

The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, Historical Summary

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Historical Summary:

The War and Armenia

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I. THE EUROPEAN WAR AND ARMENIA.

The War has brought us into a new relation with Armenia and the Armenian people. We knew them before as the name of an ancient civilization, a stubborn rearguard of Christendom in the East, a scene of mission work and massacres and international rivalry; but only a few of us -- missionaries, geographers, travellers and an occasional newspaper correspondent -- were personally acquainted with the country and its inhabitants. To most people they remained a name, and when we read of their sufferings or traditions or achievements they made little more impression than the doings of the Hittites and Assyrians, who moved across the same Near Eastern amphitheatre several millenniums ago. We had no living contact, no natural relation, with Armenia in our personal or even in our political life.

Such a relation has suddenly been created between us by the War, and it is one of the strangest ironies of war that it fuses together and illuminates the very fabric it destroys. The civilisation in which we lived was like a labyrinth, so huge and intricate that none of the dwellers in it could altogether grasp its structure, while most of them were barely conscious that it had any structural design at all. But now that the War has caught it and it is all aflame, the unity and symmetry of the building are revealed to the common eye. As the glare lights it up from end to end, it stands out in its glory, in matchless outline and perspective; for the first time (and possibly for the last) we see its parts simultaneously and in proper relation, and realise for one moment the marvel and mystery of this civilization that is perishing -- the subtle, immemorial, unrelaxing effort that raised it up and maintained it, and the impossibility of improvising any equivalent structure in its place. Then the fire masters its prey; the various parts of the labyrinth fall in one by one, the light goes out of them, and nothing is left but smoke and ashes. This is the catastrophe that we are witnessing now, and we do not yet know whether it will be possible to repair it. But if the future is not so dark as it appears, and what has perished can in some measure be restored, our best guide and inspiration in the task will be that momentary, tragic, unique vision snatched out of the catastrophe itself.

The Armenians are not protagonists in the War; they bear none of the guilt for its outbreak and can have little share in the responsibility of building up a better future. But they have been seared more cruelly than any of us by the flames, and, under this fiery ordeal, their individual character as a nation and their part in the community of the civilized world have been thrown into their true relief.

For the first time, England and the Armenians are genuinely in touch with one another. In this desperate struggle between freedom and reaction we are fighting on the same side, striving for the same end. Our lot in the struggle has not, indeed, been the same, for while England able to act as well as to suffer, the Armenians have suffered with hardly the power to strike. But this difference of external fortune only strength inward moral bond; for we, who are strong, are fight merely for this or that political advantage, this or that territorial change, but for a principle. The Powers of the Entente have undertaken the championship of small nationalities that cannot champion themselves. We have solemnly acknowledged obligation to fulfil our vow in the case of Belgium and now that the Armenians have been overtaken by a still worse fate than the

Serbian and the Belgians, their cause, too, been taken up into the general cause of the Allies. We cannot limit our field in doing battle for our ideal.

It is easier, of course, for the people of France, Great Britain and America to sympathize with Belgium than with a more unfamiliar nation in a distant zone of the War. It needs little imagination to realize acutely that the Belgians are "people like ourselves," suffering all that we should suffer if the same atrocities were committed upon us; and this realisation was made easy by the speedy publication of minute, abundant, first-hand testimony. The Armenians have no such immediate access to our sympathies, and the initial unfamiliarity can only be overcome by a personal effort on the part of those who give ear to their case; but the evidence on which that case rests has been steadily accumulating, until now it is scarcely less complete or less authoritative than the evidence relating to Belgium. The object of the present volume has been to present the documents to English and American readers in as accurate and orderly a form as possible.

Armenia has not been without witness in her agony. Intense suffering means intense emotional experience, and this emotion has found relief in written records of the intolerable events which obsessed the witnesses' memories. Some of the writers are Armenians, a larger number are Americans and Europeans who were on the spot, and who were as poignantly affected as the victims themselves. There are a hundred and forty-nine of these documents, and many of them are of considerable length; in their total effect they are something more than an exhaustive catalogue of the horrors they set out to describe. The flames of war illuminate the structure of the building as well as the destruction of it, and the testimony extorted under this fieru ordeal gives an extraordinarily vivid impression of Armenian life -- the life of plain and mountain, town and village, intelligentsia and bourgeoisie and peasantry -- at the moment when it was overwhelmed by the European catastrophe.

In Armenia, though not in Europe, the flames have almost burnt themselves out, and, for the moment, we can see nothing beyond smoke and ashes. Life will assuredly spring up when the ashes are cleared away, for attempts to exterminate nations by atrocity, though certain of producing, almost infinite human suffering, have seldom succeeded in their ulterior aim. But in whatever shape the new Armenia arises, it will be something utterly different from the old. The Armenians have been a very typical element in that group of humanity which Europeans call the "Near East," but which might equally well be called the "Near West" from the Indian or the Chinese point of view*. There has been something pathological about the history of this Near Eastern World. It has had an undue share of political misfortunes, and had lain for centuries in a kind of spiritual paralysis between East and West -- belonging to neither, partaking paradoxically of both, and wholly unable to rally itself decidedly to one or the other -- when it was involved with Europe in the European War. The shock of that crowning catastrophe seems to have brought the spiritual neutrality of the Near East to a violent end, and however dubious the future of Europe may be, it is almost certain that it will be shared henceforth by all that lies between the walls of Vienna and the walls of Aleppo and Tabriz**. This final gravitation towards Europe may be a benefit to the Near East or another chapter in its misfortunes -- that depends on the condition in which Europe emerges from the War; but, in either case, it will be a new departure in its history. It has been drawn at last into a stronger orbit, and will travel on its own paralytic, paradoxical course no more. This gives a historical interest to any record of Near Eastern life in the last moments of the Ancient Regime, and these Armenian documents supply a record of a very intimate and characteristic kind. The Near East has never been more true to itself than in its lurid dissolution; past and present are fused together in the flare.

* There seems to be no available name to convey the Janus-character of this region. "Balkan" has all the connotation, but the word is allocated already to a much too limited geographical area. "Levantino" covers a wider geographical field, but suggests merely the superficial characteristics which the Near Eastern peoples share with many others in a certain transient stage of development.

** The limits of the Near East are not easy to define. On the north-west, Vienna is the most conspicuous boundary-mark, but one might almost equally well single out Trieste or Lvov or even Prag. Towards the southeast, the boundaries are even more shadowy. It is perhaps best to equate them with the frontiers of the Arabic language, yet the genius of the Near East overrides linguistic barriers, and encroaches on the Arabic-speaking world on the one side as well as on the German-speaking world on the other. Syria is essentially a Near Eastern country, and a physical geographer would undoubtedly carry the Near Eastern frontiers up to the desert belt of the Sahara, Nefud and Kevir.

II. AN OUTLINE OF ARMENIAN HISTORY.

The documents in this volume tell their own story, and a reader might be ignorant of the places with which they and the points of history to which they refer, and yet learn from them more about human life in the Near East than from study of text-books and atlases. At the same time a general acquaintance with the geographical setting and historical antecedents is clearly an assistance in understanding the full significance of the events recorded here, and as this information is not widely spread or very easily accessible, it has seemed well to publish an outline of it, for the reader's convenience, in the same volume as the documents themselves. As many as possible of the places referred to are marked on the map at the end of book, while here, in this historical summary, a brief account may be given of who the Armenians are and where they live.

Like the English, the French and most other nations, Armenians have developed a specific type of countenance, yet it would not always be easy to tell them by sight, for they are as hybrid in their physical stock as every other European or Near Eastern people. There are marked differences of pigmentation, feature and build between the Armenians of the East, and South and between the mountaineers, plain-dwellers and people of the towns and it would be rash to speculate when these various strains came in, or to lay it down that they were not all present already at the date at which we first begin know something about the inhabitants of the country*.

We hear of them first in the annals of Assyria, where the Armenian plateau appears as the land of Nairi -- a no-man'sland, raided constantly but ineffectually by Assyrian armies from the lowlands of Mosul. But in the ninth century B.C. the petty cantons of Nairi coalesced into the Kingdom of Urartu**, which fought Assyria on equal terms for more than two hundred years has left a native record of its own. The Kings of Urartu made their dwelling on the citadel of Van+. The face of the rock is covered with their inscriptions, which are also found as far afield

 * There is one physical type, classified by ethnologists as " Armenoid" or Anatolian," which seems to be both indigenous and persistent in the Anatolian Peninsula and in the triangle included between the Black the Mediterranean and the Caspian. Its characteristics are very individual -- a " sugarloaf" skull, broad from side to side and sliced off at the back; prominent cheek-bones; a fleshy, hooked nose; and a rather clumsy, thick-set body. These features are distinguishable in the ancient Hitites of Eastern Anatolia, as they are portrayed in the native and Egytian monuments of the I4th and 13th centuries B.C.; in the modern Tchatchadze nomads of Lycia (the extreme South-West of the Peninsula), and in a considerable percentage of the living Armenian people, scattered all the Near East.

** Called "Ararat " in the Bible and "Alarodioi " by Herodotus.

+ " The City of Dhuspas (Tosp) in the land of Biaina (Van)." In the course of history the names have been transposed, Van is now the town and Tosp the district.

as the neighbourhood of Malatia, Erzeroum and Alexandropol. They borrowed from Assyria the cuneiform script, and the earliest inscriptions at Van are written in the Assyrian language; but they quickly adapted the foreign script to their native tongue, which has been deciphered by English and German scholars, and is considered by them to be neither Semitic nor Indo-European, or yet to have any discernible affinity with the still obscurer language of the Hittites further west. We can only assume that the people who spoke it were indigenous in the land. Probably they were of one blood with their neighbours in the direction of the Caucasus

and the Black Sea, Saspeires* and Chalybes and others; and if, as ethnology seems to show, an indigenous stock is practically ineradicable, these primitive peoples of the plateau are probably the chief ancestors, in the physical sense, of the present Armenian races.

The modern Armenian language, on the other hand, is not descended from the language of Urartu, but is an Indo-European tongue. There is a large non-Indo-European element in it -- larger than in most known branches of the Indo-European family -- and this has modified its syntax as well as its vocabulary. It has also borrowed freely and intimately from the Persian language in all its phases -- a natural consequence of the political supremacy which Iran asserted over Armenia again and again, from the sixth century B.C. to the nineteenth century A.D. But when all these accretions have been analysed and discarded, the philologists pronounce the basis of modern Armenian to be a genuine Indo-European idiom -- either a dialect of the Iranian branch or an independent variant, holding an intermediate position between Iranian and Slavonic.

This language is a much more important factor in the national consciousness of the modern Armenians than their ultimate physical ancestry, but its origin is also more difficult to trace. Its Indo-European character proves that, at some date or other, it must have been introduced into the country from without++, and the fact that a non-Indo-European language held the field under the Kings of Urartu suggests that it only established itself after the Kingdom of Urartu fell. But the earliest literary monuments of the modern tongue only date from the fifth century

 * Round the present town of Isbir, in the Tchorok Valley.

+ The chief evidence for the racial unity of all these primitive populations is the survival of the name of Khaldis, the national god of Urartu, throughout the Armenian plateau. On the banks of the Aras we have the district of Khaldiran, and the northern affluents of the river are fed by Lake Khaldir. Further west, the modern Vilayet of Trebizond was called the Province of Khaldia under the late Roman Empire, and there is still a Diocese of Khaldia maintained by the Orthodox Greek Church in the immediate hinterland of Trebizond.

++The original focus from which the Indo-European languages spread having been situated apparently in what is now Austria-Hungary and the Ukraine.

A.D., a thousand years later than the Vast inscription Urartian language, so that, as far as the linguistic evidence is concerned, the change may have occurred at any time within this period. One language, however, does not usually supplant another without considerable displacements of population, and the only historical event of this kind sufficient in scale to produce such a result seems to be the migration of the Cimmerians and Scythians in the seventh century B.C. These were nomadic tribes from the Russian steppes, who made their way round the eastern end of the Caucasus, burst through into the Moghan plains and the basin of Lake Urmia, and terrorised Western Asia for several generations, till they were broken by the power of the Medes and absorbed in the native population. It was they who made an end of the Kingdom of Urartu, and the language they brought with them was probably an Indo-European dialect answering to the basic element in modern Armenian. Probability thus points to these seventh century invaders as being the source of the present language, and perhaps also of the the mysterious names of " Hai(k) " and " Haiasdan," by which the speakers of this language seem always to have called themselves and their country. But this is a conjecture, and nothing more* and we are left with the bare fact that Armenian** was the established language of the land by the fifth century A.D.

The Armenian language might easily have perished and left less record of its existence than the Urartian. It is a vigorous language enough, yet it would never have survived in virtue of its mere vitality. The native Anatolian dialects of Lydia Cilicia, and the speech of the Cappadocians+, the Armenians' immediate neighbours on the west, were extinguished one by one by the irresistible advance of Greek, and Armenian would assuredly have shared their fate if it had not become the canonical language of a national church before Greek had time to

penetrate so far eastward. Armenia lay within the radius of Antioch and Edessa (Ourfa), two of the earliest and strongest centres of Christian propaganda. King Tiridates (Drdat) of Armenia converted to Christianity some time during the latter half of the third century A.D.++ and was the first ruler in the world to

 * It is equally possible that the modern Armenian language was introduced into the country at an earlier date and existed there side by side with the official language of the Urartu inscriptions. Egyptian records show that an Iranian people, the Mitanni (Matienoi), were established in Northern Mesopotamia as early as the 16th century B.C., and they clung to the Urmia basin as late as Strabo's day. They were the western outposts of Indo-European settlement on the Iranian plateau. On the whole, however the Mitanni are more likely to have been the originators of the Kurdish language than of the Armenian.

** In the classical form, of which the spoken language of to-day is a development.

+ Probably a synthesis of Hittite and Cimmerian, corresponding to the Uraltu-Scythian blend which we have suggested as the origin of Armenia.

++ The traditional date varies from 261 to 301 A.D

establish the Christian Faith as his State religion. Christianity in Armenia adopted a national garb from the first. In 410 A.D. the Bible was translated into the Armenian language, in a new native script specially invented for the purpose, and this achievement was followed by a great outburst of national literature during the course of the fifth century. These fifth century works are, as has been said, the earliest monuments of the Armenian language. Most of them, it is true, are simply rather painstaking translations of Greek and Syriac theology, and the bulk of the creative literature was theological too. But there was also a notable school of historical writers (Moses of Khorene is its most famous representative), and the really important result of the stimulus that Christianity brought was the permanent preservation of the language's existence and its development into a medium for a national literature of a varied kind.

Thus the conversion of Armenia to Christianity, which took place at a more or less ascertainable date, was an even more important factor in the evolution of Armenian nationality than the original introduction of the national language, and the Armenians have done well to make St. Gregory the Illuminator, the Cappadocian Missionary to whom the conversion was due, their supreme national hero*. Henceforth, church and language mutually sustained each other, to the great enhancement of the vital power of both. They were, in fact, merely complementary aspects of the same national consciousness, and the national character of the church was further emphasized when it diverged in doctrine from the main body of Christendom -- not by the formulation of any new or heretical dogma, but by omission to ratify the modifications of the primitive creed which were introduced by the OEcumenical Councils of the fifth century A.D.+

This nationalization of the church was the decisive process by which the Armenians became a nation, and it was also this that made them an integral part of the Near Eastern world. Christianity linked the country with the West as intimately as the cuneiform script of Urartu had linked it with the civilisation of Mesopotamia; and the Near Eastern phenomenon consists essentially in the paradox that a series of populations on the borderland of Europe and Asia developed a national life that was thoroughly European in its religion and culture, without ever succeeding in extricating themselves politically from that continual round of despotism and anarchy which seems to be the political dispensation of genuinely Oriental countries.

No communities in the world have had a more troubled political history than these Near Eastern nationalities, and none

 * A suggestive parallel to the way in which another foreign missionary St Patrick, has become the national hero at Ireland.

+ In 553 A.D. the national individuality of the Gregorian (Armenian) Church was given formal expression by the foundation

as a new ecclesiastical era.

have known how to preserve their church and their language doggedly through the most appalling vicissitudes of conquest and oppression. In this regard the history of Armenia is profoundly characteristic of the Near East as a whole.

The strong, compact Kingdom of Urartu lies at the dawn of Armenian history like a golden age. It had only existed two centuries when it was shattered by the invaders from the Russian steppes, and the anarchy into which they plunged the country had to be cured by the imposition of a foreign rule. In 58 the nomads were cowed and the plateau annexed by Cyaxares the Mede, and, after the Persians had taken over the Medes' inheritance, the great organizer Darius divided this portion into two governments or satrapies. One of these seems to have included the basins of Urmia and Van, and part of the valley of the Aras*; the other corresponded approximately to the modern Vilayets of Bitlis, Mamouret-ul-Aziz and Diyarbekir, and covered the the upper valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates+. They were respectively the satrapies of Eastern and Western Armenia, and this is the origin of the name by which the Haik and their Haiasdan are now almost universally known to their neighbours. The word "Armenia" (Armina)++: first appears in Darius' inscriptions; Greeks adopted it from the Persian official usage, and from the Greeks it has spread to the rest of the world, including the Osmanli Turks+++.

