High Commission's departments.

In the first place, the High Commission was good enough to advance the sums still due to the "Régie générale de travaux publics et chemins de fer"—i.e., 178,930.17 French francs—in order to put an end to the addition of interest on arrears.
This interest, which would normally have amounted to 10,193.56 French francs, up to May 31st, 1937, is shown only at 7,645.15 French francs, the rate having been reduced from 8% to 6%.

As regards the cost of guarding and upkeep of plant, this was, after discussion, reduced from 21,948.40 French francs to 17,150.50 French francs, on the understanding that the expenditure still to be incurred from May 31st until the final liquidation of the plant will be charged to the Ghab rents, the balance of which, if any, will be paid into the Trustee Board account.

The final statement of the funds necessary for the liquidation of the Ghab scheme thus stood as follows as at May 31st:

I. Expenditure by the “Régie générale”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance of statement No. 6 for August 1936</td>
<td>110,267.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement No. 7 for September 1936</td>
<td>68,662.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest on arrears due at 6% up to May 31st, 1937</td>
<td>178,930.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>186,575.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Cost of guarding and upkeep of plant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure effected up to May 31st, 1937</td>
<td>17,150.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>203,725.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance in hand</td>
<td>1,969.—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount due</td>
<td>201,756.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though it seemed difficult to contest the principle of the interest on arrears charged by the “Régie” in respect of the sums remaining due to it, it seemed reasonable, on the contrary, to raise the question whether the charge in respect of cost of guarding and upkeep of plant ought properly to be borne by the Settlement Fund, since official notice of the existence of this plant was not given until March 6th last. In this connection, the High Commission, while emphasising the fact that it had in this matter merely acted in the best interests of the League of Nations, expressed its readiness to bear the cost of guarding and maintenance itself. In that event, however, it refused to consider taking over for its own account any part of the plant whatsoever.

After having tried, but unsuccessfully, to get the manufacturers to take back the surveying and measuring instruments at least (see annexed the replies from the various firms consulted), we thought it much better to accept the High Commissioner’s second proposal—namely, to cut down to a minimum the costs of upkeep and to take back a substantial part of the material at the estimated price, though this was not in fact necessary, seeing that the mandate will shortly terminate.

This solution had the additional advantage that the articles sold publicly would not be very seriously reduced in price, since the eventual purchasers would otherwise have to pay Customs duties, which are sometimes rather high.

As the Committee has decided to allow the Trustee Board to make a first selection of anything which it might need out of this material, we have authorised M. Cuénod to charge against the credit accruing from the sale of Ghab vehicles, up to an amount of 50,000 French francs, the sums required for the purchase of these various articles. At the present moment, the camping equipment, a safe, a typewriter, a calculating machine, the surveying instruments handed over to the General Inspectorate of Public Works in exchange for those lent by it to the Council of Trustees, and an electric generating set represent an amount of 37,142 French francs.

The High Commission itself has decided to take over material up to the value of 49,190 French francs.

The remaining plant, except printed matter, which will be destroyed, as it is headed “Société des Nations, Travaux du Ghab”, will very shortly be put up for public sale and the proceeds transferred to the “Disposal of Ghab Supplies” account opened by the Trustee Board, into which an amount of 86,332 French francs has already been paid.

1 First tenancy:
Starting date. — November 20th, 1936;
Premises. — One hall, one dining-room, two bedrooms, one reception room, one kitchen, one bathroom, one entrance;
Period. — Three months, tacit renewal, option enjoyed by the lessor alone to terminate the lease at any date without compensation subject to eight day’s notice to take effect at the end of the current month;
Taxes. — Payable by the lessee;
Rent. — 2,500 French francs per annum, payable quarterly in respect of the three preceding months.

Second tenancy:
Starting date. — May 1st, 1937;
Premises. — One building for use as stables;
Period. — As above;
Taxes. — As above;
Rent. — 1,000 French francs per annum payable as above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inventory No.</th>
<th>Description of articles</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>182</td>
<td>Self-reading levelling rods</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>Zeiss telescope-level</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>20-metre steel tape-measure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>Morin tachymeter, with tripod</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In these circumstances, it is more than likely that the liquidation of plant will produce some 100,000 French francs, so that the amount to be paid by the Settlement Fund will be reduced to 100,000 French francs.

