

MISCELLANEOUS.

LETTERS FROM PALESTINE.

Killis, Feb. 28, 1898.

After meeting with our Saints at Haifa we proceeded north on the Mediterranean to Beyrout. The weather being pleasant we quite enjoyed the trip. In the morning, the next day, we found ourselves coasting the borders of the ancient Phoenicians. The ancient cities of Sidon and Tyre have almost lost all their importance. Only a small trade is carried on in those places as compared to Beyrout and Haifa, the two last named cities do the main business, and there the large steamers call. At Beyrout they all have business, while at Haifa they do not all stop, whereas, Sidon and Tyre, have only a few of the smaller tramp steamers make an occasional visit. At Beyrout we called one day and then we proceeded north to Eskenderoon (Alexandrette). This view of the Lebanon from the sea is a beautiful sight. This high mountain range (which will be described in another letter) is covered on the west side with Arabian villages and summer resorts of various sizes all tending to make the whole scenery very picturesque. And one will at once wonder how one could live on such soil and such elevations, yet thousands do live and are apparently happy. When we passed north, the latter days in February, the tops of the mountains seemed heavily laden with snow, and the people seemed to have a brisk taste of winter. The winter here in these quarters seems to have been extremely severe. Snow could be seen on the hills of Judea and Samaria, which must have been very severe on the Olives and other tender varieties of fruit grown in this country.

At Eskenderoon we landed safely after having one of the most agreeable voyages up the coast. The sea was so calm that not a ripple nor swell was perceptible. This was a special favor to us, as we are but poor sailors at best, and, indeed, the whole journey has been quite pleasant and the sea but little troublesome.

At Eskenderoon we were taken in hand by the custom officers, who first examined our passes, which they found all right, then the baggage was looked into. Here they showed indifference to everything except books. They asked for books and when told me had a few harmless arms of that kind they managed to wake up their sleepy vigilance and soon our books were marched off to the book prison, for Turks consider books dangerous. These were also indeed dangerous for they consisted of my Bible in English, a dictionary and grammar in Turkish, and Brother Lund's Testament. They told us to rest undisturbed. The prisoners would be taken good care of, so we left and soon found ourselves in a Turk in a khan.

Your correspondent made his way back to get the passes, which could be had all except Brother Hagob's. They wanted to see him and find out where he had been and what caused him to leave his fatherland, etc. The questions were answered with difficulty and through a little mistake came near ending in his being put in jail. In his excitement, fearing he would be detained, he offered a few platoes in backshish, which the police could not receive because he did it before the others, this making it an open bribe. Now, this was one of the few times in a man's history when a backshish is refused, but it happened, however, and poor Brother Hagob was marched off to the govern-

ment and in a few minutes found himself detained. Brother Hagob had been negotiating for our trip to Killis with a driver and as we were waiting for his coming and he did not show up, we were somewhat anxious. Waiting in the street, a lieutenant of the Turkish army came up and asked if we were off for Aintab and when told we were as soon as we could arrange for the trip, he asked to have the privilege to ride with us in our wagon. To this we assented. He at once volunteered to go and clear Hagob's case, which he did. And in the place of receiving a scolding for offering backshish, chief of police handed over the passes and sent his best wishes to some Americans whom he knew at Aintab. Thus ended a small ripple upon an otherwise pleasant trip.

Soon we were upon our way and as good fortune would have it, a captain of 1,000 who was moving to some point in the island was in our train, so we were well protected from any attack that might be made by any of the roving Kurds. Soon we found ourselves climbing the steep mountain towards Beylâne, a small town beautifully located up in the pass. This town is very old, at least over 2,000 years. But like all these ancient places, it has lost its former prestige and pomp and now it looks like all other Arabian hovels. Located as it is in a steep gulch, one can easily imagine how nice it must have been when the houses were new and trim and pride taken in making the town a handsome one. Soon we found ourselves on the summit, 1,585 feet above the sea, whence we could see the lake of Antioch on the one side and the Mediterranean on the other.

