

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.

The Sixty-ninth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will convene in the Tabernacle on Thursday morning, October 6th, 1898, at 10 o'clock a. m. Officers and members of the Church are invited to be present.

LORENZO SNOW,
GEO. Q. CANNON,
JOS. F. SMITH,
First Presidency.

IN THE HOLY LAND.

As the day approaches for the pilgrimage of the German emperor to the Holy Land great interest in the trip is manifested both in political and church circles. The question is whether the motives of the kaiser are entirely religious or only partly so—whether the journey is merely a pilgrimage or also a crusade. The extensive preparations made by the sultan in honor of the emperor are not calculated to clear this matter up, especially since it is known that Abdul Hamid has decided to present to Emperor William a piece of ground in Palestine, by tradition pointed out as the spot where the Lord's supper was instituted.

The reason, as given to the world, why the young emperor at this time goes to the Holy Land is that he wants to be present at the dedication of the Evangelical Lutheran church of the Savior in Jerusalem on the 31st of October. The site of this magnificent building was presented to the emperor's father on his visit to Jerusalem in 1869, by Abdul Aziz. It was then occupied by the ruins of an old crusade church, and the Germans immediately proceeded to restore the building to its former magnificent proportions. For years tourists have visited the spot as one of the sights of the city. Massive marble portals, stucco work, immense naves and gorgeous cathedral windows are some of the features of the structure. It is situated almost in the heart of the ancient city. There is really nothing strange in the desire of the kaiser to be present at the dedication of this church. He has spent large sums of money on it and has made no secret of his intention to unfurl the banner of Protestantism on sacred soil with as impressive ceremonies as possible.

In England and Russia the coming event is regarded as one of great political importance. The *Novoye Vremya* asserts that the visit to Palestine is planned in pursuance of a broad German program relative alike to Asia Minor and the far east, and believes that the pope is in sympathy with this program. The Russian paper mentioned believes that Russia and France must oppose a combination between the sultan, pope and emperor.

The *Novoye Vremya* says:

"The political significance of the trip is beyond all doubt. The inhabitants of Palestine and Turkey as a whole are not in the habit of seeing traveling emperors. They are to be impressed in the most striking manner with the greatness and power of Germany. The emperor evidently desires to familiarize himself with Asia Minor, the theater of the German colonization movement in the near future. Although Germany has her colonies in Africa,

Turkey, and especially Asia Minor, have particular attractions for her government. All recent efforts have tended toward the directing of emigration into that quarter. The great powers are concerned in these developments on account of the evidence afforded that Germany seeks to solve the Eastern question in her own interests."

The London Spectator expresses similar views:

"The emperor is a firm believer in German expansion, and he thinks that Asia Minor should some day be claimed by Germany. There is more substance in this dream than might be supposed. There is already a great deal of German commercial activity in those parts, and Germany has become the patron, almost the protector, of the sultan. She can obtain concessions which are refused to every other power, her officers drill the Turkish troops, and her manufacturers supply the war material. Turkey can not shake off her formerly disinterested friend. Probably the emperor dreams even of inheriting Constantinople?"

German colonization in Palestine has been going on in a quiet way for the last forty years. Previous to that time, as a result of the interest awakened in the study of the prophetic books of the Bible through the theological writings of Bengel, a religious movement was commenced which finally materialized in the so-called Tempel association, formed for the purpose of "gathering the people of God" in Palestine and to rebuild the Temple. In 1860 the plans were far enough advanced to make a start and four young men were sent to the Holy Land in order to study the situation there. In 1866, several families went there, followed two years later by others who founded the German colony in Haifa. In 1869 a second colony was founded in Jaffa. In 1871 a third colony, Sarona, was founded a few miles north of Jaffa, and about the same time several families settled in Jerusalem, and a few in Nazareth and Ramle. Ten years ago the number of colonists were estimated at 750 souls. Their principal occupation is agriculture, but they have also engaged in industrial and commercial enterprises, and have founded hospitals and schools. In Jaffa they have a bank with a capital of 500,000 francs. The German emperor has watched the growth of these colonies with much interest, and it is due to the high moral character of the colonists that Germany has gained favor in Constantinople. The suspicion is not unfounded that the kaiser goes to Palestine in order to ascertain what can be done to strengthen German prestige in Turkey. German interests, as may be seen from the above, are considerably more in evidence there than in eastern Asia or in the Philippines. They are important enough to justify Germany in disputing the superior rights of Russia, England, France and Austria.

