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At the Pool of Siloam.

Just outside the city of Jerusalem, on the south-east side, is still seen the village of Siloam, inhabited by Moslems and Jews. Near the village is an old pool, which has always been renowned for the healing virtues of its waters.

About ten years ago the water ceased to flow into the pool, and so it has been dry and a disappointment to many ever since. The

wasting, no doubt, for the last ten years. They had the entrance to this old aqueduct stopped with stones, and then waited to see the result. The spring having risen, overflowed, and to the joy of the patient workers, they saw the cool, clear water flowing once again into the long dry pool.

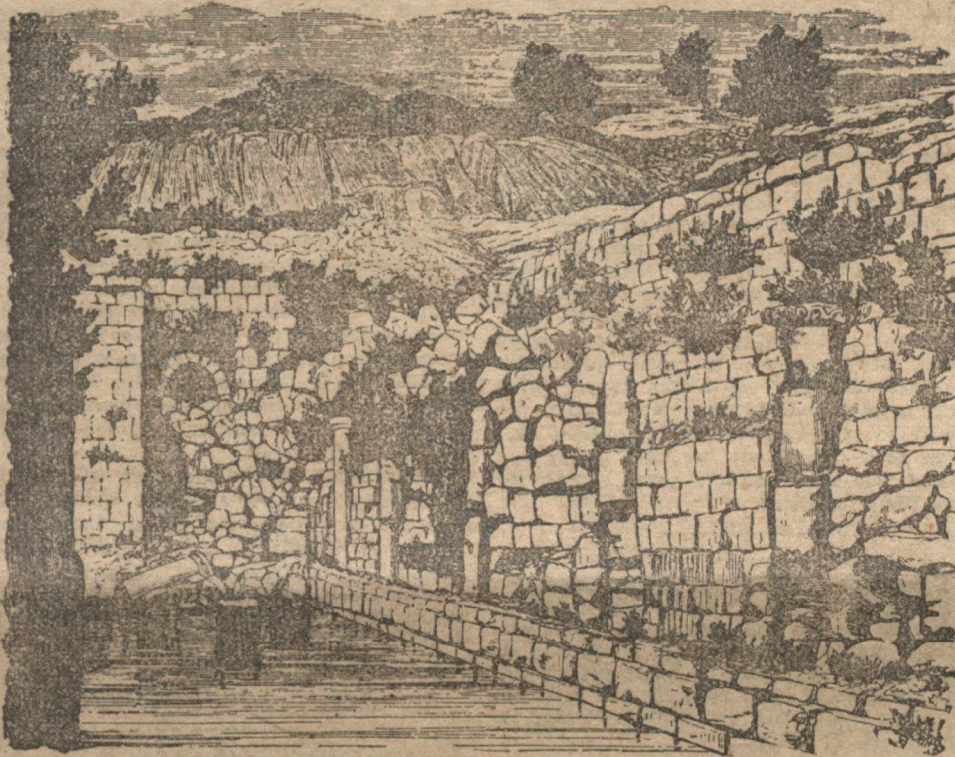
The spring rises and overflows four times a day. Early in the morning, as soon as the day breaks, large numbers of men gather, fill

numbers seventy-four, the rest mostly Catholics. Our mission has three more preaching stations in other parts of Vienna and one in Pressburg in Hungary on the Danube. How could I help thinking back to 1842 when, as a little boy, I was present at the last religious meeting my father held in his dwelling in Vienna. During the three years of our residence in Vienna he had held private meetings in our dwelling and had gathered a company of believers, a number of them Catholics. That evening the police broke up the meeting, took down the names of all the men present, conveyed to jail the unmarried men, seized my father's Bible, hymn-book and correspondence and forbade his holding any more meetings. After our departure for Constantinople the faithful attendants at my father's meetings were persecuted and scattered. Even as late as 1877 a Methodist missionary and his wife were fined because, seeing how eagerly tracts dropped from the window were picked up, she allowed some more to drop. About the same time I spoke in a Methodist Episcopal meeting in Vienna, at which we were not allowed to sing or pray. Now our missionaries are not disturbed and can hold services freely in their premises.