We feel it our duty to recommend the Committee to authorise that this amount should be sent as soon as possible to the French High Commissioner's Office at Beirut, so that the Ghab scheme can be finally wound up.

The cost of winding up will, in the end, have amounted to 1,330,000 French francs.

* * *

Etablissements Barot.
Paris, June 7th, 1937.

Your letter No. 5024/T.P.

The Inspector-General for the Supervision of Concession-holding Companies and Public Works,
c/o High Commission of the French Republic, Beirut.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the second instant, reference as above, which has had my full attention. I am extremely sorry to have to inform you that neither Messrs. Ott nor myself can agree to take back the hydrometrical instruments, as, generally speaking, buyers of measuring instruments want essentially to have new instruments. Furthermore, as the conditions in which instruments are used vary extremely and thus always involve different requests for accessories, it would be difficult for us to dispose of instruments answering specific conditions.

You will probably be able to sell the articles in question on the spot. You might perhaps be well advised in making an offer to the Syrian and Lebanese departments engaged in measurements of waterways.

Regretting that I cannot assist you in the matter.

(Signed)
Etablissements Sanguet,
Paris, June 7th, 1937.

The Inspector-General for the Supervision of Concession-holding Companies and Public Works,
Beirut (Syria).

Sir,

In reply to your letter No. 5024/T.P. of June 2nd, 1937, we beg to state that we could take back the tachymeter in question, with tripod, delivered franco Paris for an amount which might vary between 1,000 and 1,500 francs according to the state of the instrument as found on its arrival in Paris and provided that we could re-import it free of Customs duty as supplies returned as not up to indent.

In our opinion, however, if your instrument is in good condition, you might find a purchaser on better conditions for 2,000 or 2,500 francs by applying to Messrs. Anghelopoulo, rue Maarab, Beirut.

Yours faithfully,
for I. & C. Sanguet & Co.
(Signed) p. p. Director.

Paris, June 8th, 1937.

The Inspector-General for the Supervision of Concession-holding Companies and Public Works,
Beirut (Syria).

Your ref. 5024/T.P.

Sir,

In reply to your favour of 2nd instant, we regret to have to inform you that we cannot consider taking back the two Zeiss levels, Model II, which you possess.

It is our rule to sell to our customers only absolutely new instruments taken direct from our works.

With renewed regrets.

Optica Limited.
Manager.
(Signed)

Beirut, June 15th, 1937.

The Inspector-General for the Supervision of Concession-holding Companies and Public Works,
Beirut.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 2nd instant enquiring whether I could take back the levels delivered in accordance with your order of October 28th, 1935.

I am sorry that I cannot take back these levels, as I am not equipped for the re-sale of instruments for my own account.

(Signed) Charles FRISCH.
LETTER FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE.

London, September 2nd, 1937.

Dear Monsieur Lisicky,

I am now in a position to inform you of the decision at which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have arrived concerning the scheme for the further equipment and reorganisation on a fully self-supporting basis of the Assyrian settlement on the Upper Khabur, which the Council Committee adopted in principle at its session in July last, and which I was asked, as United Kingdom representative on the Committee, to bring to the notice of His Majesty's Government.

His Majesty's Government have decided to support, in principle, the scheme for the Khabur settlement set out in Part III of the report of July 21st by M. de Panafleu and myself to the Council Committee. They are prepared to recommend Parliament to authorise a financial contribution from United Kingdom funds towards the total cost of the reorganisation, in accordance with the present procedure for financing expenditure on Assyrian settlement whereby the collective contribution of the League of Nations covers 14.78% of the expenditure and His Majesty's Government and the Iraqi Government share the balance, which amounts to 42.61% for each Government. The offer of His Majesty's Government is based on the assumption that the total cost of the proposed scheme of reorganisation will not materially exceed the figure of approximately £51,000 quoted in the report as a likely maximum estimate. The offer is further subject to the maintenance of the existing conditions that the Government of Iraq shall contribute an equal amount of the extra expenditure pari passu with His Majesty's Government and that the League of Nations shall contribute not less than its present proportion of the expenditure.

In addition to this offer towards the reorganisation of the Khabur settlement, His Majesty's Government are further prepared, in principle, to recommend Parliament to authorise a contribution towards any scheme for the assistance (which might include any necessary local resettlement) of those ex-Ottoman Assyrians who remain in Iraq, which may eventually be evolved and approved by the interested parties. Such a contribution would also be subject to the conditions that the Government of Iraq should contribute an equal amount pari passu with His Majesty's Government and that the League of Nations should contribute not less than its present proportion of the expenditure on Assyrian settlement.

