

GERMANY TURKEY AND ARMENIA

1917

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A Selection of Documentary Evidence Relating to the Armenian
Atrocities from German and other Sources

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GERMANY, TURKEY AND ARMENIA

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ARMENIA**

**A selection of documentary evidence
relating to the Armenian Atrocities from
German and other sources**

LONDON.

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1917.

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INTRODUCTION.

The blue book as to the treatment of the Armenians which has recently been issued (Miscellaneous, No. 31, 1916) contains a large mass of evidence relating to facts which, incredible as they are, have been so incontrovertibly established that no doubt as to their existence can possibly be entertained by any reasonable person. The greater part of the documents included in the blue book does not, however, throw much light on the attitude taken by the German public and the German Government with reference to the crimes which have been committed. The object of this pamphlet is to bring before the public a collection of documents specially selected for the purpose of throwing light on this subject. Some of them are included in the blue book, but the documents Nos. 1, 6, 9, 10 and 12 have not, as yet, been published in Great Britain or the United States. The two documents printed in the Appendix have no direct bearing on the questions relating to the German attitude. But as they came into the possession of the British authorities after the publication of the blue book and are of special interest as giving the impressions of two intelligent Turkish officers,¹ it was thought right to include them.

A perusal of the documents included in this collection must convince the reader of three things: (1) that the Germans in Armenia are as full of indignation, and as anxious to see a stop put to the methods of extermination applied by the Turkish Government, as the most ardent friends of the Armenian cause in this country; (2) that, owing to the wilful or reckless perversion of the facts in the German press and the German pamphlet-literature, and owing also to the indifference and credulity of the general German public, the true state of things is unknown or ignored by the majority; (3) that the German Government could have stopped the outrages if they had desired to do so and that their non-interference was not in any way due to ignorance of the true facts.

One very interesting document which has come to the Editor's notice is of too confidential a nature to be reproduced in this place. It is a Memorandum written by a distinguished German scholar, whose name for obvious reasons has to be suppressed, but whose good faith and whose critical acumen would be acknowledged by every one of his countrymen whose powers of judgment have not been perverted by the passion of war. This Memorandum contains ample evidence of the fact referred to above, that in consequence of the misstatements or suppressions of fact of which German writers on the subject have been guilty, public opinion in Germany has entirely failed to realise the horrors of the Armenian situation, and that some influential persons even approve of the action of the Turkish authorities. The old legend about the unscrupulousness of the Armenian traders and their exploitation of Turkish innocence and trustfulness—of which the groundlessness is convincingly demonstrated by the author of the Memorandum—seems to be firmly believed throughout Germany, and is made use of by those German politicians and journalists who approve cruelty, provided only it serves the cause of German world-dominion. Thus Count Reventlow in a passage quoted in the Memorandum refers to these matters in the following terms: "The Turk is unsuspicious and good-natured; everywhere he furnishes a convenient object for exploitation—up to a certain point and to a certain degree; then despair seizes him and he rises against his tormentors. Regrettable as such unlawful self-defence may be from the point of view of civilisation, it is obvious that the Armenians ... least of all deserve the pity and the compassionate emotions of the civilized world."

The author of the Memorandum disposes of this tirade by saying that "it is of course unknown to the writer" of the passage quoted by us "that 80 per cent. of the Armenian population, and particularly those who were affected by the deportations, are peasant farmers, who presumably were not engaged in the exploitation of the Kurdish brigands by whom they were surrounded.... The assumption that the deportation and annihilation of the Armenian race was in the nature of unlawful self-defence is so far removed from the true facts that it does not require any refutation."

The whole German press—as stated by the author of the Memorandum—reproduced an interview with Dr. Rifaat, a member of the Committee of Union and Progress, originally published in a Danish paper, in the course of which the interviewed politician spoke of "a conspiracy embracing the whole Armenian

population residing in Turkey, threatening the very existence of the country and intended to play Constantinople into the hands of the Allies.” He further stated that the plot was discovered before it had ripened, that many of the conspirators, including the Arabian Chief Abd-ul-Kerim, had been arrested and punished, and that 21 of the adherents of the latter were hanged. The author of the Memorandum makes the following comment on this statement: “If Dr. Rifaat knows anything of an Arabian conspiracy, it is impossible for us to verify this finding. In any case an ‘Arabian’ conspiracy is not an ‘Armenian’ conspiracy. But the number of the 21 conspirators hanged and the other contents of the ‘interview’ lead inevitably to the conclusion that Dr. Rifaat did *intentionally mislead public opinion, by representing the plot of the Turkish opposition which had already been discovered before the war,*² and which aimed at the fall of the present government and the murder of Talaat Bey and other Young Turk leaders, as ‘a conspiracy embracing the whole Armenian population residing in Turkey.’”

The interview with Dr. Rifaat is also one of the trump-cards played in a pamphlet published in Berlin under the title of “The Armenian Question” by C. A. Bratter, a person describing himself as “a Citizen of a neutral State and a German Journalist.” This pamphlet (which was written in order to counteract the influence of an appeal in favour of the Armenians over the signatures of a number of distinguished Swiss residents) is minutely analyzed by the author of the Memorandum, together with its pretended sources of information; and he demonstrates irrefutably its utter untrustworthiness as well as the bad faith of its writer. He significantly adds: “*How forgetful and how uncritical must any reader be to whom it is possible to present such lies.*”³

Being ourselves in a position of greater freedom, we can say that this forgetfulness and this want of critical power are not surprising in the German public, having regard to the fact that their Government is in close alliance with the perpetrators of the crimes which Bratter and other persons of the same mental and moral calibre try to explain away or justify, and which could and would have been prevented long ago if that Government had not disregarded the elementary dictates of humanity.

The German scholar’s Memorandum contains some very interesting evidence showing: (a) that the Armenian leaders, far from engaging in an anti-Turkish conspiracy either before or during the war, were entirely loyal to the Turkish

Government, in fact so loyal that this was made a cause of complaint by some of the Turkish opponents of the Committee of Union and Progress; (b) that the policy finally adopted with regard to the Armenians was originally opposed by some of the members of the ruling party, but when so adopted was a deliberate policy of extermination; (c) that the acts of resistance on the part of the Armenians, which are relied upon as an excuse for their treatment, were isolated acts due in each case to particularly grave provocation; that, in every instance except that of Zeitoun, they were later in date than the beginning of the deportations, and were in fact provoked by the fear of suffering the fate which had already overtaken neighbouring Armenian communities [see historical summary in blue book]; (d) that some of the other excuses put forward are so much at variance with the well-known facts that they could only deceive persons unable or unwilling to ascertain the truth.

As regards the loyalty of the Turkish Armenians, it is shown by extracts from leading papers, circulars sent out by the ecclesiastical dignitaries and by the “Dashnakzagan” (the only influential party organisation of the Armenians), as well as by several official announcements of the Turkish Government or of its agents, issued as late as August, 1915, that that loyalty was not only the policy declared by the Armenian leaders and carried out by the bulk of the population, but that it was also fully acknowledged by the authorities.

In a letter dated the 26th February, 1915, written by Enver Pasha to the Armenian Bishop of Konia, the former says: “I avail myself of this opportunity to tell you that the Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman Army conscientiously perform their duties in the theatre of war, as I can testify from personal observation. I beg of you to communicate to the Armenian people, whose perfect devotion to the Ottoman Government is well known, the expression of my satisfaction and gratitude.” Several other testimonies of a similar kind are quoted in the Memorandum.

In the days of Abd-ul-Hamid the “Dashnakzagan” were closely allied with the Committee of Union and Progress, and several of the members of that Committee received considerable help and protection from the Armenians. Those among them, whose sense of gratitude was not entirely destroyed by racial fanaticism, were therefore inclined to oppose the sinister schemes of their less scrupulous colleagues. These schemes, however, were the natural result of the tendencies which had gradually gained the upper hand in the Committee of

Union and Progress, which Committee, as is well known, had met with considerable opposition in some powerful sections of the Turkish population, and for the sake of removing that opposition had been driven into a policy of Pan-Islamism. This policy had already been proclaimed in a report presented to the Congress of the Young Turk party held in 1911, on which occasion it was urged that “sooner or later the complete Ottomanisation of all Turkish subjects must be carried through, but that it was clear that this object could never be obtained by persuasion, and that the force of arms would have to be resorted to.” The nationalities in the said report are declared to be a “quantité négligeable”; they might keep their religion, but not their language.

The first symptoms of the fact that the advocates of the policy of “thorough” against the Armenians had overcome the resistance of their more scrupulous colleagues appeared on the 18/31 March, 1915, when the press organ of the “Dashnakzagan” was suppressed. On the 12/25 April 235 leading Armenians were arrested in Constantinople and deported. The excuse given by Talaat Bey to Vartkes, one of the Armenian members of the Ottoman Parliament, shows: (1) that the destruction of the Armenians had then been definitely decided on; (2) that no act of disloyalty on the part of the Armenians could have been adduced for the justification of this decision. These are Talaat’s words: “In the days of our weakness you put your knife to our throat by raising the question of reform. For that reason we will now avail ourselves of our present favourable situation, for the purpose of scattering your people to such an extent that for the next fifty years all thought of reforms will be driven out of your heads.” Vartkes thereupon said: “Then it is the intention to continue the work of Abd-ul-Hamid?” Talaat laconically replied, “Yes.” As pointed out by the author of the Memorandum, the movement for reform referred to by Talaat had for its only object the protection of the life and property of the Armenians against the attacks of Kurdish brigands; the reforms had been stipulated for by Art. 61 of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 and had been constantly supported by the Great Powers, including Germany, which last named power had been specially active in that behalf during the year 1913.

The Constantinople arrests were soon followed by the deportations in the provinces and many acts of violence. The two members of Parliament, Zohrab and Vartkes, were arrested shortly after the interview of the latter with Talaat; they were deported and murdered. Thenceforth the policy of extermination

manifested itself in all its nakedness. One of the principal officials in the Turkish Ministry of Justice said to an Armenian: “There is not sufficient room in this Empire for you and ourselves; it would be unpardonable recklessness on our part if we did not use this opportunity to clear you out of the way.” Some members of the Young Turk Committee even showed their hand more openly by declaring that “all foreigners must disappear from Turkey, first the Armenians, then the Greeks, then the Jews, and finally the Europeans.” One of the Ministers of State boasted that he would have attained in three weeks what Abd-ul-Hamid failed to accomplish in thirty years.

The excuses brought forward in a number of successive official statements made by the Turkish Government for the purpose of stifling the consciences of their wilfully credulous German Allies are summed up in the Memorandum. The substance of this summary appears from the following statement, in which the contrast between the accusation and the real facts is pointed out under each head: —

1. One Garo Pasdermadjian, a Russian Armenian, is vaguely alleged to have joined certain volunteer corps in the district of Erzeroum. (All the positive acts ascribed to him are connected with the doings of the *Russian* Armenians.)
2. Two Armenians are alleged to have—on the instigation of the British authorities—caused a train in Cilicia to go off the rails. (In the Turkish official statement dated 4th June, 1915, in which this accusation is made, a preliminary observation appears, to the effect that the Armenians “of Cilicia had done no act which could have disturbed the public peace and order, or could have necessitated any repressive measures”).
3. The Commanders of English and French warships are accused of having placed themselves in communication with Armenians of Adana, Alexandretta, and other places on the coast, for the purpose of inciting them to rebellion. (No evidence is produced as to this accusation, and it is not even alleged that the attempt complained of had any success.)
4. The resistance of the Armenians of Zeitoun to the Turkish authorities is referred to. (The events at Zeitoun are well known. Turkish Gendarmes had taken possession of some Armenian young women; twenty young men had thereupon come to blows with the Gendarmes and had barricaded themselves in

a monastery some distance away from the town. The town was then surrounded by soldiers and the whole population of the town was deported.)

5. It is made a complaint that four “Hintchakists” were involved in a plot against the Turkish Government organized by the party in opposition. (The plot was started in 1912, and had been discovered before the outbreak of war. The “Hintchakists” were active as a revolutionary Armenian party in the nineties, but in 1913 the Turkish Hintchakists repudiated all connection with any revolutionary movement; the four Hintchakists in question were *Egyptian*, Armenians, and had been arrested before the outbreak of war.)

6. It is stated that Armenians in Van and other places near the south-eastern corner of Lake Van, had risen in arms against the Government. (The events in this district are well-known; there was no premeditated resistance; but the violence of the Turkish and Kurdish soldiers, which caused many inhabitants to cross the Russian frontier, also caused some occasional acts of resistance.)

7. The occupation of the Castle Rock at Shabin-Karahissar by 500 Armenians is made another ground of complaint. (This happened after the town had been surrounded by soldiers, who had been summoned on account of the excitement caused in the town by the execution of a citizen and the threats of deportations.)

The far-fetched character of the justification of the outrages is laid bare by the analysis given above, which is a summarised reproduction of the criticism contained in the German scholar’s Memorandum. The old maxim, “Qui s’excuse s’accuse,” is particularly appropriate in this instance. The deliberate character of the policy of extermination is only seen with greater distinctness through the flimsy cloak of pretexts which is intended to conceal it. The result is described as follows in the German Memorandum: “What has happened, is an eviction carried out on the largest possible scale, affecting 1½ millions of citizens, who by their pertinacity and capacity for work have had the greatest share in the development of the economic progress of the country.”

Some persons in Germany seem to think that the fate of the Armenians was due to the fact that the continued co-existence in the same country of races so antagonistic to one another as the Turkish and Armenian is impossible in the nature of things; but this is most emphatically denied by the author of the Memorandum, who asserts that in this instance the Government did not even

make use of its favourite method of inciting one part of the population against another part, but carried out its scheme by the sole agency of administrative measures.

The author of the Memorandum is no doubt himself actuated entirely by humane and high-minded feelings, and the very fact of his taking such a very strong attitude on the Armenian question reveals an amount of courage which calls for unqualified admiration; but he evidently knows that many of his countrymen require more tangible inducements for abandoning their callous or hostile attitude on the Armenian question. He therefore calls attention to the serious loss which not only Turkish economic life but also German trade interests will suffer, if the extermination of the Armenians is to be carried to the bitter end. He shows that the Turks are absolutely without any talent for trade and industry, and that the legend about the dishonesty of the Armenians and Greeks as opposed to the honesty of the Turks has no foundation in fact of any sort. He says that many German merchants are under the impression that their customers in Turkey are Turks, while in reality they are Armenians, Greeks, or Jews. The Greeks apparently are chiefly concerned with export trade, while the import trade is mainly in the hands of Armenian merchants. The German exporters, who give longer credits than others, are of course interested in the solvency of their customers, but many of them are ignorant of their nationality, and—starting from the notion that everyone who wears a fez is of Turkish nationality—they think that they are dealing with Turks. These exporters will have a rude awakening when the true facts become known to them. The Memorandum, by way of illustration, mentions one firm of importers in Constantinople who sell goods to 378 customers residing in 42 towns in the interior. The total amount owing by these customers at the date when the information was given, was nearly £14,000, which sum had to be written off as lost, as all the 378 debtors, with their employees and with their goods, have vanished; they are either dead or wander about as beggars on the borders of the Arabian desert.

During the Balkan war some members of the Young Turk Committee tried to damage the trade of the Armenians and of the Greeks by means of a boycott, which was put into operation with the aid of the Government. The rural population, which was in this way compelled to make their purchases in Turkish shops only, obtained bad goods at increased prices, and returned to the Armenians and Greeks as soon as the boycott was raised.

The Memorandum quotes a report, dated 15th August, 1915, and made by the American Consul at Aleppo, which sums up the result of the deportations of the Armenians in the following passage:—

“As 90 per cent. of the trade into the interior is in the hands of the Armenians, the result is that the country has to face economic ruin. As the greater part of the commercial transactions are credit transactions, hundreds of business men of high standing, though not themselves Armenians, have to face bankruptcy. In the evacuated localities, barring a few exceptions, there will not be a single mason, smith, tailor, carpenter, potter, tentmaker, weaver, shoemaker, jeweller, chemist, doctor, lawyer, or any other person engaged in trade or in a profession; the country will, in fact, be in a helpless position.”

The author of the Memorandum winds up the section relating to the effect of the deportations on Turkish trade with the following passage:—

“The popularity of the—otherwise unpopular—war may have been temporarily increased with the Turkish populace by the annihilation and spoliation of the non-Mohammedan population, more particularly of the Armenians, but partly also of the Syrians, the Greeks, the Maronites, and the Jews; but the more thoughtful Mohammedans will, on perceiving the net result of the damage suffered by their country, regretfully lament the economic ruin of Turkey, and come to the conclusion that the Turkish Government has lost incomparably more by the internal warfare than it can ever gain by external victories.”

As regards the “moral consequences” of the Armenian massacres, the German scholar says that they will not be properly felt till after the end of the war. He means by that, that the civilized world will then wake up to the horrors of the deeds which have been perpetrated by the Turkish Government. He continues: “The world will not allow itself to be persuaded by the contention that strategical considerations had required the deportation of half a million of women and children, wholesale conversions to the Mohammedan faith, and the annihilation of hundreds of thousands of defenceless persons.”

The German scholar’s Memorandum, for obvious reasons, is very silent as to the moral responsibility of the German Government for the deeds which rouse his indignation, but several of his countrymen are more outspoken. In this respect some of the documents included in this pamphlet are very instructive.

The German whose experiences are recorded in Document 9 reports that a Turkish official said to him: "This time Germany has given these unbelieving swine a lesson which they will not forget." (See below, p. 66.) At Arab Pounar a Turkish major addressed him in the following language: "I and my brother took possession of a young girl at Ras-el-Ain, who had been left on the road. We are very angry with the Germans for doing such things." When challenged on this point the Turks replied: "The chief of the General Staff is a German; von der Goltz is Commander-in-Chief, and ever so many German officers are in our Army. Our Koran does not permit such treatment as the Armenians have to suffer now." (See p. 79.) In Nuss Tell a Mohammedan inspector made a similar remark, and when asked to explain himself he replied: "It is not only I who say this; everyone will tell you the same tale." (See p. 79.)

Document No. 12, which voices the indignation of a German teacher in a German secondary school in Turkey, is also of peculiar interest. The following passages deserve special notice:—"We deem it our duty to call attention to the fact that our educational work will lose its moral foundation and the esteem of the natives, if the German Government is not in a position to prevent the brutality with which the wives and children of slaughtered Armenians are treated in this place." (See p. 95.) "'Ta alim el aleman' ('that is the teaching of the Germans') says the simple Turk, when asked about the authors of these measures. The educated Moslems are convinced that, though the German people may disapprove of such horrors, the German Government is taking no steps to prevent them, out of consideration for its Turkish allies. Mohammedans of more refined feelings, Turks as well as Arabs, shake their heads disapprovingly; they do not even conceal their tears, when, in the passage of a convoy of deported Armenians through the town, they see Turkish soldiers inflicting blows with heavy sticks on women in advanced pregnancy or dying persons who cannot drag themselves any further. They cannot imagine that their Government has ordered these cruelties, and ascribe all excesses to the guilt of the Germans, who during the war are held to be the teachers of the Turks in all matters. Even the Mollahs declare in the Mosques that it was not the Sublime Porte but the German officers who had ordered the ill-treatment and annihilation of the Armenians. The things which in this place have been before everybody's eyes during many months must indeed remain a blot on Germany's shield of honour in the memory of Oriental nations." (See pp. 96–97.) "Nothing would be more humiliating for us than the erection of a costly palace at Constantinople

commemorating German-Turkish friendship, while we are unable to protect our fellow-Christians from barbarities unparalleled even in the blood-stained history of Turkey.” (See p. 106.)

The author of the document considers it “out of the question that the German Government, if it were seriously inclined to stem the tide of destruction even at this eleventh hour, could find it impossible to bring the Turkish Government to reason.” He proceeds as follows: “If the Turks are really so well disposed to us Germans as people say, then it is surely permissible to show them to what an extent they compromise us before the whole civilised world, if we, as their Allies, are to look on calmly, when hundreds of thousands of our fellow-Christians in Turkey are slaughtered, when their wives and daughters are violated, and their children brought up in the faith of Islam.” (See p. 105.)

