called the drivers together and warned them that they would be held responsible for any accident. This was very necessary as the native drivers have no other idea of driving than to hold the reins and lash their horses into a gallop and there was no other way to restrain these fellows than to threaten them in a body. We sent word to the Sheikhs of the neighboring villages where vicious boys are known to live, the Mount of Olives, Bethany, Silwan (Siloam), Nabby David (Prophet David), that they should not molest the travellers. We instructed the police to send away from the city, or to have them under special surveillance, any man or boy that were known to be pickpockets or petty thieves. As the trains arrived in the evening and as the streets are not lighted, it was arranged that the station and the street to the city, one mile distant should be lighted. Moreover we requested the chief of the municipality to have the streets, — as it had not rained for some time and the dust was very uncomfortable, watered during the stay of the party.

Thus at considerable trouble and some expense we were able to make this company of distinguished American tourists far more comfortable than they otherwise would have been. Facilities for handling and caring for such a large company are abundant in any American city, but here they are conspicuous by their absence. All these steps we voluntary on our part as Mr. Frank Clark who had charge of the party was on the steamer and his brother Mr. Herbert Clark was in Haifa, and no one on the steamer knew what had been done by us; and I am happy to say that everything worked well and the visit was made without any unfortunate or even unfavorable occurrence.

I wish to add that the Governor, the special police, and the officers of the municipality responded heartily to our requests and, in cooperation with Mr. Eclat the efficient dragoman of our Consulate, did all they could for the safety and pleasure of this army of our fellow citizens.

I remain respectfully

Your obedient servant

(Signed) Selah Merrill

U.S. Consul

No. 51

United States Consulate

Jerusalem, Syria, March 24, 1902

Hon. Herbert H. D. Peirce

Assistant Secretary of State

Washington, D. C.

Sir,

I wish to consult the Department with regard to the following matter and, if possible, obtain its permission to carry out a much needed reform.

A large number of our citizens, chiefly naturalized subjects, residing here, are engaged in business as tradespeople or shopkeepers, fancy goods dealers, tinsmiths, cloth merchants, millers, money changers, and many other kinds. It is very common for these people to have a partner of some other nationality than their own, as Russian, Turkish, Austrian, for there are eleven countries represented here by Consuls, besides the Turkish government, and from time to time we have to deal with them all. To describe the intricate and involved cases we have had to deal with would require volumes, and probably it is not necessary for my purpose.

Here is an example:— An American subject and a Turkish subject are partners. It becomes necessary for the Turkish authorities to commence some legal process against the Turkish subject and the Turkish authorities go to the shop or place of business. The American immediately declares that the shop is his, that it is American property, and on that account he warns the officers not to enter the shop

shop or to touch the goods. The case may be reversed; — we wish to proceed against the American who immediately declares that everything belongs to his partner, — and we are powerless. Such cases are common; and in some of them we are convinced that a special object of the partnership was to evade responsibility.

Another example:— A shop is supposed to be owned by French subjects who have in their employ an American subject. The French subjects wish to avoid some obligation to the French authorities and suddenly the American subject declares the store and its contents to be his, — American property and the French cannot touch it. We have nothing but the assertions of the different parties to guide us. The French have the same. There is no contract, and we are powerless. The most careful examination fails to reveal the real owner or owners and their real relation to each other.

Again, in the case of "bills" or notes that require to be protested, how can we protest a note that is signed by a Russian subject and an American subject? Or by an American, an English, and an Austrian subject jointly?

All sorts of matters are involved:— the joint use of a drain; the joint use of a cistern; of a kitchen; of a gate; of a lane; joint use of a door; joint rights in clothing or other personal property that has been pledged and sometimes sub-pledged; rights of the owner of a house and of the man who sublets it and the rights of the tenants when they all conflict, matters sometimes which no man on earth can fathom; joint ownership of a horse or

or a donkey; of a wine shop; a lot of chickens; leasing property; ordering goods from Europe; deeding property by one person when three or more persons have equal rights in it. These are a few samples. I cannot begin to give a complete list of the scores and scores of petty matters about which disputes arise and petty lawsuits ensue and which not only keep this Consulate busily occupied all the time but keep us anxious as well lest we violate the rights of some other nationality.

The Germans have some strict system of recording all matters pertaining to partnership and business, and I think that some of the other Consulates have similar regulations. But it does not signify whether they have or not; what I wish is to introduce business methods into our control of American subjects residing here and engaged in some sort of trade.

I wish to be allowed to propose such questions as the following and perhaps others as may be found necessary to meet emergencies, to all American subjects engaging in business here, and to have their names and business, their contracts, their conditions of partnership, &c., &c., recorded in the Consulate in a special book.

What is your trade or occupation?
Have you a place of business?
Are you alone responsible for the rent?
What is the approximate value of the goods in your shop?
Are the goods entirely your own?
Are any of them pledged to any party or parties?
The names of the parties and the amount pledged

pledged and the conditions?
In case you wish to pledge them you must report the same to this Consulate, - the name of the party, the amount, the terms and all the other conditions.

Have you a partner?
For what portion of the rent are you responsible?
What portion of the goods belong to you?
Name of your partner
He is required to say that your statements are true.
What share of the proceeds of the business is yours?
What has each to share in case of loss?
Are you entitled to make a contract with a third party without the consent of your partner?
Can your partner do the same without your consent?
And in case of gain or loss how is your partnership (yourself and your original partner) affected?

It is not ordinary business transactions that trouble us; not even disputes between our American subjects which are often very difficult to decide, certainly we have trouble enough from these cases; but it is the cases of double and triple ownership of some petty business where two or three nationalities are involved, which are most perplexing and which require to be handled with great caution lest we create international complications which would be very annoying to our Government. In America every case I have in mind would be decided by United States law. In Turkey it is not so:- in the one case everything is simple:- in in the other case the complications are many, some times rendering any just decision absolutely impossible.

I do not hesitate to urge this matter upon

upon the Department in the strongest manner. It is an instance where the Department can render the Consulate essential and important service. Allowing things to go as they are now and have been hitherto, is unbusinesslike not to say slack, and the occasion of great annoyance. The methods or tricks for evading justice are many and by neglecting to prevent them we simply encourage those who are disposed to take advantage of the circumstances I am describing.

The plan I have proposed would not remove all the difficulties we encounter, but it would be a great help to us in our endeavors to administer justice.

I remain Respectfully
Your obedient Servant
(Signed) Selah Merrill
U. S. Consul

Postcript:- I will add what I have already reported more than once to the Department, namely, that these merchants and trade people do not sell American goods, they import no goods from the United States, they pay no taxes not even a poll tax for the support of our Government, in fact for the support of our government they do nothing whatever.