Under the Persian Dynasty of the Achaemenids and their Macedonian successors, the two Armenian satrapies remained mere administrative divisions. Subject to the payment of tribute the satraps were practically independent and probably hereditary, but the rulers' autonomy did not enable their subjects to develop any distinctive national life. In religion and culture the country took on a strong Persian veneer; and the situation was not essentially changed when, early in the second century B.C., two reigning satraps revolted simultaneously from their overlord, the Seleucid King of Western Asia**, and each founded a royal dynasty of their own. The decisive change was accomplished by

* Herodotus' "Province of the Matienoi, Alarodion and Saspeires."

**This is the probable extent of Herodotus' puzzling " Province Armenians and Paktyes," and the certain extent of the later Sophene.

+ The provenance of this name is as obscure as every other problem of Armenian origins. It may mean "the land of Erimenas " a king of Urartu, known from an inscription on a votive offering at Van, just as the neighbouring province of Azerbaijan derives its name from the: Atropates; or (as Lord Bryce suggests) it may be a "portmanteau word" perhaps compounded of Urartu and Minni, the Assyrian name for the upper basin of the Greater Zab. The name of Kat-Patuka (Cappadocia) is a possible analogy to this latter suggestion.

++ Turkish "Ermen-ler."

*** The Seleucid Dynasty had inherited most of the Asiatic dominions acquired by Alexander the Great when he conquered the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire.

Tigranes (Dikran) the Great (94 to 56 B.C.), a scion of the Eastern Dynasty, who welded the two principalities into one kingdom, and so created the first strong native sovereignty that the country had known since the fall of Urartu five centuries before.

If Gregory the Illuminator is the ecclesiastical hero of Armenia, King Tigranes is his political forerunner and counterpart. He was connected by marriage with Mithradates, the still more famous King of Pontic Cappadocia, who may be taken as the first exponent of the Near Eastern idea. Mithradates attempted to build an empire that should be at once cosmopolitan and national, Hellenic and Iranian, of the West and of the East, and Tigranes was profoundly influenced by his brilliant neighbour and ally. He set himself the parallel

ambition of reconstructing round his own person the kingdom of the Seleucids, which had been shaken a century before by a rude encounter with Rome, weakened still further by the defection of Tigranes' own predecessors, and was now in the actual throes of dissolution. He laid himself out a new capital on the northern rim of the Mesopotamian steppe, somewhere near the site of Ibrahim Pasha's Viran Shehr, and peopled it with masses of exiles deported from the Greek cities he devastated in Syria and Cilicia. It was to be the Hellenistic world-centre for an Oriental King of Kings; but all his dreams, like Mithradates', were shattered by the methodical progress of the Roman power. A Roman army ignominiously turned Tigranes out of Tigranokerta, and sent back his Greek exiles rejoicing to their homes. The new Armenian kingdom failed to establish its position as a great power, and had to accept the position of a buffer state between Rome on the west and the Parthian rulers of Iran. Nevertheless, Tigranes' work is of supreme political importance in Armenian history. He had consolidated the two satrapies of Darius into a united kingdom, powerful enough to preserve its unity and independence for nearly five hundred years. It was within this chrysalis that the interaction of religion and language produced the new germ of modern Armenian nationality; and when the chrysalis was rent at last, the nation emerged so strongly grown that it could brave the buffets of the outer world.

Before Tigranes, Armenia had belonged wholly to the East. Tigranes loosened these links and knit certain new links with the West. The period that followed was marked by a perpetual struggle between the Roman and Parthian Governments for political influence over the kingdom, which was really a battle over Armenia's soul. Was Armenia to be wrested away altogether from Oriental influences and rallied to the European world, or was it to sink back into being a spiritual and political appenage of Iran? It seemed a clear issue, but it was not destined to be decided in either sense. Armenia was to be caught for two millenniums in the uncertain eddy of the Nearer East.

In this opposition of forces, the political balance inclined from the first in favour of the Oriental Power. The Parthians in replacing the descendants of Tigranes by a junior branch of their own Arsacid Dynasty; and when, in 387 A.D., the rivals agreed to settle the Armenian question by the drastic expedient of partition, the Sassanid kings of Persia (who had superseded the Parthians in the Empire of Iran) secured the lion's share of the spoils, while the Romans only received a strip of country on the western border which gave them Erzeroum and Diyarbekir for their frontier fortresses. In the cultural sphere, on the other hand, the West was constantly increasing its ascendancy. King Tiridates was an Arsacid, but he accepted Christianity as the religion of the State he ruled; and when, less than a century after his death, his kingdom fell and the greater part of the country and the people came directly under Persian rule, the Persian propaganda failed to make any impression. No amount of preaching or persecution could persuade the Armenians to accept Zoroastrianism, which was the established religion of the Sassanian State. They clung to their national church in despite of their political annihilation, and showed thereby that their spiritual allegiance was given irrevocably to the West.

The partition of 387 A.D. produced as long a political interregnum in Armenian history as the fall of Urartu in the seventh century B.C. In the second quarter of the seventh century A.D., the mastery of Western Asia passed from the Persians to the Arabs, and the Armenian provinces changed masters with the rest. Persian governors appointed by the Sassanid King of Kings were superseded by Arab governors appointed by the Omayyad and Abbasid Caliphs, and the intolerance of Zoroastrianism was replaced by the far stronger and hardly less intolerant force of Islam. Then, in the ninth century, the political power of the Abbasid Caliphate at Baghdad began to decline, the outlying provinces were able to detach themselves, and three independent dynasties emerged on Armenian soil: --

(a) The Bagratids founded a Christian principality in the north. Their capital was at Ani, in the upper basin of the Aras, and their rule in this district lasted nearly two centuries, from 885 to 1079 A.D.

(b) The Ardzrounids founded a similar Christian principality in the basin of Van. They reigned here from 908 to 1021 A.D.

(c) The Merwanids, a Kurdish dynasty, founded a Moslem principality in the upper basin of the Tigris. Their capital was at Diyarbekir, but their power extended northward over the mountains into the valley of the Mourad Su (Eastern Euphrates), which they controlled as far up as Melazkerd. They maintained themselves for a century from 984 to 1085 A.D.

The imposing remains of churches and palaces at Ani and elsewhere have cast an undue glamour over the Bagratid House which has been extended, again, to all the independent principalities of early medieval Armenia. In reality, this phase of Armenian history was hardly more happy than that which preceded it, and only appeared a Golden Age by comparison with the cataclysms that followed. From the national point of view it was almost as barren as the century of satrapial independence which preceded the reign of Tigranes, and in the politics of this period parochialism was never transcended. Bagratids and Ardzrounids were bitter rivals for the leadership of the nation, and did not scruple to call in Moslem allies against one another in their constant wars. The south-western part of the country remained under the rule of an alien Moslem dynasty, without any attempt being made to cast them out. Armenia had no second Tigranes in the Middle Ages, and the local renewals of political independence came and went without profit to the nation as a whole, which still depended for its unity upon the ecclesiastical tradition of the national Gregorian Church.

In the eleventh century A.D., a new power appeared in the East. The Arab Empire of the Caliphs had long been receiving an influx of Turks from Central Asia as slaves and professional soldiers, and the Turkish bodyguard had assumed control of politics at Baghdad. But this individual infiltration was now succeeded by the migration of whole tribes, and the tribes were organised into a political power by the clan of Seljuk. The new Turkish dynasty constituted itself the temporal representative of the Abbasid Caliphate, and the dominion of Mohammedan Asia was suddenly transferred from the devitalized Arabs to a vigorous barbaric horde of nomadic Turks.

These Turkish reinforcements brutalised and at the same time stimulated the Islamic world. and the result was a new impetus of conquest towards the borderlands. The brunt of this movement fell upon the unprepared and disunited Armenian principalities. In the first quarter of the eleventh century the Seljuks began their incursions on to the Armenian plateau. The Armenian princes turned for protection to the East Roman Empire, accepted its suzerainty, or even surrendered their territory directly into its hands. But the Imperial Government brought little comfort to the Armenian people. Centred at Constantinople and cut off from the Latin West, it had lost its Roman universality and become transformed into a Greek national state, while the established Orthodox Church had developed the specifically Near Eastern character of a nationalist ecclesiastical organisation. The Armenians found that incorporation in the Empire exposed them to temporal and spiritual Hellenisation, without protecting them against the common enemy on the east. The Seljuk invasions increased in intensity, and culminated, in 1071 A.D., in the decisive battle of Melazkerd, in which the Imperial Army was destroyed and the Emperor Romanos II. taken prisoner on the field. Melazkerd placed the whole of Armenia at the Seljuk's mercy -- and not only Armenia, but the Anatolian provinces of the Empire that lay between Armenia and Europe. The Seljuks carried Islam into the heart of the Near East.

The next four-and-a-half centuries were the most disastrous period in the whole political history of Armenia. It is true that a vestige of independence was preserved, for Roupen the Bagratid, conducted a portion of his people south-westward into the mountains of Cilicia, where they were out of the main current of Turkish invasion, and founded a new principality which survived nearly three hundred years (1080-1375). There is a certain romance about this Kingdom of Lesser Armenia. It threw in its lot with the Crusaders, and gave the Armenian nation its first direct contact with modern Western Europe. But the mass of the race remained in Armenia proper, and during these centuries the Armenian tableland suffered almost ceaseless devastation.

The Seljuk migration was only the first wave in a prolonged outbreak of Central Asiatic disturbance, and the Seljuks were civilized in comparison with the tribes that followed on their heels. Early in the thirteenth century came Karluks and Kharizmians, fleeing across Western Asia before the advance of the Mongols; and in 1235 came the first great raid of the Mongols themselves -- savages who destroyed civilisation wherever they found it, and were impartial enemies of Christendom and Islam. All these waves of invasion took the same channel. They swept across the broad plateau of Persia, poured up the valleys of Aras and the Tigris, burst in their full force upon the Armenian highlands and broke over them into Anatolia beyond. Armenia bore the brunt of them all, and the country was ravaged and population reduced quite out of proportion to the sufferings of the neighbouring regions. The division of the Mongol dynasty among the family of Djengis Khan established a Mongol dynasty in Western Asia which seated itself in Azerbaijan, accepted Islam and took over the tradition of the Seljuks, the Abbasids and Sassanids. It was the old Asiatic Empire under a new name, but it had now incorporated Armenia and extended north-westwards to the Kizil Irmak (Halys). For the first time since Tigranes, the whole of Armenia was reabsorbed again in the East, and the situation grew still worse when the Empire of these "Ilkhans" fell to pieces and was succeeded in the fifteenth century by the petty lordship of Ak Koyunli, Kara Koyunli and other nomadic Turkish clans.

The progressive anarchy of four centuries was finally stilled by the rise of the Osmanli power. The seed of the Osmanlis was one of those Turkish clans which fled across Western Asia before the Mongols. They settled in the dominions of the Seljuk Sultans, who had established themselves at Konia, in Central Anatolia, and who allowed the refugees to carve out an obscure appanage on the marches of the Greek Empire, in the Asiatic hinterland of Constantinople. The son and successor of the founder was here converted from Paganism to Islam*, towards the end of the thirteenth century A.D., and the name of Osman, which he adopted at his conversion, has been borne ever since by the subjects of his House.

The Osmanli State is the greatest and most characteristic Near Eastern Empire there has ever been. In its present decline it has become nothing but a blight to all the countries and peoples that remain under its sway; but at the outset it manifested a faculty for strong government which satisfied the supreme need of the distracted Near Eastern world. This was the secret of its amazing power of assimilation, and this quality in turn increased its power of organization, for it enabled the Osmanlis to monopolise all the vestiges of political genius that survived in the Near East. The original Turkish germ was quickly absorbed in the mass of Osmanlicised native Greeks+. The first expansion of the State was westward, across the Dardanelles, and before the close of the fourteenth century the whole of South-Eastern Europe had become Osmanli territory, as far as the Danube and the Hungarian frontier. The seal was set on these European conquests when Sultan Mohammed II. entered Constantinople in 1453, and then the current of expansion veered towards the east. Mohammed himself absorbed the rival Turkish principalities in Anatolia, and annexed the Greek "Empire" of Trebizond. In the second decade of the sixteenth century, Sultan Selim I. followed this up with a sweeping series of campaigns, which carried him with hardly a pause from the Taurus barrier to the citadel of Cairo. Armenia was overrun in 1514; the petty Turkish chieftains were overthrown, the new Persian Empire was hurled back to the Caspian, and a frontier established between the Osmanli Sultans and the Shahs of Iran, which has endured, with a few fluctuations, until the present day.

In the sixteenth century the whole Near Eastern world, from the gates of Vienna** to the gates of Aleppo and Tabriz, found itself united under a single masterful Government, and once Lore Armenia was linked securely with the West. From 1514 onwards the great majority of the Armenian nation was subject

* This is the view of Mr. Herbert Adams Gibbons, the most recent historian of the early Ottoman Empire.

+ The people of the East Roman Empire in its latter days were Greeks in the sense that they spoke the "Romaic "

modification of the Ancient Greek language; but most of them had only become Greeks by the loss of their native language at the date when the Armenians, unlike them, had successfully preserved theirs.

** The Osmanlis besieged Vienna twice, and held a frontier within ninety miles of it for a century and a half.

to the Osmanli State. It is true that the province of Erivan (on the middle course of the Aras) was recovered by the Persians the seventeenth century, and held by them till its cession to Russia in 1834. But, with this exception, the whole of Armenia remained under Osmanli rule until the Russians took Kars, in the war of 1878. These intervening centuries of union and pacification were, on the whole, beneficial to Armenia, but with the year 1878 there began a new and sinister epoch in the relations between the Osmanli State and the Armenian nation.

III. DISPERSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARMENIAN NATION.

We have now traced the political vicissitudes of Armenia down to its incorporation in the Ottoman Empire, and are in a position to survey the effects of this troubled political history on the social life and the geographical extension of the Armenian people.

At the present day the Armenians are, next to the Jews, the most scattered nation in the world, but this phenomenon does not begin to appear until a comparatively late stage in their history. At the time of the Partition of 387 A.D. they were still confined to a compact territory between the Euphrates, Lake Urmia and the River Kur. It was the annexation of the western marches to the Roman Empire that gave the first impetus to Armenian migration towards the west. After 387 A.D. the Roman frontier garrisons were moved forward into the new Armenian provinces, and these troops were probably recruited in the main, according to the general Roman custom, from the local population. But in the middle of the seventh century the Roman frontiers were shorn away by the advance of the new Arab power; the garrisons beyond the Euphrates were withdrawn towards the north-west, and, after a century of darkness and turmoil, during which all the old landmarks were effaced, we find that the "Armenian Army Corps District" has shifted from the banks of the Euphrates to the banks of the Halys (Kizil Irmak) and become approximately coincident with the modern Vilayet of Sivas. This transference of the troops must have meant in itself a considerable transference of Armenians, and it can be taken for granted that the retiring armies were accompanied by a certain portion of the civilian population. We can thus date back to the seventh century the beginning of those flourishing Armenian colonies in the towns of north-eastern Anatolia which suffered so terribly in the ordeal of 1915.

The mountain zone between the Roman fortress of Sivas (Sebasteia) on the Halys and the Arab posts along the Euphrates, from Malatia to Erzeroum, was now debatable territory between the Moslem and the Christian Empires, and in the eighth century was held by an independent community of Armenian heretics called Paulikians. These Paulikians led an untamed, Ishmaelitic existence. They were excommunicated for their tenets by the Gregorian Armenian Church, as well as by the Orthodox Patriarch at Constantinople, and they raided impartially in the territories of the Roman Empire and the Arab Caliphate. The Emperors waged against them a war of extermination, and anticipated the present Ottoman policy by deporting them from their mountain fastnesses to the opposite ends of the Imperial territory. In 752 A.D. a number of them were settled in Thrace, to exercise their military prowess in holding the frontier against the Bulgars; and, in 969 A.D., the Emperor John Tzimiskes (himself an Armenian) transplanted a further body of them to Philipopolis. It may be doubted whether there is any direct connexion between them and the present (Gregorian) Armenian colony in the latter city, but their numbers and influence must have been considerable, if one may judge by the vigorous spread of their tenets among the Bulgars and the Southern Slavs, and they are noteworthy as the forerunners of the Armenian Dispersion in Europe well as of the Protestant Reformation.*

Migrations on a larger scale were produced by the Turkish invasions of the eleventh century. In 1021 A.D., for instance the Ardzhrounian Dynasty of Van surrendered its home territory to the Roman Empire in exchange

for a more sheltered principality at Sivas. It only reigned sixty years in exile before it was overwhelmed there also by the advance of the Turkish tide; but the present Armenian villages in the Sivas Vilayet are doubtless derived from these Ardzrounian refugees. In the very year, again, in which the sovereignty of the Ardzrounids was extinguished at Sivas, the Bagratids of Ani founded themselves a second kingdom in Cilicia. We have spoken of this kingdom already; it is represented to-day by a chain of Armenian mountain towns and villages which stretches all the way from the headwaters of Sihoun (Saros) and Djihoun (Pyramos) to the shores of the Gulf of Alexandretta.

