No. 10.

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, December 16. 1886 —

Hon. Jas. D. Porter
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington D. C.

Sir

In submitting the annual report of this Consulate for the year ending September 30, 1886, I regret to say that commerce and industry still exhibit the effects of the depression which has prevailed for the last three or four years, and owing to the same causes, one of the principal of which has been the quarantine, which has closed so many ports on the Mediterranean.

Improvements in Jerusalem.

During the year many improvements have been made, chiefly in building and paving. Ninety five new houses have been built, the greater number of them by the Jews, outside the walls of the city, towards the west, and along the Jaffa road. A flour mill with compressed air engine is being established. A fine hotel is in process of erection within the walls, a short distance from the Jaffa gate, and on property belonging to the Greek Church. Other new buildings, some of them religious and educational, are also well advanced toward completion. The material chiefly used for building purposes is the peculiar limestone of the country, known as the Jerusalem marble. It is of a greyish-white or cream-color, often deepening to an ocherous tint, and sometimes variegated with reddish veins and markings. It is easily quarried and dressed, and is as durable as it is handsome; many of the ancient structures of the city abundantly testifying as to the former quality. It is found in almost unlimited quantities in the neighborhood, and is conveyed from the quarries, near the city, to the building-places, on the backs of Camels and donkeys — the usual means of transportation in this country. —

Within the city proper, about one mile of paving has been finished during the year, and the work is still prosecuting. In connection with this the sewerage has been greatly improved; drains and sewers of a better description than hitherto known here having been constructed beneath the new pavement. But much remains still to be done in this direction; the greater part of the city containing, as

to provision for sewage, in the same benighted and barbarous condition which appears to have pertained to it for ages. In some of those narrow, crowded and filthy quarters, chiefly inhabited by the Jews and poorer Moslems, the advent of an epidemic, such as the Cholera, would be an unmitigated calamity, the horror of which it would be difficult to overestimate. Even now, those unsavory haunts are almost constantly the abode of typhoid or other low fevers.

Manufactures.

Though there are no great factories in Jerusalem, there is a considerable number of shops and other establishments where the manufacture of certain articles, principally olive-wood-work, wine, oil and soap, is carried on. The following list gives the number and character of these:

90 Shops for Olive-wood-work.
90 " " mother-of-pearl work and articles of piety.
30 oil presses for olive oil and sesame
30 Soap boilers.
100 Shops for distilling spirits and the fabrication of wine.
3 Windmills
1 Compressed air engine mill } for grain
6 Horse mills.

Besides the above, shoes are made in a large number of small shops. But the article produced is chiefly for the Bedowin trade, and even the best goods are very inferior to those of American manufacture, which latter, though costing five or six times as much as the home-made article, are really preferred by both Turks and Syrians, their superior quality being generally acknowledged. With proper management, the trade in American shoes could be largely increased.

Agriculture.

This year's harvest must be considered a poor one; cereals and olives giving only half crops. The grains chiefly raised in this country are wheat, barley, durrah (Maize), and sesame. From the last oil of a superior quality is made. Other crops are beans, peas, potatoes, lentils and tobacco. Figs, grapes, oranges, and lemons, are abundant, and of fine quality. Sugar cane is easily grown on the plains of Palestine, where it does not require annual replanting, but, where, once planted, the roots remain forever, producing, even with imperfect culture, excellent crops, yet sugar is now never made from it.

The cultivation of the soil is generally in the same primitive condition which characterized it centuries ago. Barely a few inches in depth beneath the

surface of the land is disturbed by the small rude plough in common use. Camels, donkeys, oxen, and, alas, also women are used in ploughing. The buffalo is occasionally used for the purpose, as are also horses, but the latter very rarely.

There can be no doubt that the use of American implements of agriculture would be of the greatest benefit to this people; but the difficulty lies in their introduction into a country like this, where habits and customs are adhered to with such obstinate tenacity.

The Orange.

Oranges are cultivated in an area of about 1000 acres in the circle of Jaffa and constitute the main source of revenue of its 20,000 inhabitants. They are also planted to a small extent at Gaza.

The Jaffa orange, renowned as the largest in the world, is of an oval shape, and is produced in the following way:

In the months of July and August, cuttings, or, more properly speaking, suckers of one inch in diameter, by 18 inches or more in length, are taken from the lemon tree, and planted in beds which are watered twice a day. The following year, the suckers, which have already attained a good size, are budded by making a T incision in the bark and inoculating an orange bud. When this has taken, the lemon stock is cut away, a few inches above the bud, which then grows rapidly, and bears fruit in the third or fourth year from the first planting of the sucker.

I am particular in giving the details of this simple method of propagating this valuable fruit, as I believe it might be adopted with advantage in Florida, where the lemon tree flourishes and is of rapid growth, and where the usual method of propagating the orange is from seed, or by budding on the wild orange tree.

