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A RETROSPECTIVE REVERIE

Read at the Fourth Annual Convention Texas State Zionist Association, held at Waco, Texas, January 3-4, 1909, by Miss Lydia Littman, of Austin, Texas

Continued from last week.

This state of affairs continued for five years. Turkey led the Zionists to believe that she would part with this narrow strip of land, if she could secure her price; that it could easily be walled off from the balance of the Turkish Empire. She pointed out the fact that the country was very valuable on account of its relative position, being midway between Europe, Asia and Africa and in close proximity with the busy Suez Canal, the point where the East and West unites. Not only was the country valuable, did Turkey claim, for its admirable location, but on account of its fertility, its rich mineral resources and its beautiful climate.

At last the day did arrive when Turkey, through dire necessity, grew impatient and finally fixed a price for the desired piece of soil, and oh! how well I remember the day! Alas! it would have seemed that Turkey wanted to be relieved of her entire monied obligation through the sale of her poor, neglected Palestine. However, to many this outcome was expected and looked for, and the proposition naturally rejected. Crest-fallen were the brows of about eight millions of our race when they learned the truth, then came the hour when the wine-cup was shattered. To the balance of our people who were dwelling in lands of freedom or lands of tolerance and who did not expect to abandon the countries in which they lived, the tidings brought good cheer, for they readily could foresee the beginning of the end. Buoyant and radiant with hope the leaders braced up their energies and impetuously set to work, as there remained much to be done before the final consummation of the deal, but they were satisfied more than ever that "labor would conquer all things."

Among the first important work

done was the drawing up of a treaty, which vouchsafed protection to the firesides, property and government of this Wandering Tribe should they inhabit their own soil. This petition was first presented to our own dear America, with the full confidence that our government, as it has done in the past, would render such assistance as was consistent with the laws of a land of perfect freedom. Looking back now my heart leaps with joy at the remembrance of the ready responsiveness exhibited on the part of our blessed country in signing the treaty and in its untiring efforts which aided in bringing about an end to the mounted horrors upon horrors heaped upon an innocent people at the slightest pretext. How earnestly did our great land of freedom take up our cause with the other powers! Then with as much earnestness and pleasure did England sign, then, one by one, country after country avowed protection.

At last was approached dark Russia—the stepfatherland of over one-half the Jews of the entire world—the country which has left a lasting stain upon her history on account of the brutal atrocities towards the children of Israel. Russia, the blood-thirsty kingdom wherein the misery of the Jewish quarters surpasses the worst scenes that can be witnessed in the slums of Paris and London. For over a year the treaty was in her hands and no action taken. Matters more pressing, serious international problems involving the peace and tranquility of the kingdom required the attention of the dignitaries. Appeal after appeal was made for action until the stormtide of indignation and pity had been steadily rising in favor of the Jews by the other powers. Russia was pressed to the wall, and the information circulated abroad over

land and sea that the Jews were going to leave the country, then Russia bowed to the hand of Fate and signed the document. Russia then, for the first time, was confronted with the knowledge that she was going to lose a vast amount in taxes, a goodly number of the growing men who fought her battles and were denied the right of citizenship—who gave everything and got nothing in return, an element of her population who were law-abiding citizens, and last but by no means least, she was about to lose that race of people upon which she allowed her serfs to appease their appetites for brutality by torture, plundering without mercy and massacring without scruple. On whom would these blood-thirsty mortals spend their wrath if not on the Jews? That was a serious problem for Russia.

Shortly after the signing of the document by Russia, through a sort of arbitration, the Turks sold to the Jews the land of Palestine for a sum of money easily obtained.

Prompted by my desire to do what I could for the movement, I can look back with pride now on the fact that I was among the first to go to the Land of Promise, and many times have I taken the voyage since in the last quarter of the century to view the steady progress for my own satisfaction. Many years ago we came into the possession of the property. How much has been accomplished! But I cannot lose sight of the misery caused many of our race when they left Russia. Yes, misery in living there—misery in leaving there. Looking back now I am dismayed at the remembrances of their great suffering! The horror of the scenes yet appalls me! Men, women and children, battered and torn, with scarcely sufficient covering on their backs, landed. Their reports of torture and escape were ter-