The still more terrible invasions of the thirteenth century scattered the Armenians even further afield. The relations of Lesser Armenia with the Crusader Principalities opened for the Armenians a door into Western Europe. When the Roupenian Dynasty became extinct, it was succeeded by a branch of the French House of Lusignan summoned from Cyprus, and in 1335 there was the first secession from the national Gregorian Church to the Communion of Rome. These new adherents to Papal allegiance spread far and wide over Latin Christendom. A strong colony of Armenian Catholics established itself at Lemberg, recently won by Polish conquest for the Catholic Church; and others settled at Venice, the European focus of the Levant trade. In this Venetian settlement the tradition of Armenian culture was kept alive by the famous brotherhood of Mekhitarist Monks. They founded the first Armenian printing press here, in 1565, and maintained a constant issue of Armenian publications. Their greatest work was a magnificent thesaurus of the Armenian language, which appeared in 1836.

This Roman Catholic connexion has been of very great importance in preserving the link between Armenia and the west, and since the beginning of the nineteenth century the bonds have been strengthened by a Protestant strand. The

 * The Paulikian exiles inspired the South-Slavonic Bogomils; the Bogomils inspired the Albigenses of Languedoc, and possibly sowed some of the seeds of the Hussite movement among the Tchechs and Slovaks.

American Missions in Turkey were founded in 1831. Debarred the Ottoman Government from entering into relations with Moslem population, they devoted themselves to the Christian elements, and the Armenians availed themselves more eagerly than any other Near Eastern nationality** of the gifts which the Americans offered. Four generations of mission work have produced a strong Protestant Armenian community, but proselytism has not been the deliberate object of the missionaries. They have set themselves to revive and not to convert the national Armenian Church, and their schools and hospitals have been open to all who would attend them, without distinction of creed. Their wide and well-planned educational activity has always been the distinctive feature of these American Missions in the Ottoman Empire. Besides the famous Robert College and the College for Women on the Bosphorus, they have established schools and other institutions in many of the chief provincial towns, with fine buildings and full staffs of well-trained American and Armenian teachers. Due acknowledgment must also be given to the educational work of the Swiss Protestants and of the Jesuits; but it can hardly compare with the work of the Americans in scale, and will scarcely play the same part in Armenian history. There is little need here to speak in praise of the American missionaries; their character will shine out to anyone who reads the documents in this volume. Their religion inspires their life and their work, and their utter sincerity has given them an extraordinary influence over all with whom they come in contact. The Ottoman Government has trusted and respected them, because they are the only foreign residents in Turkey who are entirely disinterested on political questions; the Gregorian Church cooperates with them and feels no jealousy, and all sections of the Armenian nation love them, because they come to give and not to get, and their gifts are without guile+. America is exercising an unobtrusive but incalculable influence over the Near East. In the nineteenth century the missionaries came to its rescue from America; in the twentieth century the return movement has set in, and the Near Eastern people are migrating in thousands across the Atlantic. The Armenians are participating in this movement at least as actively as the Greeks, the Roumans,

the Serbs, the Montenegrins and the Slovaks, and one can already prophesy with assurance that their two-fold contact with America is the beginning of a new chapter in Armenian history.

Meanwhile the subjection of Armenia proper to the Mongol Ilkhans for nearly two centuries, and subsequently to the Shahs of modern Persia for certain transitory periods, produced a lesser, but not unimportant, dispersion towards the east. In the seventeenth century the skilled and cultured Armenian population

* With the possible exception of the Bulgars.

+ The Armenian Protestants have even been admitted to the Gregorian National Assembly -- a notable departure from Near Eastern tradition.

of Djoulfa, on the River Aras, was carried away captive to the Persian capital of Ispahan, where the exiles started a printing press and established a centre of Armenian civilization. Ever since then the Armenian element has been a factor in the politics and the social development of Iran, and from this new centre they have spread over the Indian Peninsula hand in hand with the extension of British rule.

Thus the Armenian nation has been scattered, in the course of the centuries, from Calcutta to New York, and has shown remarkable vitality in adapting itself to every kind of environment*. The reverse side of the picture is the uprooting of the nation from its native soil. The immigrant tribes of Central Asia did not make a permanent lodgment in the Armenian homelands. Some of them drifted back into Azerbaijan and the steppe country along the coast of the Caspian and the lower courses of the Aras and the Kur; others were carried on towards the north-west, along the ancient Royal Road, and imposed the Moslem faith and the Turkish language upon the population of Central Anatolia. The Armenian plateau, entrenched between Tigris, Euphrates and Aras, stood out like a rock, dividing the two Turkish eddies. Nevertheless, the perpetual shock of Seljuk and the Mongol raids relaxed the hold of the Armenians on the plateau. The people of the land were decimated by the invasions, and when the invaders had passed on beyond or vanished away, the terrible gaps in the ranks of the sedentary population of Armenia proper were filled by nomadic Kurdish shepherds from the south-east who drifted into Old Armenia from the mountain girdle of Iran, just as the Albanians drifted into Kossovo Plain from their own less desirable highlands, after the population of Old Serbia had been similarly decimated by constant passage of the Ottoman armies.

This Kurdish penetration of Armenia had begun already by the tenth century A.D.; it was far advanced when the Osmalis annexed the country in 1514, and it was confirmed by the policy of the Ottoman Government, which sought to secure its new territories by granting privileges to the Kurdish intruders and inviting their influx in greater numbers from their homelands in the sphere of influence of the rival Persian Empire. The juxtaposition of nomad and cultivator, dominant Moslem and subject Giaour, was henceforth an ever-present irritant in the social and political conditions of the land; but it did not assume a fatal and sinister importance until after the year 1878, when it was fiendishly exploited by the Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid.

But before we examine the relations between the Armenian nation and the Ottoman Government, it will be well to survey the distribution of the Armenian element in the Ottoman Empire, as it had developed during the four centuries of Ottoman rule that

* There is a flourishing colony of Armenian fruit-growers as far afield as Fresno, California.

elapsed between the campaign of Selim I. and the intervention of Turkey in the present European War. The survey shall be brief for it has been anticipated, sometimes in greater detail, in the separate notes prefixed to the different groups of documents in the volume.

A traveller entering Turkey by the Oriental Railway from Central Europe would have begun to encounter Armenians at Philippopolis in Bulgaria, and then at Adrianople, the first Ottoman city across the frontier. Had he visited any of the lesser towns of Thrace, he would have found much of the local trade and business in Armenian hands, and when he arrived at Constantinople he would have become aware that the Armenians were one of the most important elements in the Ottoman Empire. He would have seen them as financiers, as export and import merchants, as organizers of wholesale stores; and when he crossed the Bosphorus and explored the suburban districts on the Asiatic side, he might even have fancied that the Armenian population in the Empire was numerically equal to the Turkish. The coast of the Sea of Marmora was overlooked by flourishing Armenian villages; at Armasha, above Ismid, there was a large Theological Seminary of the Gregorian Church, and there were important Swiss and American institutions at Bardizag (Baghtchedjik) and Adapazar. At Adapazar alone the Armenian population numbered 25,000.

Beyond Adapazar, however, the Armenian element dwindled, and anyone who followed the Anatolian Railway across Asia Minor to the rail-head in the northern spurs of Taurus, would have felt that he was travelling through an essentially Turkish land. There were colonies of Armenian artisans and shopkeepers and business men in important places on the line, like Afiun Kara Hissar or Konia; but there were an equal number of Greeks, and both in town and country the Turks outnumbered them all. But once Taurus was crossed, the Armenians came again to the fore. They were as much at home in the Cilician plain and coastland as on the littoral of the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus. Adana, Tarsus and Mersina, with their Armenian churches and schools, had the same appearance of being Armenian cities as Adapazar or Ismid; and if at this point the traveller had left the beaten track and worked his way up north-eastward into the Cilician highlands, he would have found himself for the first time in an almost exclusively Armenian country, and would have remarked a higher percentage of Armenians in the population than in any other district of Turkey till he came to Van. But this belt of Armenian villages, though thickly set, was quickly passed, and when you emerged on the south-eastern side of it and stepped out on to the rim of the Mesopotamian amphitheatre, you had reached one of the boundaries of the Armenian Dispersion. There were Armenian outposts in the cities of the fringe -- Marash, Aintab, Ourfa, Aleppo -- but as soon as you plunged into the Mesopotamian steppe or the Syrian desert you were in Arabic world, and had left Armenia behind*.

The traveller would have seen more of the Armenians if he had turned off from the Anatolian Railway at Eski Shehr, a few hours' journey south of Adapazar, and taken the be eastward to Angora. At Angora the Armenians were again a conspicuous element, and the further east you went from the more they increased in social and numerical imporatance. Beyond the Kizil Irmak (Halys), in the Sandjak of Kaisaria and the Vilayet of Sivas, they constituted the great majority of urban middle class. The strongest centres of Armenian life in Turkey were towns like Marsovan, Amasia, Zila, Shabin Kara-Hissar or the City of Sivas itself, or such smaller places as Talas and Everek in the neighbourhood of Kaisaria. In all this region Turks and Armenians were about balanced, Turks in the country and Armenians in the town, and the proportions were the same in the riviera zone along the Black Sea coast -- Samsoun and Kerasond and Trebizond -- though here other racial elements were intermingled -- Lazes and Greeks and the advance guards of the Kurds.

Trebizond in ancient times was the last Greek colony towrds the east, and it is always a place that beckons travellers for it is the terminus of that ancient caravan route which stretches away across Persia into the far interior of the Asiatic continent. Anyone who started to follow this highway across the mountains, through Gumushkhane and Baibourt to Erzeroum, would have noticed little change in these first stages of his journey from what he had seen in the Vilayet of Sivas. There were the same countryside and the same Armenian towns, with, perhaps, an increasing Armenian element in the rural population, culminating in an actual preponderance of Armenian villages when you reached the plain of Erzeroum. With Erzeroum the second section of the caravan road begins; it crosses from valley to valley among the headwaters of the Aras and the

Eastern Euphrates (Mourad Su), and winds away eastward at the foot of Ararat in the direction of Bayazid and Tabriz. But here the explorer of Armenia must turn his face to the south, and, as he does so, his eyes are met by a rampart of mountains more forbidding than those he has traversed on his journey from the coast, which stretch across the horizon both east and west.

This mountain barrier bears many names. It is called the Bingol Dagħ where it faces Erzeroum further westward it merges into the ill-famed Dersim. but the whole range has a common character. Its steeper slope is towards the north, and this slope is washed by the waters of the Aras and the Kara Su (Western Euphrates), which flow east and west in diametrically opposite directions, flanking the foot of the mountain wall with a deep and continuous moat.

* Though even in Irak there were Armenian settlers, especially at Baghdad .

Whoever crosses this moat and penetrates the mountains passes at once into a different world. The western part of Turkey, which we have been describing so far, is a more or less orderly, settled country -- as orderly and settled, on the whole, as any of the other Near Eastern countries that lie between the Euphrates and Vienna. The population is sedentary; it lives in agricultural villages and open country towns. But when you cross the Euphrates, you enter a land of insecurity and fear. The peasant and townsman live on sufferance; the mastery is with the nomad; you are setting foot on the domain of the Kurd.

This insecurity was the chronic condition of Armenia proper, and it was not merely due to the unfortunate political experiences of the land. In its geographical configuration, as well as in its history, the Armenian plateau is a country of more accentuated characteristics and violent contrasts than the Anatolian Peninsula which adjoins it on the west. It contains vast stretches of rolling treeless down, where the climate is too bleak and the soil too thin for cultivation; and, again, there are sudden depressions where the soil is as rich and the climate as favourable as anywhere in the world. There are the deep ravines of rivers, like the Mourad Su, which carve their course haphazard across tableland and plain. There are volcanic cones, like the Sipan and the Nimroud Dagħ, and lacustrine areas, like the basin of Lake Van. The geography of the country has partitioned it eternally between the shepherd and the cultivator -- the comparatively dense and sedentary population of the plains and the scattered and wandering inhabitants of the highlands -- between civilization and development on the one hand and an arrested state of barbarism on the other. The Kurd and the Armenian are not merely different nationalities; they are also antagonistic economic classes, and this antagonism existed in the country before ever the Kurdish encroachments began. Most of the nomadic tribes that frequent the Armenian plateau now pass for Kurds, but many of them are only nominally so. In the Dersim country, for instance, which coincides roughly with the peninsula formed by the Western and Eastern branches of the Euphrates (Kara Su and Mourad Su), the Kurds are strongly diluted with the Zazas, whose language, as far as it has been investigated, bears at least as much resemblance to Armenian as to Kurdish, and whose primitive paganism, though it may have taken some colour from Christianity, is free to this day from the slightest veneer of Islam.* These Zazas represent an element which must have existed in the land from the beginning and have harassed the national rulers of Mediaeval and Ancient Armenia as much as it harasses the modern Armenian townsman and peasant or the local Ottoman authorities.

* The nomadic Kurds, for that matter, are only skin-deep Mohammedans.

On the eve of the catastrophe of 1915, this region beyond Euphrates was a treasure-house of mingled populations and diversified forms of social life. Its north-western bastion is Dersim, a no-man's-land of winding valleys and tiny upland plains, backing northwards on to the great mountain retaining-wall, with its sheer fall to the Euphratean moat. In the Dersim innumerable little clans of Zazas and Kurds lived, and continue to live, their pastoral, brigand life, secluded from the arm of Ottoman authority. A traveller

proceeding south from Erzer would give the Dersim a wide berth on his right and cross the peninsula at its neck, by the headwaters of the Aras and plain of Khnyss. He would strike the course of the Mourad Su where it cuts successively through the fertile, level plains of Melazkerd, Boulanik and Moush, and here he would find himself again for a moment (or would have done so two years ago) peaceful, almost civilized surroundings -- -populous country towns with a girdle of agricultural villages and a peasantry even more uniformly Armenian than the population of the plain of Erzerol The plain of Moush is the meeting-place of all the routes that traverse the plateau. If you ascend from its south-eastern corner and mount the southern spurs of the Nimroud volcano, suddenly find yourself on the edge of the extensive basin of Lake Van, and can follow a mountain road along its precipitous southern shore; then you descend into the open valley of Hayotz-Tzor, cross a final ridge with the pleasant village of Artamid on its slopes, and arrive a few hours later in the city of Van itself.

Van, again, before April, 1915, was the populous, civilised capital of a province, with a picturesque citadel-rock overlooking the lake and open garden suburbs spreading east of it across plain. The city of Van, with the surrounding lowlands that fringe the eastern and north-eastern shores of the lake, was more thoroughly Armenian than any part of the Ottoman Empire. In the Van Vilayet* alone the Armenians not merely outnumbered each other racial element singly, but were an absolute majority of the total population. These Armenians of Van played a leading and a valiant part in the events of 1915.

Yet Van, though a stronghold of Armenian nationality, was also the extremity, in this direction, of Armenian territory; south-east of Van the upper valley of the Zab and the basin Lake Urmia were jointly inhabited by Christian Syrians and Moslem Kurds, until the Svrians, too, were involved in the Armenians' fate. To complete our survey, we have to retrace our steps round the northern shores of Lake Van till we arrive once more in the plain of Moush. The plain of Moush is closed in on the south and south-west by another rampart of mountains, which forms the southern wall of the plateau and repeats with remarkable exactness the structure of that northern wall which the traveller encounters when he turns south from the plain of Erzeroum.

*Excluding the district of Hakkari.

This southern range, also, falls precipitously towards the north, first into the plain of Moush, and, further westward, into the waters of the Mourad Su, which wash it like a moat all the way to their junction with the Kara Su, below Harpout. And, like the northern range, again, the southern rampart unfolds itself to the south in a maze of high hills and tangled valleys, which only sink by degrees into the plains of Diyarbekir -- a detached bay of the great Mesopotamian steppe. These southern highlands are known as the Hiassoun; they are a physiographical counterpart to the highlands of Dersim, and are likewise the harbour of semi-independent mountaineers. But whereas the Dersimlis are pagan Zazas or Moslem Kurds, and were at constant feud with their Armenian neighbours, the Sassounlis were themselves Armenians, and were in the closest intercourse with their kinsmen in the valley of the Mourad Su and in the plains of Moush and Boulanik.

Sassoun was one of the most interesting Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire. It was a federation of about forty mountain villages, which lived their own life in virtual independence of the Ottoman authorities at Bitlis or Diyarbekir, and held their own against the equally independent Kurdish tribes that ringed them round. They were prosperous shepherds and laborious cultivators of their mountain slopes -- a perfect example of the cantonal phase of economic development, requiring nothing from outside and even manufacturing their own gunpowder. The Sassounli Armenians were in the same social stage as the Scottish Highlanders before 1745; the Armenians of Van, Sivas and Constantinople were people of the twentieth century, engaged in the same activities and living much the same life as the shopkeepers and business men of Vienna or London or New York.

