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THE ARMENIAN QUESTION.

In the fall of 1876, just before the Turko-Russian war, representatives of those Powers that signed the Paris treaty of 1856 met at Constantinople to consider the atrocities of the Turkish Government in Bulgaria and its misrule in Serbia. The Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, NERSES, called the attention of this conference to the oppressions in Armenia. But the conference was dissolved without accomplishing any thing at all. Upon this Russia declared war under the pretext of protecting Christians from Turkish oppression. The result was that Turkey was utterly defeated and an invading army was brought to San-Stephano, within a few miles of the Turkish capital.

The patriarch NERSES called upon the Russian commander and asked that Armenia be granted an autonomous government. As the result of his petition we have the following article in the treaty of San-Stephano, signed March 3, 1878:— "Article 16: since on the retreat of the Russian troops from those territories which will be left to Turkey, there may happen disturbances and difficulties affecting the relation of the two countries, the Sublime-Porte assumes the responsibility of carrying out, without delay, such reforms and improvements as are necessary in those provinces which are inhabited by the Armenians; also guarantees their protection against the Kurds and Circassians." From this time, we may say, the Armenian Question became directly a part of the Eastern Question.

To the above article Lord Salisbury objected at the Berlin Conference where the treaty of San-Stephano took its definit form. The principal ground of his objection was that the language employed in it might imply the stay of the Russian troops in Armenia as long as the promised reforms and protection were not realized. And this, of course, was against the interests of England in the East. Hence the article became a subject of discussion during two sessions of the conference Karateodori Pasha, the Turkish plenipotentiary, objected to it for, he said, the

necessary reforms were already in progress all over Turkey. Prince Bismarck, the presiding officer of the conference, appeared to favor his position. The Armenian delegation which was sent from Constantinople with a carefully prepared document giving the outline of an autonomous government in Armenia, urged upon the conference the necessity of some provision in the Berlin treaty for the safety of the Armenians. And amendment of the article was therefore proposed and referred to a committee composed of Salisbury and the Turkish Pasha, who drew up the article in the following and present form:

"Article 61, The Sublime-Porte assumes the responsibility of carrying out such reforms and improvements as the local necessities demand in those provinces which are inhabited by the Armenians; also guarantees their protection against the Kurds and Circassians. The Porte shall inform the Powers, from time to time of the means which it uses in fulfilling this agreement; and the Powers shall see that it is executed."

As to the result of all this, it is safe to say that the Turkish Government not only failed in fulfilling its agreement with regard to the Armenians of Turkey (for there are Armenians in Russia and elsewhere) but actually increased its oppression. Never perhaps, in all their past history, have they been subjected to greater indignities than at present. The policy of the government, especially of late, has been to extort money from the people and keep them in a state of continual terror. Cases of unjust imprisonment and banishment are not infrequent. Under the pretext of exposing some imaginary conspiracy houses are entered books seized, property confiscated and the unhappy owners sentenced, without trial, to infected jails. Murder, robbery and abduction of women have become ordinary crimes. The case of Moussa Bey that notorious ruffian, is too recent to be restated here.

As the consequence of these oppressions and atrocities rebellious sentiment has been growing among the Armenians and already five papers have made their appearance in France, England, and in the U. S. in order to protest against those Turkish atrocities and oppressions

and bring the claims of Armenians before the justice of European and American governments and peoples.

The Armenians are not asking any favor of the Turkish government, they demand the fulfilment of the article in the Berlin treaty, they do demand justice, liberty and peace which are the foundation principles of modern civilization.

G. H. P.

MOUSSA BEY.

(From The London Daily News)

CONSTANTINOPLE Jan 16—It is stated that in consequence of the appeal lodged in the Court of Cassation against the judgment in the Moussa Bey trial, the Sultan has instructed Djevdet Pacha, Minister of Justice, to devise means for reopening the case, but at present no steps have been taken with that object. The Court of Cassation has not yet given its decision. The inquiry into the other charges against Moussa Bey is proceeding slowly.

RUSSIAN SYMPATHY FOR ARMENIA

(From The London Daily News)

CONSTANTINOPLE Jan. 16—The *Ararzt*, the organ of the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin states that the Catholicos recently sent an image of the Virgin to the new Russian Caucasian Regiment quartered at Erivan and composed entirely of Armenians. Mgr. Sukias Barzian, the Bishop of Erivan, presented the image to the regiment which was drawn up in parade order for the occasion, the ceremony being witnessed by the civil and military authorities and the whole Armenian population of Erivan. The Bishop delivered an allocution, in the course of which, after referring among other matters to the position of the Armenians in Turkey, he said — "Faithful and devoted soldiers of Armenia, if the Czar should call you to your duty, you will make the sign of the Cross before this sacred image, and advance boldly against the foe. Fight for the sake of truth and love and for your unfortunate brethren."

Colonel Bakireff, in accepting the image on behalf of the regiment, expressed his sincere thanks for the gift while the soldiers gave repeated cheers for the Czar and the Catholicos. The allocution has caused considerable sensation in Armenian circles.

THE SULTAN AND MOUSSA BEY.

(From The London Daily News)

CONSTANTINOPLE Jan. 24—The Armenians of Mouch have petitioned that the further cases against Moussa Bey should be proceeded with at once, and have been informed that they would be as soon as the necessary preliminaries had been completed. No decision has yet been arrived at by the Court of Cassation. After careful inquiry I believe the position to be the following: The result of any further trial of Moussa Bey is doubtful, the question having unfortunately come to be regarded as one between Mohammedans and Christians. I am assured that the Sultan has personally followed the matter with extreme care and anxiety, and has probably convinced himself that it is not in the interest either of the Armenians or of Turkey that Moussa Bey should in any event be allowed to return to Armenia, and that therefore, whether he be guilty or not of the specific charges brought against him, he is too dangerous a man to be allowed to return there. It is certain that great influence has been brought to bear to conceal the facts from his Majesty and influence him in favour of Moussa Bey, and it speaks well for the Sultan's discernment that he has managed to learn the truth.

The opening of the second trial of Moussa Bey is being watched by all the interested. And it is a matter of justice that, not alone he should be tried again, but he must be tried and punished for all the crimes and brutalities he committed in Armenia. He must not be let free, for his inhuman conduct upon peaceful and Christian Armenians. Justice demands that his trial be reopened but when it does, will the verdict of courts be in any way different from the previous one? certainly not, because the Turkish government approves and appreciates the brutal labors of Moussa Bey and prizes him highly. She means not, and will not punish him; as any crime, outrage and assault committed upon Christians, please the Mohammedan hearts. As long as Moussa Bey killed no Mohammedan; as long as he assaulted none of the Muslims' wife or daughter he is not guilty in Mohammedan courts, unless the European Christian Powers use their influence upon Turkey and demand that justice shall be done in this case.

B. H. T.