The peculiar elongated shape of the Jaffa orange may, perhaps, be accounted for by the effect of the lemon stock; and the mingling of the two natures may also be the reason why the fruit is seldom found to produce seed, and then only a very few in each instance.

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and those of a small size.

The fruit on young trees often measures 18 inches in circumference, and weighs from one to 1½ lb. The peel is sometimes half-an-inch thick.

In Jaffa the gardens, 500 in number, are all irrigated during the rainless season, that is from April till November, by the agency of water wheels moved by horse power.

The cost of irrigation varies according to the depth of the well which supplies the water; but is about from ⅛ to ⅓ of the annual yield of the orange grove.

The time of the maturity of the fruit, and with it its export, begins in November, continuing till the following April. Several invoices of some hundred boxes of oranges have been tried this year to New York.

Investments in orange gardens will bring a return of from 10 to 15% per annum.

Petroleum, Lumber and other American products

American petroleum is large bulk here, and generally preferred to the Russian article, which, though much cheaper is admittedly inferior.

Were proper care observed in sending from the United States only the best quality, and keeping the price as low as possible, by selling at a fair remuneration, this trade could be much extended. But, too often, it is justly complained that an oil of inferior grade is shipped to this market. Greater care must be used in forwarding only the standard article, in order to compete more fully with the Russian petroleum. A comparison of the tables of Imports at Jaffa will show the rapid increase in the use of petroleum: $36,400 worth being imported this year to $22,000 worth last year.

The lumber imported into Palestine is chiefly Austrian and Turkish. It is said however that the superior white pine lumber of our American forests occasionally finds its way here, indirectly, through Austria.

Sewing machines from Germany, of

of clumsy make, are of frequent use, being mostly recommended by their cheapness. Those using them admit that machines of American manufacture are stronger and better; and the latter will, doubtless, become more highly appreciated and of more common employment as their merits become more widely known, and it is discovered that, in the end, the best is the cheapest.

The stoves in general use are mostly from England, and are of such miserable construction as to make one long for even the poorest American stove. Cooking here is reduced to the minimum; and the natives of the lower class often perform their simple culinary work in the open air, with the aid of a few handfulls of charcoal and the most primitive of earthen-ware stoves, or rude iron tripod.

Cod liver oil, quinine and other drugs are in fair demand, and the business, with judicious management, might be extended. There can be little doubt also that, if properly introduced, a market might be created for a multitude of articles of American manufacture, and in every-day use in the United States, but which are either comparatively unknown here, or for which inferior substitutes are employed.

Army Conscription and Taxes.

The heaviest drain of able-bodied men from Palestine, for army purposes, which has occurred in ten years, has been imposed on the province within the present year. About 8,000 recruits and reserves have already been shipped from here to Constantinople; and the work still goes on. The present draft has taken one out of every seven of the male population.

The Turkish Government, instead of enlisting Christian and Jews into the army, which is contrary to its policy, levies an annual tax on them, in the proportion of 180 males to one Moslem soldier. This takes effect at the age of one year; so that from this early age, each non-Moslem Woman subject of the male sex must pay, or have paid for him, his proportion

proportion of this tax. At the same time, any Mohammedan soldier has the option of either going into the army, or paying the sum of 50 Turkish Liras (about $217.), which exempts him from army duty for five years. At the end of this time, if again drafted, he is allowed to pay a like amount to escape military service for a like period of time; after which he can only be called on for home duty.

The distribution of the military tax, required of the people of Jerusalem, the Moslems excepted, is, for the present year, as stated in the following schedule, which has been prepared from official sources:

Jews, ...	$ 3,043	Armenians . . .	$ 250
Greek Orthodox church	1,217	Copts	86
Greek Catholic . . .	17	Protestants . . .	37
Roman Catholic . . .	826		

This gives the total military tax of non-Moslem Turkish subjects as $5,458.

Other taxes of this district, during the year, are as follows:

Cattle tax	$21,739
Tithes on products of the soil	32,608
Land taxes	19,855
Endowment of Mosques	5,217
Total	$79,129

The poverty of the people makes these taxes peculiarly oppressive; which oppression, the methods employed in their collection does not tend to alleviate.

The Hospitals.

Many of the nationalities re-presented here have hospitals belonging to them. Of these institutions, which all do noble work, the following named have been established for some years: The Austrian, English, French, German and Russian Hospitals, the Hospital of the Greek Church, the British Ophthalmic Hospital, and the German Hospital for Lepers.

The prevalence of diseases of the eye in Palestine is one of the most remarkable of its peculiarities. In some of the towns it has been

been estimated that 80 per cent. of the population suffer acutely from ophthalmia, a large number having lost their sight altogether. The excessive glare of the sun and the unclearly habits of the people are, doubtless the prime causes of this lamentable state of things; the worst results being brought on by the want of proper remedies, or the ignorant treatment which is worse than none.