He concludes his report with the following peroration:

“We may indignantly repudiate the lies circulated in enemy countries accusing the German Consuls of having organized the massacres. We shall not, however, destroy the belief of the Turkish people that Germany has ordered the Armenian massacres unless energetic action be at last taken by German diplomatists and German officers.”

More than a year has elapsed since the appeal was issued, but the rulers of Germany apparently are more inclined to act on Count Reventlow’s suggestion, according to which “the Armenians least of all deserve the pity and the compassionate emotions of the civilized world,” than to listen to an eye-witness whose conceptions as to the true mission of German culture differ so widely from the ideas which, to the disgrace and misfortune of his country, have of late characterised German political aims and German methods of warfare.

1

The particulars as to name and rank are given in the original documents, but must for obvious reasons be suppressed in this pamphlet. ↑

2

The italics are those of the author of the Memorandum. ↑

3

Here again the italics are those of the author of the Memorandum. ↑

A. THE INVASION OF PERSIA.

1. LETTERS FROM GERMAN MISSIONARIES IN N.W. PERSIA.

(a)

The Russians had hardly gone when the Mohammedans began to rob and to pillage. Window-frames, doors, staircases, woodwork, everything was taken away. Many Syrians had abandoned the whole of their household goods and the stores accumulated for the winter, and had fled. Everything fell into the enemy's hands. Flight was the best expedient; for those who were left behind had a sad fate. Fifteen thousand Syrians found protection within the walls of the Mission Station, and were provided with bread by the missionaries. One lavasch (a thin water biscuit) was each person's daily ration. Sickness broke out; the death rate mounted up to fifty a day. In the villages the Kurds killed nearly every man who came into their power. During six weeks a Turkish soldier guarded us. *The fact that I was born in Germany was very helpful; nobody even touched us.*¹

Am I to report how the Turks had erected gallows on the main road outside the town gates and had hanged many innocent Syrians and shot others, who previously had been detained a long time in prison? I will be silent as to all these horrible things. Like many other Armenian soldiers, one was beaten to death here outside the gate and buried close to Miss Friedemann's wall, but so carelessly that the dogs were able to disinter part of the corpse. One of the hands was quite uncovered. I took a few spades and we heaped a mound over him. Miss Friedemann's garden, the property of the German Orient Mission, was

destroyed by the Mohammedans and some of the houses were set on fire. We gladly welcomed the first Cossacks, who appeared again after five months. Now we feel once more that our life is safe and that it is unnecessary to keep the gates locked during the day-time.

(b)

The latest reports tell us that 4,000 Syrians and 100 Armenians who were here with the [American] missionaries [in Urmia] died of sickness alone. All the surrounding villages have been plundered and burnt down, more particularly Göktepe, Gülpashan, and Icharguscha. Two thousand Christians have been massacred in Urmia and the surrounding country; many churches have been destroyed and burnt; also many houses in the town.

(c)

Sautchbulak was razed to the ground by the Turks. Gallows were erected for the missionaries, but help came and prevented the worst. A lady missionary and a doctor have died.

(d)

In Haftevan and Salmas 850 corpses were found in the wells and cisterns alone, all headless. Why? The Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish troops had promised a sum of money for every Christian head. The wells are drenched with the blood of Christians. From Haftevan alone 500 women and girls were handed over to the Kurds in Sautchbulak. In Diliman crowds of Christians were locked up and forced to become Mohammedans. The males were circumcised. Gülpashan, the richest village in the district of Urmia, has been razed to the ground. The men were killed, the pretty girls and women carried off. The same fate befell Babaru. Hundreds of women threw themselves into the depths of the river when they saw so many of their sisters being violated in the streets in broad daylight; the same happened in Miandoab in the district of Sulduz. The soldiers who passed through from Sautchbulak carried the Russian Consul's head on a bayonet-point into Maragha. Forty Syrians were hanged on the gallows erected in the Catholic Mission Station at Fath-Ali-Han-Göl. The nuns had run into the street and prayed for pity, but in vain. In Salmas in Khosrova their whole station has been destroyed; the nuns have fled. Maragha is destroyed. In Tabriz things are not

quite so bad; 1,175 Christians were massacred in Salmas, 2,000 in the district of Urmia. Of those who had taken refuge with the missionaries 4,100 died of typhus. The whole number of the refugees, including those from Tergavar, Van, and Azerbaijan, is estimated at 300,000. In Etchmiadzin a committee was formed for the purpose of taking care of the poor people. Over 500 children were found on the roads over which the refugees had come, some only nine days old. Altogether over 3,000 orphans were collected at Etchmiadzin.

1

The italics are the Editor's. ↑

B. THE SIX ARMENIAN VILAYETS.

2. VAN AFTER THE TURKISH RETREAT.

Letter from Herr Spörri, of the German Mission at Van, published in the German Journal, "Sonnenaufgang," October, 1915.

There lies Artamid before us, adorned by its charming gardens; but how does the village look? The greater part of it is nothing now but a heap of ruins. We talked there with three of our former orphan protégées, who had had fearful experiences during the recent events. We rode on across the mountain of Artamid. Even in time of peace one crosses the pass with one's heart in one's mouth, because the Kurds ply their robber trade there. Now it is all uncannily still. Our glance swept over the magnificent valley of Haiotz-Tzor. There lay Antananz before us, now utterly destroyed like the rest. We gave shelter, at the time, to people from Antananz who had managed to escape. Further on in the magnificent green landscape lay Vostan. At first sight one might call it a paradise, but during these latter days it has also been a hell. What rivers of blood must have flowed there; it was one of the chief strongholds of the armed Kurds. At the foot of the mountain we came to Angegh. There again there were many houses destroyed. We found here a young woman who, after many years of widowhood, had married a native of the village. Things had been going well with her; now her husband, too, was slaughtered. One hundred and thirty people are said to have been murdered thus. We pitched our camp here in face of the blackened ruins. Straight in front of us stood an "amrodz," a tower built of cakes of dung—a common enough sight in these parts. We were told that the Kurds had burnt the corpses of the slaughtered Armenians in it. Horrible! And yet that

is at least better than if the corpses of the slain, as has happened in other places, are allowed to lie for an indefinite period unburied, so that they are devoured by dogs and poison the air. There we were met by some soldiers; they were Armenian “Volunteers” who had come from Russia and were now fighting on the side of the Russians for the liberation of their Haiasdan. They were coming now from the neighbourhood of Bitlis, where heavy fighting was in progress. They had brought some sick back to the town, and proposed to rest here awhile. After that we rode on to Ten, where people we already knew came out to meet us from the village and informed us of what had happened there. There, too, the scenes of our former activity, the school and the church, lay in ruins, and many dwelling houses as well. The man who used to put us up was also among the slain; his widow is still quite distraught. Here about 150 are said to have been murdered. There were so many orphans in the place, they said to us:—should we now be inclined to take charge of any again? We were unable to give them any definite answer. As we rode on and on over the mountains, the splendid air did us much good and we thanked God for it, for little by little we have come to be in sore need of recuperation. We had a wonderful view from the mountain heights, but everywhere in the villages one sees blackened and ruined houses.

3. MOUSH.

Statement by a German Eye-witness of Occurrences at Moush. Communicated by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief.

Towards the end of October (1914), when the Turkish war began, the Turkish officials started to take everything they needed for the war from the Armenians. Their goods, their money, all was confiscated. Later on, every Turk was free to go to an Armenian shop and take out what he needed or thought he would like to have. Only a tenth perhaps was really for the war, the rest was pure robbery. It was necessary to have food, etc., carried to the front, on the Caucasian frontier. For this purpose the Government sent out about 300 old Armenian men, many cripples amongst them, and boys not more than twelve years old, to carry the goods—a three weeks’ journey from Moush to the Russian frontier. As every individual Armenian was robbed of everything he ever had, these poor people

soon died of hunger and cold on the way. They had no clothes at all, for even these were stolen on the way. If out of these 300 Armenians thirty or forty returned, it was a marvel; the rest were either beaten to death or died from the causes stated above.

The winter was most severe in Moush; the gendarmes were sent to levy high taxes, and as the Armenians had already given everything to the Turks, and were therefore powerless to pay these enormous taxes, they were beaten to death. The Armenians never defended themselves except when they saw the gendarmes ill-treating their wives and children, and the result in such cases was that the whole village was burnt down, merely because a few Armenians had tried to protect their families.

Toward the middle of April we heard rumours that there were great disturbances in Van. We have heard statements both from Turks and from Armenians, and as these reports agree in every respect, it is quite plain that there is some truth in them. They state that the Ottoman Government sent orders that all Armenians were to give up their arms, which the Armenians refused to do on the ground that they required their arms in case of necessity. This caused a regular massacre. All villages inhabited by Armenians were burnt down. The Turks boasted of having now got rid of all the Armenians. I heard it from the officers myself, how they revelled in the thought that the Armenians had been got rid of.

Thus the winter passed, with things happening every day more terrible than one can possibly describe. We then heard that massacres had started in Bitlis. In Moush everything was being prepared for one, when the Russians arrived at Liz, which is about 14 to 16 hours' journey from Moush. This occupied the attention of the Turks, so that the massacre was put off for the time being. Hardly had the Russians left Liz, however, when all the districts inhabited by Armenians were pillaged and destroyed.

This was in the month of May. At the beginning of June, we heard that the whole Armenian population of Bitlis had been got rid of. It was at this time that we received news that the American missionary, Dr. Knapp, had been wounded in an Armenian house and that the Turkish Government had sent him to Diyarbekir. The very first night in Diyarbekir he died, and the Government explained his death as a result of having overeaten, which of course nobody believed.

When there was no one left in Bitlis to massacre, their attention was diverted to Moush. Cruelties had already been committed, but so far not too publicly; now, however, they started to shoot people down without any cause, and beat them to death simply for the pleasure of doing so. In Moush itself, which is a big town, there are 25,000 Armenians; in the neighbourhood there are 300 villages, each containing about 500 houses. In all these not a single male Armenian is now to be seen, and hardly a woman either, except for a few here and there.

In the first week of July 20,000 soldiers arrived from Constantinople by way of Harpout with munitions and eleven guns, and laid siege to Moush. As a matter of fact, the town had already been beleaguered since the middle of June. At this stage the Mutessarif gave orders that we should leave the town and go to Harpout. We pleaded with him to let us stay, for we had in our charge all the orphans and patients; but he was angry, and threatened to remove us by force if we did not do as instructed. As we both fell sick, however, we were allowed to remain at Moush. I received permission, in the event of our leaving Moush, to take the Armenians of our orphanage with us; but when we asked for assurances of their safety, his only reply was: "You can take them with you, but being Armenians, their heads may and will be cut off on the way."

On the 10th July Moush was bombarded for several hours, on the pretext that some Armenians had tried to escape. I went to see the Mutessarif, and asked him to protect our buildings. His reply was: "It serves you right for staying, instead of leaving as instructed. The guns are here to make an end of Moush. Take refuge with the Turks." This, of course, was impossible, as we could not leave our charges. Next day a new order was promulgated for the expulsion of the Armenians, and three days' grace was given them to make ready. They were told to register themselves at the Government Building before they left. Their families could remain, but their property and their money were to be confiscated. The Armenians were unable to go, for they had no money to defray the journey, and they preferred to die in their houses rather than be separated from their families and endure a lingering death on the road.

As stated above, three days' grace was given to the Armenians, but two hours had scarcely elapsed when the soldiers began breaking into the houses, arresting the inmates and throwing them into prison. The guns began to fire, and thus the people were effectually prevented from registering themselves at the Government Building. We all had to take refuge in the cellar for fear of our

orphanage catching fire. It was heartrending to hear the cries of the people and children who were being burnt to death in their houses. The soldiers took great delight in hearing them, and when people who were out in the street during the bombardment fell dead, the soldiers merely laughed at them.

The survivors were sent to Ourfa (there were none left but sick women and children); I went to the Mutessarif and begged him to have mercy on the children at least, but in vain. He replied that the Armenian children must perish with their nation. All our people were taken from our hospital and orphanage; they left us three female servants. Under these atrocious circumstances Moush was burnt to the ground. Every officer boasted of the number he had personally massacred as his share in ridding Turkey of the Armenian race.

We left for Harpout. Harpout has become the cemetery of the Armenians; from all directions they have been brought to Harpout to be buried. There they lie, and the dogs and the vultures devour their bodies. Now and then some man throws some earth over the bodies. In Harpout and Mezré the people have had to endure terrible tortures. They have had their eye-brows plucked out, their breasts cut off, their nails torn off; their torturers hew off their feet or else hammer nails into them just as they do in shoeing horses. This is all done at night time, and in order that the people may not hear their screams and know of their agony, soldiers are stationed round the prisons, beating drums and blowing whistles. It is needless to relate that many died of these tortures. When they die, the soldiers cry: "Now let your Christ help you."

One old priest was tortured so cruelly to extract a confession that, believing that the torture would cease and that he would be left alone if he did it, he cried out in his desperation: "We are revolutionists." He expected his tortures to cease, but on the contrary the soldiers cried: "What further do we seek? We have it here from his own lips." And instead of picking their victims as they did before, the officials had all the Armenians tortured without sparing a soul.

Early in July 2,000 Armenian soldiers were ordered to leave for Aleppo to build roads. The people of Harpout were terrified on hearing this, and a panic started in the town. The Vali sent for the German missionary, Mr. Ehemann, and begged him to quiet the people, repeating over and over again that no harm whatever would befall these soldiers. Mr. Ehemann took the Vali's word and quieted the people. But they had scarcely left when we heard that they had all been

murdered and thrown into a cave. Just a few managed to escape, and we got the reports from them. It was useless to protest to the Vali. The American Consul at Harpout protested several times, but the Vali makes no account of him, and treats him in a most shameful manner. A few days later another 2,000 Armenian soldiers were despatched via Diyarbekir, and, in order to hinder them the more surely from escaping, they were left to starve on the way, so that they had no strength left in them to flee. The Kurds were given notice that the Armenians were on the way, and the Kurdish women came with their butcher's knives to help the men. In Mezré a public brothel was erected for the Turks, and all the beautiful Armenian girls and women were placed there. At night the Turks were allowed free entrance. The permission for the Protestant and Catholic Armenians to be exempted from deportation only arrived after their deportation had taken place. The Government wanted to force the few remaining Armenians to accept the Mohammedan faith. A few did so in order to save their wives and children from the terrible sufferings already witnessed in the case of others. The people begged us to leave for Constantinople and obtain some security for them. On our way to Constantinople we only encountered old women. No young women or girls were to be seen.

Already by November¹ we had known that there would be a massacre. The Mutessarif of Moush, who was a very intimate friend of Enver Pasha, declared quite openly that they would massacre the Armenians at the first opportune moment and exterminate the whole race. Before the Russians arrived they intended first to butcher the Armenians, and then fight the Russians afterwards. Towards the beginning of April, in the presence of a Major Lange and several other high officials, including the American and German Consuls, Ekran Bey quite openly declared the Government's intention of exterminating the Armenian race. All these details plainly show that the massacre was deliberately planned.

In a few villages destitute women come begging, naked and sick, for alms and protection. We are not allowed to give them anything, we are not allowed to take them in, in fact we are forbidden to do anything for them, and they die outside. If only permission could be obtained from the authorities to help them! If we cannot endure the sight of these poor people's sufferings, what must it be like for the sufferers themselves?

It is a story written in blood. Two old missionaries and a younger lady (an

American) were sent away from Mardin. They were treated just like prisoners, dogged continually by the gendarmes, and were brought in this fashion to Sivas. For missionaries of that age a journey of this kind in the present circumstances was obviously a terrible hardship.

4. ERZINDJAN.

Statement by two Danish Red Cross Nurses, formerly in the service of the German Military Mission at Erzeroum.² Communicated by a Swiss Gentleman of Geneva.

In March, 1915, we learnt through an Armenian doctor, who died later on of typhoid, that the Turkish Government was preparing for a massacre on a grand scale. He begged us to find out from General Passelt whether the rumour was true. We heard afterwards that the General (a gallant officer) had his own fears of it, and asked, for that reason, to be relieved of his post. ... We fell sick of typhoid and ... in consequence of a number of changes in the hospital staff ... we were obliged to leave Erzeroum. Through the good offices of the German Consul at Erzeroum, who also possessed the confidence of the Armenians, we were engaged by the Red Cross at Erzindjan, and worked there seven weeks.

At the beginning of June, the head of the Red Cross Mission at Erzindjan, Staff-Surgeon A., told us that the Armenians had revolted at Van, that measures had been taken against them which would be put into general execution, and that the whole Armenian population of Erzindjan and the neighbourhood would be transported to Mesopotamia, where it would no longer find itself in a majority. There was, however, to be no massacre, and measures were to be taken to feed the exiles and to secure their personal safety by a military escort. Wagons loaded with arms and bombs were reported, he said, to have been discovered at Erzindjan, and many arrests were to be made. The Red Cross staff were forbidden to have any relations with the exiles, and prohibited any excursions on foot or horseback beyond a certain radius.

After that, several days' grace was given to the population of Erzindjan for the sale of their property, which was naturally realised at ludicrous prices. In the first

week of June,³ the first convoy started; the rich people were allowed to hire carriages. They were to go to Harpout. The three succeeding days, further deportations followed;⁴ many children were taken charge of by Moslem families; later on, the authorities decided that these children must go into exile as well.

The families of the Armenians employed in our hospital had to go with the rest, including a woman who was ill. A protest from Dr. Neukirch, who was attending her, had no effect except to postpone her departure two days. A soldier attached to our staff as cobbler said to Sister B.⁵: “I am now forty-six years old, and yet I am taken for military service, although I have paid my exemption-tax regularly every year. I have never done anything against the Government, and now they are taking from me my whole family, my seventy-year-old mother, my wife and five children, and I do not know where they are going.” He was especially affected by the thought of his little daughter, a year and a half old; “She is so sweet. She has such pretty eyes”; he wept like a child. The next day he came back; “I know the truth. They are all dead.” And it was only too true. Our Turkish cook came to us crying, and told us how the Kurds had attacked the unhappy convoy at Kamakh Boghaz,⁶ had pillaged it completely, and had killed a great number of the exiles. This must have been the 14th June.

Two young Armenian teachers, educated at the College of Harpout, whose lives were spared, related that the convoy had been caught under a cross-fire by the Kurds on the flanks and the Turkish irregulars in the rear. They had thrown themselves flat on the ground and pretended to be dead; afterwards they succeeded in finding their way back to Erzindjan by circuitous paths, bribing some Kurds whom they met on the way. One of them had with her her fiancé in woman's clothes. He had been shielded by a Turkish class-mate. When they reached Erzindjan a gendarme tried to abduct the girl, and her fiancé interfered. He was killed, and the girls were carried off to Turkish houses, where they were treated kindly, but had pressure put upon them to change their religion. They conveyed this news to us through a young doctor who attended some Armenian patients in our hospital, and was thereby enabled to get into touch with us; he brought us an appeal from them to take them with us to Harpout. If only they had poison, they said, they would poison themselves. They had no information whatever as to the fate of their companions.

The day after⁷, Friday, the 11th June, a party of regular troops (belonging to the 86th Cavalry Brigade) were sent out “to keep the Kurds in order.”

We heard subsequently from these soldiers how the defenceless Armenians had been massacred to the last one. The butchery had taken four hours. The women threw themselves on their knees, they had thrown their children into the Euphrates, and so on.⁸ “It was horrible,” said a nice-looking young soldier; “I could not fire, I only pretended.” For that matter, we have often heard Turks express their disapproval and their pity. The soldiers told us that there were ox-carts all ready to carry the corpses to the river and remove every trace of the massacre.⁹

Next day there was a regular battue through the cornfields. (The corn was then standing, and many Armenians had hidden in it.)

