

*[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text on the left page]*

1919.	SLINGER	1919 Jan. 221
Evangelion. October 26. 1909.	No.	Received by <i>ford</i> .
Great Blech 7. 87	<p><i>(Index)</i></p> <p><u>Greek ecclesiastical dimensions</u></p> <p>Reports on the concessions decided upon by the Commission at Constantinople the granted to natives, and on the latter's attempt to prevent the late creation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre from coming to fruition.</p>	
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New Paper.		

Jerusalem,

October 26. 1909.

Sir,

In my despatch n<sup>o</sup> 72 of August 17<sup>th</sup> last I had the honour to report that the demands of the native members of the Greek Church had been submitted to a Commission at Constantinople, of which, Subhi Bey, the Mutessarif, was a member. Subhi Bey returned here a fortnight ago, and from what His Excellency gave me to understand I gather that the Commission had decided on making certain concessions to the natives. These were to consist of the following points:

(1)

His Excellency

The Right Honourable,

Sir Gerard Lowther, K.C.M.G., C.B.

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(1) the eligibility of natives to attain the highest monastic degrees; (2) the appointment of a mixed Council to supervise the affairs of the Patriarchate; (3) a limited control of the finances of the Patriarchate, from which however were to be excluded the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem and the Church of the Virgin Mary at Getsemane; and (4) the appropriation of a fixed annual sum for the maintenance of certain schools for native children.

These concessions appear by no means to satisfy native opinion; especial complaint is made that the three Churches excepted from the control are precisely those which bring in most revenue. Moreover the natives allege that they will always be in a minority when the election of a new Patriarch

Patriarch takes place, as this is to be effected by the Synod (comprising 12 Greek prelates) and the mixed Council (consisting of 8 natives and 4 Greeks). But the decision of the Commission cannot become executory until its ratification by the Council of Ministers, and, as some state, by Parliament; it is hoped that before finally being submitted for Imperial sanction it may have been modified in a sense favourable to the native demands.

On such members of the native Community as I have seen I have not failed to urge as strongly as I could the necessity of self-restraint and moderation, pointing out to them how disastrously the interests of this City, relying as it does so largely on the receipts from pilgrims and

and tourists, would be affected by a renewal of last year's disturbances at the outset of the season. I cannot say that my advice has been of much value, as only last night on the dissemination of a rumour of the <sup>return of the</sup> late Custodian of the Greek Treasury, a certain Eftimios, an excited crowd of one hundred armed men rushed to Colonia, a place some four miles on the road from Jaffa, with a view to preventing him from coming to Jerusalem. This priest was mentioned by me early this year as being suspected of having enriched himself at the expense of the funds of the Treasury and as being greatly to blame for the disturbances last February: with great difficulty his removal from Jerusalem was obtained

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last March. He attempted to return to Jerusalem, arriving at Jaffa last week, but by order of the Governor was not allowed to land and continued his journey to Port Said. His presence here would undoubtedly give rise to trouble.

It is to be hoped that some solution will be found satisfactory to the Arab members of the Greek Community. Since last November their churches have remained closed, which fact serves to keep up the exasperation of these primitive people, deprived as they believe of their rights by the rapacity of foreign monks with whom they have only the nominal bond of union of  
belonging

belonging to the same Church.

I have the honour to be,

with the greatest respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

most obedient,

humble servant,

E. Blech.