



THE ZORYAN INSTITUTE

Rayak, Syria

Nov. 16, 1919

Dear Marian,

I'm so balled up I forget how to spell your name - Here I am again - stranded at Rayak. They have the rottenest railway system in Turkey - specially designed for the discomfort of passengers. Trains from Aleppo always just miss connections with the Beirut train at Rayak. Yesterday our train from Beirut just missed the Aleppo train, due to the fact that our engine broke going over the cog railway over the Lebanon mountains. So last night I slept on a bench in a car at the station. No hotel here, & now I'm just waiting for the next train.

I suppose you got the letter I wrote from Damascus telling about our trip that far.

Damascus certainly is a sort of paradise. On this day morning we left the city in our Red and crossed over the mountains to the Jordan between the Waters of Meron & the Sea of Galilee, crossed the river & went down the edge of the Gaba past

Capernaum & Magdala to Tiberias, where we found a good hotel. It was a blazing hot day, so we hired a sail boat to take us up to Capernaum & back. There was no wind, so our boatmen had to row the whole way.

Capernaum is just a mass of ruins. A big synagogue has been uncovered in the excavation.





but nothing else could be seen. Magdala was the home of Mary Magdalene, not far from Capernaum. Our boat got back after dark, and Nagee & I took a swim just as the moon came up over the sea.

The next day we proceeded to Cana, saw two stone jugs (said to be those in which the water was turned to wine), & then went on to Nazareth, a hill right on the side of a hill. Mary's Well is on the edge of the city, & was crowded with women drawing water, & carrying jugs on their heads. There are a number of churches here kept by Franciscan monks on the spots claimed to be the scenes of the annunciation, Joseph's home, the carpenter shop, etc. The chapels are beautifully decorated. The trip from Nazareth to Haifa was an easy one. We came in sight of Mt. Carmel and the Mediterranean early in the afternoon and got our first puncture right in the shadow of Mt. Carmel, near the place where Eliza's sacrifice was burned up.

The only interesting thing about Haifa is its beautiful situation - at the foot of Mt. Carmel and on the edge of the coast. We spent the night here & the next day planned to

reach Beirut. This last part was the speediest & almost the most interesting. ~~The~~ This section was the ancient Phoenicia. From Haifa to Acre there is no road except the shore, which is lined with quicksands and sand dunes. The British army marched over this route on their advance up to Ayyeh, & had laid chicken-wire over the worst places. Nagee said we didn't dare step on the sand, so he looked over the car thoroughly before starting across. The ~~car~~ started off as fast as we could for 30-40 miles an hour, the wheel on one side in the water, & the whole car in when the surf came in, so we got sprayed with salt water. Half way over the engine just naturally stopped. Luckily we were over firm spots, because by the time Nagee found the trouble (sand in the distributor box) we had a flat tire. The next trouble was that we got into some soft sand & couldn't budge the car, but some of the Egyptian Labor Corps came along & helped us out. Got stuck once more but managed to pull



and without extra trouble. Finally we were on the good road outside Acre & made good time (good meaning 40 miles an hour.) Acre was a famous fortress in Crusader times, & was the last place the Crusaders yielded to the Moslems. From Acre to Tyre the road followed the great Roman aqueduct, still in use, then climbed the "Ladder of Tyre" or Scala Tyriorum. The road the whole way to Beirut was just on the edge of the sea coast & the view was great. At Tyre we stopped long enough to see the Port & the remains of the old Phoenician castle, then went on to Sidon. On the road we passed by Serepta - where Elyja was fed on the handful of meal - and passed many tombs in the chalk cliffs where the Kings of Tyre & Sidon were buried. We investigated these but found nothing except square caverns & some human bones in one.

There is an A.C.R.N.E. medical clinic in Tyre, and in Sidon a hospital & an orphanage. We had dinner at the hospital, where the two nurses work, & left them there. Sidon is about the most unusual city I've seen. It is almost underground, as the streets are built under the houses, with openings between, so it is like walking thru endless subways. There were interesting remains of old Crusader castles & cannon here.

Next stop - Beirut. Due to two more punctures we arrived after dark, after a very interesting ride past Jonah's tomb (one of them), the cavern from which Alexander's sarcophagus was taken - and finally thru an enormous olive grove - the third largest in the world - about 5 miles long. At Sidon we passed thru



enormous orange & apricot orchards,  
 & could pick oranges off the trees.  
 There were lots of date palms loaded  
 with dates just ripe, but they don't  
 taste good.

We stopped in Beirut at the A.C.R.M.E.  
 headquarters till Sat. morning, paid  
 for our car - \$90 divided among the  
 five of us - and came on home,  
 but now are stuck in Riyak. At  
 Beirut Miss Meyer, the nurse from  
 Marsh was also leaving for Aleppo,  
 as Duraway & she & I are together.  
 We are taking 25,000 in gold to  
 Aleppo & it is heavy. Besides, we  
 hear that the last three trains  
 to Aleppo have been robbed by  
 Bedouins near Hama, so may have  
 some trouble yet. If there are good  
 train connections I'll stop at Baalbek  
 on the way up.

The whole trip has been wonderful  
 & I won't want another day if now

till I'm thru with the A.C.R.M.E. If  
 I see Jerusalem I'll it will be on my way  
 home. Meyer & Duraway are planning on  
 going home by way of Baghdad & Cairo.  
 I think of asking before to have any money  
 that I have in the bank sent to me in  
 the form of a draft on a New York bank.  
 I don't know how much I'll need but I'll  
 on the safe side I think I ought to have  
 at least \$150, if I have that much to my  
 name. It's pretty hard to scrape anything  
 at all of our allowance here.

I suppose there is a letter waiting  
 for me at Aleppo. I've so. I wanted  
 to send a box of things home for the  
 but am told that it may not get there  
 as the mail for packages are not good,  
 & also that the duty on things such as  
 I have is quite heavy, so am afraid  
 all I can send is some more photos.  
 I'll keep all the souvenirs I've brought  
 & bring them home in my trunk.  
 Duraway just came in & says he  
 saw one of the British officers from Marsh



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here in the Rayak station. This officer says  
that on the way down to Aleppo 150 Arabs  
attacked an Armenian convoy while the  
Indians from Antak were not far away.  
(The Indian troops that I passed on the same  
road). An Indian officer & twenty men  
of his lancers on horseback charged the Arabs  
who had a machine gun. The officer &  
three men were killed & eight wounded.  
But the Indians killed a lot of Arabs & the  
rest ran before the rest of the Indians on the  
road except one Indian killed four Arabs  
with his lance.

Eight of the French soldiers in Marash  
have been killed by snipers in the town.  
All the British are out of Marash, Antak &  
Aleppo now. A British sergeant here in Rayak  
told me last night that he had been up by  
Horns the day before with some Indians, looking  
for the bandits who robbed the train. He came  
back with the head of the Bedon chief,  
9 prisoners, & a lot of horses. The Bedon had  
stolen from the British.

Must close now as I have no more paper  
also it is dinner time & my train leaves soon.  
Love to all the boys. Hope you are all well  
& happy. Will write soon & tell about Beaulieu.  
Stanley.