From that time on, convoys of exiles were continually arriving, all on their way to the slaughter; we have no doubt about their fate, after the unanimous testimony which we have received from many different quarters. Later, our Greek driver told us that the victims had their hands tied behind their backs, and were thrown down from the cliffs into the river. This method was employed when the numbers were too great to dispose of them in any other fashion. It was also easier work for the murderers. Sister B. and I, of course, began at once to think what we could do, and we decided to travel with one of these convoys to Harpout. We did not know yet that the massacre on the road had been ordered by the Government, and we also thought that we could check the brutality of the gendarmes and stave off the assaults of the Kurds, since we speak Kurdish and have some influence over the tribesmen....

We then telegraphed to the Consul at Erzeroum, telling him that we had been dismissed from the hospital, and urging him, in the interests of Germany, to come to Erzindjan. He wired back: “Impossible to leave my post. Wait for Austrians, who are due to pass here the 22nd June.”

On the evening of the 17th June, we went out for a walk with Mr. C., the druggist of the Red Cross Staff. He was as much horrified as we were at the cruelties that were being perpetrated.... On our walk we met a gendarme, who told us that, ten minutes’ distance away, a large convoy of exiles from Baibourt had halted. He narrated to us, with appalling vividness, how one by one the men

had been massacred and cast into the depths of the gorge.¹⁰

He told how, at each village, the women had been violated; how he himself had desired to take a girl, but had been told that already she was no longer a maid; how children had had their brains battered out when they cried or hindered the march. “There were the naked bodies of three girls; I buried them to do a good deed,” was the remark with which he concluded his story.

The following morning, at a very early hour, we heard the procession of exiles passing in front of our house, along the high road leading in to Erzindjan. We followed them and kept up with them as far as the town, about an hour’s walk. Mr. G. came with us. It was a very large gang—only two or three of them men, all the rest women and children. Many of the women looked demented. They cried out: “Spare us, we will become Moslems or Germans or whatever you will; only spare us. We are being taken to Kamakh Boghaz to have our throats cut,” and they made an expressive gesture. Others kept silence, and marched patiently on with a few bundles on their backs and their children in their arms. Others begged us to save their children. Many Turks arrived on the scene to carry off children and girls, with or without their parents’ consent. There was no time for reflection, for the crowd was being moved on continually by the mounted gendarmes brandishing their whips. On the outskirts of the town, the road to Kamakh Boghaz branches off from the main highway. At this point the scene turned into a regular slave market; for our part, we took a family of six children, from three to fourteen years old, who clutched hold of us, and another little girl as well. We entrusted the latter to our Turkish cook, who was on the spot. She wanted to take the child to the kitchen of Dr. A.’s private house, and keep her there until we could come and fetch her; but the doctor’s adjutant, Riza Bey, gave the woman a beating and threw the child out into the street. Meanwhile, with cries of agony, the gang of sufferers continued its march, while we returned to the hospital with our six children. Dr. A. gave us permission to keep them in our room until we had packed our belongings; they were given food and soon became calmer. “Now we are saved,” they had cried when we took them. They refused to let go of our hands. The smallest, the son of a rich citizen of Baibourt, lay huddled up in his mother’s cloak; his face was swollen with crying and he seemed inconsolable. Once he rushed to the window and pointed to a gendarme: “That’s the man who killed my father.” The children handed over to us their money, 475 piastres (about £4), which their parents had given them with the idea

that the children would not be searched.

We then rode into the town to obtain permission for these children to travel with us. We were told that the high authorities were in session to decide the fate of the convoy which had just arrived. Nevertheless, Sister B. succeeded in getting word with someone she knew, who gave her the authorisation to take the children with her, and offered to give them false names in the passport. This satisfied us, and, after returning to the hospital, we left the same evening with baggage and children and all, and installed ourselves in a hotel at Erzindjan. The Turkish orderlies at the hospital were very friendly, and said: "You have done a good deed in taking these children." We could get nothing but one small room for the eight of us. During the night there was a frightful knocking at our door, and we were asked whether there were two German ladies in the room. Then all became quiet again, to the great relief of our little ones. Their first question had been, would we prevent them from being made Mohammedans? And was our cross (the nurses' Red Cross) the same as theirs? After that they were comforted. We left them in the room, and went ourselves to take our tea in the hotel café. We noticed that some discharged hospital patients of ours, who had always shown themselves full of gratitude towards us, behaved as if they no longer recognised us. The proprietor of the hotel began to hold forth, and everyone listened to what he was saying: "The death of these women and children has been decreed at Constantinople." The Hodja (Turkish priest) of our hospital came in, too, and said to us, among other things: "If God has no pity on them, why must you have pity? The Armenians have committed atrocities at Van. That happened because their religion is ekzik (inferior). The Moslems should not have followed their example, but should have carried out the massacre with greater humanity." We always gave the same answer—that they ought to discover the guilty and do justice upon them, but that the massacre of women and children was, and always will remain, a crime.

Then we went to the Mutessarif himself, with whom we had not succeeded in obtaining an interview before. The man looked like the devil incarnate, and his behaviour bore out his appearance. In a bellowing voice he shouted at us: "Women have no business to meddle with politics, but ought to respect the Government!" We told him that we should have acted in precisely the same way if the victims had been Mohammedans, and that politics had nothing to do with our conduct. He answered that we had been expelled from the hospital, and that

we should get the same treatment from him; that he would not stand us, and that he would certainly not permit us to go to Harpout to fetch our belongings, but would send us to Sivas. Worst of all, he forbade us to take the children away, and at once sent a gendarme to carry them off from our room.

On our way back to the hotel we actually met them, but they were hurried past us so quickly that we had not even a chance to return them their money. Afterwards we asked Dr. Lindenberg to see that this money was restored to them; but, to find out where they were, he had to make enquiries of a Turkish officer, and just at the moment of our departure, when we had been told that they had already been killed, and when we had no longer any chance of making further search for them, the aforementioned Riza Bey came and asked us for this money, on the ground that he wanted to return it to the children! We had already decided to spend it on relieving other Armenians.

At Erzindjan we were now looked askance at. They would no longer let us stay at the hotel, but took us to a deserted Armenian house. The whole of this extensive quarter of the town seemed dead. People came and went at will to loot the contents of the houses; in some of the houses the families of Moslem refugees were already installed. We had now a roof over our heads, but no one would go to get us food. However, we managed to send a note to Dr. A., who kindly allowed us to return to the hospital. The following day the Mutessarif sent a springless baggage cart, in which we were to do the seven days' journey to Sivas. We gave him to understand that we would not have the conveyance, and, upon the representations of Dr. A., they sent us a travelling carriage, with the threat to have us arrested if we did not start at once. This was on Monday, the 21st June, and we should have liked to wait for the Austrians, who were due to arrive on the Tuesday morning, and continue the journey in their company; but Dr. A. declared that he could no longer give us protection, and so we started out. Dr. Lindenberg did us the kindness of escorting us as far as Rifahia.¹¹ During the first days of our journey we saw five corpses. One was a woman's, and still had clothes on; the others were naked, one of them headless. There were two Turkish officers on the road with us who were really Armenians, as we were told by the gendarme attached to us. They preserved their incognito towards us, and maintained a very great reserve, but always took care not to get separated from us. On the fourth day they did not put in an appearance. When we enquired after them, we were given to understand that the less we concerned ourselves about

them the better it would be for us. On the road, we broke our journey near a Greek village. A savage-looking man was standing by the roadside. He began to talk with us, and told us he was stationed there to kill all the Armenians that passed, and that he had already killed 250. He explained that they all deserved their fate, for they were all Anarchists—not Liberals or Socialists, but Anarchists. He told the gendarmes that he had received orders by telephone to kill our two travelling companions. So these two men with their Armenian drivers must have perished there. We could not restrain ourselves from arguing with this assassin, but when he went off our Greek driver warned us: “Don’t say a word, if you do ...”—and he made the gesture of taking aim. The rumour had, in fact, got about that we were Armenians, which was as good as to say condemned to death.

One day we met a convoy of exiles, who had said good-bye to their prosperous villages and were at that moment on their way to Kamakh Boghaz. We had to draw up a long time by the roadside while they marched past. The scene will never be forgotten by either of us: a very small number of elderly men, a large number of women—vigorous figures with energetic features—a crowd of pretty children, some of them fair and blue-eyed, one little girl smiling at the strangeness of all she was seeing, but on all the other faces the solemnity of death. There was no noise; it was all quiet, and they marched along in an orderly way, the children generally riding on the ox-carts; and so they passed, some of them greeting us on the way—all these poor people, who are now standing at the throne of God, and whose cry goes up before Him. An old woman was made to get down from her donkey—she could no longer keep the saddle. Was she killed on the spot? Our hearts had become as cold as ice.

The gendarme attached to us told us then that he had escorted a convoy of 3,000 women and children from Mamahatoun (near Erzeroum) to Kamakh Boghaz. “Hep gildi, bildi,” he said: “All gone, all dead.” We asked him: “Why condemn them to this frightful torment; why not kill them in their villages?” Answer: “It is best as it is. They ought to be made to suffer; and, besides, there would be no place left for us Moslems with all these corpses about. They will make a stench!”

We spent a night at Enderessi, one day’s journey from Shabin Kara-Hissar. As usual, we had been given for our lodging an empty Armenian house. On the wall there was a pencil scrawl in Turkish: “Our dwelling is on the mountains, we

have no longer any need of a roof to cover us; we have already drained the bitter cup of death, we have no more need of a judge.”

The ground floor rooms of the house were still tenanted by the women and children. The gendarmes told us that they would be exiled next morning, but they did not know that yet; they did not know what had become of the men of the house; they were restless, but not yet desperate.

Just after I had gone to sleep, I was awakened by shots in our immediate neighbourhood. The reports followed one another rapidly, and I distinctly heard the words of command. I realised at once what was happening, and actually experienced a feeling of relief at the idea that these poor creatures were now beyond the reach of human cruelty.

Next morning our people told us that ten Armenians had been shot—that was the firing that we had heard—and that the Turkish civilians of the place were now being sent out to chase the fugitives. Indeed, we saw them starting off on horseback with guns. At the roadside were two armed men standing under a tree and dividing between them the clothes of a dead Armenian. They were just holding up a pair of blue cloth trousers. We passed a place covered with clotted blood, though the corpses had been removed. It was the 250 road-making soldiers, of whom our gendarme had told us.

Once we met a large number of these labourers, who had so far been allowed to do their work in peace. They had been sorted into three gangs—Moslems, Greeks and Armenians. There were several officers with the latter. Our young Hassan exclaimed: “They are all going to be butchered.” We continued our journey, and the road mounted a hill. Then our driver pointed with his whip towards the valley, and we saw that the Armenian gang was being made to stand out on the high road. There were about 400 of them, and they were being made to line up on the edge of a slope. We know what happened after that.

Two days before we reached Sivas, we again saw the same sight. The soldiers’ bayonets glittered in the sun.

At another place there were ten gendarmes shooting them down, while Turkish workmen were finishing off the victims with knives and stones. Here ten Armenians had succeeded in getting away.

Later on, in the Mission Hospital at Sivas, we came across one of the men who had escaped. He told us that about 100 Armenians had been slaughtered there. Our informant himself had received a terrible wound in the nape of the neck and had fainted. Afterwards he had recovered consciousness and had dragged himself in two days to Sivas.

Twelve hours' distance from Sivas, we spent the night in a government building. For hours a gendarme, sitting in front of our door, crooned to himself over and over again: "Ermenleri hep kesdiler—the Armenians have all been killed!" In the next room they were talking on the telephone. We made out that they were giving instructions as to how the Armenians were to be arrested. They were talking chiefly about a certain Ohannes, whom they had not succeeded in finding yet.

One night we slept in an Armenian house where the women had just heard that the men of the family had been condemned to death. It was frightful to hear their cries of anguish. "Cannot your Emperor help us?" they cried. The gendarme saw the despair on our faces, and said: "Their crying bothers you; I will forbid them to cry." However, he let himself be mollified. He had taken particular pleasure in pointing out to us all the horrors that we encountered, and he said to young Hassan: "First we kill the Armenians, then the Greeks, then the Kurds." He would certainly have been delighted to add: "And then the foreigners!" Our Greek driver was the victim of a still more ghastly joke: "Look, down there in the ditch; there are Greeks there too!"

At last we reached Sivas. We had to wait an hour in front of the Government Building before the examination of our papers was completed and we were given permission to go to the Americans. There, too, all was trouble and sorrow.

On the 1st July we left Sivas, and reached Kaisaria on the 4th. We had been given permission to go to Talas, after depositing our baggage at the Jesuit School; but when we wanted to go on from Kaisaria, we were refused leave and taken back to the Jesuit School, where a gendarme was posted in front of our door. However, the American Missionaries succeeded in getting us set at liberty.

We then returned to Talas, where we passed several days full of commotion, for there, as well as at Kaisaria, there were many arrests being made. The poor Armenians never knew what the morrow would bring, and then came the

terrifying news that all Armenians had been cleared out of Sivas. What happened there and in the villages of the surrounding districts will be reported by the American Mission.

When we discovered that they meant to keep us there—for they had prevented us from joining the Austrians for the journey—we telegraphed to the German Embassy, and so obtained permission to start. There is nothing to tell about this part of our journey, except that the locusts had in places destroyed all the fruit and vegetables, so that the Turks are already beginning to have some experience of the Divine punishment.

5. THE TOWN OF H.

Statement made by Miss DA., a Danish Lady in the Service of the German Red Cross at H., to Mr. DB. at Basle, and communicated by Mr. DB. to Lord Bryce.

Sister DA. left the German Red Cross Mission at H. in April, 1916, travelling through Ourfa to Aleppo, and thence by road and railway across Anatolia to Constantinople. Mr. DB. met her at Basle, on her way from Constantinople to Denmark, in the house of a mutual friend.

Sister DA. told Mr. DB. that on the 16th March, 1915, the German Vice-Consul appointed provisionally to Erzeroum (the Consul himself being interned in Russia) was passing through the town of H., accompanied by two German officers, and arranged to dine that evening with the German Red Cross Staff, after paying his respects to the Vali. At the hour fixed, only the two officers appeared. They said that they had called, with the Vice-Consul, upon the Vali, but after a time the Vali had shewn signs of being irked by their presence, and so they had taken their departure, leaving the Vali and the Vice-Consul together. The company waited for the Vice-Consul about two hours. He arrived about 9.30 p.m., in a state of great agitation, and told them at once the purport of his interview. The Vali had declared to him that the Armenians in Turkey must be, and were going to be, exterminated. They had grown, he said, in wealth and numbers until they had become a menace to the ruling Turkish race;

extermination was the only remedy. The Vice-Consul had expostulated, and represented that persecution always increased the spiritual vitality of a subject race, and on grounds of expediency was the worst policy for the rulers. “Well, we shall see,” said the Vali, and closed the conversation.

This incident occurred on the 16th March, 1915, and Mr. DB. points out that it must have been practically simultaneous with an interview given by Enver Pasha at Constantinople to the Gregorian Bishop of Konia in the course of February, 1915, Old Style. In this interview the Bishop had asked Enver whether he were satisfied with the conduct of the Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman Army, and Enver had testified warmly to their energy, courage and loyalty—so warmly, in fact, that the Bishop at once asked whether he might publish this testimonial over Enver’s name. Enver readily consented, and the Gregorian Patriarchate at Constantinople accordingly circulated an authorised account of the interview to the Armenian, and even to the Turkish, press.¹² Thus, in the latter part of February, 1915, the Central Government at Constantinople was advertising its friendly feelings towards its Armenian subjects, while by the 16th March, less than a month later, it had given its representative in a remote province to understand that a general massacre of these same Armenians was imminent.

To return to Sister DA.’s narrative—she told Mr. DB. that between February and the beginning of May, 1915, about 400 Armenians had been arrested and imprisoned at H. They were the young men, the strong in body and the intellectuals. Most of their kind had been taken for the Army in the mobilisation of the previous autumn, but these 400 had been left, and were now thrown into prison instead of being conscribed.

At the beginning of May, the Vali of H. sent for the head of the German Protestant Mission Station in the town, and requested him to tell the Armenians that they must surrender their arms. Otherwise, he said, the most stringent measures would be taken against them. The missionaries must persuade them to deliver up the arms quickly. The head of the Mission Station called a meeting of Armenian notables, and put to them what the Vali had said. The Armenians decided to consult with their Turkish fellow-townsmen, and so a mixed meeting was held of all the Turkish and Armenian notables of H. At this meeting the Turkish notables urged the Armenians to give up their arms, and promised that, if they did so, they themselves would guarantee their security, and would see that

they suffered nothing at the Government's hands.

This promise induced the Armenians to comply. They collected their arms and presented them to the Vali, but the Vali declared that all had not been brought. The newest and most dangerous weapons, he said, had been in the hands of the 400 prisoners. These must be surrendered also, or the penalties he had threatened would still be inflicted on the whole Armenian community at H. So the notables went to the men in prison, and besought them to reveal where their arms were hidden; all the Gregorian priests went, and the head of the German Mission Station went with them. The 400 were obstinate at first, but it was represented to them that, if they refused, they would be responsible for the destruction of the whole community, and at last they gave in. They revealed the hiding-places, and the arms were duly found and delivered up to the Vali.

The Vali immediately had photographs taken of all the arms collected, and sent them to Constantinople as evidence that an Armenian revolution was on the point of breaking out at H. He asked for a free hand to suppress it, and an order came back from Constantinople that he was to take whatever measures he considered necessary on the spot.

After that, the 400 young men were conveyed out of the town by night and never heard of again. Shots were said to have been heard in the distance.

Three days later, the rest of the Armenian community at H. was summoned by bugle to assemble before the Government Building, and then deported. The men were first sent off in one direction, and later the women and children, on ox-carts, in another. They were only given a few hours to make their preparations, and Sister DA. described their consternation as being terrible. They tried to dispose of their property, which the Turks bought up for practically nothing. Sewing-machines, for instance, sold for two or three piastres (4d. to 6d.). The process of deportation was extended to the whole Vilayet.

The Armenian children in the German Orphanage at H. were sent away with the rest. "My orders," said the Vali, "are to deport all Armenians. I cannot make an exception of these." He announced, however, that a Government Orphanage was to be established for any children that remained, and shortly afterwards he called on Sister DA. and asked her to come and visit it. Sister DA. went with him, and found about 700 Armenian children in a good building. For every twelve or

fifteen children there was one Armenian nurse, and they were well clothed and fed. “See what care the Government is taking of the Armenians,” the Vali said, and she returned home surprised and pleased; but when she visited the Orphanage again several days later, there were only thirteen of the 700 children left—the rest had disappeared. They had been taken, she learnt, to a lake six hours’ journey by road from the town and drowned. Three hundred fresh children were subsequently collected at the “Orphanage,” and Sister DA. believed that they suffered the same fate as their predecessors. These victims were the residue of the Armenian children at H. The finest boys and prettiest girls had been picked out and carried off by the Turks and Kurds of the district, and it was the remainder, who had been left on the Government’s hands, that were disposed of in this way.

As soon as the Armenians had been deported from H., convoys of other exiles began to pass through from the districts further north. Sister DA. did not see these convoys, because they made a detour round the town, and she never left the town precincts; but she talked with many people who did see them, and they gave a terrible description of their plight. The roads near the town, they said, were littered with the corpses of those who had died of sickness or exhaustion, or from the violence of their guards. And these accounts were confirmed by her own experiences last April (1916), on her journey to Aleppo. On the road to Aleppo from Ourfa she passed numbers of corpses lightly buried under a layer of soil. The extremities of the limbs were protruding, and had been gnawed by dogs. She was told by people she met that unheard-of atrocities had been committed, and that there were cases of women who had drowned themselves to escape their tormentors.