About four years ago the British Ophthalmic Hospital was first opened in Jerusalem, and notwithstanding it is even now crippled for means, it has made a most creditable record. It is perfectly undenominational in its character; and its reputation is such that patients from distant parts of Palestine and Syria, including the desert, flock to it, as well as do those suffering from eye diseases in Jerusalem and its neighboring villages. Christians, Jews and Mussulmans are all treated alike, without fee, or charge of any sort; and also without any interference with their religious beliefs, as, by the rules, all proselytising is forbidden. Though its straightened circumstances permit of only eight beds being provided, during the year, no less than 121 patients have been admitted in to the hospital; the new cases seen at the dispensary were 3,238; while the total number of consultations was 13,482. Americans visiting Jerusalem take great interest in this truly benevolent institution, when pointed out to them, and have more than once lent it substantial aid; and it is to be hoped it will not be left fail for want of support.

The American Cemetery.

It is with pain I have to state that I found the condition of the American Cemetery on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, one of almost total neglect. It is without ornament or foliage, with the

exception of a single ancient and battered olive-tree in the centre; and though surrounded with a high wall, it seems to be a favorite receptacle for all sorts of rubbish. So desolate is its aspect, that, of late years, Americans have preferred burying their dead in the English Cemetery, and the first interment within the American Cemetery which has occurred for several years, has been since my arrival. It is my intention to do what lies in my power to put the enclosure in a condition more consonant with its purposes, by clearing away the rubbish, planting trees, laying out walks and training vines and creeping plants over the now unsightly walls.

The slab for the gateway - inscribed with gilt lettering, generously given by Colonel Shepherd of New-York and which, in addition to the name of the Cemetery, proclaims, in both Arabic and English, Jesus Christ as the resurrection and the life, has been placed in position over the entrance, and is the one redeeming feature of the place.

It is to be regretted that at the time the property was acquired, a larger plat of ground was not secured. It should have been at least twice as extensive. The surrounding land on Mount Zion has since largely increased in value, and could additional ground now be purchased, it would be at a very great advance in price.

Jerusalem Police

This year, for the first time in the history of the ancient city, Jerusalem has been provided with a police force. The men are twelve in number, one Christian, one Jew, and ten Mohammedans, and are an intelligent and respectable body, which would not reflect discredit on their brethren in the cities of Europe and America. They are neatly uniformed, in English style, in dark cloth, turned up with green, and ornamented with gilt buttons; the usual headgear of the country, the crimson fez surmounting the whole. They wear a short sword; but do not carry a baton, and otherwise go unarmed, though

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I believe, the regulations permit a revolver and, in case of necessity, a carbine to be borne by them. In cold weather they wear an overcoat similar to the uniform, only it is made of heavier cloth; and in hot weather they are provided with white duck trousers. They are quite as polite as the London police, which is saying volumes.

The Jaffa Road.

This road is in very much the same miserable state it has exhibited for so many years past. The mountainous portion is so bad that it is astonishing more complaints are not made about it. It is undergoing at present certain improvements, and for about ten miles out of Jerusalem is under work about seven miles of which are in fair condition. Parapets have also been built guarding the more dangerous passes.

The long promised Railroad, which had been reported in the United States as having been finished, seems farther off than ever from being an accomplished fact. In the unsettled state of political affairs at present existing, it seem hopeless to look for such improvements as would be the construction of a harbor at Jaffa, and a rail road from that port to Jerusalem.

Declared Exports

The value of declared exports (olive wood work, mother of pearl, wine, &c.), from this consular district, for the year ending September 30, 1886, is as follows: The quarter ending December 31, 1885, $1,304.76; March 31, 1886, $850.58; June 30, 1886, $1,411.48; and September 30, 1886, $178.02; making a total of $3,744.84.

Sanitary Matters

Though we have been made to feel so keenly, through the depression of trade and commerce, the consequences of the quarantine

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so rigidly enforced along the shores of the Mediterranean, on account of the Cholera, Jerusalem and the entire of Palestine have been free from epidemics or sickness of any serious type. With the better system of drainage, now so slowly accomplishing, the health of the city must naturally be much improved. and it is to be regretted that this important work cannot be pushed more rapidly.

I am, Sir
Very respectfully,
your obedient Servant,

U. S. Consul.

Jaffa

The great increase in the number of steamers visiting Jaffa, a remarkable feature of the past year, has been commented on by Consular Agent E. Hardegg, in transmitting the accompanying trade tables. Within a fortnight, 2 Turkish, 2 French, 2 Russian, 4 Austrian, and 4 Egyptian steamers have touched at the port; that is, over one steamer per diem, where there was but one steamer per week, only two years ago. Considering the far from flourishing state of commerce and of the Country, this superfluity of means of Communication and transportation can hardly be counted other than the result of a fierce Competition between the respective steamship Companies, trying to outvie each other on this coast. So this present blessing of a more lively navigation may not prove to be of very long Continuance.