

A JEWISH KINGDOM PROPOSED.

Washington, D.C., March 5th, 1891.

William E. Blackstone, of Chicago, to-day visited the President in company with Secretary Blaine, and presented a memorial in behalf of the Russian Jews.

He explained that the memorial was the result of a conference of Christians and Jews recently held in Chicago, and called special attention to the fact that it did not antagonize Russia, but sought in a peaceable way to give the Jews control of their old home – Palestine.

He pointed out many evidences of the possibility of great development of that country, both agriculturally and commercially, under an energetic government and said that the railroad now building from Joppa to Jerusalem, if extended to Damascus, Tadmor and down the Euphrates, cannot fail to become an international highway.

He said that the poverty of the Turkish Government gives emphasis to the proposed indemnity, by funding a portion of the Turkish national debt through Jewish capitalists, and that only peaceable diplomatic negotiations are asked for, to the end that all private ownership of land and property be carefully respected and protected. In closing he said that, being on such friendly terms with Russia and having no complications in the Orient, it is most fitting and hopeful that our government should initiate this friendly movement, to give these wandering millions of Israel a settled and permanent home.

The President listened attentively to Mr. Blackstone's remarks, and promised to give the subject serious consideration.

THE MEMORIAL.

The text of the memorial is as follows: –

What shall be done for the Russian Jews? It is both unwise and useless to undertake to dictate to Russia concerning her internal affairs. The Jews have lived as foreigners in her dominions for centuries, and she fully believes that they are a burden upon her resources and prejudicial to the welfare of her peasant population, and will not allow them to remain. She is determined that they must go. Hence, like the [R1294 : page 44] Sephardim of Spain, these Ashkenazim must emigrate. But where shall 2,000,000 of such poor people go? Europe is crowded and has no room for more peasant population. Shall they come to America? This would be a tremendous expense and would require years.

Why not give Palestine back to them again? According to God's distribution of nations it is their home – an inalienable possession from which they were expelled by force. Under their cultivation it was a remarkably fruitful land, sustaining millions of Israelites, who industriously tilled its hillsides and valleys. They were agriculturists and producers as well as a nation of great commercial importance – the centre of civilization and religion.

Why shall not the powers which, under the treaty of Berlin, in 1878, gave Bulgaria to the Bulgarians and Servia to the Servians, now give Palestine back to the Jews? These provinces, as well as Roumania, Montenegro and Greece, were wrested from the Turks and given to their natural owners. Does not Palestine as rightfully belong to Jews? It is said that rains are increasing, and there are many evidences that the land is recovering its ancient fertility.

If they could have autonomy in government, the Jews of the world would rally to transport and establish their suffering brethren in their time-honored habitation. For over seventeen centuries they have patiently waited for such a privileged opportunity. They have not become agriculturists elsewhere because they believed they

were sojourners in the various nations, and were yet to return to Palestine and till their own land. Whatever vested rights, by possession, may have accrued to Turkey can be easily compensated for, possibly by the Jews assuming an equitable portion of the national debt.

We believe this is an appropriate time for all nations, and especially the Christian nations of Europe, to show kindness to Israel. A million of exiles, by their terrible sufferings, are piteously appealing to our sympathy, justice and humanity. Let us now restore to them the land of which they were so cruelly despoiled by our Roman ancestors.

To this end we respectfully petition his Excellency Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, and the Hon. J. G. Blaine, Secretary of State, to use their good offices and influence with the governments of their imperial [R1294 : page 45] majesties – Alexander III., Czar of Russia; Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India; William II., Emperor of Germany; Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austro-Hungary; Abdul Hamid II., Sultan of Turkey; Her Royal Majesty Marie Christina, Queen Regent of Spain; with the government of the Republic of France and with the governments of Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria and Greece, to secure the holding, at an early date, of an international conference to consider the condition of the Israelites and their claims to Palestine as their ancient home, and to promote in all other just and proper ways the alleviation of their suffering condition.

[The memorial is signed by prominent men of all professions and creeds from Chicago, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington.]
