AMERICAN CONSULATE.

Jerusalem, June 30th 1909.

SUBJECT: CONSULAR JURISDICTION OVER THE INSANE.

The Honorable

Assistant Secretary of State

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to send herewith a communication addressed to Alexander Cardinal, Esq., Hugo, Minn., concerning his son Joseph, one of the many unfortunates who come to this place suffering from religious dementia, whom to turn loose, or to permit to run at large in a foreign land, without care or oversight, to the great danger of others and themselves, is a serious reflection upon our humanity, and not calculated to impress others in the belief that we have attained a very high standard of civilization. It is reprehensible and brings upon us deserved reproach and contempt both in public and private.

There may be found in this city at almost any time, one or more American citizens whose mental condition is such as to require that they should be returned to their homes to be given into the custody of their relatives, or placed in some public institution for care, treatment and possible cure.

These cases range from those suffering from slight mental disorder, or religious delusions, to complete dementia. Nearly all of them are young in years and fit subjects for treatment in a hospital for the insane. They roam about the streets, and through the dangerous country surrounding it

it, unprotected and subject to every danger incident to the land.

Some of them disappear, and where they go to or what becomes of them is an unsolved mystery, and but small consideration is given to their probable fate. The name by which they are known is usually an assumed one, taken in the belief that they are the reincarnation, or the absolute identity, of some holy personage of the Bible, the Messiah, or even the Supreme Being.

Other nations furnish their quoto of these queer cases. Among them the favorite personality assumed seems to be "Elijah", or "John the Baptist". There are a few "Messiahs", and a recent communication from one of them addressed to me would indicate he believes himself to be "Jehovah".

While in the city of Hebron last year one of these cases was brought into the city, from the country beyond, in a dying condition. She was intelligent enough to give an idea of the suffering and torture she had gone through with in her efforts to reach the Holy City. She had wandered in the treeless and waterless desert for six weeks, and how life was sustained during her journey, it is impossible to say. She was a skeleton and in rags, and although taken immediately to the English Hospital located there, and given kind care and treatment, she died in a few days. She must have been assisted by some wandering tribe, as it would be impossible for a sane person to have made the journey she accomplished.

As a rule they are harmless and unobtrusive. It is because of this characteristic of their conduct, that they are not missed or commented upon when they disappear. Those who assume some fantastic garb to represent the per-

tract public attention to themselves, are the only ones who are missed. One of these "John the Baptists" roamed about, bareheaded and in bare feet, part of the time wearing sandals, with a sheepskin about his shoulders and a long staff in his hand. Such a one as he is missed when he disappears.

The subject of our enclosed letter, Joseph Cardinal, believes he is the "Prophet Saint Paul from Saint Paul, Minn.",and he"keeps watch on the mountain", to herald to the waiting world the first news of the glad tidings. He becomes greatly excited if it is suggested that some one else could take his place and continue the work. He declares "There is but one true prophet, and he is an American, and all others are false prophets". Joseph carries a gun to back up this statement. Who, in face of this, could deny Joseph's origin, that he is of the breezy west?

The first really dangerous manifestations from him, coming to my attention, have been of recent date. In addition to shooting at those who provoke him, to the danger of others as well as his assailants, he has had a revelation directing him to look after and guard two young girls who attend school. This compells a servant to accompany the girls to school. Joseph violently resents this, and insists the servant is not the proper person to be entrusted with this duty.

He seems to be capable of reason outside of his religious delusions, and when I ordered him to cease his attentions to these girls on the penalty of being locked up, he agreed, though with much muttering.

I have been unable to find that Consular Courts have jurisdiction, or are authorized by law to exercise over lunatics or insane persons any authority whatever, and I have been informed that no appropriation is made for the expenses

ses that are necessary for their care, custody and control.