Only an enterprising traveller would have struck up into Sassoun if he wished to make his way from Moush to Diyarbekir. The beaten track takes a longer course to the south-eastern corner of the plain, and then breasts the mountain wall to the south (where the branch-road turns eastward to Lake Van). From Norshen, the last village of the plain, an easy pass leads over a saddle and brings the traveller unexpectedly to the important city of Bitlis, which lies under the shadow of the ridge, immediately south of the watershed. Bitlis is the capital of a vilayet, and before Djevdet Bey retreated upon it in June, 1'315, there was a numerous Armenian element in its population. But Bitlis, again, was one of the limits of the Armenian dispersion. The waters which rise round the city flow southward to the Tigris, and the highroad winds down with them towards the plains, which are inhabited by a confused population of Jacobites*

 * A Syrian sect whose doctrines diverged, like those of the Nestorians, from the creed of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, but in the contrary direction.

and Arabs, Turks and Kurds. If you had followed the Tigris stream across the levels to Diyarbekir, you would have passed few Armenian villages on the road, even before June, 1915; and at Diyarbekir itself, a considerable city, there was on weak Armenian colony -- a feeble link in the chain of Armenian outposts on the fringe of the Mesopotamian steppe. But Diyarbekir is on the line of that Royal Road by which men have gone up from time immemorial from Baghdad and beyond to coasts of the Bosphorus and the AEgean. The highway run north-west across the flats, passes Arghana and Arghana Mines, climbs the southern escarpment of the Armenian plateau up the valley of the Arghana Su, skirts the Goldjik Lake on the watershed, and slopes down, still north-westwards, to Harpout, near the course of the Mourad Su. Many convoys of Armenian exiles traversed this road in the opposite direction during the summer months of 1915, on their way from their native plateau to the alien climate of the Arabian deserts. But our survey of the Armenians in Turkey is complete, and we can travel back in imagination from Harpout to Malatia, from Malatia to Sivas, and so on continually north-westward, till we return again to the point from which we started out.

This somewhat elaborate itinerary will have served its purpose if it has made clear the extraordinary vitality and versatility of the Armenian nation in the Ottoman Empire at the moment when its extermination was planned and attempted by the established Government of the country. The Government been of little service to any of its subjects; it had never initiated any social or economic developments on its own part, and invariably made itself a clog upon the private enterprises of native or foreign individuals. Yet, under this pall of stagnation and repression, there were manifold stirrings of a new life. Wherever an opportunity presented itself, wherever the Government omitted to intervene, the Armenians were making indefatigable progress towards a better civilization. They were raising the pastoral and agricultural prosperity of their barren highlands and harassed plains; they were deepening and extending their education at the American schools; they were laying the foundation of local industries in the Vilayet of Sivas; they were building up Ottoman banking and shipping and finance at Trebizond and Adana and Constantinople. They were kindling the essential spark of energy in the Ottoman Empire, and anyone acquainted with Near Eastern history will inevitably compare their promise with the promise of the Greeks a century before. The apologists of the Ottoman Government will seize in eagerness upon this comparison. "The Greeks," they will say, "revolted as soon as they had fallen into this state of fermentation. The Young Turks did more prudently than Sultan Mahmoud in forestalling future trouble." But if we examine the relations between the Ottoman Government and the Armenian people we shall find that this argument recoils upon its authors' heads.

IV. THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE AND THE OTTOMAN GOVERNMENT.

When the Ottoman Government entered the European War in 1914, it had ruled Armenia for just four hundred years, and still had for its subjects a majority of the Armenian people. Anyone who inquires into the relations between the Government and the governed during this period of Near Eastern history will find the

most contradictory opinions expressed. On the one hand he will be told that the Armenians, like the rest of the Christians in Turkey, were classed as "Rayah" (cattle*) by the dominant race, and that this one word sums up their irremediable position; that they were not treated as citizens because they were not even treated as men. On the other hand, he will hear that the Ottoman Empire has been more liberal to its subject nationalities than many states in Western Europe; that the Armenians have been perfectly free to live their own life under a paternal government, and that the friction between the government and its subjects has been due to the native perversity and instability of the Armenian character, or, worse still, to a revolutionary poison instilled by some common enemy from without. Both these extreme views are out of perspective, but each of them represents a part of the truth.

It is undoubtedly true (to take the Turkish case first) that the Armenians have derived certain benefits from the Ottoman dispensation. The caste division between Moslem and Rayah, for instance, may stamp the Ottoman "State Idea" as medieval and incapable of progress; but this has injured the state as a whole more appreciably than the penalised section of it, for extreme penalisation works both ways. The Government ruled out the Christians so completely from the dominant Moslem commonwealth that it suffered and even encouraged them to form communities of their own. The "Rayah" became "Millets" -- not yoke-oxen, but unshackled herds.

These Christian Millets were instituted by Sultan Mohammed II, after he had conquered Constantinople in 1453 and set himself to reorganize the Ottoman State as the conscious heir of the Eastern Roman Empire. They are national corporations with written charters, often of an elaborate kind. Each of them is presided over by a Patriarch, who holds office at the discretion of the government, but is elected by the community and is the recognised intermediary between the two, combining in his own person the headship of a voluntary "Rayah" association and the status of an Ottoman official. The special function thus assigned to the Patriarchates gives the Millets, as an institution, an ecclesiastical character**;

but in the Near East a church is merely

 * It appears to be uncertain whether this is really the literal meaning of the word, its current connotation being purely the political one.

** The word "Millet" means simply "Religious sect" in the Arabic languages from which it was borrowed by the Turks.

the foremost aspect of a nationality, and the authority of Patriarchates extends to the control of schools, and even to administration of certain branches of civil law. The Millets, fact, are practically autonomous bodies in all that concern religion, culture and social life; but it is a maimed autonomy, it is jealously debarred from any political expression. The establishment of the Millets is a recognition, and a palliation, of the pathological anomaly of the Near East -- the political disintegration of Near Eastern peoples and the tenacity with which they have clung, in spite of it, to their corporate spiritual life.

The organization of the Millets was not a gain to all the Christian nations that had been subjected by the Ottoman power. Certain orthodox populations, like the Bulgars and the Serbs, actually lost an ecclesiastical autonomy which they had enjoyed before, and were merged in the Millet of the Greeks under the Orthodox Patriarch at Constantinople. The Armenians on the other hand, improved their position. As so-called schismatics, they had hitherto existed on sufferance under Orthodox and Catholic governments, but the Osmanlis viewed all varieties of Christian with an impartial eye. Mohammed II. summoned the Gregorian Bishop of the Armenian colony at Broussa, and raised him to the rank of an Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople. The Ottoman conquest thus left the Gregorian Armenians their religious individuality and put them on a legal equality with their neighbours of the Orthodox Faith, and the same privileges were extended in time to the Armenians in communion with other churches. The Gregorian Millet was chartered in 1462, the

Millet of Armenian Catholics in 1830, and the Millet of Armenian Protestants in the 'forties of the nineteenth century, as a result of the foundation of the American Missions.

The Armenians of the Dispersion, therefore, profited, in that respect, by Ottoman rule, and even in the Armenian homeland the account stood, on the whole, in the Ottoman Government favour. The Osmanlis are often blamed for having given the Kurds a footing in this region, as a political move in their struggle with Persia; but the Kurds were not, originally, such a scourge to the Armenians as the Seljuks, Mongols, or Kara Koyunli, who had harried the land before, or as the Persians themselves, who the Osmanlis and the Kurds ejected from the country. The three centuries of Kurdish feudalism under Ottoman suzerainty that followed Sultan Selim's campaign of 1514 were a less unhappy period for the Armenians than the three centuries and more anarchy that had preceded them. They were a time of torpor before recuperation, and it was the Ottoman Government again that, by a change in its Kurdish policy, enabled this recuperation to set in. In the early part of the nineteenth century a vigorous anti-feudal, centralising movement was initiated by Sultan Mahmoud, a reformer who has become notorious for his unsuccessful handling of the Greek and Serbian problems without receiving the proper credit for his successes further east. He turned his attention to the Kurdish chieftains in 1834, and by the middle of the century his efforts had practically broken their power. Petty feudalism was replaced by a bureaucracy centred in Constantinople. The new officialdom was not ideal; it had new vices of its own; but it was impartial, by comparison, towards the two races whom it had to govern, for the class prejudice of the Moslem against the well-behaved Rayah was balanced by the exasperation of the professional administrator with the unconscionable Kurd. In any case, this remodelling of the Ottoman State in the early decades of the nineteenth century introduced a new epoch in the history of the Armenian people. Coinciding, as it did, with the establishment of the American Missions and the chartering of the Catholic and Protestant Millets, it opened to the Armenians opportunities of which they availed themselves to the full. An intellectual and economic renaissance of Armenian life began, parallel in many respects to the Greek renaissance a century before.

This comparison brings us back to the question: Was the Armenian revival of the nineteenth century an inevitable menace to the sovereignty and integrity of the Ottoman State? Is the disastrous breach between Armenian and Turk, which has actually occurred, simply the fruit of wrong-headed Armenian ambitions? That is the Turkish contention; but here the Turkish case breaks down, and we shall find the truth on the Armenian side.

The parallel with the Greek renaissance is misleading, if it implies a parallel with the Greek revolution. The Greek movement towards political separatism was, in a sense, the outcome of the general spiritual movement that preceded it; but it was hardly an essential consequence, and certainly not a fortunate one. The Greek War of Independence liberated one fraction of the Greek race at the price of exterminating most of the others and sacrificing the favoured position which the Greek element had previously enjoyed throughout the Ottoman Empire. It was not an encouraging precedent for the Armenians, and the objections to following it in their own case were more formidable still. As we have seen, no portion of Ottoman territory was exclusively inhabited by them, and they were nowhere even in an absolute majority, except in certain parts of the Province of Van, so that they had no natural rallying point for a national revolt such as the Greeks had in the Islands and the Morea. They were scattered from one end to another of the Ottoman Empire; the whole Empire was their heritage, and it was a heritage that they must necessarily share with the Turks, who were in a numerical majority and held the reins of political power. The alternative to an Ottoman State was not an Armenian State, but a partition among the Powers, which would have ended the ambitions of Turk and Armenian alike. The Powers Concerned were quite ready for a partition, if only they could agree upon a division of the spoils. This common inheritance the Armenians and the Turks was potentially one of the richest countries in the Old World, and one of the few that had not been economically developed. Its native inhabitants, still scanty, backward and divided against themselves, were not yet capable of defending their title

against spoilers from without; they only maintained it at present by a fortuitous combination in balance of power, which might change at any moment. The problem for the Armenians was not how to overthrow the Ottoman Empire but how to preserve it, and their interest in preservation was even greater than that of their Turkish neighbours and co-heirs. Our geographical survey has shown that talent and temperament had brought most of the industry, commerce, finance and skilled intellectual work of Turkey into the Armenians' hands. The Greeks may still have competed with them on the Aegean fringe, and the Sephardi Jews in the Balkans but they had the whole interior of the Empire to themselves with no competition to fear from the agricultural Turks or the pastoral Kurds. And if the Empire were preserved by timely reforms from within, the position of the Armenians would become still more favourable, for they were the only native element capable of raising the Empire economically, intellectually and morally to a European standard, by which alone its existence could permanently be secured. The main effort must be theirs and they would reap the richest reward.

Thus, from the Armenian point of view, a national entente with the Turks was an object of vital importance, to be pursued for its ultimate results in spite of present difficulties and drawbacks. About the middle of the nineteenth century there seemed every likelihood of its being attained. The labours of Sultan Mahmoud and the influence of Great Britain and France had begun to inoculate the Turkish ruling class with liberal ideas. An admirable "Law of Nationalities" was promulgated, and there was a project for a parliamentary constitution. It looked, to an optimist, as if the old medieval caste-division of Moslem and Rayah might die away and allow Armenian, Turk and Kurd to find their true relation to one another -- not as irreconcilable sects or races, but as different social elements in the same community, whose mutual interest was to co-operate for a common end.

This was the logical policy for the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire to pursue, and the logic of it was so clear that they have clung to it through difficulties and drawbacks sufficient to banish logic altogether -- "difficulties" which amounted to a bankruptcy of political sense in the Imperial Government, and "drawbacks" which culminated in official massacres of the Armenian population. There were two causes of this sinister turn of events: the external crisis through which the Empire passed in the years 1875-8, and the impression this crisis made upon Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid, who came to the throne in 1876, when it was entering upon its gravest phase.

In these years the Empire had been brought to the verge of ruin by the revolt of a subject Christian population, the Bosniak Serbs, which spread to the other subject races in the Balkan provinces, and by a momentary breakdown in the diplomatic mechanism of the European balance of power, which enabled Russia to throw her military force into the scales on the Balkan rebels' behalf. The ruin was arrested and partially repaired, when Turkey lay prostrate under Russia's heel, by a reassertion of the balance of power, which deprived Russia of most of her gains and half the Balkan Christians of their new-won liberties. Abd-ul-Hamid was clever enough to learn from these experiences, but not, unfortunately, to learn aright, and he devoted all his astuteness to carrying out a policy far more injurious to the Empire than the troubles it was meant to avert. He seems to have inferred from the war with Russia that Turkey was not and never would be strong enough to hold its own against a first-class power; it was not her internal strength that had saved her, but the external readjustment of forces. Therefore, any attempt to strengthen the Empire from within, by reconciling its racial elements and developing its natural resources, was Utopian and irrelevant to the problem. The only object of importance was to insure against an attack by any single Power by keeping all the Great Powers in a state of jealous equilibrium. Now the breakdown of this equilibrium, in 1877, which had been so disastrous for Turkey, had been directly caused by an antecedent disturbance of equilibrium within the Empire itself. A subject Christian nationality had tried to break away violently from the Ottoman body politic. Here was the root of the whole trouble, to Abd-ul-Hamid's mind, and the primary object of his policy must be to prevent such a thing from happening again. The subject nationalities of the Empire were not for him unrealised

assets; they were potential destroyers of the State, more formidable even than the foreign Powers. Their potentialities must be neutralised, and the surest course, with them as with the Powers, was to play them off against one another. In fine, the policy of Abd-ul-Hamid was the exact antithesis of the instinctive Armenian policy which we have indicated above; it was not to strengthen the Empire by bringing the nationalities into harmony, but to weaken the nationalities, at whatever cost to the Empire, by setting them to cut each other's throats. Abd-ul-Hamid applied this policy for forty years. The Macedonians and the Armenians were his special victims, but only the Armenians concern us here.

It was inevitable that the Armenians should be singled out by Abd-ul-Hamid for repression. When Turkey sued for peace in 1878, the Russian troops were in occupation of the greater part of the Armenian plateau, and the Russian plenipotentiaries inserted an Article (No. 16) in the Treaty of San Stefano making the evacuation of these provinces conditional upon the previous introduction of reforms in their administration by the Ottoman Government. A concrete scheme for the reorganization of six vilayets in question* had already been drawn up by a delegation of their Armenian inhabitants. It provided for the creation of an Armenian Governor-General, empowered to appoint and remove the officials subordinate to him; a mixed gendarmerie of Armenians and the sedentary elements in the Moslem population to the exclusion of the nomadic Kurds; a general assembly, consisting of Moslem and Christian deputies in equal number and equal rights for every creed. The Ottoman Government approved and even encouraged this project of provincial autonomy when it feared that the alternative was the cession of the provinces to Russia. As soon as it had made certain of the Russian evacuation, its approval turned to indifference; and when the European Congress met at Berlin to revise the San Stefano Treaty, the Ottoman emissaries exerted themselves to quash the project altogether. In this they were practically successful, the Treaty drawn up at Berlin by the Congress merely engaged the Ottoman Government, in general terms**, to introduce "amelioration" in the "provinces inhabited by Armenians," without demanding any guarantee at all***. The Russian troops were withdrawn and the ameliorations were a dead letter. The Ottoman Government was reminded of them, in 1880, by a collective Note from the six Powers. But it left the Note unanswered, and after the diplomatic demarches had dragged on for two years the question was shelved, on Bismarck's suggestion, because no Power except Great Britain would press it.

The seed of the "Armenian Reforms" had thus fallen upon stony ground, except in the mind of Abd-ul-Hamid, where it lodged and rankled till it bore the fruit of the "Armenian Massacres." The project had not really been a menace to Ottoman sovereignty and integrity. It was merely a proposal to apply in six vilayets that elementary measure of "amelioration" which was urgently needed by the Empire as a whole, and without which it could never begin to develop its internal strength. But to Abd-ul-Hamid it was unforgivable, for to him every concession to a subject Christian nationality was suspect. He had seen the Bulgars given ecclesiastical autonomy by the Ottoman Government in 1870 and then raised by Russia, within eight years, into a semi-independent political principality. Armenian autonomy had been averted for the moment, but the parallel might still hold good, for Russia's influence over the Armenians had been increasing. .

* Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, Sivas.

** Article 61.

*** There was an equally vague clause to the same effect in the special "Cyprus Convention" between Turkey and Great Britain, but in neither treaty was there any guarantee of its observance. The Berlin Treaty merely provided that the Ottoman Government should communicate its measures of reform to the Powers. but, as they were never carried out, they were never reported.