It was Sister DA.’s impression that the deportation and massacre of the Armenians had ruined Turkey economically. The Armenians had been the only skilled workers in the country, and industry came to a stand-still when they were gone. You could not replace copper vessels for your household; you could not get your roof re-tiled. The Government had actually retained a few Armenian artisans—bakers, masons, etc.—to work for the Army, and whatever work was still done was done by these and a few others who had gone over to Islam. But though the sources of production were cut off, the Turks had not begun to feel the pinch. Having laid hands on the property of the Armenians, they were richer, for the moment, than before. During the past year bread had been plentiful and

cheap, cattle and meat had been abundant, and there were still enough supplies, she thought, to last for some time yet. Under these circumstances, the Turkish peasantry were well content—except for the women, who resented the absence of their husbands at the war. The dearth of men, Sister DA. said, was everywhere noticeable. She had been told, however, that some Kurdish tribes had refused to furnish recruits, and that the Kizil Bashis of the Dersim had furnished none at all. The Government had been preparing an expedition against the Kizil Bashis to extort a toll of conscripts, but the plan had been thwarted by the Russian advance. In the Turkish villages agricultural work was being largely carried on by the Armenian women and children, who had been handed over to the Moslem peasants by the authorities. Sister DA. saw quantities of them everywhere, practically in the condition of slaves. They were never allowed to rest in peace, but were constantly chivied about from one village to another.

As she came down to Aleppo she found the country under good cultivation. Great stores of bread had been accumulated for the army in Mesopotamia. In Anatolia, on the other hand, the fields were neglected, and she thought that there famine was not far off. But it was not till she reached Constantinople that she found any present scarcity. In the provinces only sugar and petrol had been scarce; at Constantinople all commodities were both scarce and dear.

Sister DA. was told at Constantinople that Turks of all parties were united in their approval of what was being done to the Armenians, and that Enver Pasha openly boasted of it as his personal achievement. Talaat Bey, too, was reported to have remarked, on receiving the news of Vartkes'¹³ assassination: "There is no room in the Empire for both Armenians and Turks. Either they had to go or we."

6. MALATIA.

Statement by a German Eye-Witness.

In Malatia there were 10,000—12,000 Armenians. A German, who left Malatia immediately before the deportation, reports as follows on the events which

preceded the execution of that measure:—

“The Mutessarif, Nabi Bey, an extremely friendly and well-disposed elderly gentleman, was deposed sometime about May—as we suppose, on the ground that he would not have carried out the measures against the Armenians with the desired harshness.

“His deputy, the Kaimakam of Arrha, had all the qualities required for that purpose. There could hardly be any doubt as to his anti-Armenian feelings or as to the lawlessness of his mode of action. He is probably responsible, together with a clique of rich ‘Beys,’ for the arbitrary imprisonment of many Armenians, for the inhuman application of the bastinado, and also for the clandestine murder of Armenian men. The Mutessarif’s official successor, Reshid Pasha, who arrived from Constantinople towards the end of June, a conscientious Kurd, endowed with an altogether surprising kindness of heart, did everything in his power, from the first day of his assumption of the duties of his office, to mitigate the fate of the numerous Armenian prisoners, to prevent outrages against the population on the part of the irregular soldiers and Zaptiehs, and to make possible a lawful and humane settlement of the extremely difficult situation; in doing this he knew that he incurred danger and put himself into a very undesirable position. Notwithstanding his severity, the greater part of the Armenian population held him in esteem as a just, incorruptible and warm-hearted man. Unfortunately his powers did not go very far. The movement against the Armenians had already, on his arrival, gained too much strength, his own executive staff was neither sufficiently numerous nor sufficiently trustworthy to enable him to make any energetic stand for the maintenance of law and order. He succumbed to the power of his adversaries and collapsed physically and morally within a very few days. Even during his serious illness he used every particle of strength that was in him to insure that the banished Armenians should be able to undertake their journey with safety and be properly cared for on the way.

“He had delayed the departure of the Armenians from week to week, partly with the silent hope that his great endeavours to procure a countermanding order might be successful, and partly in order to be able to make all preparations for a humane execution of the deportation order. Finally he had to give way to the stringent directions of the central government and to the pressure of the party opposed to him in the town.

“Before the deportation, which was effected towards the middle of August, wholesale murders among the male population occurred in the beginning of July.”

1

1914. ↑

2

They were at work in the German hospital at Erzeroum from October, 1914, to April, 1915.—EDITOR. ↑

3

7th June: *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, November, 1915. ↑

4

Amounting to about 20,000–25,000 people in all: *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, November, 1915. ↑

5

One of the two authors of the present statement, which has been drafted in the first person by the other witness, but represents the experience of both. The Editor is in possession of the drafter’s name, but does not know the identity of Sister B., Dr. A., or Mr. G.—EDITOR. ↑

6

A defile, 12 hours’ journey from Erzindjan, where the Euphrates flows through a narrow gorge between two walls of rock. ↑

7

i.e., after the departure of the last convoys of exiles from Erzindjan (10th June), not after the narrators were informed of the massacres by their cook and by the two Armenian girls. The passages about the cobbler, the cook, and the two girls are evidently in parenthesis, and interrupt the sequence of the narrative.—EDITOR. ↑

8

The further details are given in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. November, 1915: “When we exclaimed in horror: ‘So you fire on women and children!’ the soldiers answered: ‘What could we do? It was our orders.’ One of them added: ‘It was a heart-breaking sight. For that matter, I did not shoot.’”—EDITOR. ↑

9

On the evening of the 11th. we saw soldiers returning to town laden with loot. We heard from both Turks and Armenians that children’s corpses were strewn along the road. ↑

10

Every day ten or twelve men had been killed and thrown into the ravines.—*Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*. ↑

11

This was not the route followed by the convoys of exiles. ↑

12

This incident was communicated to Mr. DB. by DC. Effendi, a gentleman who had held high office under the Ottoman Government till the outbreak of the War. ↑

13

Mr. Vartkes was an Armenian deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, who was murdered, together with another deputy, Mr. Zohrab, when he was being escorted by gendarmes from Aleppo to be court-martialled at Diyarbekir.—EDITOR. ↑

C. CILICIA AND NORTHERN SYRIA.

7. EXILES FROM ZEITOUN.

Diary of a Foreign Resident in the Town of B. on the Cilician Plain. Communicated by a Swiss Gentleman of Geneva.

Sunday, 14th March, 1915.

This morning I had a long conversation with Mr.—— about events at Zeitoun. He has managed to obtain some information regarding the little Armenian town, although all direct communication with it has been interrupted. Turkish troops have left Aleppo for Zeitoun—some say 4,000, some 6,000, others 8,000. With what intention, one wonders? Mr.——, who has been there himself during last summer and this winter, assures me that the Armenians have no wish to revolt, and are prepared to put up with anything the Government may do. Contrary to the old-established custom, a levy was made at Zeitoun at the time of the August mobilisation, and they did not offer the slightest resistance. None the less, the Government has played them false. In October, 1914, their leader, Nazaret Tchaoush, came to Marash with a “safe conduct” to arrange some special points with the officials. In spite of the “safe conduct,” they imprisoned him, tortured him and put him to death. Still the people of Zeitoun remained quiet. Bands of zaptiehs (Turkish gendarmes), quartered in the town, have been molesting the inhabitants, raiding shops, stealing, maltreating the people and dishonouring their women. It is obvious that the Government are trying to get a case against the Zeitounlis, so as to be able to exterminate them at their pleasure and yet justify themselves in the eyes of the world.

—*th April, 1915.*

Three Armenians from Dört Yöl were hanged last night in the chief square of Adana. The Government declare that they had been signalling to the British warship or warships stationed in the Gulf of Alexandretta. This is untrue, for I know, though I dare not put the source of my information on paper, that only one Armenian from Dört Yöl has had any communication with the English.

—*th April.*

Two more Armenians from Dört Yöl have been hanged at Adana.

—*th April.*

Three Armenians have been hanged at Adana. We were out riding to-day, and the train came into the station just as we reached the railway. Imagine our indignation when we saw a cattle-truck filled with Armenians from Zeitoun. Most of these mountaineers were in rags, but a few were quite well dressed. They had been driven out of their homes and were going to be transplanted, God knows where, to some town in Asia Minor. It seems we have returned to the days of the Assyrians, if whole populations can be exiled in this way, and the sacred liberty of the individual so violated.

—*th April (the next day).*

We were able to see the unfortunate refugees, who are still here to-day. These are the circumstances of their departure from Zeitoun, or rather this is the tragedy which preceded their exile, though it was not the cause of it.

The Turkish gendarmes outraged several girls in the town, and were attacked in consequence by about twenty of the more hot-headed young men. Several gendarmes were killed, though all the while the population as a whole was opposed to bloodshed, and desired most earnestly to avoid the least pretext for reprisals. The twenty rebels were driven out of the town and took refuge in a monastery about three-quarters of an hour's distance from the town. At this point the troops from Aleppo arrived. The Zeitounlis gave them lodging, and it seemed that all was going excellently between the populace and the 8,000 soldiers under their German officers.

The Turks surrounded the monastery and attacked it for a whole day; but the insurgents defended themselves, and, at the cost of one man slightly wounded, they killed 300 of the regular troops. During the night, moreover, they managed to escape.

Their escape was as yet unknown to the town when, about nine o'clock on the following morning, the Turkish Commandant summoned about 300 of the principal inhabitants to present themselves immediately at the military headquarters. They obeyed the summons without the least suspicion, believing themselves to be on excellent terms with the authorities. Some of them took a little money, others some clothing or wraps, but the majority came in their working clothes and brought nothing with them. Some of them had even left their flocks on the mountains in the charge of children. When they reached the Turkish camp, they were ordered to leave the town at once without returning to their homes. They were completely stupefied. Leave? But for where? They did not know.

They had been unable even yet to learn their destination, but it is probable that they are being sent to the Vilayet of Konia. Some of them have come in carriages and some on foot.

—*th April.*

I heard to-day that the whole population of Dört Yöl has been taken away to work on the roads. They continue to hang Armenians at Adana. It is a point worth remembering that Zeitoun and Dört Yöl are the two Armenian towns which held their own during the Adana massacres of 1909.

—*th May.*

A new batch of Zeitounlis has just arrived. I saw them marching along the road, an interminable file under the Turkish whips. It is really the most miserable and pitiable thing in the world. Weak and scarcely clothed, they rather drag themselves along than walk. Old women fall down, and struggle to their feet again when the zaptieh approaches with lifted stick. Others are driven along like donkeys. I saw one young woman drop down exhausted. The Turk gave her two or three blows with his stick and she raised herself painfully. Her husband was walking in front with a baby two or three days old in his arms.

Further on an old woman had stumbled, and slipped down into the mud. The gendarme touched her two or three times with his whip, but she did not stir; then he gave her several kicks with his foot; still she did not move; then he kicked her harder, and she rolled over into the ditch; I hope that she was already dead.

These people have now arrived in the town. They have had nothing to eat for two days. The Turks forbade them to bring anything with them from Zeitoun, except, in some cases, a few blankets, a donkey, a mule, or a goat. But even these things they are selling here for practically nothing—a goat for one medjidia (3s. 2d.), a mule for half a lira (nine shillings). This is because the Turks steal them on the road. One young woman who had only been a mother eight days, had her donkey stolen the first night of the journey. What a way of starting out! The German and Turkish officers made the Armenians leave all their property behind, so that the mouhadjirs (refugees) from Thrace might enter into possession. There are five families in ——'s house! The town and the surrounding villages (about 25,000 inhabitants) are entirely destroyed.

Between fifteen and sixteen thousand exiles have been sent towards Aleppo, but they are going to be taken further. Perhaps into Arabia? Can the real object be to starve them to death? Those who have passed through our town were going to the Vilayet of Konia; there too there are deserts.

—*th May.*

Letters have come which confirm my fears. It is not to Aleppo that the Zeitounlis are being sent, but to Der-el-Zor, in Arabia, between Aleppo and Babylonia. And those we saw the other day are going to Kara-Pounar, between Konia and Eregli, in the most arid part of Asia Minor.

Certain ladies here have given blankets and shoes to some of the poorest. The local Christians, too, have shown themselves wonderfully self-sacrificing. But what can one do? It is a little drop of charity in the ocean of their suffering.

—*th May.*

News has come from Konia. Ninety Armenians have been taken to Kara-Pounar. The Zeitounlis have arrived at Konia. Their sufferings have been increased by their having had to wait—some of them 8, some 15, some 20 days—at Bozanti

(the terminus of the Anatolian Railway in the Taurus, 2,400 feet above sea level). This delay was caused by the enormous masses of troops passing continually through the Cilician Gates; it is the army of Syria which is being recalled for the defence of the Dardanelles.

When the exiles reached Konia, they had eaten nothing, according to our news, for three days. The Greeks and Armenians at once collected money and food for their relief, but the Vali of Konia would not allow anything of any kind to be given to the exiles. They therefore remained another three days without food, at the end of which time the Vali removed the prohibition and allowed food to be served out to them under the supervision of the zaptiehs.

My informant tells me that, after the departure of the Armenians from Konia for Kara-Pounar, he saw an Armenian woman throw her new-born baby into a well; another is said to have thrown hers out of the window of the train.

—*th May.*

A letter has come from Kara-Pounar. I know the writer of it, and can have no doubt of his truthfulness. He says that the 6,000 or 8,000 Armenians from Zeitoun are dying there from starvation at the rate of 150 to 200 a day. So from 15,000 to 19,000 Zeitounlis must have been sent into Arabia, the total population of the town and the outlying villages having been about 25,000.

—*th May.*

The whole garrison of —— and of Adana have left for the Dardanelles. There are no troops left to defend the district if it should be attacked from outside.

—*th May (the next day).*

New troops have arrived, but they are untrained.

—*th May.*

The last batch of Zeitounlis passed through our town to-day, and I was able to speak to some of them in the han where they had been put. I saw one poor little girl who had been walking, barefoot, for more than a week; her only clothing was a torn pinafore; she was shivering with cold and hunger, and her bones were

literally pushing through her skin.

About a dozen children had to be left on the road because they could not walk any further. Have they died of hunger? Probably, but no one will ever know for certain. I also saw two poor old women without any hair left, or with hardly any. When the Turks drove them out of Zeitoun they had been rich, but they could not take anything with them beyond the clothes they were wearing. They managed somehow to hide five or six gold pieces in their hair, but, unfortunately for them, the sun glinted on the metal as they marched along and the glitter attracted the notice of a zaptieh. He did not waste any time in picking out the pieces of gold, but found it much quicker to tear the hair out by the roots.

I came across another very characteristic case. A citizen of Zeitoun, formerly a rich man, was leading two donkeys, the last remnants of his fortune. A gendarme came along and seized their bridles; the Armenian implored him to leave them, saying that he was already on the verge of starvation. The only answer he received from the Turk was a shower of blows, repeated till he rolled over in the dust; even then the Turk continued beating him, till the dust was turned into a blood-soaked mud; then he gave a final kick and went off with the donkeys. Several Turks stood by watching; they did not appear to be at all surprised, nor did any of them attempt to intervene.

—*th May.*

The authorities have sent a number of people from Dört Yöl to be hanged in the various towns of Adana Vilayet.

—*th May.*

There is a rumour of a partial exodus from Marash. It is going to be our town next.

Dört Yöl has also been evacuated and the inhabitants sent into Arabia. Hadjin is threatened with the same fate. There has been a partial clearing out of Adana; Tarsus and Mersina are threatened too, and also Aintab.

8. Information regarding Events in Armenia, published in the “Sonnenaufgang” (Organ of the “German League for the Promotion of Christian Charitable Work in the East”), October, 1915; and in the “Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift,” November, 1915.

This testimony is especially significant because it comes from a German source, and because the German Censor made a strenuous attempt to suppress it.

The same issue of the “Sonnenaufgang” contains the following editorial note:—

“In our preceding issue we published an account by one of our sisters (Schwester Möhring) of her experiences on a journey, but we have to abstain from giving to the public the new details that are reaching us in abundance. It costs us much to do so, as our friends will understand; but the political situation of our country demands it.”

In the case of the “Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift,” the Censor was not content with putting pressure on the editor. On the 10th November, he forbade the reproduction of the present article in the German press, and did his best to confiscate the whole current issue of the magazine. Copies of both publications, however, found their way across the frontier.

Both the incriminating articles are drawn from common sources, but the extracts they make from them do not entirely coincide, so that, by putting them together, a fuller version of these sources can be compiled.

In the text printed below, the unbracketed paragraphs are those which appear both in the “Sonnenaufgang” and in the “Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift”; while paragraphs included in angular brackets [< >] appear only in the “Sonnenaufgang,” and those in square brackets ([]) only in the “Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift.”



Between the 10th and the 30th May, 1,200 of the most prominent Armenians and other Christians, without distinction of confession, were arrested in the Vilayets

of Diyarbekir and Mamouret-ul-Aziz.

<It is said that they were to be taken to Mosul, but nothing more has been heard of them.>

[On the 30th May, 674 of them were embarked on thirteen Tigris barges, under the pretext that they were to be taken to Mosul. The Vali's aide-de-camp, assisted by fifty gendarmes, was in charge of the convoy. Half the gendarmes started off on the barges, while the other half rode along the bank. A short time after the start the Armenians were stripped of all their money (about £6,000 Turkish) and then of their clothes; after that they were thrown into the river. The gendarmes on the bank were ordered to let none escape. The clothes of these victims were sold in the market of Diyarbekir.]

<About the same time 700 young Armenian men were conscribed, and were then sent to build the Karabaghtché-Habashi road. There is no news of these 700 men either.

It is said that in Diyarbekir five or six priests were stripped naked one day, smeared with tar, and dragged through the streets.

In the Vilayet of Aleppo they have evicted the inhabitants of Hadjin, Shar, Albustan, Göksoun, Tasholouk, Zeitoun, all the villages of Alabash, Geben, Shivilgi, Furnus and the surrounding villages, Fundadjak, Hassan-Beyli, Harni, Lappashli, Dört Yöl and others.>

[They have marched them off in convoys into the desert on the pretext of settling them there. In the village of Tel-Armen (along the line of the Bagdad Railway, near Mosul) and in the neighbouring villages about 5,000 people were massacred, leaving only a few women and children. The people were thrown alive down wells or into the fire. They pretend that the Armenians are to be employed in colonising land situated at a distance of twenty-four to thirty kilometres from the Bagdad Railway. But as it is only the women and children who are sent into exile, since all the men, with the exception of the very old, are at the war, this means nothing less than the wholesale murder of the families, since they have neither the labour nor the capital for clearing the country.]

A German met a Christian soldier of his acquaintance, who was on furlough

from Jerusalem. The man was wandering up and down along the banks of the Euphrates searching for his wife and children, who were supposed to have been transferred to that neighbourhood. Such unfortunates are often to be met with in Aleppo, because they believe that there they will learn something about the whereabouts of their relations. It has often happened that when a member of a family has been absent, he discovers on his return that all his family are gone—evicted from their homes.

[For a whole month corpses were observed floating down the River Euphrates nearly every day, often in batches of from two to six corpses bound together. The male corpses are in many cases hideously mutilated (sexual organs cut off, and so on), the female corpses are ripped open. The Turkish military authority in control of the Euphrates, the Kaimakam of Djerablous, refuses to allow the burial of these corpses, on the ground that he finds it impossible to establish whether they belong to Moslems or to Christians. He adds that no one has given him any orders on the subject. The corpses stranded on the bank are devoured by dogs and vultures. To this fact there are many German eye-witnesses. An employee of the Bagdad Railway has brought the information that the prisons at Biredjik are filled regularly every day and emptied every night—into the Euphrates. Between Diyarbekir and Ourfa a German cavalry captain saw innumerable corpses lying unburied all along the road.]

<The following telegram was sent to Aleppo from Diyarbekir:—"We have accepted the True Religion. Now we are all right." The inhabitants of a village near Anderoum went over to Islam and were allowed to stay. At Hadjin six families wanted to become Mohammedans. They were told: "Nothing under one hundred families will be accepted."