I shall be grateful if you will bring the contents of this letter to the notice of the President and other members of the Committee, and of the permanent delegate of Iraq at Geneva.

(Signed) J. G. Ward.


The Iraqi Government maintains its objection to the permanent settlement of the Assyrians on the Khabur, in such a close proximity to the frontier.

In view, however, of the fact that no suitable place for permanent settlement has been found, the Government agrees that the existing temporary Khabur settlement should be reorganised in such a way as to make it self-supporting and, in consequence, agrees, subject to parliamentary sanction, to contribute to the cost of the reorganisation as proposed in the report circulated under number C./Min.Ass.242, pari passu with the United Kingdom and in the proportions previously agreed upon for Iraq, the United Kingdom and the League respectively, up to a maximum of about £21,750.

The Iraqi Government agrees to make the contribution on the clear understanding that, with this payment, its liability in respect of the Assyrian settlement on the Khabur shall definitely terminate, with the exception only of its contribution to the expenses of administration, on condition that these do not exceed the rate in the budget of 1937 as specified in paragraph 87 of the report, for the short period for which it may be necessary to retain the services of the Trustee Board and the officials working under its orders.

The Iraqi Government assumes that the Committee of the Council, set up by the resolution of October 14th, 1933, will continue in being only for the purpose of supervising the reorganisation of the Khabur settlement and will have no concern with the Assyrians who remain in Iraq, since these will henceforward resume their position as an ordinary minority to whom the normal procedure will apply.
Although, in order not to tie the hands of the Committee unduly, we have accepted the maximum figure mentioned in the report, I am bound to say that the estimated cost of the land appears to us abnormally high. My Government desires that the Committee will consider whether the estimate of the amount of land required cannot be cut down and in any case will make every effort to reduce the actual cost of any land acquired to a figure well below the estimate.

There is another point to which my Government attaches importance. We have in the last few years subscribed very considerable amounts for the settlement of the Assyrians and should like to see a larger proportion of this money spent in Iraq. In particular, Iraq is already the normal supplier of live-stock to Syria; prices in Iraq are therefore lower than in Syria. It is therefore not unreasonable to stipulate in particular that, unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, all the live-stock required under the scheme should be purchased in Iraq. I trust that the Committee will have no difficulty in agreeing to this.

Annex IV.

[Translation.]

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL OF THE FUNDS.

(Revised text, in force as from April 1st, 1937.)

As a result of the amendments adopted by the Council Committee, in agreement with the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner of the French Republic in Syria and the Lebanon, and the Trustee Board, the financial regulations for the control of the funds for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq in the Levant territories under French mandate, approved by the Council on December 18th, 1935, will, as from April 1st, 1937, read as follows:

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL OF THE FUNDS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ IN THE LEVANT TERRITORIES UNDER FRENCH MANDATE.

The financial administration of the plan for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq in the Levant territories under French mandate shall be governed by the following provisions:

I. — Receipts and Custody of Funds.

Article 1. — The funds for the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq shall include:

(a) The amounts subscribed or to be subscribed by the Government of Iraq in virtue of the communications from that Government of May 26th and September 26th, 1935;
(b) The amounts subscribed or to be subscribed by the United Kingdom Government in virtue of the communication from that Government of September 12th, 1935;
(c) The subsidy voted by the Assembly of the League of Nations on September 28th, 1935;
(d) Any contributions from other Governments and private organisations received in answer to the appeal made by the Council on January 19th, 1934, and by the Committee on July 16th, 1935, and funds raised on a recoverable basis from various sources;
(e) Miscellaneous receipts from other sources.

Article 2. — The funds, excluding payments made by the Assyrians on account of the purchase of their land, shall be paid to the Secretary-General, who shall keep them in a special account separate from the ordinary funds of the League of Nations, or in a bank account which shall be at his sole disposal. The said funds shall be used exclusively:

(i) For the refund of expenditure incurred by the High Commissioner of the French Republic in Syria and the Lebanon up to June 30th, 1935, for the provisional settlement of the Assyrians in the Khabur;
(ii) For defraying the expenditure involved for the settlement, including the cost of the Trustee Board and its staff;
(iii) For defraying the expenditure involved in the examination and audit of accounts.