Russia had conquered the Armenian provinces of Persia in 1828*, and this had brought within her frontier the Monastery of Etchmiadzin, in the Khanate of Erivan, which was the seat of the Katholikos of All the

Armenians. The power of this Katholikos was at that time very much in abeyance. He was an ecclesiastical relic of the ancient united Armenian Kingdom of Tigranes and Tiridates, which had been out of existence for fourteen hundred years. There was another Katholikos at Sis, a relic of the mediaeval kingdom of Cilicia, who did not acknowledge his supremacy, and he was thrown into the shade altogether by the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople, who was the official head of the Armenian Millet in the Ottoman Empire -- at that time an overwhelming majority of the Armenian people. But Russian diplomacy succeeded in reviving the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin's authority. In the 'forties of the nineteenth century, when Russian influence at Constantinople was at its height and Russian protection seemed the only recourse for Turkey against the ambition of Mehemet Ali, the ecclesiastical supremacy of Etchmiadzin over Constantinople and Sis was definitely established, and the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin, a resident in Russian territory, became once more the actual as well as the titular head of the whole Gregorian Church. Russia had thus acquired an influence over the Armenians as a nation, and individual Armenians were acquiring a reciprocal influence in Russia. They had risen to eminence, not only in commerce, but in the public service and in the army. They had distinguished themselves particularly in the war of 1877. Loris Melikov, Lazarev and Tergoukasev, three of the most successful generals on the Russian side, were of Armenian nationality. Melikov had taken the fortress of Kars, and the Treaty of Berlin left his conquest in Russia's possession with zone of territory that rounded off the districts ceded by Persia fifty years before. The Russian frontier was thus pushed forward on to the Armenian plateau, and now included an important Armenian population -- important enough to make its mark on the general life of the Russian Empire** and to serve as a national rallying-point for the Armenians who still remained on the Ottoman side of the line.

* Russia began to acquire territory south of the Caucasus at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the last King of Georgia ceded his kingdom to the Tsar, to save it from the hands of the Turks and Persians.

** Tiflis, the former capital of the Georgian Kingdom and now the administrative centre of the Russian Provinces of the Caucasus, has become practically an Armenian city in the course of the nineteenth century, and Armenian settlements have spread far further into the interior of Russia.

Such considerations outweighed all others in Abd-ul-Hamid's mind. His Armenian subjects must be deprived of their formidable vitality, and he decided to crush them by resuscitating the Kurds. From 1878 onwards he encouraged their lawlessness and in 1891 he deliberately undid the work of his predecessor, Mahmoud. The Kurdish chieftains were taken again into favour and decorated with Ottoman military rank; their tribes were enrolled as squadrons of territorial cavalry, regimental badges and modern rifles were served out to them from the Government stores, and their retaining fee was a free hand to use their official status and their official weapons as they pleased against Armenian neighbours. At the same time the latter were systematically disarmed; the only retaliation open to them was formation of secret revolutionary societies, and this fitted in entirely with Abd-ul-Hamid's plans, for it made a racial conflict inevitable. The disturbances began in 1893 with the posting up of revolutionary placards in Yozgad and Marsovan. This soon followed by an open breach between Moslem and Christian in the districts of Moush and Sassoun, and there was a concentration of troops -- some of them Turkish regulars, most of them Hamidié Kurds. Sassoun was besieged for several months, and fell in 1894. The Sassounlis -- men, women children -- were savagely massacred by the Turks and Kurds, and the attention of Great Britain was aroused. In the winter of 1894-5 Great Britain persuaded France and Russia to join her in reminding the Ottoman Government of its pledge to introduce provincial reforms, and in the spring they presented a concrete programme for the administration of the Six Vilayets. In its final form it was a perfunctory project, and the counter-project which the Ottoman Government announced its intention of applying in its stead was more illusory still. It was promulgated in 1895, but the first of a new series of organized massacres had already taken place a few days earlier, at Trebizond, and in the following months the slaughter was extended to one after of the principal towns of the Empire. These atrocities were nearly all committed against peaceful, unarmed urban populations. The only place that resisted

was Zeitoun, which held out for six months against a Turkish army, and was finally amnestied by the mediation of the Powers. The anti-Armenian outbreaks were instigated and controlled by the Central Government, were crowned, in August, 1896, by the great massacre at Constantinople, where for two days the Armenians, at the Government's bidding, were killed indiscriminately in the streets, until the death-roll amounted to many thousands. Then Abd-ul-Hamid held his hand. He had been feeling the pulse of public opinion, abroad and at home, and he saw that he had gone far enough.* In all more than 100,000 men, women and children had perished, and for the moment he had sufficiently crippled the Armenian element in his Empire.

 * Though the British Government was the only Government that attempted to put pressure on the Turks to desist. In Germany it was the mot d'ordre that the massacres were a British invention with a purpose, and the German Emperor shortly afterwards sent his portrait to Abd-ul-Hamid as a complimentary gift.

Yet this Macchiavellian policy was ultimately as futile as it was wicked. In the period after the massacres the Armenian population in Turkey was certainly reduced, partly by the actual slaughter and partly by emigration abroad. But this only weakened the Empire without permanently paralyzing the Armenian race. The emigrants struck new roots in the United States and in the Russian Caucasus, acquired new resources, enlisted new sympathies; and Russia was the greatest gainer of all. The Armenians had little reason, at the time, to look towards Russia with special sympathy or hope. In Russia, as in Turkey, the war of 1877-8 had been followed by a political reaction, which was aggravated by the assassination of the Tsar, Alexander II., in 1881; and the Armenians, as an energetic, intellectual, progressive element in the Russian Empire, were classed by the police with the revolutionaries, and came under their heavy hand. Yet once an Armenian was on the Russian side of the frontier his life and property at least were safe. He could be sure of reaping the fruits of his labour, and had not to fear sudden death in the streets. During the quarter of a century that followed the Treaty of Berlin, the Armenian population of the Russian provinces increased remarkably in prosperity and numbers, and now, after the massacres, they were reinforced by a constant stream of Ottoman refugees. The centre of gravity of the Armenian race was shifting more and more from Ottoman to Russian territory. Russia has profited by the crimes of her neighbours. The Hamidian régime lasted from 1878 to 1908, and did all that any policy could do to widen the breach between the Ottoman State and the Armenian people. Yet the natural community of interest was so strong that even thirty years of repression did not make the Armenians despair of Ottoman regeneration.

Nothing is more significant than the conduct of the Armenians in 1908, when Abd-ul-Hamid was overthrown by the Young Turkish Revolution, and there was a momentary possibility that the Empire might be reformed and preserved by the initiative of the Turks themselves. At this crisis the real attitude of the different nationalities in the Empire was revealed. The Kurds put up a fight for Abd-ul-Hamid, because they rejoiced in the old dispensation. The Macedonians -- Greek, Bulgar and Serb -- who had been the Armenians' principal fellow-victims in the days of oppression, paid the Constitution lip-homage and secretly prepared to strike. They were irreconcilable irredentists, and saw in the reform of the Empire simply an obstacle to their secession from it. They took counsel with their kinsmen in the independent national States of Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece, and, four years later, the Balkan League attacked Turkey and tore away her Macedonian provinces by force.

The Armenians, on the other hand, threw themselves wholeheartedly into the service of the new régime. As soon as Ottoman Constitution was restored, the Armenian political parties abandoned their revolutionary programme in favour of parliamentary action, and co-operated in Parliament with the the Turkish bloc so long as Young Turkish policy remained in any degree liberal or democratic. The terrible Adana massacre which occurred less than a year after the Constitution had been proclaimed, might have damped the Armenians' enthusiasm (though at first the proof that the Young Turks were implicated in them was not so clear as it has

since become). Yet they showed their loyalty in 1912, when the Turks were fighting for their existence. It was only under the new laws that the privilege and duty of military service had been extended to the Christian as well as the Moslem citizens of the Empire, and the disastrous Balkan Campaign was the first opportunity that Armenian soldiers were given of doing battle for their common heritage. But they bore themselves so well in this ordeal that they were publicly commended by their Turkish commanders. Thus, in war and peace in the Army and in Parliament, the Armenians worked for salvation of the Ottoman Commonwealth, from the accession of the Young Turks in 1908 till their intervention in the European War in 1914. It is impossible to reconcile with this fact the Turkish contention that in 1914 they suddenly reversed their policy and began treacherously to plot for the Ottoman Empire's destruction.

V. THE DEPORTATIONS OF 1915: ANTECEDENTS

There is no dispute as to what happened in 1915. The Armenian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire were everywhere uprooted from their homes, and deported to the most remote and unhealthy districts that the Government could select for them. Some were murdered at the outset, some perished on the way, and some died after reaching their destination. The death-roll amounts to upwards of six hundred thousand; perhaps six hundred thousand more are still alive in their places of exile; and the remaining six hundred thousand or so have either been converted forcibly to Islam, gone into hiding in the mountains or escaped beyond the Ottoman frontier. The Ottoman Government cannot deny these facts, and they cannot justify them. No provocation or misdemeanour on the part of individual Armenians could justify such a crime against the whole race. But it might be explained and palliated if the Armenians, or some of them, were originally in the wrong; and therefore the Ottoman Government and its German apologists have concentrated their efforts on proving that this was the case.* There are three main Turkish contentions, none of which will bear examination.

The first contention is that the Armenians took up arms and joined the Russians, as soon as the latter crossed the Ottoman frontier. The standard case its champions cite is the "Revolt of Van." The deportations, they maintain, were only ordered after this outbreak to forestall the danger of its repetition elsewhere. This contention is easily rebutted. In the first place, there was no Armenian revolt at Van. The Armenians merely defended the quarter of the city in which they lived, after it had been beleaguered and attacked by Turkish troops, and the outlying villages visited with massacre by Turkish patrols. The outbreak was on the Turkish side, and the responsibility lies with the Turkish governor, Djevdet Bey. The ferocious, uncontrollable character of this official was the true cause of the catastrophe. Anyone who reads the impartial American testimony on this point, in section II. of the present collection of documents, will see that this was so. And, in the second place, the deportations had already begun in Cilicia before the fighting at Van broke out. The Turks fired the first shot at Van on the 20th April, 1915; the first Armenians were deported from Zeitoun on the 8th April, and there is a record of their arrival in Syria as early as the 19th**. The case of Van, which

* In such publications as *Vérité sur le mouvement révolutionnaire Arménien et ses mesures gouvernementales* (Constantinople, 1916) ; or *Die Armenische Frage*, von C. A. Bratter (Berlin, Concordia-Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1915) .

** Doc. 138.

the apologists have made so much of, simply falls to the ground* and they cannot rehabilitate themselves by adducing any previous revolt at Zeitoun. It is true that twenty-five fugitive conscripts defended themselves for a day in a monastery near Zeitoun against Turkish troops, and decamped into the mountains during the night. But this happened only one day before the deportations, and the deportation must have been decided upon far in advance, for it was preceded by a protracted inquisition for arms, and there were Moslem refugees from the Balkans concentrated on the spot, ready to occupy the Zeitounlis' houses the moment the rightful

owners were carried off. During all these preliminary proceedings -- most of which were violations of the charter of liberties held by Zeitoun from the Ottoman Government the population as a whole (15,000 individuals as against the 25 who rebelled) very scrupulously kept the peace. This was the policy of the leaders, and they were obeyed by the people. Nothing happened at Zeitoun that can account for the Government's scheme of deportation.

* In the pamphlet *Vérité sur le mouvement révolutionnaire Arménien et les mesures gouvernementales*, the following passages occur: "The Imperial (Ottoman) Government abstained from exercising any pressure or adopting any repressive measures against the Armenians until the day the revolt broke out at Van towards the middle of April, 1915" (page 10); "No coercive measure was decreed by the Imperial Government against the Armenians until the date of their armed revolt, which took place at Van and in the other military zones in the course of the month of June of the year 1915, and until they had made common cause with the enemy forces" (page 15). These statements are direct falsehoods, as is also the statement (page 12) that -- "After the occupation of Van by the Russians and Armenians, the Moslem population of the town was pitilessly massacred." We have authoritative neutral testimony (eg, Docs. 120, 121, 122 and 15) on both these points, by which the Turkish statements are refuted. Yet these lying statements are the pivot of the whole apologia presented in this pamphlet.

There were several other instances in which the Armenians took up arms, but none of them are relevant to the case. They were all subsequent in date to these cardinal instances, were simply attempts at self-defence by people who had their neighbours massacred or deported, and were threatened with the same fate themselves. The Armenians of Moush resisted when they were attacked by Djevdet Bey, who had already tried to massacre the Armenians of Van and had succeeded in massacring those of Sairt and Bitlis. The Armenians of Sassoun resisted when the Kurds had destroyed their kinsmen in the plain of Diyarbekir and were closing in upon themselves. This was in June, and the Nestorian Christians of Hakkari resisted under the same circumstances and at the same date. Further west, a few villages took up arms in the Vilayet of Sivas, after the rest of the Sivas Armenians had been deported; and at Shabin Kara-Hissar the Armenians drove out their Turkish fellow-townsmen and stood for several weeks at bay, when they heard how the exiles from Trebizond and Kerasond had been murdered on the road. The defense of Djibal Mousa in August (the only story in this volume with a happy ending) was similarly inspired by the previous fate of Zeitoun. The resistance at Ourfa in September was another act of despair, provoked by the terrible procession of exiles from Harpout and the north-east, which had been filing for three months through Ourfa before the Armenian colony there was also summoned to take the road. These are all the instances of resistance that are reported, and they were all a consequence of the deportations, and not their cause. It may be added that, wherever resistance was offered, the Turks suppressed it with inconceivable brutality, not merely retaliating upon on the fighting men, but, in most cases, massacring every Armenian man, woman and child in cold blood after the fighting was over. These cases were not palliations of the atrocities, but occasions of the worst excesses.

The second contention is that there was a general conspiracy of Armenians throughout the Empire to bring about an internal evolution at a moment when all the Ottoman military forces were engaged on the frontiers, and so deliver the country into the hands of the Allies. The prompt action of the Ottoman government in disarming, imprisoning, executing and deporting the whole people -- innocent and guilty alike -- is alleged to have or crushed this movement before it had time to declare itself. This is an insidious line of argument, because it refuses to be tested by the evidence of what actually occurred. If the actual outbreaks were isolated, inspired by panic, confined to self-defence, and posterior in date to the Government's own preventive measures, all that, on this hypothesis, is not a proof of the Armenians' innocence, but only of the Government's energy and foresight. Yet when this indictment is examined, it, too, is found to rest on the most frivolous grounds.

The revolution, it is alleged, was to break out when the Allies landed in Cilicia -- but such a landing was never made; or it was arranged in conjunction with the landing at the Dardanelles but the landing was made and the

outbreak never happened. Indeed, it is hard to see what the Armenians could have done, for nearly all their able-bodied men between twenty and forty-five arears of age were mobilised at the beginning of the war, and the age limit was soon extended in either direction to eighteen and fifty. The Turks make sweeping allegations about secret stores of bombs and arms, which prove to be false in every case where they can be checked. The Armenians certainly possessed a moderate number of rifles and revolvers, because, for the last six years, under the Young Turkish regime, they had been permitted to carry arms for their personal security, a privilege that had always been enjoyed, as a matter of course, by every Moslem in the Ottoman Empire. But evidently there were not enough arms in their possession to go round, even among the comparatively few men left behind after mobilization; for when, in the winter of 1914-5, the Ottoman authorities made a house-to-house search for arms, and conducted their inquisition by atrocious physical tortures, the Armenians bought arms from each other and from their Moslem neighbours, in order to be able to deliver them up and suffer no worse punishment than mere imprisonment. This practice is recorded independently, by several trustworthy witnesses from various localities*.

The stories of bombs are more extravagant still. In the town of X., for instance, a bomb was unearthed in the Armenian cemetery, which was made the pretext for the atrocious procedure against the Armenian inhabitants. Yet the bomb was rusty with age, and was believed to date from the days of Abd-ul-Hamid, when the Young Turks, as well as the Armenian political parties, were a secret revolutionary organization not averse to using bombs themselves. In the same town a blacksmith in the employment of the American College was cruelly tortured for "constructing a bomb "; but the "bomb" turned out to be a solid iron shot which he had been commissioned to make for the competition of "putting the weight" in College athletic sports.

It was also alleged that Armenians resident on the coast had been in treacherous communication with the Allied fleets. The Armenian boatmen of Silivri**, for instance, on the Sea of Marmora, were deported on the ground that they had furnished supplies to British submarines; and before this, as early as April, 1915, half-a-dozen Armenians from Dort Yol, a village on the Gulf of Alexandretta, were hanged at Adana on the charge of having signalled to the Franco-British cruiser squadron -- a step which was followed up by the deportation of the whole population of Dort Yol into the interior, to do navvy-work on the roads. This charge against Dort Yol can be checked, the witness of the hangings (a resident in Cilicia of neutral nationality and excellent standing)***: states, from his personal knowledge, that only one Armenian from Dort Yol had had communication with the Allied warships. This evidence is authoritative, and it has probability on its side; for, if Dort Yol was in regular communication with the Allied squadron, it is inconceivable that the Armenians of Djibal Mousa, a few miles further down the coast, should have taken 44 days to attract the same squadron's attention, when it was a question for them of life and death****.

* See Docs. 68, 82, 94 and 122.

