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AN ARMENIAN WOMAN

The Haik,

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BY

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THE POLICY OF ABDUL-HAMID II.

All that has been said, and much has been said, about the Armenian massacres, does not seem to have sufficiently enlightened public judgment regarding the deeper origin of the events. Why the Turks massacred the Armenians? Why the Sultan authorized them to slaughter their Armenian fellow-citizens? Various answers of more or less superficial plausibility are given to the question, but the true answer is this: because the Turks are Moslems and the Armenians are Christians. Let us make this plain.

The Armeno-Turkish collision is the continuation of the great struggle which has been for centuries going on between Mohammedanism and Christianity, between the Sultans and the European Powers. There was a time when Europe was afraid of the Turks, whose warlike and savage instincts were stimulated and consecrated by their religious faith. They have been always a people in camp and since the first Ottoman Sultan, Otman, who reigned in 1296, that is in the course of

600 years, they have made 300 (three hundred) great wars. They have most piously killed, massacred, outraged the Christians whom they regard as "infidels" damned to perdition†. To convert the world to Islam or to subject the "Infidels" to their rule, that has been their aim. And as a reward during their present existence they have been offered the full and unbridled enjoyment of their animality free from all preoccupation concerning the moral ideal of life. Full of the spiritual pride of their religion, they held the Christians in contempt and disdainfully turned away their eyes from every thing Christian. They used to say "the French (the Europeans) have science, the Armenians have trades, the Ottomans have magnificence."

But precisely by virtue of its science Europe grew frightfully more and more powerful, and the Armenian, thanks to his trade and industry, grew more prosperous, than the Turks. The poor Turks were puzzled. Should they learn the sciences of the infidel Europeans? and should they become shoemakers and watchmakers and jewellers and tailors like their contemptible Armenian subjects? No. They would not stoop so low, but they would like to remain in "magnificence."

Of all the features of the European States one thing pleased most the Turkish Government and suited best its needs of magnificence, namely, the institution of public debts. And Turkey plunged itself in state debts deep to its chin. Europe did not hesitate to furnish the loans.

Turkey, without science and without industry, had plenty of money for a time, and began to look like a European State. An other advantage resulting from the debts was the interest taken by the European bondholders in the existence of Turkey. But the situation had also one disagreeable side to it. The Sultan who took so much money from Christian Europe was obliged to take, or at least to appear to take, its advice also, and to grant his Christian sub-

† "whoever followeth any other religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted by him, and in the next life he shall be of those who perish." Koran, Chapter III.

jects rights of citizenship equal to those enjoyed by Moslems. To do this was to sin against Allah and his prophet, but the Turks thought themselves excusable to make some apparent concessions to European opinion, provided they should faithfully deny in practice whatever privileges they had granted the Christians on paper. So the "Hatts" or edicts remained dead letters; only the presence of European colonies and consuls in the sea-coast cities of Turkey afforded the native Christians some degree of protection, while the interior provinces unfortunately continued to groan under the most crushing oppressions.

Roughly speaking this period of reluctant subjection of the Sultans to European influence lasted about half a century, of which the end began with the reign of the present Sultan.

Turkey had been bankrupt, and Hamid could not obtain any more loans from Europe. By what means the moslem "magnificence" was to be maintained? Science and trade and loans were out of the question. The empire had grown weaker since European influence had grown in Constantinople. The Sultan and his advisers, lead by considerations of Mohammedan orthodoxy, elaborated a new policy. They would strengthen the failing fanaticism of the Moslems and thus regenerate the power and the glory of the good old times. Hamid abolished the newly-born Ottoman Constitution and dissolved the short-lived Parliament because it was not in accord with the Mohammedan principle of absolute rule. His next enterprise was directed against the Armenian danger. The Armenians, in fact, had grown in number and importance; and were adding to their trade and industry science and education, in this having the powerful assistance of the American missionaries. Armenia threatened to become a small Europe in the Asiatic bosom of Turkey. The Sultan could by no means tolerate such a tendency. His fears were further stimulated by the 61st article of the Berlin Treaty engaging the Powers to superintend the application of reforms needed in the Armenian provinces of the Empire.

This general review of the course of

events brings us to see why the Armenians were massacred.

An Armenian proverb says: "The mother of seven sons was devoured by the wolf." So the agreement of the seven Powers, in stead of one of them having to look after Armenia, was of no avail and Armenia was devoured by the Hamidian wolf. The wolf, of course, proceeded cautiously, looked around, watched the opportune moment for taking his tentative steps and seized in his teeth poor old Armenia and chewed her in contemptuous defiance of all the forces that be. At the sight the British Lion roared but to no effect. The Bear growled doubtfully and, ever thirsty of the Seas, marched down bathing his gigantic paws in the blood of the innocent thousands. O Bear, thou mayest reach the Seas, but all the waters of the Mediterranean will never suffice to wash the blood out of thy feet!...

Let us answer once more, in conclusion, the question why the Armenians were massacred.— Because they, as Christians, sympathized with and progressed in the direction of European civilization, while the Turks, as Mohammedans, hated Christian Europe and Christian Armenia with which they could not keep pace.