Aleppo and Ourfa are the assembling-places for the convoy of exiles. There were about 5,000 of them in Aleppo during June and July, while during the whole period from April to July many more than 50,000 must have passed through the city. The girls were abducted almost without exception by the soldiers and their Arab hangers-on. One father, on the verge of despair, besought me to take with me at least his fifteen-year-old daughter, as he could no longer protect her from the persecutions inflicted upon her. The children left behind by the Armenians on their journey are past counting.

Women whose pains came upon them on the way had to continue their journey

without respite. A woman bore twins in the neighbourhood of Aintab; next morning she had to go on again. She very soon had to leave the children under a bush, and a little while after she collapsed herself. Another, whose pains came upon her during the march, was compelled to go on at once and fell down dead almost immediately. There were several more incidents of the same kind between Marash and Aleppo.¹

The villagers of Shar were permitted to carry all their household effects with them. On the road they were suddenly told: “An order has come for us to leave the high road and travel across the mountains.” Everything—waggon, oxen and belongings—had to be left behind on the road, and then they went on over the mountains on foot. This year the heat has been exceptionally severe, and many women and children naturally succumbed to it even in these early stages of their journey.

There are about 30,000 exiles of whom we have no news at all, as they have arrived neither at Aleppo nor at Ourfa.>

9. Extracts from the Records of a German who died in Turkey.

Between the 28th July and the 20th August, 1915, I travelled to Marash. At Beshgöz, between Killis and Aintab, it was a subject of conversation among the villagers that the deportation of the Armenians would begin at Aintab too on the following day. A little while after, a well-dressed gentleman, a Circassian, according to his appearance, being partly in mufti and partly in officer's uniform, joined the group of talkers and asked: “From what part of the town are people being sent away? By what road do they go? What kind of people are they? Are they people from whom anything is to be got?” When one of the persons present asked him whether he was a civilian or in military service, he said smilingly: “Is there a finer opportunity of being a soldier than now?” The same person said afterwards: “*This time Germany has given these unbelieving swine a lesson which they will not forget.*”²

On hearing this, I could not refrain from replying that it was soiling the name of

Germany to mention it in connection with the things which I had just been compelled to hear. On my return journey I heard that the first convoys from Aintab, consisting almost exclusively of well-to-do families, were stripped to their shirts, and I was assured from several sides that this was done with the connivance of the Government authorities, with whom the above-mentioned questionable gentleman must, according to all appearances, have been in relation. At Karaböyük, between Aintab and Marash, I met a convoy of Armenians, consisting of about forty women and children and five or six men. Close in front of them, at a distance of about 180 yards, 100 newly-enlisted soldiers were marching. There was a young lady among the women, a teacher, who for several years had been in German employment; she had just recovered from a serious attack of typhoid fever. The soldiers wanted her and a young wife, whose husband is at present a soldier in Damascus, to spend the night with them, and used force to make them. It was only through the Mohammedan mule drivers coming to the assistance of the women, that the soldiers could be kept off during their three attacks.

On the 6th August the Armenian village of Fundadjak, near Marash, a place of about 3,000 inhabitants, was battered down to the ground. The population, consisting almost exclusively of mule drivers, had, during the preceding three months, been frequently compelled to transport Armenians in the direction of the Euphrates. They had seen the corpses in the Euphrates, and had also observed with their own eyes the selling and raping of women and girls.

In an Armenian school at Marash I saw over 100 women and children with bullet wounds in their legs and their arms, and with all sorts of mutilations; among them were children of one to two years.

On the 13th August, 34 Armenians, including two boys twelve years old, were shot at Marash. Again, on the 15th August, 24 were shot and 14 were hanged. The 24 who were shot were tied together with a heavy chain that went round their necks, and were made to stand up together in one mass. They were shot in the presence of the Mohammedan population behind the American College. With my own eyes I saw the bodies, while still convulsed by the agonies of death, being abandoned to the license of the rough civilian mob, who pulled the hands and feet of the corpses; and during the next half-hour the policemen and gendarmes shot continuously with revolvers on these corpses, some of which were terribly disfigured, while the population looked on with amusement.

Afterwards the same people marched up and down in front of the German Hospital and shouted, “Vashasin Almanya” (Long live Germany).³ Again and again I have been told by Mohammedans that it was Germany which caused the Armenians to be extirpated in this way.

On the way from the town to the farm I saw, on the outskirts of the town, a human head lying on a dung-heap, which was used as a target by Turkish boys. In Marash itself, during my stay there, Armenians were every day killed by the civil population, and the corpses were left for days in the open sewers or elsewhere.

Kadir Pasha said to me at Marash: “I know that, in pursuance of an order from the Government, the whole male population within the area of the 4th Army Corps was killed.”

On the 20th August, 1915⁴, at six o’clock in the evening, it was proclaimed at Marash that, according to the order of the Vali of Adana, all males over 15 years of age (5,600 altogether) must be assembled outside the town, ready for marching, by mid-day on Saturday; any one of them found in the town after 12 o’clock would be shot on the spot. Everyone knew the meaning of this order, and we lived through hours of most awful terror. At the last moment the Vali’s order, owing to the intervention of the very humane Governor of Marash, was modified to the extent that the men would be allowed to leave with their families. Only on the 18th August the Vali had sent for the clerical authorities, and had given them an assurance that the Armenians in Marash would not be deported. Thus the first who had to leave the town had to do so without any previous preparation.

In the village of Böveren, near Albistan, all the Armenian inhabitants, 82 in number, with the exception of a boy twelve years old, who jumped into the water and escaped, were killed.

In the neighbourhood of Zeitoun the inhabitants of a village infested by the smallpox were deported. The patients suffering from smallpox, including those whose eyesight had been destroyed by the illness, were lodged in hans (i.e. inns) at Marash, in which deported persons from other districts were lodged already.

At Marash I saw a convoy, consisting of about 200 persons, among whom were several blind. A mother, of the age of about 60, led her daughter, who was lame

from birth; in this manner they started on their journey on foot. After an hour's march a man collapsed near the Erkeness bridge; he was robbed and killed. Four days afterwards we still saw his corpse lying in a ditch.

Last night I called on an acquaintance; he had given hospitality to a mother and her child who had been deported from Sivas—the two survivors of a family of 26 persons who had been deported from Sivas three months before and had reached Marash in the last few days.

In Aintab I saw a written order of the Governor of the town, prohibiting the purchase on the part of the Mohammedan population of any objects belonging to the deported Armenians. The same Governor caused preparations to be made for a raid on the deported persons. Two convoys were robbed of everything, down to the shirts of the people belonging to them.

About 2,800 persons deported from Gürün were attacked and robbed at Airan-Pounar (12 hours to the north-east of Marash) by eight brigands, who wore uniforms, partly officer's uniform and partly private's. At Kisyl Gedjid, 1½ hours short of Airan-Pounar, the eight brigands joined the gendarmes escorting the convoy and had a long conversation with them. At Airan-Pounar the gendarmes ordered the people to divide into two parties; the few men formed one party, and the women the other party. The women were stripped naked and robbed of everything; four women and two girls were dragged away in the night and violated; five of them returned on the following morning. In a defile of the Engissek-Dagh the whole convoy was completely plundered by Turks and Kurds. In this assault 200 persons were killed; 70 severely wounded persons had to be left behind, and more than 50 more were taken along with the convoy. I met the convoy, then consisting of about 2,500 persons, at Karaböyük. The people were in an indescribable state of misery; one hour short of Karaböyük two men were lying on the road, one with two and the other with seven knife-wounds; further on there were two exhausted women; still further four women, including a girl of 13, with a two days' old baby in her arms, wrapped in rags. A man of about 60, who was lying in the road with a deep wound (inflicted by a dagger), as long as a finger and two fingers wide, told me that he had left Gürün with 13 animals. All the animals and all his goods were taken away from him at Airan-Pounar, and he had dragged himself away on foot, until he reached a place about an hour short of Karaböyük, where he fell down exhausted.

These people had all been in easy circumstances; the value of the goods, the animals and the money of which they were robbed, is estimated at T£8,000. Those who were exhausted were left lying on the road; corpses can be seen lying on both sides of it. Among the 2,500 persons of whom this convoy was composed I saw no males, with the exception of about 30–40. All males over the age of 15 were taken away in the sight of the women, and were probably killed. These Armenians were intentionally transported by circuitous routes and over dangerous paths. By the direct road to Marash they would have arrived in four days, and they have been on the road for over a month. They had to travel without animals, without beds, without food; once in every day they received a thin slice of bread, and then not enough to satisfy their hunger. Four hundred of them (Protestants) have in the meantime arrived at Aleppo; out of these two or three die every day.

The raid at Ainar-Pounar was carried out with the connivance of the Kaimakam at Albistan, who made them pay him T£200, and promised the people that he would see that they reached Aintab safely. The Kaimakam at Gürün made them pay him T£1,020, and gave the same assurances. I saw a man who, together with others, handed this sum to the Kaimakam in the club room at Gürün. In the neighbourhood of Aintab several women belonging to this convoy were violated in the night by civilian inhabitants of Aintab. On the occasion of the raid at Airan-Pounar men were tied to trees and burnt alive. While the Armenians at Gürün were actually leaving the town, the Mollahs called the faithful to prayer from the roofs of the Christian Churches. An eye-witness told me about a dispute between two brothers relating to the booty at Airan-Pounar; one of them said: “For these four loads I have killed forty women.”

At Marash a Mohammedan of the name of Hadji, whom I have known for years, told me the following incident: “At Nissibin, I and all the mule-drivers were locked up in a han; several young women belonging to Furnus were violated during the night by the gendarmes escorting the convoy and by civilians.”

At Aintab, at the office of the Commissioner of Police, a Mohammedan Agha said in my presence to an Armenian: “In such and such places letters have been found. What are your relations with this man? I have often told you to become a Mohammedan: if you had listened to me, you would have escaped all the disagreeable things to which your nation is exposed.”

Out of 18,000 persons who were deported from Kharput and Sivas, 350 arrived at Aleppo (consisting of women and children); out of 1,900 deported from Erzeroum, only eleven—one sick boy, four girls and six women—reached that town. A convoy of women and girls had to walk the 65 hours from Ras-el-Ain to Aleppo along the railway line, notwithstanding the fact that at the same time the railway carriages, which had been used for the transport of soldiers, were returning empty. Mohammedan travellers, who came along this way, report that the roads are impassable owing to the many corpses lying unburied on both sides of the road, the smell of which is poisoning the air. Of those “remaining over,” who so far have not been sent further on, 100–120 persons have died at Aleppo up to the present, in consequence of the hardships of the journey. The starving and emaciated women and children, on their arrival at Aleppo, fell on the food like wild beasts. In the case of many of them the digestive organs had ceased to work; after having devoured one or two spoonfuls they put the spoon aside. The Government alleges that the deported persons receive food, but in the case of the above-mentioned convoy, which came from Kharput, a distribution of bread took place only once in three months.

The Government does not merely neglect to make any provision for the people; on the contrary, it causes everything to be taken away from them. At Ras-el-Ain a convoy of 200 girls and women arrived in a state of complete nudity; their shoes, their chemises, everything, in short, had been taken away from them, and they were made to walk for four days under the hot sun—the temperature was 122 degrees in the shade—in their condition of nakedness, jeered at and derided by the soldiers of their escort. Mr. X. told me that he himself had seen a convoy, consisting of 400 women and children, in the same state. Whenever the wretched exiles appealed to the humanity of the officials, the reply was: “We have strict orders from the Government to treat you in this way.”

At first the dead in Aleppo were brought to the cemetery in the coffins provided by the Armenian Church. This was done by “Hamals” (professional porters), who received two piastres for each dead. When the “Hamals” were unable to cope with the whole work, the women themselves brought their dead to the cemetery—the babies in their arms, the bigger children laid on sacks and carried by four women, one at each corner. I saw corpses carried to the cemetery across a donkey’s back. A friend of mine saw a dead body tied to a stick, which was carried by two men. Another friend saw a cart drawn by oxen going to the

cemetery with a full load of corpses. The two-wheeled cart was too large to pass the narrow cemetery-gate, whereupon the driver, without any hesitation, turned it round and emptied it; then he dragged the dead bodies to their respective graves by the arms and legs. At the present moment five or six carts are in use, which take the dead to the cemetery. In one of the hans, which is called a hospital, I saw on a Sunday something like 30 corpses lying about in a yard, which was about 25 yards wide and 50 yards long. About 20 had already been buried on that day. The 30 corpses remained lying there until the evening. My wife got them carried away in the darkness by engaging three “Hamals,” to whom she gave a medjidié (about 3s. 2d.) each. In the case of one of the corpses the skin adhered to the hands of the “Hamals,” showing how far the process of decomposition had already gone. Dying persons and persons suffering from serious illnesses, about 1,000 altogether, were lying among the dead, under the burning sun. The whole scene was more terrible than anything I had ever seen, even than the shooting of the 24 people at Marash in the summer, which has been described above. Nearly all the people suffered from diarrhœa. Channels had been dug in the ground within the courtyard, by the side of which the dying were placed, with their backs towards the channel, so that the emptyings of their bowels could pass into it at once. Whenever anyone died, he was removed, and his melancholy place was filled by another. It happened frequently that persons who were carried away as dead gave signs of life when they were near the grave; they were dragged aside, until it was certain that death had supervened. One young girl recovered so far that she could be carried back to the town, and one person who had been buried in the evening was found sitting on his grave the next morning. Several corpses had been thrown into one grave, and he was on the top; in the twilight only a thin layer of earth had been put over him. In Tel-Abiad Mr.— saw open graves with 20–30 corpses. The graves were filled up with earth when it was no longer possible to put any more corpses into them. Mr.— told me that it was impossible to go near these places owing to the stench, and yet the deported persons had to encamp in the immediate vicinity. Out of 35 orphans who were kept in one room at Aleppo, 30 died in a week for want of nourishment. Mr.— says that on his journey to this place he saw corpses everywhere on the road, and that a Kurd boasted to him of having killed 14 children.

On Sunday, the 12th August, 1915, I had to go to the station of the Damascus railway at Aleppo, and was able to see the loading into cattle trucks of about

1,000 women and children. With us in Germany the cattle are allowed more space than those wretched people; 90 per cent. of them had death written on their faces. There were people among them who literally had no time allowed them for dying. On the previous evening a convoy had been taken away, and on the next morning the dead bodies of two children, about half grown up, were found, who had died during the loading of the trucks and had been left lying on the platform.

On the 13th September, 1915, the following telegraphic order from the Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army, Djemal Pasha, was brought to the notice of the inhabitants: "All photographs, which may have been taken by the engineers or other officers of the Bagdad Railway Construction Company relating to the convoys of Armenians, are to be delivered within 48 hours, together with the negatives, to the Military Commissariat of the Bagdad Railway at Aleppo. Any contravention of this order will be punished by court-martial."

Several times I saw women and children search for scraps of food in the dustheaps: anything that was found was devoured immediately. I saw the children gnawing at raw bones which they had picked up in corners used as urinals.

On the road between Marash and Aintab the Mohammedan population of a village wanted to distribute water and bread among a convoy of 100 families, but the soldiers escorting the convoy prevented this. Four-fifths of the deported persons are women and children; the majority of the men have been called up for the Army.

Twenty thousand persons who had been deported by way of Marash were not allowed to pass on to Aintab and obtain supplies of food, though the direct caravan route goes through Aintab.

At Ras-el-Ain there are at present about 1,500 women and children, the only survivors out of several thousands, who, together with their husbands and fathers, were deported from Kharput and the surrounding country. Among these 1,500 persons there is not a single male over the age of 10–12 years. These people, healthy or sick, are left lying from morning till evening in the sun without food and without protection against a temperature of 109½ degrees in the shade, and they are in the arbitrary power of their guards. Mr. L.— who

during the last month had, in conversation with me, used the expression “Armenian rabble”—spoke literally as follows: “I am not a man who is easily touched, but after what I have seen at Ras-el-Ain I cannot keep the tears away. I did not think it possible that such acts of ill-treatment and violence, outraging all rules of humanity, could be perpetrated in our century.”

A “Tchaoush” (Sergeant-Major) of the name of Suleiman took 18 women and girls and sold them to Arabs, charging 2–3 mejidiés (6s. 4d.—9s. 6d.) for each of them. A Turkish police-commissary said to me: “We have lost all count of the numbers of women and girls who were taken away by the Arabs and Kurds, either by force or with the connivance of the Government. This time we have carried out our operations against the Armenians according to our heart’s desire; not one out of ten has been left among the living.”

While I am writing this down, my wife has returned from a walk into the town, and reports tearfully that she met a convoy of over 800 Armenians, all barefooted, with torn clothes, carrying their scanty possessions on their backs, together with their babies.

In Besné the whole population, consisting of 1,800 souls, principally women and children, were expatriated; it was alleged that they were to be deported to Ourfa. When they reached the Göksu, a tributary of the Euphrates, they were compelled to take their clothes off, and thereupon they were all massacred and thrown into the river.

On a single day latterly 170 corpses were observed drifting down the Euphrates, on other days 50–60. Mr. A., an engineer, saw 40 corpses in the course of one ride. Those which are stranded on the river bank are devoured by the dogs, those on sandbanks in mid-stream by the vultures.

The above-mentioned 800 Armenians had been deported from the district of Marash. They had been told that they would be taken to Aintab, and they were to provide themselves with food for two days. When they reached the neighbourhood of Aintab the soldiers said: “We have made a mistake, we were meant to go to Nissibin.” No food was supplied by the authorities, and no opportunities for the purchase of provisions were given. At Nissibin the word went round: “We came the wrong way; we were meant to go to Mumbidj.” There again the soldiers said: “We came the wrong way; we were meant to go to Bab.”

In this manner they had to wander about for seventeen days, abandoned to the arbitrary pleasure of their escort. During the whole time no provisions were supplied by the Government, and their scanty possessions had to be given away in exchange for bread.

One mother, whose eldest daughter was taken away by force, threw herself in despair into the Euphrates with her two remaining children.

Said, an emigrant from Tripoli, who had been a groom in Mr. L.'s stables for four years with a monthly salary of 400 piastres (about £3), enlisted as a volunteer for the war, in order to be able, according to his own statement, to take part in the slaughter of a few Armenians. A nice house in an Armenian village near Ourfa was promised him (he hinted) by way of reward.

Two Circassians who were in the service of Mr. E., a storekeeper, enlisted as volunteers for the war on the same ground.

The head of a Circassian village community, Tchordekli, speaking of the war volunteers from his village, said to an acquaintance of mine: "Ev yikmak itchun giderler" (They go in order to ruin whole families).

At Arab Pounar a Turkish Major, who spoke German, expressed himself as follows: "I and my brother took possession of a young girl at Ras-el-Ain, who had been left on the road. *We are very angry with the Germans for doing such things.*" When I contradicted them, they said: "*The Chief of the General Staff is a German; von der Goltz is Commander-in-Chief, and ever so many German officers are in our Army. Our Koran does not permit such treatment as the Armenians have to suffer now.*"⁵ At Nuss Tell a Mohammedan inspector made similar remarks to a clerk. When I taxed him with this utterance in the presence of others, he said: "It is not only I who say this; everyone will tell you the same tale."

At Biredjik the prisons are filled every day and emptied over night. Tell Armen, a village of 3,000 inhabitants, was raided, the inhabitants were massacred, thrown dead or alive into the wells, or burnt. Major von Mikusch was a witness of the devastation. A German cavalry captain saw unburied corpses between Diarbekir and Ourfa on both sides of the road, with their throats cut. Innumerable unburied corpses of children were seen on the way by Mr. S.

At Tel-Abiad seventeen dead or dying persons were left behind near the station, on the departure of a convoy. Two railway officials afterwards had all seventeen buried.

