In the Jordan Valley wheat & barley are already several inches high. —

(signed) Hurd Gillman
Consul

United States Consulate,
Jerusalem, December 5. 1889.

No. 136

Consulate of the United States,
Jerusalem, December 5. 1889.

Honorable William F. Wharton,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Referring to your despatch No. 61, dated the 2d ultimo, I have the honor to report that I have inquired into the condition of Mrs Civia Leah Jacobson and her three children, supposing them to be the persons intended, though the name is not mentioned in your despatch. The two sons are named respectively Benitz & Mendel, and the daughter, Rachel.

I find the woman is quite insane, her insanity taking the form of the religious=melancholy type. On this account her husband left her. His name is Isaac Jacobson, and, I am informed, he is re=married, and to a Christian, their place of residence being No. 55 - 7th Street, South Norfolk, Connecticut.

It seems to me to be quite reprehensible on the part of the agents of the Hebrew Sheltering Guardian Society that they permitted the insane mother to take control of the children. She should at once have been placed under restraint when she gave utterance to her incoherent ravings of her religious duty impelling her to bring them to Jerusalem, and threatened, as she says, to drown herself and the children in the river unless she was permitted to bring them here. We have already, by far, too many such

such characters in Jerusalem; and they give us much trouble.

This importunate mother and her children are now living here under the care of the Abram Bar Cohen referred to in your Despatch, who is a first cousin once removed of the mother. He appears to be taking good care of them; and, though not well off, and having a wife and children to support, he expends $2. per month on the education of the eldest boy. On my offering Cohen aid for them from my own purse, he refused to accept it, saying it was not at all necessary. But, at the same time, he besought me to render them my assistance to get their names placed on the relief list, so that they might obtain their share of the alms sent by their co=religionists from the United States and which it is stated amount to $25,000 per annum. He assured me he had implored in vain all the Hebrew congregations in this city to grant this aid; but that with my interference they would be obliged to yield.

And here I may state that the eleemosynary aid sent to Jerusalem by Hebrews, from all over the world, and amounting to a very large sum of money, by many said to be as much as £60,000 per annum, is a continual source of bitterness, contention and quarreling. Crimination and re=crimination between the head Rabbis and the members of the various congregations are incessant, and prolific of the most acrimonious feuds. The chief accusations are that the Rabbis make an improper use of the fund, expending it upon themselves, their families, relatives and friends to a large extent, and using favoritism generally in its distribution. I have received letters from prominent Rabbis of the United States complaining of this; but I see it is, as I have told them, a matter very difficult for me to interfere in. There are about 200 synagogues in Jerusalem, and there are thousands of Rabbis the majority of whom are far from being what they ought to be. There is no question that a reform in this matter is demanded; but it would prove a task equal to the cleansing of the Augean Stables.

The charitable fund referred to is the chief magnet that draws to Jerusalem mendicant Jews from all quarters of the globe; and here they prefer to live what would seem to most people a miserable existence of laziness, squalor and want.

It is apparent that it is only in special cases of our own

citizens of Hebrew race and need that I have any authority to interfere. In all such cases, I need scarcely say, I am always ready to use my good offices to the full extent of my power.

In conclusion, I have only to add that, in the case now under consideration I have given the Rabbi Bar Cohen all the assistance he requested, giving him nine recommendatory certificates, addressed to as many of the congregations, over my signature and the seal of the Consulate, and which he assures me will be productive of the result desired.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
Henry Gillman,
Consul.

Note: It would appear that the large amount mentioned as constituting the Hebrew Relief Fund of Jerusalem must be greatly over estimated; but I have given it as stated to me.
(Sgd.) H. G.

Annual Report on the Commerce and Industries of Palestine for year ending September 30. 1889.

The Harvest.

The unusual copiousness of the early rains the past season gave promise of an abundant and goodly harvest in all the crops of both the field and garden. Though this promise was fairly realized as regards a great part of Palestine, for various reasons, the expectation was hardly fulfilled with respect to the crops on the Plains of Sharon and Philistia. In these wide and important tracts the harvest was, in general, below the average, producing the consequent depressing results.

The rainy season.

The average annual rainfall at Jerusalem is about

25 inches; and this is intensified by the fact that the maximum amount of the fall is confined to little more than three months; as between the "former" or "middle" and "latter" rains, there are usually intervals of several weeks' duration in which rarely any rain falls, and during the dry season — from May to October, there is no rain whatsoever. During the height of the rainy season the sudden bursting of the overcharged rain-clouds and consequent down pour — are of a tropical character in force & volume. Torrents like small rivers gather in a few minutes, and rush through the streets, or pour over the hillsides with a violence that is often destructive to property, and sometimes to life. An instance of the latter occurred about two years ago, when during an excessive rain-storm a number of persons, mostly peasants, sought shelter in a cave not far from Jerusalem. The streams, from the sudden rain-burst, swelling to a flood, tore through the neighboring ravines, and filled the cave with such rapidity, that before its inmates could escape, thirty-five of them lost their lives through drowning.

An unprecedented Rainfall.

There is much variation in the character of the rainy season, and in the distribution of the rain-fall. In some years the maximum precipitation occurs in the early part of the season, while in others it is reserved till towards the close. But as a general rule the great volume of the rain-fall takes place at the middle of the season, the "former" and "latter" rains being usually of the character of gentle or moderate showers. In the past year, however, a remarkable phenomenon occurred, all the more remarkable as succeeding a year of drought, nearly the entire of the 25 inches of rain, which constitute the average annual rain-fall, (or exactly 24.710 inches) were precipitated in about two months, or between the end of October and the 31st of December 1889. Before the latter date, the cisterns of Jerusalem were not alone all filled, but were over-flowing, something said to be unknown