

and satisfaction that comes with having the question decided in favor of upholding the law, is also the impression that the discussion and anxiety over the case will lead the Legislature to be very careful hereafter with regard to constitutional mandates. It was not to be expected that the first Legislature, starting out within a week after the Constitution came into effect, and before its provisions had received judicial consideration, could be as well informed on issues that might arise as could subsequent legislatures; neither will the lawmaking bodies of the future comprehend every question of constitutionality without the wisdom of further experience. Hence there is no occasion for recriminations. It is to be hoped, however, that the brief experience of legislation in this State with respect to elections, taxation, and some other matters, will cause legislators to have less of the feeling that some have exhibited in the past to pass a measure and "let the courts determine its constitutionality," and cultivate instead to ascertain to the best of their judgment and ability the safety of each proposition before it receives the endorsement of their affirmative vote. It is better not to run close to a danger point when there is plenty of room to sail clear of it.

RUSSIA AND TURKEY.

Russia's attitude in Turkey lately has been a mystery. It has appeared as if the czar's government had taken a stand in favor of Turkish role and against the other powers of Europe. From recent expressions of the Russian press the situation would seem to become clearer. It is pointed out that the Turkish question is no longer a European concern but one for Russia to deal with. Europe has failed to act; now Russia must take the matter in hand. The *Novoye Vremya* is quoted as saying:

The Eastern question is a purely Russian affair, and the question of the Dardanelles concerns Russia only. A conference is useless to Russia, as it would lead to the partitioning of Turkey, which we do not desire. What Turkey needs is the help of a strong power. Russia is that power. She must solve the question how Turkey's frontiers are to be arranged and how they must be guarded. Russia has waited for two years to see the powers united. It is useless to wait longer, for the lives of the Armenians are not playthings for diplomats. Turkey and Russia will now settle the question.

The Viedomost advocates acceptance of the Dardanelles by Russia without delay and then continues:

We have been successful in isolating Turkey from England. British influence need no longer be feared in Constantinople, for Great Britain has lost her prestige. Russia now stands alone with Turkey. The sultan will not find assistance from any European power. He must come to terms, and there is little doubt that he will fulfill our wishes.

Accordingly it may confidently be expected that at the first sign of new disturbances in the Turkish provinces, Russia will intervene and take some definite step toward the termination of a situation that has become almost

intolerable. The Mohammedan tradition that from Russia will come the conqueror that is to tear the crescent down and restore the cross on the celebrated mosque at Constantinople seems nearer its realization than ever.

PALESTINE UNDER CULTIVATION.

The political nature of Palestine, with respect to the influence that it would have on the restoration of the Holy Land to what it was of old—a land flowing with milk and honey—is the theme of a most interesting discussion by a German specialist in No. 6 of the *Leitblatter*, a German publication issued at Columbus, Ohio. On this point the writer of the article holds that by careful attention and under the protection of a strong hand in government Palestine again could become a veritable garden, capable of sustaining millions of inhabitants and of supplying other lands with its superabundance. In showing how, with a safe political future, this could be accomplished, the *Zeitblatter* makes some very interesting statements.

With the political arrangement satisfactory, it is pointed out that by systematic irrigation and cultivation the now barren tracts again would become productive. This was a means used formerly, as is shown by the many old cisterns, opened and covered, which yet remain; and the ruins of an immense system of aqueducts which can yet be traced, the chief one being called that of Phasob, indicate that in the flourishing period of that east Jordan district an immense irrigation system existed and was utilized to good advantage. It is stated that the east Jordan country, in its whole length and breadth from Moab to Mount Hermon and the Hauran, is naturally one vast wheat field, than which none better can be found; that those fruitful districts, when the harvest is over at the end of May, become for the rest of the season a sun-scorched desert which the inhabitants must for the time being leave, but could readily, by building reservoirs to receive the superabundant rains of earlier months, and using these for irrigation during the dry season, be made habitable all the year round, and could also be cultivated with abundant success during this time; and it is recalled that such was its condition in earlier centuries before the Arabian Bedouins took possession, as is attested by the ruins of hundreds of villages and cities in that region.

The position is taken that by the means referred to it is easily possible that Palestine again should become a garden for the entire southeastern region along the Mediterranean, and for Europe. In the country west of the Jordan the entire level district along the coast has the best of water supplies and is capable of sustaining an immense population; while on the higher table lands of the west districts nothing is necessary but the preservation of the quantities of water that accumulate during the rainy season and utilizing these during the dry months. The whole region would thus be admirably adapted for vegetable gardening on a grand scale.

As to how readily this end could be

accomplished there is cited what already has been done in this line, chiefly by the members of the German Templar society in Bethlehem, Nablus, Tshelo, and other places; the relatively poorer success of the Jewish agricultural colonies, which have been planted there by the dozen in recent decades, chiefly through the instrumentality of the Rothschilds and other Jewish magnates, is attributed not to the barrenness of the soil, but to the poor work of the colonists. But everywhere in that district it is more easily possible by irrigation to raise the finest of oils, oranges, wine, etc., than anywhere else along the southeastern portion of the Mediterranean; and there would be no lack of markets, especially as Egypt is so near; the entire Ghor, or Jordan valley, could be converted into a tropical valley. The dates that ripen there are regarded yet, as they were in ages past, as the best that are known, surpassing even those of Egypt; to this add oranges, cotton, sugar cane, bananas, and especially fine vegetables raised during the rainy season, all of which grow under most favorable conditions. Access to markets is easy; Jericho, by way of Salonica, only five days removed from Berlin and Central Europe, only a short distance from Jerusalem, and some degrees warmer than Cairo, could readily be made again what it was in the days of King Herod, a magnificent winter resort.

All this presents a beautiful picture of a clear possibility. What Palestine once was it may be again, under like conditions—and those conditions are drawing near. For eighteen centuries the hand of affliction has been upon that land, [condemned because of the course of its inhabitants as it once had been blessed for its people's sake. But the period of condemnation is closed, and the energy and circumstances in politics and industry which are necessary to the redemption of this land of promise to Israel are becoming as readily available as were the powers which wrought the great change by which it was reduced to a forbidding condition.

SPAIN WILL NOT YIELD.

The New York Journal publishes an interview with the prime minister of Spain, Canovas del Castillo, on the policy of the Spanish government in regard to Cuba. It is an official declaration, reiterating former statements on the subject.

Canovas emphasizes that the Spanish government will not yield an inch to force, or to threats of force. Spain will grant a certain measure of home rule to the Cubans, but not autonomy after the fashion of Canada, and not until the troops have conquered the rebels, lest it should appear that the government had been forced to yield.

The independence of Cuba, he further explains, would be a menace to the United States. The island would be dominated by negroes, African in every sense. There would be civil war between whites and blacks; there would be anarchy, and the commerce would be destroyed.

Spain does not desire war with the