In the evening we put up at a place called Kuruk Khan. Here we had our first trial in making our beds on the floor, in this country. We turned a number of times to find the softest place, which we found no small task, although our companions, the fleas, found no trouble in finding soft spots on us. Many were the vain grabs we made, but Turkish fleas are like Paddy's; they are not there when wanted.

Our journey continued thus quietly and peaceably for two and a half days until we reached Killis, a place situated on a large plateau. Here a curious crowd gathered around our wagon and for a few minutes we were objects of great curiosity. The sight was amusing from both sides. We could not help smiling at their simplicity and impudence; a motly crowd they were.

F. F. HINTZE.

Aintab, March 28, 1898.

Our arrival here at this city has certainly made a great stir. Men of fifty years of age say they have not in all their time seen the like. In every direction there is investigation. We have been called out night after night to speak upon the Gospel to crowds ranging all the way from twenty-five to one hundred. In all instances the houses have been well filled and many on the outside. This desire on the part of the people has given us a fine opportunity to lay the Gospel plainly before them. Of course, many come out of pure curiosity, but how many of the Latter-day Saints are there not today who in some such a way first heard the truth. Little believing that any good could come from Mormonism.

Now such a condition could, of course, not exist without opposition. Soon the professors from the Central Turkish college of Aintab, an institu-

tion belonging to the American mission in Turkey, saw the danger to their crafts. They immediately issued five circulars on Mormonism, purporting to prove by the Bible that Mormonism is false and winding off with all the vile stories about the Mormons long since exploded. Polygamy, horribly described, blood atonement, the Mountain Meadow Massacre, etc. They claimed it was necessary to show the source of Mormonism in order to prove its falsity, also that Joseph Smith was a lazy, low money digger.

At first many thought a great weapon had been found, but soon intelligent and honestly seeking men began to see through the scheme and already before we came away, better signs were appearing. That is, the thick clouds that gathered for a couple of weeks were gradually dispersing and a freer spirit began again to exert its influence.

So severe was the onslaught that it looked like a cyclone of persecutions. On Sundays particularly. Morning meeting was all we could hold. This was held at 7 o'clock or half-past 7 a. m. This is customary also to avoid the mob. Afternoon meeting we had to suspend. On the streets we were followed by curious, shouting mobs, occasionally stoning us, and all the time whistling and yelling Mor-r-r, Mor-r-r, rolling out the r in a real comical way. Now Mor means purple in Turkish so they yelled, sovy, mayy Mor-r-r (yellow blue Purpel-i-lî). This, of course, was fun for the Aintab hoodlums, hundreds followed us in the streets. Men, women and children in the gates and on the flat house tops taking in the sight afforded. Why, it was a real circus to them to see what they thought to be the much married Mormons. Wherever we called, if they were not admitted, the houses were stoned and an attempt was made to break in until we had, at last, to call in the police to protect us. This proved quite effectual, and soon the names of many were taken and one or two arrests were made. We also called upon the Kaimakan the governor of the city, who promised us all needed protection. This all had a good effect. The Protestants at once began to give notice in their churches that the people should be careful about persecutions, as the Mormons also had rights to be respected. The climax seems to have been reached one Sunday when we were trying to organize a Sunday school in a brother's house, as it seemed impossible to go to the meeting house. The mob was trying to pound down the door and storming the house, when two of the brethren came hurriedly and told us a large congregation had assembled in the third district to hear Mormonism explained and that we would have to come at once, or it would seem as though they could not live there. One Professor Hohannes from the college would be there and he would explain the other side. Brother Lund decided that Brother Maycock, Dr. Hagobian and your humble servant should go to explain to them the Gospel. We did, the subject chosen being Authority.

This we explained from the Bible, the professor answering by explaining what a wicked fellow Joseph Smith was, according to reports from his enemies. As you may imagine, this was a complete vindication for us. Our new members became stronger; the honest admitted the weakness of the opposition, and altogether we had a good influence over the people. Our last Sunday was spent in conference; hundreds came to hear us and much good is being done. Invitations to come to other places are gradually coming in and the outlook in general is fair.

One incident is worthy of notice to show how well the Lord works with