

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.
ISRAEL'S INTEREST IN TURKEY'S TROUBLES

LIKE a bursting bomb, disturbing European peace, has come the announcement of a rupture of the "Berlin Treaty" by Austria's annexing two Turkish provinces. Russia at once announced her desire that the Treaty be revised, and Bulgaria declared her independence of Turkey. The "Berlin Treaty" of thirty years ago claimed that the Turks were unable properly to govern portions of their territory in which Christians resided, and divided the supervision of these amongst the other powers. Bosnia and Herzegovina were two of these, put under Austria's care. It will be remembered that Palestine was put under British protection, and Egypt unitedly under French and British supervision, but that France avoided her responsibility in favor of the British.

Whether the present trouble shall result in a general war or not it probably will mean the rupture of the "Berlin Treaty," and that the several provinces supervised by other nations will come more completely under their control.

This would make Palestine a British province, like Canada, and mean as full liberty to the Jews as they have in Canada – to buy, build, elect local government, etc. We are not, however, to expect for Palestine full independence before 1915.

NEWS FROM JUDEA

In a recent letter from Jerusalem, Mr. W. H. Dunn refers to the remarkable development in the Jewish National Zionist movement which took place in Jerusalem during the fifteen

months he was in England: "Great numbers of Jews are returning to Jerusalem, not for repentance or confession of sins, but simply because they must go somewhere, and the Sultan allows them to enter without hindrance. In that short time no fewer than 5,000 Russian Jews landed at Jaffa. These Jews are investing what money they have in buying land and buying and building houses. So great is their activity that it is a matter of concern to the foreign residents. The Moslems sell to them however without demur. They believe this land really belongs to the Jews. The development in Jewish education is also striking, and kindergarten schools are being opened for the children. Hebrew is being taught and becoming a living language, and new Hebrew words are being formed so as to make the old tongue helpful for up-to-date use. It is common to hear Hebrew spoken in the streets."

– *Exchange.*

UNION OF BAPTISTS AND DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

The Rev. I. J. Spencer, pastor of the Central Christian Church (or Disciples of Christ, the term used by members of this denomination), will accept an invitation to address the National Baptist Congress, to be held in Chicago, November 10 to 12, upon the subject, "What Definite Steps Should Be Immediately Taken Toward the Union of Baptists, Free Baptists, and Disciples of Christ?" Other speakers representing the first two denominations also will discuss the topic, and it is expected that the discussion will result in a long stride toward the union of the two denominations – Baptists and Disciples of Christ, the first steps toward which were taken two years ago.

At the National Congress of the Disciples in Indianapolis, in March, 1908, by invitation Dr. E. Y. Mullins, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary of Louisville, and Mr. Spencer discussed the topic: "What Does the New Testament Teach Concerning the Doctrine of the Remission of Sins?" One session of the congress was entirely given to the addresses.

The similarity of the teachings of the denominations on vital points aroused great enthusiasm. This gave rise to the suggestion that through committees the [R4268 : page 323] two denominations might learn as exactly as possible just what are their doctrinal differences.

The original drafts of the statements have been completed and are before the members of the committee for suggestions. When finally revised these statements will be given wide publicity through the religious press, and in the course of time will come before the congress of the denominations. The rough drafts show that they are surprisingly alike. When this is known through publication, the belief is held that in a spirit of fraternity and desire for unity the denominations will waive minor differences and merge congregations, acting as individuals, yet probably in concert, pursuant to a recommendation from their congresses.

In western Canada, Disciples and Baptists have already united, are using churches in common and share things alike.

– *Courier-Journal.*

IS CHRISTIANITY DECAYING?

The pastor of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, New York City, Rev. Dr. Charles F. Aked, who came to [R4268 : page

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"When I first came to this great city of New York, the center of empire, its broad avenues thronged with eager, strenuous crowds, pulsating with energy and hope, I saw the buoyancy of the American people. I learned of their hope and endeavor and electric activity. Now, I want to learn the signs of the times. What is the condition of Christianity in New York? When I interview my parishioners, and they are among the most representative in the city, I find the spirit of religious depression very unlike the spirit of abounding enterprise in business, in manufacturing, in engineering and construction.

SOME BIG LOSSES

"To turn to that mighty religious organization, the Catholic Church, to which over 1,000,000 New Yorkers give fealty, even there the losses are heavy. I think that church is doing a magnificent work, but with all its enthusiasm and rallying force it does not nor ever did hold its own in this city or in the nation at large. There are about 16,000,000 Catholics in continental United States. Now, in our immigration for ninety years back, no less than 15,000,000 were Catholics. If all remained loyal to its tenets they would number 45,000,000 now instead of 16,000,000.

"The Protestants have lost ground, too, when the filling up of the country is counted. Our own denomination, the Baptist, reflects the general trend. The increase among the Baptists of America has been equal to only one-fourth of the birth rate among us, proving that three out of four of our Baptist population have fallen away from us. We have in this city 40,000 Baptists. If we held all that was coming to us we should have had at least 150,000. All the Christian churches in city and country in this nation show a similar condition.

"The decline of Christianity is universal. In England, in France, in Spain, in Italy and Germany we hear the same cry.

"Only lately I was talking to an English clergyman. He told me that not merely is there a great falling off in church-goers in England, but that the class of people who frequent churches are becoming inferior.

THE BLAME

"The church here is out of touch with the masses. Everything has progressed except Christianity. Many thinking and progressive young men and women have been driven from the church by the stupidity of the preachers. The pulpit has too many bigots, too many bores, too many hell-fire screechers for the enlightened thought of the day. Compelled to a life of grinding poverty, treading always the same old paths of a thousand years, hide-bound and restricted, the church of Christ has become a laughing stock – parrots of the dead church cry instead of preachers of the living Christ.

THE AWAKENING

"The church is obliged to accept any applicant for the ministry who is respectable. Even with this latitude, Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist vocations show a remarkable falling off in 25 years, while the needs for an enlarging clergy were never felt so much as now. There must come an awakening when pious and God-loving men will see a paramount duty in actively enlisting in the cause of salvation and finding its exposition in preaching the Gospel and in doing good to everyone within the sphere of their influence."

– *Utica Globe.*

REV. DR. GOODMAN'S METHOD

Five hundred men packed the new Men's Church at Atlantic City Sunday night, and puffed cigars and pipes furnished by Rev. Sidney Goodman during the sermon, which was sandwiched between a special entertainment, also provided by the pastor of new ideas. Moving pictures, stereopticon views illustrating the parables, and singing by professionals who volunteered from beach-front cafes and theatres, made up the remainder of the programme.

– *Exchange.*

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