All the convoys of Armenians have for the last few days been taken into these parts. The statement made by Mr. N. is entirely in accord with the reply given to me by the Chairman of the Deportation Commission, when I made an application in favour of four Armenian children: "You do not grasp our intentions; we want to destroy the Armenian name. *Just as Germany will only let Germans exist, so we Turks will only let Turks.*"⁶

10. Narrative of a German Official of the Bagdad Railway.

When the inhabitants of the Cilician villages left their homes, many of them still had donkeys for riding or carrying packs, but the soldiers escorting the convoys would only allow the "Katerdjis" (donkey-drivers) to ride on these animals, saying that strict orders had been given that no deported persons, whether male or female, might ride. In the case of the convoy starting from Hadjin the "Katerdjis" simply took all the pack animals which they suspected of carrying money or valuables straight to their own villages. Other animals, which the people had taken with them, were taken away from them by force or purchased for prices so absurdly low that it would hardly have made any difference if they had been given away gratis. A woman whose family is known to me sold 90 sheep for a hundred piastres, which at any other time would have realised about T£60 to £70; in other words, she had to sell ninety animals for the proper price of one animal. The villagers of Shar had received permission to take away their oxen, carts and pack animals. Near Gökpunar they were forced to leave the carriage road and to take the shorter footpath which crosses the mountains. They had to march on without any food, for their journey or other equipment. The escort simply said that these were their orders.

At the beginning each deported person received from the Government one kilogram (2 lbs.) of bread per month (not per day). They lived on the provisions

which they had taken with them. Small sums of money were afterwards paid to them. I was told of about 30 persons who had formerly been in good positions in the Circassian village of Bumbudj (Mumbidj, on the ruins of the ancient Bambyke), 1½ days' journey from Aleppo, who had received 20 piastres in thirty days—not per head; but the 30 between them. That meant a penny a month each. About four hundred barefooted women, each with one child on her arm, one child on her back (often enough a dead one) and one held by the hand, passed through Marash during the first days. The Armenians of Marash—who afterwards were themselves deported—purchased £50 (Turkish) worth of shoes to supply those who passed through the town. Between Marash and Aintab the Mohammedan population in a Turkish village wished to give water and bread to a convoy of about 100 families. The soldiers refused to permit this. The American mission and the Armenians of Aintab—who later on were also deported—managed to bring bread and money during the night to the convoys which passed Aintab, and which totalled about 20,000 persons, mostly women and children. These were the villagers of the Sandjak of Marash. The convoys were not allowed to enter Marash, but encamped in the open. The American missionaries found it possible to provision them thus by night as far as Nisib (nine hours to the south-east of Aintab, on the way to the Euphrates).

While on the march the deported Armenians were at first robbed of their ready money, and afterwards of all their possessions. A deported Protestant minister saw T£43 being taken away from one family and £28 from another. This minister was himself newly married, and was compelled to leave his young wife at Hadjin, expecting her first child. Four-fifths of the deported persons are women and children. Three-fifths of them are barefooted. A former inhabitant of Hadjin who is known to me personally and who had a fortune of at least T £15,000 had, like everybody else, been robbed of his clothes, and clothes had to be begged for him here. The deported Armenians are specially troubled by the fact that they are unable to bury their dead. They are left dying anywhere on the road. The women often carry their dead children for days on their backs. At Bab, ten hours to the east of Aleppo, those who came through were lodged provisionally for a week or two, but they were not allowed to retrace their steps to bury the companions who had died on the way.

The hardest fate is that of the women who are confined on the way. They are hardly allowed sufficient time to bring their child into the world. One poor

woman gave birth to twins during the night. In the morning she had to march on, carrying the two newly-born children on her back. After a two hours' march she collapsed. She had to put the children on the ground under a bush, and the soldiers compelled her to walk on with her companions. Another woman was confined during the march and was forced to proceed on her march immediately; she fell down dead. A third woman was surrounded by ladies belonging to the American mission, while she was confined in the neighbourhood of Aintab. They only succeeded in obtaining permission for her to ride an animal, and she continued her journey in this manner, holding the child in her lap with a few rags round it. These cases were witnessed merely on the section of road between Marash and Aintab. At Aintab the people clearing up a han, which an hour before had been left by a convoy, found a new-born child. In the Tash-Han, in Marash, three new-born children were found buried in dung.

Innumerable corpses of children are found lying unburied on the road. A Turkish Major, who returned with me three days ago, said that many children were abandoned by their mothers on the way because they could not feed them any more. Older children are taken away from their mothers by the Turks. The Major, as well as each of his brothers, had an Armenian child with him; they intended to educate them as Mohammedans. One of the children speaks German. It must be one of the inmates of a German orphanage. It is thought that about 300 of the women who passed through here were confined on the way.

In this place a family, in its dire poverty and despair, sold a girl of the age of 18 years to a Turk for T£6. The husbands of most of the women had been called up for service in the Army. Anyone who does not obey the summons calling him up is hanged or shot; there were seven cases lately at Marash. The conscripts are, however, generally used merely for mending the roads, and are not allowed to carry arms. Those who return home find their houses empty. Two days ago I met an Armenian soldier at Djerabulus, who had come from Jerusalem, having obtained leave to visit his native village, Geben (situate between Zeitoun and Sis). I have known this man for years. Here he heard that his mother, his wife and three children had been deported into the desert. All inquiries as to the fate of his family were fruitless.

Corpses drifting down the Euphrates have been observed every day during the last 28 days, pairs of them being tied together back to back, while others are tied three to eight together by the arms. A Turkish Colonel who is stationed at

Djerabulus was asked why he did not have the corpses buried, whereupon he replied that he had no orders to do so, and that, moreover, it was impossible to ascertain whether they were Mohammedans or Christians, as their sexual organs had been cut off. (They would bury Mohammedans, but not Christians.) The corpses which had been stranded on the shore were eaten by the dogs. Others which had stuck on the sandbanks became the prey of the vultures. A German, in the course of one ride, saw six pairs of corpses drifting down stream. A German cavalry captain said he had, in the course of a ride from Diyarbekir to Ourfa, seen innumerable unburied corpses on both sides of the road, all corpses of young men whose throats had been cut. (These were the Armenians called up for military service and used for mending the roads.) A Turkish Pasha, addressing a distinguished Armenian, expressed himself as follows: "Be thankful, if at least you find a grave in the desert; many of you have to do without this."

Not one half of the deported persons remain alive. The day before yesterday one woman died here in the station yard; yesterday there were 14 deaths, and this morning a further 10. A Protestant minister from Hadjin said to a Turk at Osmanieh: "Not one half of these deported persons remain alive." The Turk replied: "That is what we are after."

It ought not to be overlooked that there are some Mohammedans who disapprove of the horrible deeds done against the Armenians. A Mohammedan Sheikh, a person of great authority at Aleppo, said in my presence: "When I hear talk about the treatment of the Armenians, I am ashamed of being a Turk."

Anyone who wishes to remain alive is compelled to go over to Islam. In order to promote this, isolated families are in certain cases sent to purely Mohammedan villages.

The number of deported persons who have passed through here and at Aintab has so far reached about 50,000. Nine-tenths of them were told on the evening before their deportation that they had to start in the morning. The majority of the convoys go through Ourfa, the minority through Aleppo. The first mentioned take the road for Mosul, the others for Der-el-Zor. The authorities say that they are to be settled there, but those who escape the knife will certainly perish of hunger. Some 10,000 persons have reached Der-el-Zor on the Euphrates; no news has so far been received of the others. As regards those who were sent towards Mosul, it is said that they are to be settled at a distance of about 16 miles

from the railway; this probably means that they are to be driven into the desert, where their extirpation can proceed without witnesses.

What I have written down is only a small fraction of all the cruelties which have been practised here during the last two months, and which assume larger proportions every day. It is only a fraction of the things which I have seen with my own eyes and heard from acquaintances and friends who were eye-witnesses. I am prepared at any time to mention the dates of the events and to give the names of the witnesses.

11. THE AMANUS PASSES.

Statements by two Swiss Ladies, resident in Turkey. Communicated by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief.

(a) Report by Fräulein M., dated 16th November, 1915.

I have just returned from a ride on horseback through the Baghtché-Osmania plain, where thousands of exiles are lying out in the fields and on the roads, without any shelter and completely at the mercy of all manner of brigands. Last night, about 12 o'clock, a little camp was suddenly attacked. There were between 50 and 60 persons in it. I found men and women badly wounded—bodies slashed open, broken skulls and terrible knife-wounds. Fortunately I was provided with clothes, so I could change their blood-soaked things and then bring them to the next inn, where they were nursed. Many of them were so much exhausted from the enormous loss of blood that they died, I fear, in the meantime. In another camp we found thirty or forty thousand Armenians. I was able to distribute bread among them! Desperate, and half-starved, they fell upon it; several times I was almost pulled off my horse. A number of corpses were lying about unburied, and it was only by bribing the gendarmes that we could induce them to allow their burial. Usually the Armenians were not allowed to perform the last offices of love for their relatives. Dreadful epidemics of typhoid-fever broke out everywhere; there was a victim of it practically in every third tent. Nearly everything had to be transported on foot; men, women and

children carried their few belongings on their backs. I often saw them break down under their burden, but the soldiers kept on driving them forward with the butt-ends of their rifles, even sometimes with their bayonets. I have dressed bleeding wounds on the bodies of women that had been caused by these bayonet thrusts. Many children had lost their parents and were now without any support. Three hours' distance from Osmania two dying men were lying absolutely alone in the fields. They had been here for days without food or even a drop of water, after their companions had continued their march. They had grown as thin as skeletons, and only their heavy breathing showed that there was still life in them. Unburied women and children were lying in the ditches. The Turkish officials in Osmania were very obliging; I succeeded in obtaining many concessions from them, and many hardships were remedied. I obtained carriages to pick up the dying people and bring them in to town.

(b) Report by Fräulein O. on a visit to the exiles' camp at Mamouret, 26th November, 1915.

We saw thousands of tiny low tents, made of thin material. An innumerable crowd of people, of all ages and every class of society! They were looking at us partly in surprise, partly with the indifference of desperation. A group of hungry, begging children and women were at our heels: "Hanoum, bread! Hanoum, I am hungry; we have had nothing to eat to-day or yesterday!"

You had only to look at the greedy, pale, suffering faces to know that their words were true. About 1,800 loaves could be procured. Everybody fell greedily upon them; the priests who were charged with the distribution of the bread had almost to fight for their lives; but it was by no means sufficient, and no further bread was to be had. A crowd of hungry people stood imploringly before us. The gendarmerie had to keep them back by force. Suddenly the order for departure was given. If anybody was slow in striking their tent, it was torn down with the bayonet. Three carriages and a number of camels were held in readiness. A few wealthy people quickly hired the carriages, while others less well-to-do loaded a camel with their things. The wailing of the poor, the old and the sick filled the air: "We can't go any further, let us die here." But they had to go on. We were at least able to pay for a camel for some of them, and to give small change to others in order to buy bread at the next station; clothes, sewn at the Mission Station in Adana, were also distributed. Soon the immense procession was moving on. Some of the most miserable were left behind (others rested there already in the

newly-dug graves). As many as 200—destitute, old or sick—are said to have waited there for help to come. The misery was increased a hundredfold by the severe rain and cold that had set in. Everywhere convoys left dying people in their track—little children and invalids perishing. Besides all this the epidemic was spreading more and more.

(c) Report by Fräulein M. on a visit to the exiles' camp at Islohia, 1st December, 1915.

It had rained three days and three nights; even in our houses we were acutely sensible of the cold and damp. As soon as possible, I set out on my way. About 200 families had been left behind at Mamouret. They were unable to proceed through exhaustion or illness. In this rain the soldiers, too, felt no inclination to rouse them up and drive them on, so they were lying about in what might have been a lake. There was not a single dry thread left in their ragged bedding. Many women had their feet frost-bitten; they were quite black and in a state for amputation. The wailing and groaning was horrible. Everywhere there were dying people in their last agonies or dead bodies lying in front of the tents. It was only by “bakshish” that the soldiers could be persuaded to bury them. It seemed a comfort to them when we came with dry clothes; they could change their things and get some bread and small change. Then I drove in a carriage along the whole route to Islohia. Though I had seen much distress before, the objects and the scenes I saw here defy description. A frailly-built woman was sitting by the roadside with her bedding on her back, and a young baby strapped on at the top of it; in her arms she had a two-year-old child—its eyes were dim and it was at its last gasp. The woman had broken down in her distress and was weeping in a heartbreaking way. I took her with me to the next camp, where the child died; then I took care of her and sent her on her way. She was so grateful. The whole carriage was packed with bread. I kept on distributing all the time. We had three or four opportunities of buying fresh supplies. These thousands of loaves were a great help to us. I was also able to hire some hundreds of animals to help the poor people forward. The camp at Islohia itself is the saddest thing I have ever seen. Right at the entrance a heap of dead bodies lay unburied. I counted 35, and in another place 22, in the immediate neighbourhood of the tents of those who were down with virulent dysentery. The filth in and around these tents was something indescribable. On one single day the burial committee buried as many as 580 people. Men were fighting for bread like hungry wolves. One saw

hideous scenes. With what timidity and apathy these poor people often stared at me, as though they wondered where this assistance came from! For some weeks now many camps have been provided daily with bread. Of course, everything has to be done as unobtrusively as possible. We are so thankful to God that we may at least do something.

(d) Letter from Fräulein M. to Mr. N., dated 13th December, 1915, on the way to Aleppo.

I should have written long before this, but during these last weeks I have been more on the road than at home, and the work in the camps was often so urgent that I could not find time for anything else. I suppose you have had, in the meantime, the receipt for the 200 liras you sent me. Many thanks for the quick response. I only wish you could see these poor people yourself; you would get an impression of the absolutely dreadful need and distress that these camps conceal. It is simply indescribable; one has to have seen it oneself. So far I have had no difficulty whatever; on the contrary, the officials here are most obliging, and grateful for everything we are doing for the poor people. You will find some reports enclosed which Miss O. copied for you as well; they will give you an idea of what we are doing here. Up to the present we have worked in four camps, twelve hours distant. We were often able to distribute about 10 to 20 liras' worth of bread a day; besides this, we gave flour, clothes and nirra to many sick people, to help them on the long journey. Sometimes it happened that in some places we did not have nearly enough bread—in such cases we provided the people with money to buy bread at the next bakery along the route.

Now we are on our way to Aleppo, and Miss O. will stay there some weeks, D.V., to prepare everything for another journey to Der-el-Zor. I intend to come back soon, since there is still much work to do on the Mamouret-Islohia route, and it seems to me that we ought not to give up the work among the distressed so long as any of them are left in this place, for if we did they would absolutely die of starvation. Judging by our recent experience, we shall need about 300 to 400 liras a month. Dr. L. told me to send you word about this, because I should get the money from you. It would be better not to stop the work for lack of money, because the poor people would suffer by it. If, however, you think that less money ought to be spent, or that the whole work should be given up, please send me a telegram in time, so that we may stop doing it. If not, will you please be so kind as to send me the amount. To-day I have asked you by wire to send me 400

liras—200 for Mamouret and 200 for Islohia-Hassan-Beyli.

I hope you are well. We got a message that Dr. L. is down with typhoid. I hope that God will soon give him new strength. Fräulein O. and I both send you our best wishes.

1

“We have just picked up fifteen babies. Three are already dead. They were terribly thin and ailing when we found them. Ah! If we could only write all that we see.”—Extract from a letter dated Marash, 4th June, 1915, published in “Sonnenaufgang,” September, 1915. ↑

2

The italics are the Editor’s. ↑

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The italics are the Editor’s. ↑

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This was a Friday. ↑

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The italics are the Editor’s. ↑

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The italics are the Editor’s. ↑

D. ALEPPO.

12. “A word to the accredited representatives of the German people,” by Dr. Martin Niepage, Higher Grade Teacher at the German Technical School at Aleppo, at present at Wernigerode.

On my return in September, 1915, from Beirut to Aleppo, after a three months' holiday, I heard, to my horror, that a new period of Armenian massacres had been initiated. I was told that they were far more terrible than those under Abdul Hamid; and that their object was to exterminate, root and branch, the intelligent, prosperous and progressive nation of the Armenians and to transfer their property to Turkish hands.

At first I was unable to believe such a monstrous report. I was told that in various quarters of Aleppo there were masses of half-famished human beings, the survivors of so-called “deportation-convoys,” and that in order to cover the extermination of the Armenian people with a political cloak, military reasons had been put forward, which were alleged to necessitate the expulsion of the Armenians from the homes they had occupied for over 2,500 years, and their deportation into the Arabian Desert. It was also said that individual Armenians had lent themselves to acts of espionage.

After having investigated the facts and made enquiries on all sides, I came to the conclusion that the accusations against the Armenians related in all cases to trifling matters, which were taken as a pretext to slay ten thousand innocent persons for one who was guilty, to commit the most savage outrages against

women and children, and to carry on a war of starvation against the deported persons with the object of destroying the whole nation.

In order to test the judgment which I had formed from the information I had obtained, I visited every place in the town in which there were any Armenians who had formed part of one of the convoys and had been left behind. I found in dilapidated caravansaries (hans) heaps of dead bodies, many of which were in an advanced state of decomposition, with living persons interspersed among them who were all near to the agony of death. In other yards I found heaps of sick and famished persons who were absolutely uncared for. Near the German Technical School, of which I am one of the higher grade teachers, there were four hans of this class with 700–800 deported persons who were starving. We, the teachers at the school, and our pupils had to pass them every day. Through the open windows we saw, each time we went out, the emaciated forms, covered with rags, of these miserable beings. Our school children had every morning almost to touch the two-wheeled carts drawn by oxen which they had to pass in the narrow streets, and in which every day 8–10 rigid corpses were carted away without coffins and without covering of any sort, the arms and legs protruding from the cart.

After having been a witness of these scenes during several days, I thought it my duty to draft the following report—

“As teachers at the German Technical School at Aleppo we take leave humbly to submit the following report:—

“We deem it our duty to call attention to the fact that our educational work will lose its moral foundation and the esteem of the natives, if the German Government is not in a position to prevent the brutality with which the wives and children of slaughtered Armenians are treated in this place. The convoys which, on the departure of the exiles from their homes in Upper Armenia, consisted of 2,000–3,000 persons—men, women and children—arrive here in the south with a remnant of only two or three hundred survivors. The men are killed on the way, the women and children, excepting those of unattractive appearance and those who are quite old or quite young, are first abused by Turkish soldiers and officers, and then brought into Turkish or Kurd villages, where they have to go over to Islam. As regards the remnant of the caravans, every effort is made to reduce them by hunger and thirst. Even when a river is passed, those who are

dying of thirst are not permitted to drink. As their only food a small quantity of flour is strewn on their hands as a daily ration; this they greedily lick off, but its only effect is to delay death from starvation for a little while longer.

“Opposite to the German Technical School at Aleppo in which we do our work as teachers, a remnant of some of these convoys is lying in one of the hans; there are about 400 emaciated forms; about 100 boys and girls, from five to seven years old, are among them. Most of them are suffering from typhoid and dysentery. On entering the yard one has the impression of coming into a lunatic asylum. When food is brought to them, one notices that they have lost the habit of eating. The stomach, weakened by months of starvation, has ceased to be able to receive food. Any bread that is given to them is laid aside with an air of indifference. They just lie there quietly, waiting for death.

“How can we teachers read German fairy tales with our pupils, or, indeed, the story of the Good Samaritan in the Bible? How can we ask them to decline and conjugate indifferent words, while round about in the neighbouring yards the starving brothers and sisters of our Armenian pupils are succumbing to a lingering death? In these circumstances our educational work flies in the face of all true morality and becomes a mockery of human feeling.

“And those poor creatures who in their thousands have been driven through the town and the neighbouring districts into the desert; nearly all of them are women and children, and what becomes of them? They are driven on from place to place, until the thousands dwindle into hundreds and until the hundreds dwindle into insignificant remnants. And these remnants are again driven on until the last survivors have ceased to live. Then only the final goal of the migration has been reached. Then the wanderers have arrived at ‘the new homes assigned to the Armenians,’ as the newspapers express it.

“‘*Ta’alim el aleman*’ (‘that is the teaching of the Germans’) says the simple Turk, when asked about the authors of these measures.¹ The educated Moslems are convinced that, though the German people may disapprove of such horrors, the German Government is taking no steps to prevent them, out of consideration for its Turkish Allies.

