Acc. D. 49. November 15. 1871

No 59. United States Consulate at
Jerusalem Sept. 30th 1871

Hon. Second Assistant Secretary of State
Washington D.C.

Sir,

The past year has witnessed but few changes political or commercial in Palestine. The same rumors rule so universally identified with Turkish provincial administration is adhered to - the same sad tales of oppression, injustice, want of protection & prevailing poverty are to be told - In January last Fauzil Pacha was relieved from his duties as Governor of Palestine & Ali Bey was appointed in his stead. The latter official did not arrive until early in April. In the meantime Raouf Pacha Governor of Beirut assumed provisional charge of the affairs of this department as Acting Governor. - Ali Bey arrived on the 2d of April & entered upon the discharge of his duties as Governor of Jerusalem on the 3d. - As Governor of Philoe in Asia Minor, he had displayed great activity & energy & came here with a reputation for executive abilities & reform ideas higher than is usually possessed by Turkish officials. We therefore expected much

much from his administration of affairs, & his promises were not our expectations - After five months experience of his regime we are compelled to acknowledge that thus far, he has proved, no better, if as good, as his predecessors. It was understood, when he arrived here that his first work, would be to repair the carriage road between Jerusalem & Jaffa but as yet nothing has been done & another winter's rain will render the road almost worthless & the labor already expended, upon it will have been thrown away - A railroad, on the Fall plan is now talked of, running along the old carriage road. - The projectors of this enterprise are English & appear to be inspired rather by religious enthusiasm than by any hope of financial success. It appears to be a foregone conclusion that Railroads in Palestine & Syria must be failures financially considered. I am however convinced that a Railroad of narrow gauge running from Jaffa to Damascus via Jerusalem & Jordan Valley, would be a financial success & would develope a region of country rich in agriculture & mineral resources. The past year has been a prosperous one on the whole for the agricultural interest of Palestine, & the prices of all the products of the soil have fallen at least 100 per cent. - The winter famine has

has passed & there is sufficient water in the cisterns to last until the winter rains. The cholera has again appeared in the Levant & quarantine is the order the day. Palestine & Syria are entirely free from it as yet but it is more than probable that next year, we will have more or less of it. Jerusalem continues healthy with the exception of a mild type of fever & ague which has prevailed during the past summer. The forepart of the summer, which has just closed, was exceptionally cool: the latter part of it especially August was exceptionally hot the thermometer averaging about as follows viz: noon 88°, four o'clock p.m. 80°. eight o'clock 75°. & ten o'clock p.m. 70°. This heat is unusual at Jerusalem, but is but little above the average summer temperature at Jaffa & along the coast. The fruit crop of Palestine has been a remarkably good one this season both in quality & quantity. Figs, grapes & peaches, are particularly fine & have never seen larger or better flavored grapes than grow on the mountains of Judea, while the peaches cultivated in the valley of Urtas near Bethlehem are equal in every respect.

respect the American peaches. In fact I am told that they are grown from American seed. Jerusalem shows signs of considerable material prosperity during the past year. The large pile of Russian buildings outside of the city on the Jaffa road, has become the nucleus of quite a new town which is known by the name of "New Jerusalem". About forty dwelling & houses have been built in that quarter during the last two years, some of them handsome & expensive constructions. Quite a number are being built at this writing & preparations are made for commencing more next spring. The improvements within the city consist of a new hotel on Mount Zion & a large commodious hospital on Mount Moriah built by the Greek Church. About five hundred Americans have visited Jerusalem during the past year, & the appearances now are that the number will be much greater during the cumming year. All the country west of the Jordan is perfectly safe for travelers, & the east side is now visited with but little risk or danger. The opening of a new hotel in Jerusalem secures more comforts to our travelers, & is a great boon to those desirous of spending some time in this city.

Our travellers feel the want of a Consular Agent at Nablous & often speak to me on the subject, but I am powerless to remedy the matter, as there are no Europeans resident there, & the terms of the "Reglement" do not allow Turkish subjects to accept foreign Agencies.