Should one of them be arrested and charged with a crime, under this subterfuge the dangerous ones might be dealt with; but a prison cell would be their lot, while a hospital and medical treatment would be what they would require. Under the strict rules enforced with regard to expenditures, the criminal law alone could be resorted to, both as to jurisdiction and as to costs. Any other course pursued by the Consul would make him personally responsible for the expenses incurred in taking charge of one of these cases, be it ever so humane or necessary.

A speedy remedy should be provided covering the matter of our insane citizens found in foreign lands, and more especially in non-Christian or barbarous countries, where but little attention is given to the care of such unfortunates.

The Consul should be given jurisdiction in such cases to exercise authority and control over them. Such jurisdiction might be limited and restricted as may be deemed advisable, and his authority exercised only upon complaint being made, and final judgement entered on the verdict or decision of a commission duly appointed or selected to pass upon the sanity of the person examined; the commission to be composed of the Consul, who should preside over it, a regular practising physician, if such could be obtained, and one or more reputable persons of the community; these to act as such board or commission, with a view of safeguarding the rights of the person in question.

My judgement would be that a physician's certificate setting out the fact of the insanity of the person, and including therein his advice as to the degree of control the Consul should exercise in the case, and as to whether the patient should be treated in some local institution or be returned to America, should be sufficient to authorize the Consul

the Consul to pronounce judgement. Such certificate should be advisory and not final, the Consul to determine from the same, as well as from other evidence, what in his judgement would be the best course to pursue, and to come to his decision and enter it in the case, from the facts presented to him, as he deemed would be for the best interests of all.

A benevolent Jewish gentleman of this place, horrified at the conditions presented by the uncared for men of this locality who were sufferers from various mental disorders, established an asylum in this city for the care of such unfortunates. Hearing there was an American confined in it, I visited the place on Sunday, to investigate the matter of our citizen, and also to see whatwas being done for others at this institution.

I found our American laboring under the delusion that the longer he lived the less chance he would have of heaven. Therefore it would be best for him to die soon, although it would not be right for him to make way with himself. In otherrespects than this he was quite sane. He would have periodic attacks, at which time he would lose control of his will, and would perform his natural functions where ever he might be, without regard to propriety. He would also, at such times, tear from his person all his clothing, and would, when not under restraint, go about the streets in a condition of nakedness. He was taken from the street in a nude and filthy condition, and he now remains at this little asylum voluntarily, as he realizes, while in a normal state of mind, the necessity of restraint, and wants to be taken care of. This man has a family in America, and well-to-do relatives who knew of his condition before he came here, and it looks as though he was turned loose to be got rid of, although he says they believed that he might

The jurisdiction of the consul should cover, as well, the property of such insane persons, although that is of small importance compared with his right and authority to take charge of the person, and to deal with him in such manner as his condition would require.

I find that other foreign powers clothe the consul with full power to act, and in some cases give him the sole right to determine, and with unlimited and arbitrary power to act in such cases.

Where the rules governing and regulating such cases are not fully set out, the English Consul, acting as a Provincial Court, may "of its own motion, or on the application of any person interested, take or authorize such steps as to the court may seem necessary or expedient for the immediate protection of the person and property of any person appearing to the court to be a lunatic, and may, from time to time, revoke or vary or supplement any order or proceeding taken thereunder."

As a rule, the consuls secure a certificate from a reputable physician of the community, as to the mental condition of the person charged with insanity, although both the German and English Consuls inform me they would act without it, in cases in which it became necessary to take charge of the person who appeared to them to be a lunatic, or a person of unsound mind.

In addition to the two cases mentioned herein of Americans who are insane, there is another case, that of a young woman who should be cared for, and returned home for treatment. The Department of State, as well as other officials of the government, have had letters from her. She has caused much trouble at the Consulate with regard to her alleged wrongs. I wrote a number of letters for her to ascertain if there was any foundation for her stories, but she became a nuisance and was

and was excluded from my office, although she still comes to the Consulate.

Action should be immedialely taken by our government in the matter of its insane citizens in foreign countries, because of its humanity, and its honor, and its necessity.

I have the honor to be,Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Thomas R Wallace.

American Consul.