“Mohammedans of more refined feelings, Turks as well as Arabs, shake their heads disapprovingly; they do not even conceal their tears when, in the passage

of a convoy of deported Armenians through the town, they see Turkish soldiers inflicting blows with heavy sticks on women in advanced pregnancy or dying persons who cannot drag themselves any further. *They cannot imagine that their Government has ordered these cruelties, and ascribe all excesses to the guilt of the Germans, who during the war are held to be the teachers of the Turks in all matters.*² Even the Mollahs declare in the Mosques that it was not the Sublime Porte but the German officers who had ordered the ill-treatment and annihilation of the Armenians.

“The things which in this place have been before everybody’s eyes during many months, must indeed remain a blot on Germany’s shield of honour in the memory of Oriental nations.

“Many educated persons, who do not wish to be obliged to give up their faith in the character of the Germans whom they have hitherto respected, explain the matter to themselves in the following manner: they say, ‘The German nation probably knows nothing of the horrible massacres which are on foot at the present time against the native Christians all over Turkey. How is it possible otherwise, having regard to the veracity of the German nation, that articles should appear in German papers showing complete ignorance of all these events, and only stating that some individual Armenians were deservedly shot by martial law as spies and traitors?’ Others say: ‘Perhaps the hands of the German Government are tied by some convention regulating the limits of its competence, or intervention does not appear opportune at the present moment.’

*“It is known to us that the Embassy at Constantinople was informed of all these events by the German Consulates. As, notwithstanding this fact, nothing has been altered in the system of deportation, our conscience compels us to make this report.”*³

At the time I composed this report, the German Consul at Aleppo was represented by his colleague from Alexandretta, Consul Hoffmann. The latter told me that the Embassy at Constantinople was fully informed of what was happening in the country by repeated reports from the Consulates at Aleppo, Alexandretta and Mosul, but that a report about the things which I had seen with my own eyes would be welcome as a supplement to the existing records, and as filling in the details. He promised to send my report by a sure agency to the Embassy at Constantinople. I thereupon drafted a report in the desired manner,

giving a detailed description of the state of things in the han opposite our school. The Consul wished to add some photographs which he himself had taken in the han. They revealed heaps of corpses, between which young children, still alive, were crawling about or relieving nature.

In this revised form the report was signed not only by me, but also by my colleagues, Dr. Graeter (higher grade teacher) and Frau Marie Spiecker. The Director of our Institution, Herr Huber, also added his name and the following words: "The report of my colleague, Dr. Niepage, is not in any way exaggerated. For many weeks we have lived here in an air poisoned with sickness and the stench of corpses. Only the hope for a speedy change of things makes it possible for us to continue our work."⁴

The hoped-for change of things did not occur. I then thought of resigning my post as higher grade teacher at the German Technical School, stating as the ground for my decision that it appeared senseless and morally indefensible to give instruction and education as a representative of European culture, and at the same time to have to sit with folded hands while the Government of the country abandoned persons belonging to the same nation as our pupils to an agonizing death by starvation. But those around me, as well as the Director of the Institution, Herr Huber, dissuaded me from this intention. My attention was called to the fact that it would be useful for us to remain in the country as eye-witnesses of the events which were occurring. Perhaps our presence would have the effect of inducing the Turks, out of consideration for us Germans, to behave somewhat more humanely towards their unfortunate victims. I see now that I have far too long remained a silent witness of all these wrongs.

Nothing was improved by our presence, and we ourselves were able to give only very little help. Frau Spiecker, our energetic, brave fellow teacher, purchased some soap, and the lice-covered bodies of the women and children who were still alive in our neighbourhood were washed and freed from vermin (there were no men left). Frau Spiecker engaged some women, who prepared soup for those of the patients who were still able to eat. I myself distributed, every evening for six weeks, among the dying children the contents of two pails filled with tea, cheese and soaked bread. But when the hunger-typhus or spotted-typhus spread into the town from these charnel-houses, we succumbed, together with five of our colleagues, and had to stop our relief work. Moreover, no help given to the

exiles who came to Aleppo was of any use. We could only afford those condemned to death a few slight alleviations of their death agony.

What we saw here in Aleppo with our own eyes was, in fact, only the last scene of the great tragedy of the extirpation of the Armenians; only a trifling fraction of the horrors which were being perpetrated simultaneously in the other Turkish provinces. The engineers of the Bagdad railway, on their return from the section under construction, and German travellers, who on their way had met the caravans of the deported, spoke of still more abominable horrors. Many of these men could eat nothing for days; the impression of the loathsome things they had seen was too overpowering.

One of them (Herr Greif, of Aleppo) reported that heaps of corpses of violated women were lying naked on the railway embankment near Abiad and Ras-el-Ain. In the case of many, sticks had been driven into the anus. Another (Herr Spiecker, of Aleppo) saw Turks tie Armenian men together, fire several volleys of small shot with fowling pieces into the human mass, and go off laughing, while their victims slowly perished in frightful convulsions. Other men were sent rolling down steep slopes with their hands tied behind their backs. Below there were women, who slashed those who had rolled down with knives until they were dead. A Protestant minister who two years ago had given a most cordial reception to my colleague, Dr. Graeter, had his finger nails torn out.

*The German Consul at Mosul said in my presence in the German Club at Aleppo that he had seen so many children's hands lying hacked off on his way from Mosul to Aleppo, that one could have paved the road with them.*⁵

In the German Hospital at Ourfa there is also a little girl, both of whose hands have been hacked off. Herr Holstein, the German Consul at Mosul, also saw, in the neighbourhood of an Arab village, shortly before reaching Aleppo, shallow graves with freshly-buried Armenian corpses. The Arab villagers asserted that they had killed these Armenians by order of the Government. One of them said proudly that he personally had killed eight.

In many houses in Aleppo, inhabited by Christians, I found Armenian girls hidden away, whom some accidental circumstances had enabled to escape death; they had either remained behind in a state of exhaustion, having been taken for dead when their convoy was driven on; or some European had found an

opportunity to purchase these miserable beings for a few shillings from the Turkish soldier who had last violated them. All these girls are in a state of mental collapse. Many had been compelled to look on while their parents had their throats cut. I know some of these pitiable creatures, who for months were unable to utter a word, and even now cannot be coaxed into a smile. A girl of the age of 14 was received into the home of the depôt-manager of the Bagdad railway at Aleppo, Herr Krause. The child had been raped so many times by Turkish soldiers during one night that she had completely lost her reason. I saw her tossing on her pillow in delirium with hot lips, and I found it difficult to make her drink some water.

A German who is known to me witnessed the following incident in the neighbourhood of Ourfa; hundreds of Christian peasant women were forced by Turkish soldiers to take off all their clothes. For the amusement of the soldiers they had to drag themselves through the desert for days together in a temperature of 40° Centigrade, until their skin was completely burnt. Another person saw a Turk tear a child out of the womb of its Armenian mother, and throw it against the wall.

Other facts, some of them worse than the few instances given here, are recorded in the numerous reports of the German Consuls at Alexandretta, Aleppo and Mosul.⁶ The Consuls are of opinion that, up to the present date, about a million Armenians have perished by the massacres of the last months. Women and children, who either were killed or died from starvation, probably form one half of this number.

Conscience compels us to call attention to these things. Though the Government, by the annihilation of the Armenian people, only intends to further internal political objects, the execution of the scheme has in many respects the character of a persecution of Christians.

All the tens of thousands of young girls and women, who have been dragged away to Turkish harems, and the masses of children who have been collected by the Government and distributed among Turks and Kurds, are lost to the Christian Churches and are compelled to go over to Islam. The opprobrious name of “Giaour” is again used against the Germans.

In Adana I saw a troop of Armenian orphans marching through the streets under

the escort of Turkish soldiers. The parents have been slaughtered; the children must become Mohammedans. It has happened everywhere that adult Armenians were able to save their lives by declaring their readiness to go over to Islam. In some places, however, Turkish officials, wishing to throw dust in the eyes of Europeans, replied grandiloquently to Christians who had applied for admission into the Mohammedan fold, that religion is not a thing to play with, and preferred to have the petitioners killed. Men like Talaat Bey and Enver Pasha have repeatedly said, thanking distinguished Armenians, who brought them gifts, that they would have been still better pleased if the givers had presented them as Mohammedans. One of these gentlemen said to a newspaper reporter: "Certainly we are now punishing many innocent people, but we must protect ourselves, even from those who might become guilty in the future." Such reasons are adduced by Turkish statesmen in justification of the indiscriminate slaughter of defenceless woman and children. A German Catholic priest reports that Enver Pasha had told Monsignore Dolci, the Papal representative at Constantinople, that he would not rest while one single Armenian was still living.

The object of the deportations is the extirpation of the entire Armenian nation. This intention is also evidenced by the fact that the Turkish Government refuses all help from missionaries, Sisters of Mercy, and Europeans settled in the country, and tries systematically to prevent the giving of any such help. A Swiss engineer was to have come before a court-martial, because he had distributed bread in Anatolia among the starving women and children belonging to a convoy of deported persons. The Government did not scruple to deport Armenian pupils and teachers from the German schools at Adana and Aleppo, and Armenian children from the German orphanages; the protests of the Consuls and of the heads of the institutions were left unheeded. The offer of the American Government to take the deported persons to America on American ships and at America's expense was refused.

What our German Consuls and many foreigners residing in Turkey think about the massacres of Armenians will one day be known from their reports. As *regards the opinion of the German officers in Turkey I am unable to say anything. I often noticed when in their company an ominous silence or a convulsive effort to change the subject whenever any German of strong feelings and independent judgment began to speak about the fearful sufferings of the Armenians.*⁷

When Field-Marshal von der Goltz travelled to Bagdad and had to cross the Euphrates at Djerabulus, there was a large encampment of half-starved, deported Armenians there. Shortly before the Field-Marshal's arrival these wretched people, as I was told in Djerabulus, were driven under the whip a few miles off over the hills, sick and dying persons among the number. When von der Goltz passed through, all traces of the repulsive spectacle had been removed. When, soon afterwards, I visited the place with a few colleagues, we still found in the more out of the way places corpses of men and children, remnants of clothes, and skulls and bones which had been partly stripped of the flesh by jackals and birds of prey.

*The author of this report considers it out of the question that the German Government, if it were seriously inclined to stem the tide of destruction even at this eleventh hour, could find it impossible to bring the Turkish Government to reason. If the Turks are really so well disposed to us Germans as people say, then it is surely permissible to show them to what an extent they compromise us before the whole civilised world, if we, as their Allies, are to look on calmly, when hundreds of thousands of our fellow-Christians in Turkey are slaughtered, when their wives and daughters are violated, and their children brought up in the faith of Islam.*⁸ Do not the Turks understand that their barbarous acts are imputed to us, and that we Germans shall be accused either of criminal connivance or of contemptible weakness if we shut our eyes to the abominable horrors which this war has brought forth, and attempt to ignore facts which are already known to the whole world? If the Turks are really as intelligent as people say, it should surely not be impossible to convince them of the fact that, by extirpating the Christian nations in Turkey, they are exterminating the productive factors and the intermediaries of European trade and general civilisation? If the Turks are really as far-seeing as people say, they will not be blind to the danger, that all civilized European States, after having discovered the things which were done in Turkey during the war, must form the conclusion that Turkey has forfeited the right of governing herself, and has, once for all, destroyed all belief in her capacity for becoming civilized, and in her tolerance. Will not the German Government be acting in Turkey's own best interests, if she prevents her from committing economic and moral suicide?

With this report I am attempting to reach the ear of the Government through the accredited representatives of the German people. These things, painful as they

are, must no longer be passed over in silence at the sittings of the Committees of the Reichstag. Nothing would be more humiliating for us than the erection of a costly palace at Constantinople commemorating German-Turkish friendship, while we are unable to protect our fellow-Christians from barbarities unparalleled even in the blood-stained history of Turkey. Would not the funds collected be better spent in building orphanages for the innocent victims of Turkish barbarism?

When, after the Adana massacres in 1909, a sort of “reconciliation banquet” took place, in which high Turkish officials as well as the heads of the Armenian clergy took part, an Armenian ecclesiastic made a speech, the contents of which were communicated to me by the German Consul, Büge, who was present. He said: “It is true we Armenians have lost much in the days of these massacres, our men, our women, our children, and our possessions. But you Turks have lost more. You have lost your honour.”

If we persist in treating the massacres of Christians in Turkey as an internal affair, of no importance for us except as making us sure of Turkey’s friendship, then it will be necessary to alter the whole orientation of our German cultural policy. We must cease to send German teachers to Turkey, and we teachers must no longer speak to our pupils in Turkey of German poets and German philosophers, of German culture and German ideals, and least of all of German Christianity.

Three years ago the German Foreign Office sent me as higher grade teacher to the German Technical School at Aleppo. The Royal Provincial Education Board at Madgeburg, on my departure, specially enjoined me to show myself worthy of the confidence reposed in me by the granting of leave of absence to take up the office of teacher at Aleppo. I should not perform my duty as a German official and as an authorised representative of German culture if, in face of the atrocities of which I was a witness, I were to remain silent and passively look on while the pupils entrusted to me are driven out to die of starvation in the desert.

To a person inquiring into the reasons which have induced the Young Turkish Government to order and carry out these terrible measures against the Armenians, the following answer might be given:—

The Young Turk has before him the European ideal of a united national State. He

hopes to be able to “Turkify” the non-Turkish Mohammedan races—Kurds, Persians, Arabs, and so on—by administrative measures and by Turkish school education and by appeals to the common Mohammedan interest. He is afraid of the Christian nations—Armenians, Syrians and Greeks—on account of their cultural and economic superiority, and their religion appears to him an obstacle impeding “Turkification” by peaceful measures. Therefore they must be extirpated or forced into Mohammedanism. The Turks do not realise that they are sawing off the branch on which they themselves are sitting. Who is to bring progress to Turkey, except the Greeks, the Armenians and the Syrians, who constitute more than a quarter of the population of the Turkish Empire? The Turks, the least gifted among the races living in Turkey, themselves form only a minority of the population, and are still far behind even the Arabs in civilisation. Is there anywhere any Turkish commerce, Turkish handicraft, Turkish manufacture, Turkish art, Turkish science? Even law and religion, even the literary language, is borrowed from the subjected Arabs.

We teachers, who for years have taught Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Turks and Jews in German schools in Turkey, can only declare that of all our pupils the pure Turks are the least willing and the least capable. Whenever one hears about anything accomplished by a Turk, one can be sure, in nine cases out of ten, that the person concerned is a Circassian, or an Albanian, or a Turk with Bulgar blood in his veins. Judging from my own personal experience, I can only prophesy that the real Turk will never accomplish anything in commerce, manufacture or science.

The German newspapers have told us a great deal lately about the Turkish “hunger for education”; it is said that the Turks are thronging eagerly to learn German, and even that courses of instruction in that language for adults are being arranged in Turkey. No doubt they are being arranged, but with what result? They go on to tell one of a language course at a Technical School, which started with twelve Turkish teachers as pupils. The author of this story, however, forgets to add that after four lessons only six, after five lessons only five, after six lessons only four, and after seven lessons only three pupils presented themselves, so that after the eighth lesson the course had to be abandoned, before it had properly begun, owing to the indolence of the pupils. If the pupils had been Armenians, they would have persevered town to the end of the school year, learnt patiently, and come away with a fair knowledge of the German

language.

What is the duty of Germany, as well as of every civilized Christian nation, in face of the Armenian massacres? We must do all we can to preserve the lives of the 500,000 Armenian women and children who may now [beginning of 1916] be still in existence in Turkey and who are abandoned to starvation—to preserve them from a fate which would be a disgrace to the whole civilized world. The hundreds of thousands of deported women and children, who have been left lying on the borders of the Mesopotamian desert, or on the roads which lead there, will not be able to preserve their miserable existence much longer. How long can people support life by picking grains of corn out of horse dung and depending for the rest upon grass? Many of them will be beyond help on account of the underfeeding, which has continued for many months, and of the attacks of dysentery which are so prevalent. In Konia there are still a few thousand Armenians alive—educated people from Constantinople, who were in easy circumstances before their deportation, physicians, authors, and merchants; help for them would still be possible, before they succumb to the fate that threatens all. There are still 1,500 healthy Armenians—men, women and children, including grandmothers 60 years old and many children of six and seven—who are at work breaking stones and shovelling earth, on the part of the Bagdad Railway between Eiran and Entilli, near the big tunnel. At the present moment Superintendent Engineer Morf, of the Bagdad Railway, is still providing for them, but their names too have already been registered by the Turkish Government. As soon as their work is completed, that is to say, probably in two or three months, and they are no longer wanted, “new homes will be assigned to them”—which means that the men will be taken away and slaughtered, the good-looking women and girls will find their way into the harems, and the others will be driven about in the desert without food, until the end comes.

The Armenian people has a claim to German help. When a few years ago massacres of Armenians threatened to break out in Cilicia, a German warship appeared off Mersina. The commander called on the Armenian “Katholikos” in Adana and assured him *that as long as there was any German influence in Turkey, massacres like those perpetrated under Abdul Hamid would be impossible.*⁹ The same assurance was given by the German Ambassador von Wangenheim [since deceased] at an audience given to the Armenian Patriarch and the President of the Armenian National Council in April, 1915.

Even apart from our common duty as Christians, we Germans are under a special obligation to put a stop to the complete extirpation of the surviving half million of Armenian Christians. We are the Allies of Turkey, and having eliminated the influence of the French, English and Russians, we are the only foreigners who have any say in Turkey. We may indignantly repudiate the lies circulated in enemy countries accusing the German Consuls of having organised the massacres. We shall not, however, destroy the belief of the Turkish people that Germany has ordered the Armenian massacres, unless energetic action be at last taken by German diplomatists and German officers. If only the one reproach remained that our timidity and our weakness in dealing with our Ally had prevented us from preserving half a million women and children from death by starvation, the image of the German War in the mirror of history would be disfigured, for all time, by an ugly feature. It would be a serious mistake to imagine that the Turkish Government would, of its own accord, desist from the extermination of the women and children, unless the strongest pressure were to be exercised by the German Government. A short time before my departure from Aleppo in May, 1916, all the women and children encamped at Ras-el-Ain, on the Bagdad railway, whose number was estimated at 20,000, were mercilessly slaughtered.

13. ALEPPO.

Message dated, 7th February, 1916, from Fräulein O.; Published in the German Journal, "Sonnenaufgang," April, 1916.

I want to beg our friends at home not to grow weary of making intercession for the members of the Armenian nation who are in exile here. If there is no visible prospect of a change for the better, a few months more will see the end of them all. They are succumbing in thousands to famine, pestilence, and the inclemency of the weather. The exiles at Hama, Homs, and in the neighbourhood of Damascus are comparatively better off. They are left where they are, and can look about for means of subsistence. But further East, along the Euphrates, they are driven from place to place, plundered and maltreated. Many of our friends are dead.

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The remarks of this Headmaster, who only calls attention to the personal inconvenience suffered by the teachers in the school, is in singular contrast with the impassioned feelings of pity for the Armenians expressed and undoubtedly felt by the author of the report.—EDITOR'S NOTE. ↑

5

The italics are the Editor's. The fact which comes out clearly in several of the documents included in this pamphlet, that many German Consuls reported indignantly about these horrors, and that their reports were left unheeded, throws a lurid light on the attitude of the German Government.—EDITOR'S NOTE. ↑

6

See the last note (Editor's Note). ↑

7

The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

E. PLACES OF EXILE.

14. Der-el-Zor: Letter, dated 12th July, 1915, from Schwester L. Möhring, a German Missionary, describing her Journey from Bagdad to the Passes of Amanus; Published in the German Journal, "Sonnenaufgang," September, 1915.

