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Missionary Letters of John Alexander Clark

Haifa, Palestine

Dec. 13, 1894

My dear Mother,

The post goes today and I must write in reply to your very kind letter written Oct. 25. Yours and Laura's letters were very interesting indeed. Laura's plain way of speaking seemed to almost sound in my ears.

Yes, your account of your "Como" trip was very interesting. I quite appreciated it.

So Grandma is living with you, I am glad for she is too old and feeble to live all alone. I thank Grandma for the moments you spoke of very much. But about seeing her again I don't think there is much danger but that I shall see her again. Time is flying very fast. Christmas will soon be here.

Yes the folks here know you are a lover of flowers. I try to excuse myself from the "greed" I have for them very often by saying how my Mother admires flowers and plants. My liking for flowers you will perhaps say has improved. Music sounds better to me now that it ever did before. Circumstances you know help us to discover beauties; and that habit of choosing things that are truly pleasing is a good one.

I am still comfortably situated and enjoying the kindness of friends. My health is good and I feel indeed blessed of the Lord. Am advancing quite nicely in Arabic and have begun delivering tracts in the city of Arabs. I do see some peculiar

sights. When "it rains" here "it pours." The city of Haifa is built on the northern slope of Mt. Carmel and the rain runs down in streams and in some houses one sees inmates with their mats, bedding and cooking apparatus crouched in one corner of side of the room to keep out of the water which has flooded the lower portions of the floor. The poorer people do not have much more in their houses than that. I have mentioned above; "their stove" is a bucket of hot coals; stoves are very uncommon among them. And worst of all not many of them know how to read and their understanding of their language is very limited;