

dedicated to the old Prophet Elijah. Conspicuous in this church is a life-size figure of the Virgin Mary, with the child in her arms, clothed in silk, and adorned with a crown in which numerous jewels sparkle. On entering the church the priests were just busy burning the incense to the statues, chanting their monotonous Latin masses, which were responded to from the organ gallery by choir boys and monks, all gorgeously attired according to the fashion of the old "Roman two-horned Beast." On the floor a few dark-skinned Arabs were kneeling, and sometimes kissing the floor. These were evidently converts. The mass being over, an opportunity was given to enter the cave, over which the church has been built, and which is claimed to have been one in which the Prophet Elijah at some time or other lived. In this cave a statue of the Prophet killing the priests of Baal was seen, very well carved in wood.

Having visited Carmel I very naturally opened my Bible to read the narrative of the events prominently connected with this mountain. There had been a great famine in Israel, no rain having come for three years and a half. Elijah was finally sent to announce that God would again send rain. When meeting the fearfully wicked king Ahab, the prophet told him to gather Israel on Mount Carmel, and also the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of the groves which ate at the queen's table. This being done, the conference commenced by an opening speech of the Prophet: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." He further proposed to put this to a final test, by finding out which God would answer prayer. We remember the issue. The priests of Baal cried out all day until they could do so no more, but there came no answer. Elijah bent his knees in earnest but quiet prayer, and the fire from heaven came, evident to all, and made the people shout, "The Lord is God! The Lord is God!" Upon this the prophets of Baal were all taken, and, on the commandment of Elijah, put to death by the river Kishon. After this, Elijah went up to the top of Carmel and bowed himself to the ground, praying for the promised rain. And while praying, he sent his servant up to a point where he could look over the sea and watch the rising of the clouds. Seven times the prophet prayed, and seven times the servant went to look, before a little cloud was visible. But this was enough for the prophet. He told the king to hasten home; and after a short while the whole sky was clouded, and a great rain came. (See 1 Kings, chap. 18.)

Numerous caves found on the slopes of this mountain are said to have given the prophets, during times of persecution, a welcome shelter. Even the Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, is said to have sojourned here for some time. The Anachorites of the first Christian century were very numerous on the

Carmel, and many of the caves exhibit marks of the work of human hands. On the whole, a walk on Mount Carmel is very interesting, and awakens many memories from ancient sacred history.

I must close my letter at this time, hoping to be able to send a few lines again before long.

J. M. S.

HAIFA, Palestine, Jan. 30, 1889.

The weather during the whole of this winter has been of so unusual a character in the Holy Land as to attract the attention also of certain circles in Europe. Settlers who have lived here for more than twenty years assure us that they have never seen such a winter. The so-called "early rain" commenced in November, and it has continued with a few short intervals up till this time, giving hope of a rich harvest if other circumstances are favorable. The amount of rain that had fallen up to the middle of December was already greater than the total amount for the whole of last winter, and all the water cisterns were then full. The so-called Job's Well in the valley of Kedron had already then commenced to flow. This commonly does not take place before February or March.

Another surprise to the inhabitants of Judea was a snowfall that lasted for about two days. To the music of roaring thunders the white snowflakes performed their aerial dances, and when tired settled on the ground, covering it with several inches of snow. This was in the middle of December. To the children who very seldom see snow this was a glorious opportunity for fun, but not so to those who must look upon life from the serious point of view. In dear Utah we are prepared for winter with clothes and houses; but not so here. The snow here stopped all communication with the outer world overland. No one wants to leave his house if not compelled to; and the poor natives in their miserable huts and scanty costumes suffer a great deal, as also do their animals, for which no supply of feed, as a general rule, is laid by. The snow lasted only a couple of days, and as soon as the sun again broke through the clouds, his warm rays demonstrated his all quickening power. And then the water completely flooded the country. Streets and roads were turned into brooks and rivulets, and in many houses the lower rooms were filled with water, one or two feet deep. The lowest situated fields were turned into lakes, and the brooks swelled to streams.

In Haifa, where I have now been since January 21st, it has rained more or less every day, occasionally thundering, and all the time blowing a cold wind. "Cold" is, however, only a relative expression, and must not be understood to mean a temperature below the freezing point. On the contrary, the thermometer indicates several degrees of heat. But the air being so damp, it wraps round one like a wet cloth, and when sitting in it for days and weeks, one soon feels it "cold," even if the thermometer indicates

"warm;" for one's nerves and the thermometer do not always agree on the proper use of these terms.

I suppose, though, that the thermometer is right, however unwilling my shivering flesh is to admit that it is "warm." But facts, we are told, are stubborn things; and some wonderful facts here present themselves. When I look out through the square hole in the wall, which serves for window, on my right side I see the potatoes flourishing to the height of eight inches or more. The peas are about to blossom, and the barley stands thick and green. An equally wonderful sight presents itself on my left, when looking through that hole in the wall, for there the almond trees stand clothed in their luxurious dress of sweet flowers, reminding me of summer in Utah, when the blossoms of the peach and apple trees fill the air with delicious fragrance; and if I take a walk on Mount Carmel I find wild tulips, narcissus and other flowers, all swinging their little heads in the wind, and smiling, as if to ask, "Is not this a comfortable, warm climate?" Of course I have to put on my overcoat, a minicoat, and a blanket, and assent, "It is warm, indeed." There is no alternative.

But, leaving the weather, I hope and pray that the blessing of heaven may be poured down on this country as abundantly spiritually as it is temporally. Indeed I do believe that the time for deliverance is near.

The Europeans who live here are, as you already know, mostly Germans. They have come here prompted by a desire to prepare Palestine for the gathering of the Jews and the coming of Christ. The movement commenced, I understand, in 1836 in Germany, and after some years of agitation there were enough members gathered to form a kind of organization, known as Templars. They have now founded colonies in Jerusalem, where their headquarters have been since the year 1878, and in Jaffa, Haifa and one or two other places. I have tried hard to find out what their real object was in founding these colonies; but it is not easy to obtain an intelligent answer. "We have come here," they say, "prompted by the prophecies which foretell the gathering of Israel and the second coming of Christ." "Well, and what are you going to do here?" Of this they do not seem to have any clear idea. In their doctrines they stand very near Count Zinzendorf's followers; but the modern views of the uselessness of baptism seem to have got hold of not a few members. And so has also Waldenstrom's doctrine of the atonement. Divisions have followed as a consequence, accompanied by spiritual sleepiness and coldness, and it is more than likely that this will in the course of time lead many to see that they were too hasty in their efforts at fulfilling prophecy.

In the meantime, it is wonderful to see how there seems to be a longing for truth among these Templars; and in many respects they appear to