At Der-el-Zor, a large town in the desert about six days' journey from Aleppo, we found the big han full to overflowing. All available rooms, roofs, and verandahs were occupied by Armenians. The majority were women and children, but there were also a certain number of men squatting on their quilts wherever they could find a spot of shade. As soon as I heard that they were Armenians, I started going round and talking to them. They were the people of Furnus (a village in the neighbourhood of Zeitoun and Marash); herded together here in these narrow quarters, they presented an extraordinarily melancholy appearance. When I enquired for children from our Orphanage at BM., they brought me a protégée of Sister O., Martha Karahashian. She gave me the following account of what had happened.

One day Turkish gendarmes had come to Furnus and arrested and carried off a large number of men, to turn them into soldiers. Neither they nor their families knew where they were being taken to. Those who remained were told that they would have to leave their houses within the space of four hours. They were allowed to take with them as much as they could carry; they might also take their beasts. After the lapse of the specified time the poor people had to march out of their village under the escort of soldiers (zaptiehs), without knowing where they

were going or whether they would ever see their village again. To begin with, as long as they were still among their mountains and had some provisions left, things went well enough. They had been promised money and bread, and were actually given some in the early stages—as far as I can remember, it was 30 paras (1½d.) per head per day. But very soon these rations ceased, and there was nothing to be had but bulgur meal—50 drams (=150 grammes) per head per day. In this fashion the Furnusli, after four weeks of extremely hard travelling via Marash and Aleppo, had arrived at Der-el-Zor. They had already been three weeks there in the han, and had no idea what was to happen to them. They had no more money left, and the provisions supplied by the Turks had also dwindled almost to nothing. It was days since they had had any bread. In the towns they had been barred in at nights, and not allowed to speak to the inhabitants. Martha, for instance, had not been allowed at B.M. to go to the Orphanage. She said to me sadly: “We had two houses and we had to leave everything; now there are mouhadjirs¹ in them.” There had been no massacres in Furnus, and the zaptiehs, too, had treated the people well. They had suffered principally from lack of food and water on the march through the burning hot desert. These Yailadji or Mountaineers, as they called themselves, suffered twice as much from the heat as other people.

The zaptiehs escorting them told us then that, since the massacres, the Armenians had cherished such hatred against the Turks that the latter had always to go in fear of them. The intention now, they said, was to employ the Armenians in building roads, and in this way to move them on gradually to Bagdad. When asked the “wherefore” of this, the zaptiehs explained that the people had been in collusion with Russia. The Armenians themselves declared that they did not know the reason for their expulsion.

Next day, at the midday rest, we fell in with a whole convoy of Armenians. The poor people had made themselves primitive goat’s hair tents after the manner of the Kurds, and were resting in them. But the majority lay on the burning sand without defence against the scorching sun. On account of the number of sick, the Turks had allowed them a day’s rest. It is simply impossible to conceive anything more disconsolate than such a mass of people in the desert under the given circumstances. One could tell by their clothes that they had lived in considerable prosperity, and now misery was written on their faces. “Bread!” “Bread!” was the universal cry. They were the people of Geben, who had been

driven out with their Pastor. The latter told me that every day there were five or six deaths among the children and the sick. This very day they had only just buried the mother of a girl about nine years old, who was now quite alone in the world. They besought me most urgently to take the child with me to the Orphanage. The Pastor gave precisely the same account of what had happened as the little girl at Der-el-Zor.

No one without personal experience of a desert can form anything approaching a conception of the misery and distress. The desert is mountainous, but almost entirely without shade. For days together the route leads over rocks and is extremely difficult going. On the left hand, as one comes from Aleppo, there is always the Euphrates, which trails along like a streak of clay, yet not near enough for one to be able to draw water from it. The poor people must suffer intolerable pangs of thirst; no wonder that so many sicken and die.

As it was the midday halt, we, too, unpacked our provisions and prepared to eat. That morning we had had bread and tea; our midday meal consisted once more of hard Arab bread, cheese, and a tin of sardines. In addition we had a bottle of mineral water. It was not very sumptuous, and yet it was not an easy task to eat anything in face of that crowd of distressed and suffering humanity. We gave away as much as we possibly could, and each of my three companions silently pressed into my hand a medjidia (3s. 2d.) "for the poor people." A bag of bread from Bagdad, as hard as stone, was received with extraordinary gratitude. "We shall soak it in water and then the children will eat it," said the delighted mothers.

Another scene comes back to me, which will give an idea of their destitution. One of my companions threw away an empty glass bottle. An old man threw himself upon it, begged to be allowed to take it for himself, and gave profuse thanks for the boon. Then he went down to the river, washed it out, and brought it back filled with the thick clayey water, carrying it carefully in his arms like a treasure, to thank us for it once more. Now he had at least drinking water for his journey.

Followed by many good wishes we at last continued on our way, with the impression of this misery still weighing upon us. In the evening, when we reached the village, we met yet another Armenian convoy of the same kind. This time it was the people of Zeitoun. There was the same destitution and the same

complaint about the heat, the lack of bread and the persecutions of the Arabs. A little girl who had been brought up by Kaiserswerth Deaconesses in the Orphanage at Beirout, told us of her experiences in good German:—

“Why does God allow it? Why must we suffer like this? Why did not they strike us dead at once?” were her complaints. “In the daytime we have no water for the children and they cry of thirst. At night the Arabs come to steal our bedding and clothes. They have taken girls from us and committed outrages against women. If we cannot drag ourselves further on the march, we are beaten by the zaptiehs.”

They also told us that other women had thrown themselves into the water to escape their shame, and that mothers with their new-born children had done the same, because they saw no other way out of their misery. Along the whole desert route there was a dearth of food—even for us who had money to pay for it—on account of the number of Turkish soldiers passing through and resting at every han. In Zeitoun, too, no one had been killed; the people could mention no instance of it.

The Armenian is bound up with his native soil; every change of climate is extremely upsetting to him, and there is nothing he misses so much as clear, cold water. For this reason alone residence in the desert is intolerable for him. A speedy death for the whole family at once seems a better fate to the mothers than to watch death by starvation slowly approaching themselves and their children.

On my arrival at Aleppo I was at once asked about the Armenians, and how they were doing for supplies. Their case had been taken up in every possible way, and representations had been made to the Government on their behalf. All that could be obtained was permission for the formation of an Armenian League of Help, which the Government at Constantinople as well as the Vali of Aleppo had sanctioned. The Armenian community at Aleppo at once proceeded to raise a relief fund among themselves, and have been supporting their poor, homeless brethren with money, food and clothing.

In the Amanus mountains, on our second day's journey after leaving Aleppo, we met with Armenians again. This time it was the people of Hadjin and the neighbourhood. They explained to us that they were going to Aleppo, but they knew nothing beyond that. They had only been nine days on the road, and did not ask for any assistance. Compared with those in the desert, they were faring

sumptuously; they had wagons with them carrying their household goods, horses with foals, oxen and cows, and even camels. The procession making its way up through the mountains seemed endless, and I could not help asking myself how long their prosperity would last. They were still in the mountains on their native soil, and had no suspicion of the terrors of the desert. That was the last I saw of the Armenians, but such experiences are unforgettable, and I publish them here with the most earnest appeal for help. Many of the Armenians may be guilty and may only be suffering what they have brought upon themselves, but the poor women and children need our help.

15. Exiles from the Euphrates: Report from Fräulein O.

On the 20th of April, 1916, I arrived at Meskene, and found there 3,500 deported Armenians, and more than 100 orphans. A part of the people have settled here as bakers and butchers, etc., even though Meskene is but a halting place. All the rest are begging. In every tent there are sick and dying. Anyone who cannot manage to get a piece of bread by begging, eats grass raw and without salt. Many hundreds of the sick are left without any tent and covering, in the open, under the glowing sun. I saw desperate ones throw themselves in grave-trenches and beg the grave-diggers to bury them. The Government does not give the hungry any bread, and no tent to those who remain outside. As I was in Meskene, there came a caravan of sick women and children from Bab. They are in an indescribable condition. They were thrown down from the wagons like dogs. They cried for water; they were given each a piece of dry bread, and were left there. No one gave them any water, though they remained a whole day under the hot sun. We had to work the whole night to ameliorate their condition a little. Among the orphans there was a small boy of four years old. It was early in the morning, and I asked him if he had eaten anything. He looked much amazed, and said: "I have always gazed at the stars, and my dear God has satisfied me." On my questioning him where his father and mother were, he said simply that they were dead in the desert.

In Meskene I gathered one hundred children under a tent. I had their hair cut and

their rags washed. They received daily some bread and some soup. As I had to go further, I sought someone to care for the orphans. I found a young widow from Hadjin, who asked me if she might take the children under her care. She belonged to a good family and had received a good education. She gave herself with an intense love to the children-work. Ten days after my departure they had sent the woman with the one hundred children South. I found her a few weeks later in Sepka, clothed in rags. She had lost her wits, and wandered about the place asking, "Where are my children? What have you done with my children?" When she had reached Abu Hara she had spent all her money and was destitute. The children were scattered—a prey to hunger. In Der-el-Zor I found two of them, the only survivors; they said that all the rest had perished.

In Meskene I saw more than 600 deported who had lived in Muara till now, and who had spent a pitiful sojourn of nine months there. They were now once more persecuted and sent to different places. Slowly and wearily they came on with their possessions on their backs. As nourishment they cook grass, press the water out, and make balls which they dry in the sun.

On the first of May, I came to Debsy, where I found the above mentioned six hundred deported, all in despair. They had not even been allowed to rest once or even to gather grass, but had been cruelly driven on. On the way I found people dying everywhere, exhausted from hunger and thirst. They had remained behind the caravan and must perish so painfully. Every few minutes came a stench of corpses. The gendarmes beat these stragglers, saying that they pretend to be tired. In Debsy there are 3,000 deported. In Abu Hara 6,000. In both places the death rate is one per cent. daily.

In Hama I found 7,000 deported, 3,000 of them hungry and practically naked. Here there is no grass, the locusts have consumed everything. I saw the people were gathering locusts and eating them raw or cooked. Others were looking for the roots of grasses. They catch street dogs, and like savages pounce upon dead animals, whose flesh they eat eagerly without cooking. They showed me how they bury the dead, shallow near the tents.

In Rakka alone there are 15,000 deported in tents. The camp is situated on both banks of the Euphrates, but these people are not allowed to enter the city. Rich people are paying from T£30–40 to get permission from those in authority to live for a length of time in the city. Everywhere the same lamentable pictures

repeat themselves.

In Sepka there are 1,500 persons who have bought the privilege of establishing themselves there. The rest, 6,000, remain in camps on the banks of the Euphrates. There is great misery here. Some in despair throw themselves into the river. In each deportation from one place to another, at least five or six perish through the brutal illtreatment of the accompanying gendarmerie. They expect to extract money from the poor, and exact vengeance with heavy blows when they receive nothing. Many are transported on boats in the Euphrates.

In Tibne I found 5,000—everywhere we met caravans of deportees. In every Arabian village there are some families, in every Arabian house young women and girls. Here the Government is giving 150 gr. of bread to every poor person daily. Children and grown-ups search among the garbage heaps for food, and whatever is eatable (chewable) is eaten. At the butchers' people wait eagerly for scraps.

Of every fifty persons who start from Rakka or Sepka on boats, twenty arrive, often even less. At the time of my arrival, the Government had gathered 200 orphans in a house in Der-el-Zor. At my departure (six weeks later) there were 800. They get daily a little bread and some soup. In the meantime 12,000 deported came to Der-el-Zor. Every day we see caravans going in the direction of Mosul. Nevertheless, at my departure, there were at Der-el-Zor and in its neighbourhood over 30,000 Armenians. Those who have means are getting permission to delay. The rest must proceed further. The deported are especially badly treated in the region of Der-el-Zor. The people are driven back and forward with whip blows, and cannot even take their most urgent necessities. On my return I met new caravans everywhere. The people have the appearance of lost men. We often see a whole row of ghastly forms rising suddenly out of a grave and asking for bread and water. They have all dug their graves and lie waiting for death. People of better standing, who cannot make up their minds to beg for a piece of bread, lie, when exhausted, on their beds, till death comes to release them. No one looks after them. In Sepka a preacher from Aintab told me that parents have often killed their children. At the Government investigation it was shown that some people had eaten their children. It has happened that dying people have been fought over in order to secure their flesh for food.

Another report from the region of Meadine and Ana, south of Der-el-Zor, where

there are thousands of deported, will be sent by the next mail. Our messenger returned to Aleppo on the 20th June. On the 26th he was again on a journey to the South.

¹

Moslem immigrants from Europe. ↑

APPENDIX.

REPORTS BY MOHAMMEDAN OFFICERS IN THE TURKISH ARMY AS TO INCIDENTS WITNESSED BY THEM.

(1) A.B.'s Report.

In April, 1915, I was quartered at Erzeroum. An order came from Constantinople that Armenians inhabiting the frontier towns and villages be deported to the interior. It was said then that this was only a precautionary measure. I saw at that time large convoys of Armenians go through Erzeroum. They were mostly old men, women and children. Some of the able-bodied men had been recruited in the Turkish Army and many had fled to Russia. In May, 1915, I was transferred to Trebizond. In July an order came to deport to the interior all the Armenians in the Vilayet of Trebizond. Being a member of the Court Martial, I knew that deportations meant massacres.

The Armenian Bishop of Trebizond was ordered to proceed under escort to Erzeroum to answer for charges trumped up against him. But instead of Erzeroum he was taken to Baipurt and from there to Gumush-Khana. The Governor of the latter place was then Colonel Abdul-Kader Aintabli, of the General Staff. He is famous for his atrocities against the Armenians. He had the Bishop murdered at night. The Bishop of Erzeroum was also murdered at Gumush-Khana.

Besides the deportation order referred to above, an Imperial "Iradeh" was issued ordering that all deserters, when caught, should be shot without trial. *The secret order read "Armenians" in lieu of deserters.*¹ The Sultan's "Iradeh" was

accompanied by a “fetua” from Sheikh-ul-Islam stating that the Armenians had shed Moslem blood and their killing was lawful. Then the deportations started. The children were kept back at first. The Government opened up a school for the grown-up children, and the American Consul of Trebizond instituted an asylum for the infants. When the first batches of deported Armenians arrived at Gumush-Khana all able-bodied men were sorted out, with the excuse that they were going to be given work. The women and children were sent ahead under escort with the assurance by the Turkish authorities that their final destination was Mosul and that no harm will befall them. The men kept behind were taken out of town in batches of 15 or 20, lined up on the edge of ditches prepared beforehand, shot, and thrown into the ditches. Hundreds of men were shot every day in a similar manner. The women and children were attacked on their way by the “Shotas” and armed bands organised by the Turkish Government, who attacked them and seized a certain number. After plundering and committing the most dastardly outrages on the women and children, they massacred them in cold blood. These attacks were a daily occurrence until every woman and child had been got rid of. The military escorts had strict orders not to interfere with the “Shotas.”

The children that the Government had taken in charge were also deported and massacred.

The infants in the care of the American Consul at Trebizond were taken away on the pretext that they were going to be sent to Sivas, where an asylum had been prepared for them. They were taken out to sea in little boats. At some distance out they were stabbed to death, put in sacks and thrown into the sea. A few days later some of their little bodies were washed up on the shore of Trebizond.

In July, 1915, I was ordered to accompany a convoy of deported Armenians. It was the last batch from Trebizond. There were in the convoy 120 men, 700 children, and about 400 women. From Trebizond I took them to Gumush-Khana. Here the 120 men were taken away, and, as I was informed later, they were all killed. At Gumush-Khana I was ordered to take the women and children to Erzindjan. On the way I saw thousands of bodies of Armenians unburied. Several bands of “Shotas” met us on the way and wanted me to hand over to them women and children. But I persistently refused. I did leave on the way about 200 children with Moslem families who were willing to take care of them and educate them. The “Mutessarif” of Erzindjan ordered me to proceed with the

convoy to Kamach. At the latter place the authorities refused to take charge of the women and children. I fell ill and wanted to go back, but I was told that as long as the Armenians in my charge were alive I would be sent from one place to the other. However, I managed to include my batch with the deported Armenians that had come from Erzeroum. In charge of the latter was a colleague of mine, — Effendi, from the Gendarmerie. He told me afterwards that after leaving Kamach they came to a valley where the Euphrates ran. A band of “Shotas” sprang out and stopped the convoy. They ordered the escort to keep away, and then shot every one of the Armenians and threw them into the river.

At Trebizond the Moslems were warned that if they sheltered Armenians they would be liable to the death penalty.²

Government officials at Trebizond picked out some of the prettiest Armenian women of the best families. After committing the worst outrages on them, they had them killed.

Cases of rape of women and girls even publicly are very numerous. They were systematically murdered after the outrage.

The Armenians deported from Erzeroum started with their cattle and whatever possessions they could carry. When they reached Erzindjan they became suspicious, seeing that all the Armenians had already been deported. The Vali of Erzeroum allayed their fears, and assured them most solemnly that no harm would befall them. He told them that the first convoy should leave for Kamach, the others remaining at Erzeroum until they received word from their friends informing them of their safe arrival to destination. And so it happened. Word came that the first batch had arrived safely at Kamach, which was true enough. But the men were kept at Kamach and shot, and the women and children were massacred by the “Shotas,” after leaving that town.

The Turkish officials in charge of the deportation and extermination of the Armenians were: At Erzeroum, Bihaa Eddin Shaker Bey; at Trebizond, Naili Bey, Tewfik Bey Monastirly, Colonel of Gendarmerie, the Commissioner of Police; at Kamach, the member of Parliament for Erzindjan. The “Shotas” headquarters were also at Kamach. Their chief was the Kurd Murzabey, who boasted that he alone had killed 70,000 Armenians. Afterwards he was thought to be dangerous by the Turks, and thrown into prison charged with having hit a

gendarme. He was eventually executed in secret.

(2) C.D.'s Report.

In August, 1915, in the suburbs of Mush I saw large numbers of dead bodies of Armenians, men, women and children, lying in the fields. Some had been shot, some stabbed, and most of them had been horribly mutilated. The women were mostly naked.

In the villages around Mush I saw old women and children wandering in the streets, haggard and emaciated.

In the same month, in a camp outside Bitlis, I saw collected about 500 women, girls, and children, guarded by gendarmes. I asked the latter what was to become of these people. *They said that they were being deported, but that they had orders to let the Bands deal with them on the way. The Bands had been organized by the Turkish Government for the purpose of massacring the Armenians. They were formed by Kurds, Turkish gendarmes and criminals who had been specially set free.*³

On the river at Bitlis I saw quite a number of bodies of Armenians floating on the water, and some washed up on the banks. The smell was pestilential and the water undrinkable.

In the same month of August, in the country at a distance of about two hours from Zaart, I saw the bodies of about 15,000 massacred Armenians. They were piled up on top of each other in two ravines. The Armenian Bishop of Zaart was, at his own request, taken to a cave near by and shot.

On my return from Zaart to Mush, in a village of the suburbs of Mush over 500 Armenians, mostly women and children, were herded up in a stable and locked in. The gendarmes threw flaming torches through an opening in the ceiling. They were all burnt alive. I did not go near, but I distinctly saw the flames and heard the screams of the poor victims.

I heard from reliable persons that women in the family way had their bodies cut open and the child snatched out and thrown away.

At Mush the streets were strewn with bodies of Armenians. Every Armenian who ventured out of doors was instantly killed.

Even men of great age, blind and invalids, were not spared.

From Mush to Hinis, at short distances from each other, I saw piles of bodies of Armenians in the fields alongside the road.

Between Sherkes-Koi and Hinis I saw two ravines filled with corpses of Armenians, about 400 in each ravine, mostly men. Another ravine was filled with bodies of little children.

At Khara-Shuban I saw a large number of bodies of Armenians floating on the river Murad.

When I went to Erzindjan I was told that wholesale massacres were perpetrated at Erzindjan, Mamakhatoun, and the whole country around. Besides those that the Turks had killed and burnt alive, they threw thousands of them into the Euphrates. A large number of Armenians, seeing that their death was inevitable, and fearing worse atrocities, preferred to throw themselves into the Euphrates.

1

The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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The italics are the Editor's. ↑

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COLOPHON

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