In connection with the German efforts to colonize Palestine and the probable results of Emperor William's journey to the Holy Land, an account of the attempts of the Jews to redeem the country that belongs to them may prove of interest. We therefore append the following from a correspondence of the *Globe-Democrat*, dated Jaffa, August 20:

"The movement for the establishment of colonies in Palestine is about sixteen years old. The progress made in the first eleven years of this period was not encouraging. The colonies did not thrive; abuses, the interference of the Arabs and a thousand and one diffi-

culties made the lot of the first colonists so unalluring that few followed them. About five years ago, through the efforts of Prof. Waldemar Haffkine, the famous scientist, the numerous 'Lovers of Zion' societies formed a union, with headquarters at Paris, and a representative at Jaffa. This was the beginning of orderly and effective work. The recent history of Zionism is familiar to us, and we will soon hear of the deliberations of the Basle conference, but very little is known of the encouraging progress already made by the agricultural colonies already existing in Palestine. Their prosperity is chiefly due to the munificence of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, who has virtually 'subsidized' these colonies to the extent of \$5,000,000. This has doubtless had some bad effect in impairing independence, and encouraging in a few sloth and improvidence, but, without such aid at the start, none of the colonies could have lived.

"The Mikveh Israel colony (Hope of Israel) lies a mile or so beyond Jaffa, in the Plains of Sharon, with a lovely view across flower-laden fields that stretch away to the purple haze that surrounds the mountains of Judea. It was established thirty years ago by Charles Netter, who lies buried in its grounds, and is an agricultural school with 100 pupils and 600 acres of highly cultivated orange trees and vines. The pupils are trained to become gardeners, and their skilled services are eagerly sought, not only in other colonies, but so far away as France. Mikveh Israel is now self-supporting, and the wish of its founder is gratified. The inscription on his tomb reads: "He did good to his brethren; how many are his merciful works. Mikveh Israel his hands established. Born 5586; died 5643." The gardeners are happy, the climate is delightful, and the scenery is superb.

"Along the road that leads to Mikveh Israel is another colony, Rishon-le-Zion (the First to Zion) by name. Here there are about fifty dwelling houses built substantially of stone, a synagogue, a school, a library and a hospital. There are in this settlement, which is not more than six miles from Jaffa, 2,000 acres of land, that support fully 1,500,000 vines. The streets are well paved, and three wells supply good water. The wine of Rishon is, I am told, commanding some sale in London. The silk industry here is growing; there are perhaps 1,500 or 2,000 mulberry trees on the Rishon acres.

"Other colonies in the neighborhood are Rechoboth, with 2,500 acres of land and 250 inhabitants, who speak pure Hebrew; Waad el Janin, with 400 acres given to vines; Ekron, with 1,000 acres and 250 people; Katra and Artuf. This last is a missionary station for converted Jews. Tikvah (Door of Hope) boasts a population of 750 people, 3,500 acres and over 1,000,000 vines. Much fruit is raised, dairy farming is profitably followed, and experiments are made in tea planting. The largest colony in Palestine is Zichron Jacob (memorial of Jacob), founded by Roumanian Jews under the guidance and advice of Dr. Moses Gaster and Mr. Pineles, sixteen years ago.

"The most healthful of these colonies is Rosh Pinah (the head corner-stone). It lies in the hills beyond Tiberias Hermon, snow-capped, in the background. Here are fifty houses, each surrounded by a flower garden. Water from the Jordan is plentiful, and the excessive heat of Tiberias is relieved by the altitude. This colony practically belongs to Baron Rothschild; it has a good school and its silk and wine industries are flourishing.

"What these surroundings have done for the inhabitants is best seen in the vigorous types encountered on every side. From the bent, narrow-chested