Article 3. — Payments made by the Assyrians on account of the purchase of their land shall be paid into a special account opened in the name of the Trustee Board.

II. — Estimates of Expenditure.

Article 4. — The Trustee Board shall prepare the draft annual budget relating to the whole of the establishment operations contemplated in the year in question (counted from January 1st to December 31st), and shall submit this draft, through the Secretary-General, who shall add such comments thereon as he may wish to make, for approval to the Council Committee appointed with a view to the settlement of the Assyrians of Iraq. This budget shall be apportioned over the four quarters of the year.
When the budget has been approved by the Committee, the Secretary-General shall forward it to the Trustee Board.

Article 5. — At the beginning of each quarter, the Secretary-General shall inform the Trustee Board whether it is authorised to incur the expenditure corresponding to the budget estimates, for that quarter. For this purpose, the Secretary-General shall take into account the funds available, the undertakings entered into by the Governments and further sums, if any, which he is due to receive within the same period.

Article 6. — The incurrence during any quarter of expenditure exceeding the credits entered for that purpose in the corresponding chapter of the budget estimates for that quarter, and transfers from one chapter to another of the budget, shall require the previous approval of the Committee. The Committee may authorise its Chairman to give in its name, in agreement with the Secretary-General, such approvals as may be necessary between sessions of the Committee.

Subject to confirmation by the Committee at its next following session in the light of a reasoned report from the Trustee Board, the Trustee Board shall nevertheless be empowered itself to effect transfers to a specified chapter of the budget, up to a maximum amount of 25,000 francs. As soon as the transfers effected by the Trustee Board to such a chapter in the budget reach the specified limit, the Trustee Board shall, before it can effect any further transfers to that chapter, require the approval of the Committee as laid down in the first paragraph.

III. — Administration and Appropriation of Funds.

Article 7. — Except for the subsidy voted by the Assembly of the League of Nations, the funds belonging to the League of Nations itself shall not be drawn upon either for recoverable or for irrecoverable advances.

Article 8. — When the Trustee Board submits a request to this effect to the Secretary-General, the latter shall make to it advances out of the funds placed at his disposal, though such advances may not at any time exceed the amount of the balance available.

In normal circumstances advances shall be made on the 15th of the month for the month following, and shall correspond to the expenditure contemplated by the Trustee Board for the month in question in its request.

Article 9. — Within the limits specified in the above provisions, the Trustee Board shall incur expenditure and effect payments. It shall have the custody and administration of the funds paid by the Secretary-General into its banking account.

The Trustee Board shall register all commitments of expenditure and shall institute such accounting system as will enable it to draw up the statements provided for in Chapter IV below.

IV. — Accountancy and Audit of the Accounts.

Article 10. — The Trustee Board shall draw up and submit to the Secretary-General at the end of each month, quarter and year, in respect of such month, quarter or year, a statement showing:

(a) As regards income, the payments made from Geneva, bank interest, security taken on deposit and any other income;

(b) As regards expenditure, (1) the original budget credits; (2) credits resulting from transfers; (3) expenditure incurred, including payments; (4) the difference between credits entered under (2) on the one hand, and expenditure incurred or payments made entered under (3) on the other hand; (5) the payments made during the period in question. As an annex to the table of expenditure there shall be shown:

(i) The list of advances outstanding for settlement, indicating the corresponding chapters in the budget;

(ii) The amount of security refunded.

Article 11. — There shall be attached to the quarterly statements all the relevant documentary evidence, including invoices, schedules, counterfoils, etc.

The quarterly statements shall be audited by the Treasury of the League of Nations within one month from the date of their receipt by the Secretary-General.

Article 12. — The annual statements shall be subjected to comprehensive audit by the Auditor of the League of Nations in accordance with the rules regarding the financial administration of the League. They shall then be communicated by the Secretary-General to the Committee together with the Auditor’s report.

V. — General Provisions.

Article 13. — As regards financial questions for the settlement of which no specific provision is made in these Regulations, the Trustee Board shall be guided by the Regulations concerning the administration of the finances of the League of Nations and by the relevant provisions of the administrative rules of the Secretariat. Any question which cannot be settled in this manner shall be submitted to the Secretary-General, who will refer it to the Committee if necessary.

Article 14. — The present Regulations may be amended and completed by the Committee in agreement with the Secretary-General and the Trustee Board.