** Doc. 98.

*** Doc. 123.

**** Docs. 130 and 131.

Thus the second contention breaks down, and we are left with the third, which lays little stress on justice or public safety and bases the case on revenge. The Armenian civil population in the Ottoman Empire, it is argued, owes its misfortunes to the Armenian volunteers in the Russian Army. "Our Armenians in Turkey," say the Turks in effect, "have certainly suffered terribly from the measures we have taken; they may even have suffered innocently; but can you blame us? Was it not human nature that we should revenge ourselves on the Armenians at home for the injury we had received from their compatriots fighting against us at the front in the Russian ranks -- men who had actually volunteered to fight against us in the enemy's cause?"

This is almost the favourite argument of the apologists, and yet it is surely the most monstrous of any, for these Armenian volunteers owed no allegiance to the Turks at all, but were ordinary Russian subjects. Through territorial acquisitions and free immigration from across the frontier, the Russian Government had, by 1914, acquired the sovereignty over little less than half the Armenian race*. Russia was as much the lawful "fatherland" of this substantial minority as Turkey was of the remainder. It is a misfortune for any nation to be divided between two allegiances, especially when the states to which they owe them elect to go to war; but it is at least an alleviation of the difficulty, and one that does honour to both parties concerned, when either fraction of the divided nationality finds itself in sympathy, even under the test of war, with the particular state to which its allegiance is legally due. The loyalty of the Russian Armenians to Russia** cast no imputation upon the Ottoman Armenians, and was no concern of the Turks. The latter will probably explain that they had no objection to the Russian Armenians doing their duty, but resented their doing more: "The conscripts naturally answered the summons, but why did those who were exempt equip themselves so eagerly as volunteers? The Ottoman Armenians adopted a painfully different attitude. At the beginning of the war, the Young Turkish Party sent representatives to the Congress of the Armenian ' Dashnaktzoutioun' Party at Erzeroum, offered them concessions to their nationality, and called upon them to organise volunteers and join in the invasion of Russian territory***. Yet they decidedly refused -- refused in this case when their kinsmen did not wait to be asked in the other. This reveals the real sympathies and aspirations of the Armenian people, not only the Armenians in Russia, but those in our country as well."

 * According to an official calendar, published at Alexandropol by authority of the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin, from which extracts have been communicated to the Editor by Mr. H. N. Mosditchian, the statistics of the Armenian population in Russia, up to date, are 1,636,486 for the Caucasus and approximately two million for the Empire as a whole. For the Ottoman Empire, statistics compiled at the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1912 estimate the Armenian population at 2,100,000; Turkish official statistics, on the other hand, admit no more than 1,100,000, which on their own showing would give Russia a majority.

** For evidence of this loyalty, see Annexe B. to this summary.

*** Docs. 21 and 57.

There is, of course, a crushing answer to these tirades. If the Armenians felt so differently towards the Turks and Russians, then that was a serious reflection on their treatment by the Turks, and the logical way to change their feelings was to treat them better. Could the civilian Armenians who remembered the massacre of their innocent kinsfolk at Adana a few years before have been expected to volunteer in support those who had commanded these massacres? Could their feelings have been other than they were? But so long as only their feelings were in question and their behaviour remained correct, the Turks had no right to proceed with them in any but a humane and constitutional manner. The argument can be driven home by a parallel. There are Polish volunteer legions in the Austro-Hungarian Army. What would the Turks' German apologists have said if the Russian Government had appeased resentment against these Austrian-Polish volunteers by wiping out all the Russian-Polish civilians on their own side of the frontier?

It is a significant fact that all these Turkish complaints are directed against Russian Armenians in Russian service. There is no hint of treachery or malingering on the part of those Ottoman Armenians who had been drafted, many of them illegally, into the Turkish Army -- no insinuation that their record was not as satisfactory in 1914 as in 1912*. To the editor's knowledge the German apologists have only been able to fasten upon "traitors" in the legal (though not in the moral) sense of word. There have been refugees, of course, like Mourad Sivas, who escaped into the Caucasus when the atrocities were in full course -- men who had just been compelled to fight for their lives, and had seen their neighbours and kinsfolk massacred once more on all sides of them. Not even the German apologists would dare to censure these men under these circumstances for enrolling in the volunteers. But there are only two cases adduced of Ottoman subjects

who went over to the Russians before atrocities began -- a certain Karakin Pasdermadjian, a deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, and another Armenian named Suren, stated to have been a delegate at the "Dashnaktzoutioun" Congress at Erzeroum. In face of this, "argues the German writer from whose pamphlet these instances are taken**", "it was the Ottoman Government's duty to uphold public law and order. In wartime, measures of this kind assume an especially weighty and pressing character" -- and with this generality he implicitly condones the atrocities of 1915. If this represents the official apologia of the Ottoman Government, the only answer is a *reductio ad absurdum*. On the same principle, when Sir Roger Casement landed from a German submarine on the Irish coast, it would have been the British Government's duty to deport all the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Ireland and maroon them, say, on the coast of Labrador or in the central desert of Australia.

* The 25 recalcitrants at Zeitoun do not come into question, for Zeitounlis were excepted from military service by special charter, and the attempt to conscribe them was a violation by the Ottoman authorities of Ottoman law.

**Die Armenische Frage, von C. A. Bratter, Berlin, Concordia Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1915. The reference is to pp 9-10.

The parallel is exact, and leaves nothing more to be said, unless, indeed, what was said by Talaat Bey, the Young Turkish Minister of the Interior, in a recent interview with a correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt**. "The sad events that have occurred in Armenia," he vouchsafed, "have prevented my sleeping well at night. We have been reproached for making no distinction between the innocent Armenians and the guilty; but that was utterly impossible, in view of the fact that those who were innocent to-day might be guilty to-morrow." There is no need of further witnesses.

 * Reproduced in the Paris journal *Le Matin*, 6th May, 1916, in a special despatch dated Zurich, 5th May.

The various Turkish contentions thus fail, from first to last, to meet the point. They all attempt to trace the atrocities of 1915 to events arising out of the war; but they not only cannot justify them on this ground, they do not even suggest any adequate motive for their perpetration. It is evident that the war was merely an opportunity and not a cause -- in fact, that the deportation scheme, and all that it involved, flowed inevitably from the general policy of the Young Turkish Government. This inference will be confirmed if we analyse the political tenets to which the Young Turks were committed.

The Young Turkish movement began as a reaction against the policy of Abd-ul-Hamid. Its founders repudiated his "neutralization of forces"; they maintained that the Ottoman Empire must stand by its own strength, and that this strength must be developed by a radical internal reconstruction. From their asylum at Paris they preached the doctrines of the French Revolution -- religious toleration, abolition of caste-privileges, equality of all citizens before the law, equality of obligation to perform military service, constitutional government through a representative parliament. And when they came into power, they made some attempt to put these doctrines into practice. In Turkey for a brief space of the year 1908 as in France twelve decades before, the vision of "Pure Reason" did bring peace and goodwill among men. Nearly all the foreign observers who were in the country when "Huriet" came, testify to this momentary, magic transfiguration of hatred into love; and the Armenians, who had desired more than any of their neighbours to see this day, might well believe that the Young Turks' ideal was identical with their own. Yet there were vital differences beneath the surface. The Young Turks realized that the Christian elements were an asset; they did not propose, at the outset, to destroy them, as Abd-ul-Hamid had done; but they wanted still less to co-operate with them as separate partners in the Ottoman State. The "Millet" were as abhorrent to them, as an institution, as the autocracy of Abd-ul-Hamid. They set up against the principle of the "Millet" the programme of "Ottomanisation." The Turkish leaven was to permeate the non-Turkish lump, until it had all become of one uniform Turkish substance. In Parliament this programme took such forms as a bill to make the Turkish

language the universal and compulsory medium of secondary education*, and the Armenian deputies found themselves opposing it in concert with the Liberal Party, which included the Arab bloc and stood for the toleration of national individualities. The Young Turks, in fact, imbibed both the good currents and the bad in the modern political atmosphere of Western Europe -- its democratic doctrines but its chauvinism as well. Most political theorists debarred from responsible practice give this same confused allegiance to incompatible ideals, and all, when they come into power are compelled by circumstances to choose which master they serve. In 1908, the choice of the Young Turks was not pre-destined; the "Committee of Union and Progress" might have set its face towards either of its divided goals; but disillusion soon decided its orientation. The magic dawn of "Huriet" faded; the old, crushing burden of Ottoman Government descended upon shoulders not expert, like Abd-ul-Hamid's, at balancing the weight; the Austro-Bulgarian violation of Treaty of Berlin and the subsequent territorial losses of the Balkan War shook the Young Turkish Party's prestige, aggravated the difficulty of their problem, and embittered their attitude towards its solution. The current of chauvinism gained upon them more and more, and their intervention in the European War demonstrated that its mastery was complete, for their calculations in intervening were of a thoroughly Prussian character. A military triumph was to restore them their prestige; it was to recover ancient territories of the Empire in Egypt, the Caucasus and the coveted Persian province of Azerbaijan; it was to shake off the trammels of international control, and solve the internal problem by cutting the Gordian Knot. But the hopes of conquest and prestige were early shattered by the strategical failures of the winter of 1914-5, which were almost as humiliating as those of 1912, and then the Young Turks concentrated savagely upon "Ottomanisation" at home.

Ottomanisation has become the Young Turks' obsession.** Their first act after declaring war was to repudiate the Capitulations; their latest stroke has been to declare the Turkish language the exclusive medium of official business in the Empire, with only a year's delay -- a step which has caused consternation among their German allies. And in this mood they turned to the Armenian question, which happened at the moment to have reached an important phase.

* The vast majority of secondary schools in the Empire being, of course; American, Armenian or Greek, and practically none of them Turkish.

** See Annexe A.

In 1912-3 the diplomatists of Europe had once more met in consultation over the Ottoman Empire, and the Armenians had presented their case to the Conference at London, as they had presented it at Berlin thirty-five years before.* When the Conference proved unable to take cognizance of their petition, they applied to the individual governments of the Powers. The Russian Government took the initiative and drafted a new scheme for the administration of the Six Vilayets, which it submitted to the Signatories of the Treaty of Berlin. The German Government opposed, but was won over by the Russian diplomacy and by the representations of the Armenian delegates, who repaired to Berlin in person. Then, when the German opposition had been withdrawn, the Russian draft was revised by the Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople, accepted, with modifications, by the Young Turkish Government, and actually promulgated by them on the 8th February, 1914.

In its final shape, the scheme still embodied the main points of reform which had been regarded as cardinal ever since 1878. There was to be a mixed Gendarmerie, under a European chief, recruited from the Turks and Armenians, but closed to the Kurds; Moslem and Christian were to be equal before the law; the Armenian language was to be a recognized medium in the courts and public offices (a bitter clause for the Young Turkish nationalists); there were to be no restrictions on the multiplication of Armenian schools. Finally, the vilayets affected by the scheme** were to be divided into two groups, and each group was to be placed under a European Inspector-General. The two Inspector-Generals were authorized to appoint and

dismiss all officials in their respective spheres, except those "of superior rank." They were themselves to be appointed by the Ottoman Government, on the recommendation of the Powers, for a term of ten years and not to be removable within this period. The Government duly proceeded to select two candidates for these Inspectorates, a Dutchman and a Norwegian, but its treatment of these gentlemen soon showed that in diplomacy, at any rate, the Young Turks had adopted the methods of Abd-ul Hamid. A clause was inserted in the Inspectors' contract of engagement, empowering the Government to denounce it at any moment upon payment of an indemnity of one year's salary -- a flat violation of the ten years' term provided for under the scheme; and the list of "superior officials" was inflated until the patronage of the Inspectors, which, next to their irremovability, would have been their most effective power, was reduced to an illusion. The unfortunate nominees were spared the farce of exercising their maimed authority. They had barely reached their provinces when the European War broke out, and the Government promptly denounced the contracts and suspended the Scheme of Reform as the first step towards its own intervention in the conflict.

* The Delegation of 1912 was nominated by His Holiness the Katholikos of Etchmiadzin. Its President was His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha.

** The Ottoman Government, for statistical reasons, added the Vilayet of Trebizond to the original Six, the Moslem element being here in a sufficient majority to balance, to some extent, the Armenian majority in the rest.

Thus, at the close of 1914, the Armenians found themselves in the same position as in 1883. The measures designed for their security had fallen through, and left nothing behind but resentment of the Government that still held them at its mercy. The deportations of 1915 followed as inexorably from the Balkan War and the Project of 1914 as the massacres of 1895-6 followed from the Russian War and the Project of 1878. Only in the execution of their revenge the Young Turks revealed the sinister features of their dissimilarity to Abd-ul-Hamid. The Sultan, so far as he differed from the familiar type of Oriental despot, had been an opportunist in the tradition of Metternich -- a politician of mature experience and delicate touch, unencumbered by any constructive programme to disturb the artistry of his game of finesse. He repressed the Armenians to a nicety after preparing for it eighteen years. The Young Turks were adventurers who had caught the catchwords of another generation and another school -- the apes of Danton and Robespierre, and doctrinaires to the core. For the old, anachronistic ascendancy of Moslem over Rayah, to the maintenance of which Abd-ul-Hs had cynically devoted his abilities, they substituted the idea of Turkish nationalism, which clothed the same evil in a more clearly-cut and infinitely more dynamic form. They were fanatics with an unreasoned creed, builders with a plan that they meant to carry through, and no half-measures would content them, no inhibitions of prudence or humanity deter them from attempting to realise the whole. Hindrances only exasperated them to sweeping action, and a blind concentration on their programme shielded them from doubts. "Our acts," Talaat Bey is reported to have said, in the interview quoted above, "have been dictated to us by a national and historical necessity. The idea of guaranteeing the existence of Turkey must outweigh every other consideration." The first of these sentiments is the pure-milk of the eighteenth century idéologues; there is a Prussian adulteration in the second which smacks of more recent times. It is the voice of the youngest, crudest, most ruthless national movement in Europe, and the acts which it excuses, and which the documents in this volume describe, were the barbarous initiation of the Near East into the European fraternity.

VI. THE DEPORTATIONS OF 1915: PROCEDURE.

The atrocities of 1915 are described in detail in the documents collected in this book, but it will be well to give in conclusion a bare summary of events, partly to make the detail less confusing to the reader, and partly to bring out the essential unity of design which underlay the procedure against the Armenians at the various dates and in the various provinces of the Empire to which the documents relate. This fundamental uniformity of procedure is more sinister than the incidental aggravations of the crime by Kurds, peasants, gendarmes or

local authorities. . It is damning evidence that the procedure itself, which set in motion all the other forces of evil, was conceived and organised by the Central Government at Constantinople.

The dismissal of the Inspectors-General and the abrogation of the reforms were followed immediately by the mobilization of the Ottoman Army for eventual participation in the war, and with this the sufferings of the Armenians began. It has been mentioned already that the Young Turks had extended the duty of military service to their Christian fellow-citizens, and that the Armenian recruits had distinguished themselves in the Balkan War; but naturally the measure was not retrospective, and Armenians who were already past the statutory age of training when it was introduced, were allowed to pay the "Rayah" poll-tax as before, under the formula of an exemption-tax in lieu of military service. In the autumn of 1914, however, there was a general levy of all males in the Empire from twenty years of age to forty-five, and soon from eighteen to fifty, in which the Armenians, whether they had paid their annual exemption-tax or not, were included with the rest. There were also drastic requisitions of private supplies, by which the Armenians, again, were the principal sufferers, since they were the chief merchants and store-keepers of the country. These were considerable hardships and injustices, but they were not necessarily in themselves the result of a malevolent design. Apart from what actually followed, they might have been simply the inevitable penalties of a country which had been embarked by its Government on a struggle for existence.

In October, when mobilization was completed, the Government had, in fact, declared war on the Allies, and in December its grandiose military operations began. Enver Pasha, with the main Ottoman forces, started an encircling movement against the Russian troops in Caucasia, along a front extending from Erzeroum to the Black Sea Coast; Halil Bey led a flying column across the frontier of Azerbaijan, and raised the Kurds; Djemal Pasha felt his way across the Sinai Peninsula towards the Suez Canal. For a week or two the invading armies met with success. They reached Ardahan, almost in the rear of Kars, they pushed the Russians back from their rail-head at Sari-Kamysh, and they occupied the capital of Azerbaijan, Tabriz. But then the campaign broke down in disaster. Two Turkish army c were destroyed at Sari-Kamysh in the first week of January, 1915, and the rest were driven out of Russian territory by the end of the month; on the 30th January, the Russians even re-occupied Tabriz. Djemal's Egyptian expedition was a month in arrears, but its fortunes were the same. He reached the Canal at the beginning of February, after a creditable desert march only to return by the way he came, after an abortive night attack. There was no more question of the offensive for the Turks; but only of defending their own straggling front and this breakdown was a bitter blow to Young Turkish official circles, for it shattered half the hopes that had lured them the war. The unmeasured optimism of the winter gave place to equally violent depression, and under the influence of this new atmosphere the persecution of the Armenians entered a second and more positive phase.

