

ful strangers in civilized countries. But not so. Unless you can induce the American Consul to put his name on the passport, your passport is liable to be treated with the same indifference as your certificate of citizenship. It may happen, as in the case of the gentleman (pardon the expression!) who is a Consul at Bern, that that dignitary will ask you: "Are you a 'Mormon?'" and then add: "By order of the government of the United States I can do nothing for you." So you are left at the mercy of the Swiss authorities. You may be allowed to roam about and enjoy the views of beautiful Switzerland, or you may be arrested any day and sent the nearest way out of the "freest" country in Europe. Those born in Switzerland may be able to secure a "Helmthschein," a document which will put them all right; but others must unavoidably "quit, or git." Thus goes the world. This little European republic can take Uncle Sam's adopted or native children and just kick them out like dogs; and Uncle Sam's paid servants stand idly by, saying: "All right, that's the way to do it, boys!" *Fi done!*

But from Switzerland, music, and bigotry, my thoughts go to Palestine, the country I hope to see in a few days — Palestine, the Holy Land, once a centrum for the commerce and civilization of the world, now devastated and trodden under the feet of Gentiles, suffering under a long, long curse. Palestine, the land of God, will yet be a spot upon which the eyes of the world will gaze with amazement. Palestine is acknowledged to be the key to the eastern question, and in that country, perhaps before long, according to prophecy, will that question be finally settled. See Daniel 11. 44, where the Prophet, speaking of the Ottoman empire and this very question says: "But tidings out of the east (Persia) and out of the north (Russia) shall trouble him (Turkey). Therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (not even England). Having a position between the three great continents — Europe, Asia, and Africa — its possibilities for commerce are incalculable, and there will yet be seaports and great commercial centres to which Tyre and Sidon were small

and insignificant. When once a great Asian system of railways is built up, Palestine will naturally be the spot to which the great lines will converge, and through Palestine the products of Asia will be carried to the European and American markets, and *vice versa*.

That a country with the possibilities of Palestine should be an object of desire to all the great European powers is natural enough. But it does not belong to any of them, and their mutual jealousy will no doubt prevent any one of them from grasping it. The country belongs to the Jew, and the voice of that people will yet be heard above the tumult of the European ironclad armies, "The country is mine!" And driven from land to land, persecuted like "Mormons," the spirit of gathering will seize the scattered remnant, and with joy they will return to the land of their fathers. Events follow each other in rapid succession now-a-days, and great events can be accomplished in short times. It is therefore well to be awake and watch for the "signs of the times."

Looking at the religious world as it at present appears around me, there seems to be a complete standstill except as far as the ever-marching "Salvation Army" is concerned. Religion now seems to be reduced to a kind of mutual insurance association. The "Church" pays its policies to the State, and receives "protection." The States commit themselves with the "Churches" and receive the assurance of the "Churches" that these will render all necessary help in "checking the rabble." Yes, that is the noble scope of the "Church" of today. The people pay the priests in order to obtain eternal salvation, and the priests take the pay. Nobody seems to think of such a thing as converting a sinner from the errors of his waywardness. This seems to be out of fashion. Religion is only a business. I can fully realize, I think, the depth of meaning conveyed in these quaint words of Søren Kierkegaard: "When everybody has been made a Christian, then Christianity has *eo ipso* been abolished." And this is exactly what has been done. Everybody is a Christian, and Christianity is consequently abolished. People are fed, spiritually, on the refuse of centuries. Why, a prodigal in our days need not perish for want of husks so long as he keeps himself within the boundaries of the established churches and their "shepherds."

Is it a wonder that infidelity

should flourish, that morals should be corrupted, consciences killed, and the whole machinery of society be on the road back to barbarism? No; nor is it a wonder that the judgments of God have been pronounced upon the present generation. The only surprise is that it takes so long a time before all is consummated and a new era established. But it will come as soon as the Saints of God are prepared for it.

J. M. S.

Bern, December 24th, 1888.

IN TURKEY.

Providence having brought us safely to the shores of the Mediterranean, I take pleasure in penning you a few more lines. Alexandretto is a seaport on the Mediterranean, but not of much importance. It is, however, the seaport for Aleppo, a city of nearly 100,000 inhabitants located 90 miles inland, and some other places. The city is built on a marsh, and is, as a matter of course, a hotbed for fevers. The haven, as are all other havens in Turkey, is almost devoid of improvements. When Smyrna is excepted, there are no docks in Turkey where a ship can lay to; all traffic is carried on by boat from shore to deep water.

As I have now traveled about 550 miles from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, via Aleppo, I have seen much which will be, at least to me, of great value. I have observed much concerning the "sick man," as the Sultan has been named, and some of his dominions. Turkey may well be styled a sick country. It is poor and helpless according to the age, and is favored with many ruins of large and, at one time, great and important districts. It has therefore been styled "a country of ruins;" but in its present condition it is more correct to say "a ruined country." Its finances are at a low ebb; no trust, and Russia is crowding for war indemnity; old and once repudiated creditors are drawing the taxes of several prominent territories, which after collection only bring about one per cent. The soldiers are quarreling for their pay, and are often in open rebellion for that reason. Men drafted for the army go with reluctance, as they are but poorly paid and kept for long terms, the daily rations being about one and three-fourth pounds of bread and 3 cents, and they are poorly clad. The people are bewailing their financial condition. Imports exceed exports, and taxes are exorbitant when earn-