At the beginning of our missionary work in Prague we found that no Protestants were recognized as having any religious status or any rights except Lutherans and adherents of the Helvetic Reformed Church. We had no right to hold public divine services. As private individuals we could sell no Bibles and lend no tracts, only a bookseller could do that. As late as 1879 we were prohibited from holding private religious meetings. In neighboring villages Roman Catholic farmers, who had become interested in evangelical truth and met on Sunday morning to read the Bible and sing and pray together, were brutally scattered and punished by the police. Through the efforts of the Evangelical Alliance in 1879 we acquired the right to hold private religious meetings, but only with invited guests, and to hold public meetings (not recognized as church services) according to the provisions of the law regulating all public gatherings.

When I spent a Sabbath in Prague last August I found four Free churches, fruits of our mission work, occupying strategic points in different parts of the city. Three of them are housed in buildings owned by the Y. M. C. A., which is incorporated under Austrian law, and has the right to own property, publish papers and books and hold meetings. Thus though our Free churches cannot be incorporated and have no legal status or rights as churches, they really enjoy all the legal rights that the Y. M. C. A. possess. Indeed, in important respects they enjoy greater freedom than the Protestant Churches recognized by the state, since the latter are subject to the control of a consistory in Vienna, whose members are appointed by the Crown.

Sunday morning I preached in the centre of the old city to a now self-supporting church, which numbers 239 members, and whose pastor is the Rev. Alois Adloff. In the afternoon I spoke to a congregation of 150, half of them church members, in the Y. M. C. A. building in the new suburb, Vinohrady, where the church



THE POOL OF SILOAM, OUTSIDE JERUSALEM.

empty pool, some thirty feet long, fifteen feet wide, and twenty feet deep, was all that there was left to bear witness of the gospel story of the blind man who was sent here to wash, and by so doing received his sight. Jerusalem being recently hard up for water, it occurred to some of the men of Siloam to try and find out if the spring that used to supply the pool was dry. So they commenced to clear away the accumulated rubbish of generations, and after nearly a month found the spring.

Looking about, they discovered behind some fallen rocks an old waterway leading away underground into the valley of the Kedron, and into this they plainly saw that the beautiful, cool, clear water had run and had been

their skins, and take them up to the city for sale. All day long people go there and carry away water for their households and gardens.

The opinion of some is that the now closed aqueduct was made by King Hezekiah when he suppressed all the springs outside Jerusalem, at the time that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up against Jerusalem; and that the pool was repaired by Nehemiah, we read in Neh. iii, 15. So that this place has had a varied history, and now again thousands are being benefited by the waters from the Pool of Siloam. Once again it is a means of blessing and life to many, as it was to the blind man nearly two thousand years ago.—'Friendly Greetings.'

God's Marvellous Work in Austria.

(The Rev. H. A. Schaffler, D.D., in the 'Congregationalist and Christian World'.)

Last summer I revisited a part of the mission field in Austria which I explored for the American Board in 1872, when the Rev. Drs. E. A. Adams, A. W. Clark and I commenced the Austrian mission of our churches. The contrast between the small beginning, the painful limitations and severe persecution of those early days and the present large liberty, wide extension and abundant fruitage of the work was striking and delightful.

I first visited Vienna. When compelled by family reasons to leave Austria in 1881, we had no missionary work in Vienna. Now I found a flourishing mission to Bohemians, who abound in that great, beautiful and godless city. Sunday morning I preached to a small congregation in a hall and in the afternoon to 135 or 140 attentive hearers in the mission house. The beautiful house, containing a good sized hall with gallery, fitted up as a church, with apartments for the preacher's home, Christian Endeavor rooms and gymnasium, was built for the mission and is owned by a Scotch friend. Of the audience forty were members of our First Free Church which