A decree went forth that all Armenians should be disarmed The Armenians in the Army were drafted out of the fighting: ranks, re-formed into special labour battalions, and set to work at throwing up fortifications and constructing roads. The disarming of the civil population was left to the local authorities, and in every administrative centre a reign of terror began. The authorities demanded the production of a definite number of arms. Those who could not produce them were tortured, often in fiendish ways; those who procured them for surrender, by purchase from their Moslem neighbours or by other means, were imprisoned for conspiracy against the Government. Few of these were young men, for most of the young had been called up to serve; they were elderly men, men of substance and leaders of the Armenian community, and it became apparent that the inquisition for arms was being used as a cloak to deprive the community of its natural heads. Similar measures had preceded the massacres of 1895-6, and a sense of foreboding spread through the Armenian people. "One night in winter" writes a foreign witness of these events*, "the Government sent officers round the city to all Armenian houses, knocking up the families and demanding that all weapons should be given up. This action was the death-knell to many hearts."

 * Doc. 129

The appalling inference was in fact correct, for the second phase of persecution passed over without a break into the third and final act, and it is evident that the whole train had been laid by the Ministry at Constantinople before the first arms were called in or the first Armenian thrown into prison. This carries the detailed organization of the scheme at least as far back as February, 1915, and, indeed, the elaborate preparations that already been made by the 8th April, the date of the first deportation at Zeitoun, presuppose at least as long a period. It is extremely important to emphasise these chronological facts, because they refute the attempt of the apologists to disconnect the last phase from the phases that preceded it, and to represent it as an emergency measure dictated by the military events of the spring.

In reality, the situation had been growing tenser before the spring began. In outlying villages, the inquisition for arms had been accompanied by open violence. Men had been massacred, women violated and houses burnt down by the gendarmerie patrols, and such outrages had been particularly frequent in the Vilayet of Van, where the soldiers seem to have been exasperated by their recent reverses and were certainly stimulated by the truculence of the Governor Djevdet Bey, who had returned to his administrative duties after his unsuccessful campaigning beyond the frontier. The crowning outrage was the murder of four Armenian leaders from the City, when they were on their way to an outlying district to keep the peace, at Djevdet's own request, between the local Armenians and their Moslem neighbours. The Armenian inhabitants of the City of Van took warning from the fate of the villagers and from this last and most sinister crime, and prepared themselves, in case of need, for self-defence. Their action was justified by Djevdet Bey himself, for he had been drawing a cordon round the garden suburbs of Van, where the majority of the Armenian population lived, and on the 20th April he unleashed his troops upon them without provocation. The Armenians of Van found themselves fighting for their lives against a murderous attack by what was supposed to be the lawful Government of their country. There had been the same sequence of events at Zeitoun. The search for arms had been accompanied by a formidable concentration of troops in the town, and the final phase had been opened, not indeed by a butchery, but by the deportation of the first batch of the inhabitants. This had occurred on the 8th April, twelve days before Djevdet Bey's outbreak at Van, and both events were previous to the new turn in the military situation. In fact, it was the distress of the Armenian civil population at Van that decided the Russian initiative. A Russian column, with a strong contingent of Russian-Armenian volunteers, forced its way towards the city from the direction of Bayazid, and relieved the defenders on the 19th May, after they had been besieged for a month. The strategy of encirclement was now retorted upon the Turks themselves, for on the 24th May another Russian column occupied Urmia, and drove the last of the Turco-Kurdish invaders out of Azerbaijan. A British expeditionary force was simultaneously pressing up the Tigris, and while events were taking this serious turn in the east, the heart of the Empire was threatened by the attack on the Dardanelles. By the end of May, 1915, the outlook was as desperate as in the bad days of 1912, but it must be emphasized again that the final phase in the procedure against the Armenians had already begun before these acute military dangers emerged above the horizon. The military straits which the Young Turks found themselves in the spring of 1915 may have precipitated the execution of their Armenian scheme but have no bearing whatever upon its origination.

On the 8th April, then, the final phase began, and the process carried out at Zeitoun was applied to one Armenian centre after another throughout the Ottoman Empire. On a certain date, in whatever town or village it might be (and the dates show a significant sequence), the public crier went through the streets announcing that every male Armenian must present himself forthwith at the Government Building. In some cases the warning was given by the soldiery or gendarmerie slaughtering every male Armenian they encountered in the streets, a remicence of the procedure in 1895-6; but usually a summons to Government Building was the preliminary stage. The men presented themselves in their working clothes, leaving their shops and work-

rooms open, their ploughs in the field, their cattle on the mountain side. When they arrived, they were thrown without explanation into prison, kept there a day or two, and then marched out of the town in batches, roped man to man along some southerly or south-easterly road. They were starting, they were told, on a long journey -- to Mosul or perhaps to Baghdad. It was a dreadful prospect to men unequipped for travel, who had neither scrip nor staff, food nor clothes nor bedding. They had bidden no farewell to their families, they had not wound up their affairs. But they had not long to ponder over their plight, for they were halted and massacred at the first lonely place on the road. The same process was applied to the other Armenian men (and they numbered hundreds or even thousands in the larger centres) who had been imprisoned during the winter months on the charge of conspiracy or concealment of arms, though in some instances these prisoners are said have been overlooked -- an involuntary form of reprieve of which there were also examples during the French Reign of Terror in 1793. This was the civil authorities' part, but there was complete co-ordination between Talaat Bey's Ministry of the Interior and Enver Pasha's Ministry of War, for simultaneously the Armenian Labour Battalions, working behind the front, were surrounded by detachments of their combatant Moslem fellow-soldiers and butchered in cold blood.

The military authorities also made themselves responsible for the civil population of Bitlis, Moush and Sassoun, who were marked out for complete and immediate extermination on account of their proximity to Van and the advancing Russian forces. This task was carried out by military methods with the help of the local Kurds -- another reversion to the tactics of Abd-ul-Hamid -- but its application appears to have been limited to the aforementioned districts. In the rest of the Empire, where the work was left in the hands of the civil administration, the women and children were not disposed of by straightforward massacre like the men. Their destiny under the Government scheme was not massacre but slavery or deportation.

After the Armenian men had been summoned away to their death, there was usually a few days interval in whatever town it might be, and then the crier was heard again in the streets, bidding all Armenians who remained to prepare themselves for deportation, while placards to the same effect were posted on the walls.* This applied, in actual fact, to the women and children, and to a poor remnant of the men who, through sickness, infirmity or age, had escaped the fate marked out for their sex. A period of grace was in most cases accorded for the settlement of their affairs and the preparation of their journey; but here, again, there were cases in which the victims were taken without warning from the loom, the fountain or even from their beds, and the respite, where granted, was in great measure illusory. The ordinary term given was a bare week, and it was never more than a fortnight -- a time utterly insufficient for all that had to be done. There were instances, moreover, in which the Government broke its promise, and carried away its victims before the stated day arrived.

For the women there was an alternative to deportation. They might escape it by conversion to Islam; but conversion for an Armenian woman in 1915 meant something more physical than a change of theology. It could only be ratified by immediate marriage with a Moslem man, and if the woman were already a wife (or, rather, a widow, for by this time few Armenian husbands remained alive), she must part with any children she had, and surrender them to be brought up as true Moslems in a "Government Orphanage" -- a fate of uncertain meaning, for no such institutions were known to be in existence**. If the convert could find no Turk to take her, or shrank from the embraces of the bridegroom who offered himself, then she and her children must be deported with the rest, however fervently she had professed the creed of Islam. Deportation was the alternative adopted by, or imposed upon, the great majority.

 * Proclamations announcing and justifying the deportation of the Armenians are quoted in Docs. 83 and 120 of this volume, while the alleged text of one of them has been published complete in the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post of the 5th February, 1915, and is reproduced here as Annexe C. to this summary. The latter document differs in its wording and in the order of its clauses from the versions quoted in the places mentioned above, but there is no reason to doubt its

genuineness. Probably the Central Government communicated its instructions to the local authorities by telegraph or secret despatch, and the local authorities embodied these instructions, at their own discretion, in a printed proclamation to the inhabitants of their province.

** See, however, Doc. 64.

The sentence of deportation was a paralysing blow, yet those condemned to it had to spend their week of grace in feverish activity, procuring themselves clothing, provisions and ready money for the road. The local authorities placed every possible obstacle in their way. There was an official fiction that their banishment was only temporary, and they were therefore prohibited from selling their real property or their stock. The Government set its seal upon the vacated houses, lands and merchandise, "to keep them safe against their owners' return;" yet before these rightful owners started on their march they often saw these very possessions, which they had not been allowed to realise, made over by the authorities as a free gift to Moslim immigrants, who had been concentrated in the neighbourhood, in readiness to step into the Armenians' place*. And even even such household or personal chattels as they were permitted to dispose of were of little avail, for their Moslem neighbours took shameless advantage of their necessity, and beat them down to an almost nominal price, so that when the day of departure arrived they were often poorly equipped to meet it.

The Government charged itself with their transport, indeed they were not in a position to arrange for it themselves, for their ultimate destination was seldom divulged. The exiles from each centre were broken up into several convoys, which varied in size from two or three hundred to three or four thousand members. A detachment of gendarmerie was assigned to every convoy, to guard them on the way, and the civil authorities hired or requisitioned a certain number of ox-carts (arabas), usually one to a family, which they placed at their disposal; and so the convoy started out. The mental misery of exile was sufficiently acute, but it was soon ousted by more material cares. A few days, or even a few hours, after the start, the carters would refuse to drive them further, and the gendarmes, as fellow-Moslems, would connive at their mutinousness. So the carts turned back, and the exiles had to go forward on foot. It was the beginning of their physical torments, for they were not travelling over soft country or graded roads, but by mule-tracks across some of the roughest country in the world. It was the hot season, the wells and springs were sometimes many hours' journey apart, and the gendarmes often amused themselves by forbidding their fainting victims to drink. It would have been an arduous march for soldiers on active service, but the members of these convoys were none of them fitted or trained for physical hardship. They were the women and children, the old and the sick. Some of the women had been delicately brought up and lived in comfort all their lives; some had to carry children in their arms too young to walk; others had been sent off with the convoy when they were far gone with child, and gave birth on the road. None of these latter survived, for they were forced to march on again after a few hours' respite; they died on the road, the new-born babies perished with them. Many others died of hunger and thirst, sunstroke, apoplexy or sheer exhaustion. The hardships endured by the women who accompanied their husbands on Sir John Moore's retreat to Corunna bear no comparison with the hardships these Armenian women endured. 'the Government which condemned them to exile knew what the journey would mean, and the servants of the Government who conducted them did everything to aggravate their inevitable physical sufferings. Yet this was the least part of their torture; far worse were the atrocities of violence wantonly inflicted upon them by fellow human beings.

* These Moslem immigrants were particularly in evidence in Cilicia in the Vilayets of Erzeroum and Trebizond.

From the moment they left the outskirts of the towns they were never safe from outrage. The Moslem peasants mobbed and plundered them as they passed through the cultivated lands, and the gendarmes connived at the peasants' brutality, as they had connived at the desertion of the drivers with their carts. When they arrived at a village they were exhibited like slaves in a public place, often before the windows of the Government Building itself, and every Moslem inhabitant was allowed to view them and take his choice of

them for his harem; the gendarmes themselves began to make free with the rest, and compelled them to sleep with them at night. There were still more horrible outrages when they came to the mountains, for here they were met by bands of "chettis" and Kurds. The "chettis" were brigands, recruited from the public prisons; they had been deliberately released by the authorities on a consideration which may have been tacit but which both parties clearly understood. As for the Kurds, they had not changed since 1896, for they had always retained their arms, which Abd-ul-Hamid had served out and the Young Turks could not or would not take away; and they had now been restored to official favour upon the proclamation of the Holy War, so that their position was as secure again as it had been before 1908. They knew well what they were allowed and what they were intended to do. When these Kurds and chettis waylaid the convoys, the gendarmes always fraternized with them and followed their lead, and it would be hard to say which took the most active part in the ensuing massacre -- for this was the work which the brigands came to do. The first to be butchered were the old men and boys -- all the males that were to be found in the convoy except the infants in arms -- -but the women were massacred also. It depended on the whim of the moment whether a Kurd cut a woman down or carried her away into the hills. When they were carried away their babies were left on the ground or dashed against the stones. But while the convoy dwindled, the remnant had always to march on. The cruelty of the gendarmes towards the victims grew greater as their physical sufferings grew more intense; the gendarmes seemed impatient to make a hasty end of their task. Women who lagged behind were bayoneted on the road or pushed over precipices, or over bridges. The passage of rivers, and especially of the Euphrates, was always an occasion of wholesale murder. Women and children were driven into the water, and were shot as they struggled, if they seemed likely to reach the further bank. The lust and covetousness of their tormentors had no limit. The last survivors often staggered into Aleppo naked; every shred of their clothing had been torn from them on the way. Witnesses who saw their arrival remark that there was not one young or pretty face to be seen among them, and there was assuredly none surviving that was truly old -- except in so far as it had been aged by suffering. The only chance to survive was to be plain enough to escape their torturers' lust vigorous enough to bear the fatigues of the road.

Those were the exiles that arrived on foot, but there were, others, from the metropolitan districts and the north-who were transported to Aleppo by rail. These escaped the violence of the Kurds, but the sum of their suffering can hardly have been less. They were packed in cattle-trucks, often filthy and always overcrowded, and their journey was infinitely slow, for the line was congested by their multitude and by the passage of troops. At every stopping-place they were simply turned out into the open, without food or shelter, to wait for days, even weeks, till the line was clear and rolling-stock available to carry them a further stage. The gendarmes in charge of them seem to have been as brutal as those with the convoys on foot, and when they came to the two breaks in the Baghdad Railway, where the route crosses the ranges of the Taurus and Amanus Mountains, they too had to traverse these, the most arduous stages of all, on foot. At Bozanti, the rail-head west of Taurus, and again at Osmania, Mamouret, Islohia and Kotmo, stations on either slope of the Amanus chain, vast and incredibly foul concentration camps grew up, where the exiles were delayed; for months, and died literally by thousands of hunger, exposure, and epidemics. The portion of them that finally reached Aleppo were in as deplorable a condition as those that had made the journey on foot from beginning to end.

Aleppo was the focus upon which all the convoys converged. In April, it is true, half the Zeitounlis had been sent north-westward to Sultania, in the Konia district, one of the most unhealthy spots in the Anatolian Desert. But the authori changed their mind, and despatched the exiles at Sultania south-east again, to join their fellow-townsmen in the Desert of Syria.* Thenceforward, the south-eastern desert was the destination them all, and Aleppo, and in a secondary degree Ourfa and Ras-ul-Ain, were the natural centres of distribution.

* Docs. 114 and 123.

Some of the exiles were planted in the immediate neighbourhood of Aleppo itself -- at places like Moumbidj, Bab, Ma'ara Idlib* -- but these seem to have been comparatively few, and it is not certain whether their quarters there were intended to be permanent. Many more were deported southward from Aleppo along the Syrian Railway, and allowed to find a resting-place in the districts of Hama, Homs and Damascus. A still larger number were sent towards the east, and cantoned on the banks of the Euphrates, in the desert section of its course. There were some at Rakka; Der-el-Zor was the largest depot of all, and is mentioned in this connection more frequently than any place after Aleppo itself; some were sent on to Mayadin**, a day's journey further down the river, and Moslem travellers reported meeting others within forty-eight hours' journey of Baghdad.*** No first-hand evidence has come in of their presence at or near Mosul, though they were frequently informed on their journey that their destination was to be there.

The dispersal of the exiles was thus extremely wide, as the authors of the scheme had intended that it should be, but certain features are common to all the places to which they were sent. They were all inhabited by Moslem populations alien to the Armenians in language and habits of life; they were all unhealthy -- either malarious or sultry or in some other respect markedly unsuitable for the residence of people used to a temperate climate; and they were all remote from the exiles' original homes -- the remotest places, in fact, which the Government could find within the Ottoman frontiers, since Christians were debarred from setting foot on the sacred deserts of the Hidjaz, and a British expeditionary force was occupying the marshes of Irak. The Ottoman Government had to content itself with the worst districts at its disposal, and it did its utmost to heighten the climate's natural effect by marooning the exiles there, after an exhausting journey, with neither food, nor shelter, nor clothing, and with no able-bodied men among them to supply these deficiencies by their labour and resource.

* Docs. 4 and 139.

**Doc 141

***Docs. 11 and 121.

The transmission of the exiles to these distant destinations was naturally slow -- indeed, the slowness of the journey was one of the most effective of its torments. The first convoy started from Zeitoun on the 8th April, 1915; fresh convoys followed it during the seven ensuing months from the different Armenian centres in the Empire, and there is no record of any stoppage until the 6th November. On that date an order from Constantinople reached the local authorities, at any rate in the Cilician plain*, directing them to refrain from further deportations; but this only applied to the remnant of the local Armenian residents and the masses of exiles from the north and north-west who were still painfully struggling across the barriers of Taurus and Amanus, were driven on remorselessly to their journey's end, which cannot have been reached by them (or by such of them as survived) before the very close of the year. The congestion of the routes was partly responsible for this delay; but the congestion would have been still more pronounced if the scheme not been carried out methodically, region by region, in an order which betrays more than anything else the directing hand of Central Government. Cilicia was the first region to be cleared, just as it had been the principal region to suffer in the massacres of 1909. Strategically and economically, it was the most vital in Asiatic Turkey, and its large and increasing Armenian population must always have offended the sensibilities of the Young Turkish Nationalists. It was the natural starting-point for the execution of the Ottomanisation Scheme, and the deportations were in progress here fully six weeks before they were applied to the remainder of the Empire. Zeitoun was cleared on the 8th April; Geben, Furnus and Albustan within the next few days; Dort Yol before the end of the month. At Hadjin, on the other hand, the clearance did not begin till the 3rd June, and dragged on into September; while at Adana, the city of the plain, there was only an abortive clearance in the third

week of May, the serious deportations were postponed till the first week of September.