The Mosque of Omar is now thrown open to travellers free of any admittance fee - the order of permission from the Governor is still necessary however, but no fee is charged for this order. The bear talk here of an American Palestine Exploration Society which is to work on the East side of the Jordan. - No particulars are known as to its organization, prospects or proposed time of commencing operations - I await information on the subject with impatience & hope that the report is true. - The East side of the Jordan is a rich field for research & investigation; the moment is, I think, opportune for operations & it is manifestly fitting that Americans should undertake the enterprise. - There are reasons why a society under American auspices would have better

success

success in prosecuting this work than any other. Chief among these reasons is the fact that the United States are not suspected of having any political designs, as are all European Nations. We have no direct interest in the Eastern question & more liberal powers would be granted us in a firman for exploration purposes than to any European power. I shall be most happy to lend my personal aid & assistance to the advancement of the interests of the "American Palestine Exploring Expedition". -

There have been some changes in the internal affairs of this Consulate. The late Dragoman Mr. W. C. Gargour, has been dismissed. Mr. Finkelstein was employed as Secretary & Dragoman for nine months, & Mr. Bagnotti has finally taken as Dragoman about the middle of the month of August. These changes have been reported, as they have occurred. Mr. Finkelstein has now left the office & is en route for the United States to seek his fortune. It is too early to speak of Mr. Bagnotti, it is only to be hoped that he will prove satisfactory. I congratulate myself at having finally got rid of the old employés of this Consulate. When they were appointed they were given to understand that they were provided for for life & that a Consular career was open to them; they therefore found

exaggerated ideas of their importance & in becoming too consequential & independent, they soon ceased to be useful. The various cases of importance which have arisen in this Consulate and been brought before the local Ottoman courts of Palestine by me during the past year have been reported in detail to the Department as they have occurred. Some of them are still unsettled. I would call the special attention of the Department to the case of Floyd vs. Ahmed Cheer, a Turkish Soldier which as yet has not received the serious consideration of the Turkish Government although repeatedly brought to its notice by our Legation at Constantinople & some satisfaction demanded. This case was the subject of my dispatch to the Department No 34 of May 10. 1871. I consider, that the principals at issue in this case are vital to the influence of this as well as all other United States Consulates in Turkey. In prosecuting cases before the Turkish tribunals in Palestine, the greatest obstacle in the way of success is the irresponsibility of the authorities & of the different courts. They have the power

power of appealing every petty case to the Vali or Governor General of Syria at Damascus & in every case where they wish to take themselves the responsibility of final decision they avail themselves of this power of appeal. Once a case is at Damascus it is very difficult to have it carefully considered as the affairs of this province have during the past year, been systematically ignored by the Vali Rachid Pacha. All the cases which I have had occasion to prosecute at Damascus have been ably & vigorously urged upon the attention of the Vali by our Consul General at Beirut Mr. Johnson. With the death of the Grand Vizier "Ali Pacha" many changes have taken place among the provincial Governors, among them Rachid Pacha has been removed from the Governor Generalship of Syria & his successor has been named. It is supposed that Ali Bey will be superseded as Governor of Palestine & in anticipation of these changes we are again looking forward to a better state of things. I hope to be able to forward the commercial returns for this Consular district by next mail. I find much difficulty in obtaining anything like accurate figures

figures I do not yet know how
well I will succeed.

I have the honor to be Sir
Your Obedient Servant
Sig) R. Beardsley
U. S. Consul.

Ack. D. 51. December 8th 1871
Appointment affrmd and certificate of
the same inclosed

No. 60 United States Consulate at
Jerusalem October 27 1871.

Hon. Second Assistant Secretary of State
Washington D.C.

Sir,

I have the honor to report that I have appointed, subject to the approval of the Department, Mr. E. Hardegg as Consular Agent of the United States at Jaffa to fill the vacancy caused by the appointment as Consular Clerk of the late Consular Agent Mr. J. Baldwin Esq.

Mr. Hardegg is a Prussian subject residing at Jaffa & as I believe in every way qualified for the position of Agent.

He is an intelligent, honest and worthy individual, & as proprietor of the only good & respectable hotel at Jaffa he is brought in direct contact with nearly all our travellers. He has always manifested a kind regard for their interests & welfare in the past, & I am confident he will be still more jealous in their behalf in the future.

I have made this