*Doc. 115.

The next region to be cleared was the zone bordering Van and immediately threatened by the Russian advance, from the Black Sea to the Persian frontier. In the south-eastern districts of this zone -- Bitlis, Moush, Sassoun and Hakkil the clearance, as has been remarked already, was not effected by deportation, but by wholesale massacre on the spot. Outlying villages of the Boulanik, Moush and Sassoun areas were destroyed in the latter part of May, and before the end of the same month Djevdet Bey retreated down the Bohtan Valley from Van, and massacred the Armenians of Sairt. The Armenians of Bitlis were next massacred by Djevdet, on the 25th June; and, in the first week of July, 20,000 fresh troops arrived from Harpout and exterminated the Armenians of Moush -- first the villagers then the people of the town, which was bombarded by artillery on the 10th June. After making an end of Moush these troops joined the Kurdish irregulars operating against Sassoun, and on the 5th August, after bitter fighting, the surviving Sassounlis -- man, woman and child -- were annihilated in their last mountain stronghold. At the end of July the Ottoman forces temporarily re-entered Van, and slaughtered all the Armenian inhabitants who had not escaped in the wake of the Russian retreat. In June and July the Nestorian (Syrian) communities of the districts of Hakkari, in the upper basin of the Greater Zab, were also attacked by the Kurds and destroyed, except for a remnant which crossed the watershed into the Urmia basin and found safety within the Russian lines.

In the north-western districts of the frontier zone the semblance of deportation was preserved, but the exiles -- women and children as well as men -- were invariably massacred in cold blood after a few days on the road. Before the end of May there was a massacre at Khnyss, and on the 6th June the deportations began (with the same consummation) in the villages of the Erzeroum plain. At Erzeroum itself the first deportation took place on the 16th June, and the last on the 28th July (or on the 3rd August, according to other reports). The Armenian Bishop of the city was deported with this last convoy, and never heard of again. At Baibourt, the surrounding villages were similarly cleared before the town, and the townspeople were despatched in three convoys, the last of which started on the 14th June. From the town of Erzindjan four convoys started on successive days, from the 7th June to the 10th. Practically none of the exiles from Erzindjan, Baibourt or Erzeroum seem to have outlived the first stages of the journey.

At Harpout, the clearance began on the 1st June, and continued throughout the month. On the 2nd, 3rd and 4th July the adjoining town of Mezré was emptied as well. The convoys from these two places and the neighbouring villages were terribly thinned by atrocities on the road.

At Trebizond the deportations were carried out from the 1st to the 6th July, and seem to have been simultaneous in the various coast towns of the Vilayet. Here, too, deportation was merely a cloak for immediate massacre. The exiles were either drowned at sea or cut down at the first resting-place on the road.

In the Vilayet of Sivas, again, the villages were dealt with first, but the city itself was not cleared till the 5th July. At X. the men were deported on the 26th June, the women on the 5th July, and the last remnant, who had found protection with the American Missionaries, were carried away on the 10th August. All the men, and many of the women, were massacred on the road.

The Armenian population in the provinces west of Sivas, and in the metropolitan districts surrounding Constantinople, was removed by train along the Anatolian Railway to Konia, and thence towards Aleppo along the several sections of the Baghdad line. In all this region the scheme was put into execution distinctly later. At Angora the deportations began towards the end of July, at Adapazar about the 11th August; at Broussa there seems to have been no clearance till the first weeks of September, but this is stated to have

been one of the last places touched*. At Adrianople, however, the Armenians were not deported till the middle of October; and at K., in the Sandjak of Kaisaria, not till the 12th/15th November.

* Doc. 101

The south-eastern outposts of the Armenian Dispersion were left to the last, although their immediate neighbours in the Cilician highlands had been taken at the very beginning. The villagers of Djibal Mousa were not summoned till the 13th July; Aintab was not touched till the 1st August, and then only cleared gradually during the course of the month. The summons to Ourfa, which was answered, as at Djibal Mousa, by defiance, was not delivered till the last week in September.

Glancing back over this survey, we can discern the Central Government's general plan. The months of April and May were assigned to the clearance of Cilicia; June and July were reserved for the east; the western centres along the Railway were given their turn in August and September; and at the same time the process was extended, for completeness' sake, to the outlying Armenian communities in the extreme south-east. It was a deliberate, systematic attempt to eradicate the Armenian population throughout the Ottoman Empire, and it has certainly met with a very large measure of success; but it is not easy to present the results, even approximately, in a statistical form. The only people in a position to keep an accurate account of the numbers affected were the Ottoman authorities themselves but it is unlikely that they have done so, and still more unlikely that they would ever divulge such figures to the civilized world. We are compelled to base our estimates on the statements of private persons, who were excluded from detailed investigation by the jealous suspicion of the Government officials and were seldom able to observe events in more than a limited section of the field. We must make our computations by piecing together these isolated data from private sources, and since Oriental arithmetic is notoriously inexact (and this is scarcely less true of the Nearer than of the Further East), we shall only make of testimony from foreign witnesses of neutral nationality. Such witnesses may be assumed to be comparatively free from conscious exaggeration and completely innocent of purposeful misrepresentation, and we can accept their statements with considerable assurance.

The first step is to establish the number of Armenians living within the Ottoman frontiers at the moment the deportations began. All the other figures ultimately depend upon this, but it is harder than any to obtain, for there are no independent foreign estimates of this on record, and the discrepancy between the native estimates is extreme*. The Armenian Patriarchate, after an enquiry conducted in 1912, placed the number as high as 2,100,000**; the Ottoman Government, in its latest official returns, puts it at 1,100,000 and no more. Both parties have an equal political interest in forcing their figures, but the Armenians are likely to have had a greater respect for exactitude, or at any rate a stronger sense of the futility of falsification. 'The most "neutral" course under the circumstances is to halve the difference, and to take the number provisionally as being 1,600,000, with the qualification that the true figure certainly lies between this and 2,000,000, and probably approaches more closely to the latter. The rest of the necessary figures can fortunately be drawn from foreign neutral testimony, in which such baffling discrepancies are rarer.

* Though not more extreme than in other parts of the Near Eastern World, like Hungary, where statistics of nationality are a burning question of political controversy.

** For Armenian statistical material see Annexes D. and E. to this summary.

The second step is to estimate the number of those who have escaped deportation. There are the refugees who have escaped it by crossing the frontier -- 182,000 into the Russian Caucasus and 4,200 into Egypt, according to detailed and trustworthy returns*. There are also two important Armenian communities in Turkey where practically all but the leaders have been left unmolested -- those of Smyrna and

Constantinople. At Constantinople about 150,000 Armenians must still remain. Then there are the Catholic and Protestant Millets, which were nominally exempted from deportation, and the exempted converts to Islam. It is impossible to estimate the numbers in these categories with any plausibility, for the conduct of the authorities in respect of them was quite erratic. Many of the converts to Islam**, as well as Armenians of the other denominations, were given the same treatment as the Gregorians, and the actual percentage of conversions is unascertainable, for they were encouraged in some places and discouraged in others. We must also allow for those who managed to elude the Government's net. As a general rule, this category is more numerous in reality than it appears to be, and this is especially so in the Near East. But in the present case the Young Turks seem to have put a Prussian thoroughness into the execution of their scheme, and the margin of ineffectiveness was evidently narrow. In the towns, such as Zeitoun, Hadjin, Sivas, X., and Erzeroum, where we have sufficient testimony to cross-check the estimates presented, the clearance, by deportation or massacre, seems to have been practically complete. At Erzeroum, for instance, there were 20,000 Armenians before the clearance began, and when it was over there were not more than 100 left***. Concealment on any considerable scale can only have been practised in the villages, yet the number of those who have emerged from hiding since the Russian occupation is extraordinarily small. According to the investigations of the Patriarchate, there were 580,000 Armenians in 1912 in the Vilayets of Erzeroum, Bitlis and Van, which are now within the Russian lines****. The American Relief Committee has recently been informed by its agents on the spot that there are now only 12,100 left alive there*****. Whatever arbitrary margin of reduction the absence of confirmatory statistics may make it necessary to subtract from the former figure, the proportion borne to it by the 12,100 survivors remains infinitesimal. Putting the communities at Constantinople Smyrna and the refugees together at about 350,000, we shall certainly not be reckoning too low if we allow a quarter of a million for the Protestants, Catholics, converts and others who were spared, and estimate the total number of Armenians in Turkey who escaped deportation at not more than 600,000.

 * The former figure is taken from the American Relief Committee's Fourth Bulletin, dated 5th April, 1916; the second from Doc. 131.

** Doc. 88.

*** Doc. 57. According to Doc. 53, the most authoritative of all those relating to Erzeroum, the number was actually 22

**** The western districts of Erzeroum, which the Turks still hold, m written off against Trebizond.

***** Bulletin of the 5th April, 1916.

This leaves at least 1,000,000 to be accounted for by deportation and massacre, and probably 1,200,000 or more.

The third step is to estimate what proportion of these million Armenians has perished and what proportion survived, and here again our material is scanty and generalization unsafe, the procedure of the authorities being erratic in this respect also. In certain vilayets, like Van and Bitlis, there was no deportation at all, but massacre outright; in others, like Erzeroum and Trebizond: and again at Angora, deportation and massacre were equivalent, the convoys being butchered systematically at an early stage on the road. In Cilicia, on the other hand, the men as well as the women seem to have been genuinely deported, and the convoys seem only to have been reduced by sickness and exhaustion. Yet even where there was no wholesale massacre on the journey, a convoy might practically be exterminated by degrees. A large combined convoy, for instance, of exiles from Mamouret-ul-Aziz and Sivas, set out from Malatia 18,000 strong and numbered 301 at Viran Shehr, 150 at Aleppo*. In this case however, the wastage appears to have been exceptional. We have one similar instance of a convoy from Harpout which was reduced on the way to Aleppo from 5,000 to 213, a loss of 96 per cent.**; but in general the wastage seems to fluctuate, with a wide oscillation, on either side of

50 per cent.; 600 out of 2,500 (24 per cent.) reached Aleppo from a village in the Harpout districts***; 60 per cent. arrived there out of the first convoy from the village of E. (near H.), and 46 per cent. out of the second; 25 per cent. arrived out of a convoy from the village of D. in the same neighbourhood****. We shall certainly be well within the mark if we estimate that at least half those condemned to massacre or deportation have actually perished.

* Doc 66.

** Doc. 137.

*** Doc. 141.

****Doc. 70.

We can check this estimate to some extent by the record of arrivals at certain important centres of traffic on the exile routes, or at the final destinations of the convoys. On the 16th August, 1915, for instance, an exceedingly competent neutral resident at Constantinople stated that, to his knowledge, there were then 50,000 exiles scattered along the route from Bozanti (the first break in the Baghdad line) to Aleppo; on the 5th November, another witness*, who had just traversed this route, wrote back from Aleppo that he had passed 150,000 exiles between there and Konia. Again, 13,155 exiles had reached or passed through Aleppo by the 30th July, 1915, and 20,000 more arrived there between that date and the 19th August**. By the 3rd August 15,000 of these had been transmitted alive to Der-el-Zor, and this was only the beginning of the arrivals in the Zor district. No exiles reached Damascus before the 12th August, but between that date and the 3rd October, 1915, 22,000 of them had come through***. These are isolated data, and prove little in themselves, but in its Bulletin of the 5th April, 1916, the American Relief Committee has published a cable recently received in the United States from a competent source, in which the total number of Armenian exiles alive at that time in the regions of Der-el-Zor, Damascus and Aleppo is estimated roughly at 500,000****. This figure is possibly an exaggeration, but it is not incompatible with our two previous conclusions, that the total number of Armenians affected by the Young Turks' scheme was at least a million, and that at least 50 per cent. of these have perished. To the alleged 500,000 survivors in the three regions mentioned we must add an uncertain but inconsiderable margin for the exiles who may have been planted at Mosul or who may still, in March 1916, have been held up on the road; and this will raise the original number affected to something approaching 1,200,000, which we considered, on other grounds, to be nearer the real figure than the bare million which we accepted.

We can sum up this statistical enquiry by saying that, as far as our defective information carries us, about an equal number of Armenians in Turkey seem to have escaped, to have perished, and to have survived deportation in 1915; and we shall not be far wrong if, in round numbers, we estimate each of these categories at 600,000.

The exact quantitative scale of the crime thus remains uncertain*****, but there is no uncertainty as to the responsibility for its perpetration. This immense infliction of suffering and destruction of life was not the work of religious fanaticism. Fanaticism played no more part here than it has played in the fighting at Gallipoli or Kut, and the "Holy War" which the Young Turks caused to be proclaimed in October, 1914, was merely a pol move to embarrass the Moslem subjects of the Entente Powers.

* Doc. 116.

** Doc 139

***Doc. 143.

**** The items of this estimate are given in Doc. 139(d).

***** For further calculations see Annexe F.

There was no fanaticism, for instance, in the conduct of Kurds and chettis, who committed some of the most hot acts of all, nor can the responsibility be fixed upon them. They were simply marauders and criminals who did after their kind, and the Government, which not only condoned, but instigated, their actions, must bear the guilt. The peasantry, again (own brothers though they were to the Ottoman soldiery whose apparent humanity at Gallipoli and Kut has won their opponents' respect), behaved with astonishing brutality to the Armenians who were delivered into their hands; yet responsibility does not lie with the Turkish peasantry. They are sluggish, docile people, unready to take violent action their own initiative, but capable of perpetrating any enormity on the suggestion of those they are accustomed to obey. The peasantry would never have attacked the Armenians if their superiors had not given them the word. Nor are the Moslem townspeople primarily to blame; their record is not invariably black, and the evidence in this volume throws here and there a favourable light upon their character. Where Moslem and Christian lived together in the same town or village, led the same life, pursued the same vocation, there seems often to have been a strong human bond between them. The respectable Moslem townspeople seldom desired the extermination of their Armenian neighbours, sometimes openly deplored it, and in several instances even set themselves to hinder it from taking effect. We have evidence of this from various places -- Adana*, for instance, and AF.** in Cilicia, the villages of AJ. and AK** in the A.F. district, and the city of Angora. The authorities had indeed to decree severe penalties against any Moslem as well as any alien or Greek who might be convicted of sheltering their Armenian victims. The rabble naturally looted Armenian property when the police connived, as the rabble in European towns might do; the respectable majority of the Moslem townspeople can be accused of apathy at worst; the responsibility cannot rest with these.

The guilt must, therefore, fall upon the officials of the Ottoman Government, but it will not weigh equally upon all members of the official hierarchy. The behaviour of the gendarmerie, for example, was utterly atrocious; the subordinates were demoralized by the power for evil that was placed in their hands; they were egged on by their chiefs, who gave vent to a malevolence: against the Armenians which they must have been harbouring for years; a very large proportion of the total misery inflicted, was the gendarmerie's work; and yet the gendarmerie were not, or ought not to have been, independent agents. The responsibility for their misconduct must be referred to the local civil administrators, or to the Central Government, or to both.

* Doc. 128.

** Doc. 126.

The local administrators of provinces and sub-districts -- Valis, Mutessarifs and Kaimakams -- are certainly very deeply to blame. The latitude allowed them by the Central Government was wide, as is shown by the variations they practiced, in different places, upon the common scheme. In this place the Armenian men were massacred; in that they were deported unscathed; in that other they were taken out to sea and drowned. Here the women were bullied into conversion; here conversion was disallowed; here they were massacred like the men. And in many other matters, such as the disposal of Armenian property or the use of torture, remarkable differences of practice can be observed, which are all ascribable to the good or bad will of the local officials. A serious part of the responsibility falls upon them -- upon fireeaters like Djevdet Bey or cruel natures like the Governor of Ourfa*; and yet their freedom of action was comparatively restricted. Where they were evilly-intentioned towards the Armenians they were able to go beyond the Central Government's instructions (though even in matters like the exemption of Catholics and Protestants, where their action was

apparently most free, they and the Central Government were often merely in collusion)**; but they might never mitigate their instructions by one degree. Humane and honourable governors (and there were a certain number of these) were powerless to protect the Armenians in their province. The Central Government had its agents on the spot -- the chairman of the local branch of the Committee of Union and Progress***, the local Chief of Gendarmerie, or even some subordinate official**** on the Governor's own administrative staff. If these merciful governors were merely remiss in executing the instructions, they were flouted and overruled; if they refused to obey them, they were dismissed and replaced by more pliant successors. In one way or another, the Central Government enforced and controlled the execution of the scheme, as it alone had originated the conception of it; and the Young Turkish Ministers and their associates at Constantinople are directly and personally responsible, from beginning to end, for the gigantic crime that devastated the Near East in 1915.

* Doc. 119

**See Doc. 87 relating to the town of X.

***Docs. 72 and 128

**** Doc. 70.