A Committee has been organized among the New York Armenians with the object of having a series of lectures given to the Armenian colony of this city during the present season. Rev. Lyman Abbott was the first to address them, as he has long been one of the foremost friends of the Armenians. He spoke "as an American to his fellow-citizens" welcoming them to this country, and told them what were the conditions of success in life. "There are no other laws of successful achievement for you than myself," said the Doctor; in this country than in any other;" and proceeded to explain the necessity of knowing one's self, of energy, of having a definite aim or purpose, of persistence, of economy both of time and money, and, last but not least of all, of being guided by the laws of God. These are the conditions of true success in life.

We give the translation of this most interesting address in full in the Armenian portion of the HAİK for the benefit of all the Armenians.

THE ARMENIAN WOMAN

The better half of the American man is his wife; we Armenians are sincerely persuaded of that. The better half of the Armenian man is his wife; of this we are going to persuade the Americans.

In the first place the Armenian women are more Armenian than the men. Their language is purer, as their character is purer, of foreign elements. They have a pious hatred of the Turks, and avoid in every way coming within their sight. They do not learn and do not speak Turkish as their husbands do for business purposes. Their fidelity to their husbands, their devotion to their homes, their strong attachment to their children are proverbial. The Armenians know they owe to their women the preservation of their national tongue and church and traditions.

What is still more wonderful is the fact that Armenian women are brave, often braver even than the men. At the same time that they are extremely tender in their affections they often have something virile in their strength. MME Chantre, a French lady, who traveled in Armenia a few years since and wrote a book *, tells us many interesting things about the Armenian women. Speaking of an incident relative to an Armenian young woman, she makes this remark "this energetic type is frequent among the Armenian women, who often join to the grace and beauty of forms a virile character †."

During the last winter's beseige of the Armenian town of Zeitoun in Armenia the heroism of the women was displayed to the great admiration of the American missionaries of the neighbourhood. The following is from the description given at the time by an American missionary.

"While the men were fighting for the fort there still remained in the town the governor and sixty-five armed guards. These men were preparing to do some mischief when the women armed themselves with axes and attacked them, forcing them to

surrender their arms, and then stationed them around the town for safekeeping.

"After they had taken the fort and the 250 prisoners, they confined the latter in the governor's establishment. Then followed a great battle with the newly-arrived troops. Every man and boy over thirteen years of age, was away fighting, no one could be spared to guard the prisoners and they were just breaking out to fire the town when the women in desperation, rose again, killed every man of them and threw them down the cliff. You must remember they were fighting for their lives and the lives of their babes and the lives of 1,200 refugees who had fled from their burning villages before the hordes of Turkish soldiers who were pursuing them. How the ladies of our mission circle held their breath with horror at the thought of the women having done this. I did not. My mind went back to the time when

Romans in Rome's quarrels
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife nor limb nor life
In the brave days of old.
For how can man(or woman)die better
Than by facing fearful odds,
For the birthplace of his fathers,
For the temples of his Gods.

and I gloried in the courage of those women.

"Once the soldiers cannonaded the town. Out of 2,780 shells, 1,200 fell harmlessly into the mud walls and the roofs of the houses. The women gathered up the unexploded shells and emptied out the powder of which they were in great need, and converted the shells into bullets. They say simply 'The shelling of the town was a great blessing to us,' and they have no more of an idea that they have done anything heroic than any woman has when she has done the duty nearest at hand."

(To be continued)

We would be glad to receive the subscriptions of our American friends, as all the subscriptions we receive from the Armenians are far from covering the expenses of this publication. The subscription price of the HAIK is two dollars a year.

To clergymen one dollar.

The picture of the Armenian woman published in this issue of the HAIK is from the book of MME Chantre mentioned in our article on the Armenian women.

* A travers l'Arme'nie russe, 1893.

† Page 78.

CHRISTION SYMPATHY AND THE ARMENIANS.

(This article is substantially a letter by the Editor of the HAIK published in the HERALD of Montreal, Jan. 7, in answer to Mr. Parker.)

Now and then we happen to find in the papers strange reports of interviews, from which we see there are some uncommon personages who deprecate the display of an "unquestioning" sympathy with the Armenians; or make a lame attempt to justify, in the greatest possible measure, the massacres by vilifying the massacred; or show a contemptuous pity for the simple-minded Christians who regard the butchered Armenians as martyrs ... We should like to give them a general answer.

When the first news of the Armenian massacres reached the civilized world, many questioned the exactness of the reports and reserved judgment whether the Armenians might not have provoked their fate; but those who were well acquainted with the past record of the Turkish Government, inclined from the first to the belief that the worst had not yet been told, and further reports came soon to justify their opinion. Now for two years reports of the most trustworthy character and from a variety of sources have kept coming—the American missionaries in Armenia and Asia Minor have written, the European consuls have repeated, the travellers have witnessed, the refugees have described, the Blue Books of the British Government have narrated the events—and the tremendous weight of the accumulated evidences has forced upon all "questioning" minds the conviction that "the Turks are the ruthless aggressors and the Armenians the innocent victims."

Still there are a few who seem to have the desire of signalizing themselves as men of exceptionally "calm judgment" by deprecating the Armenian sympathy of the rest of the world as fanatic and "unquestioning."

And these exceptionally broad-minded people say: All these butcheries are accidents of "a purely racial warfare," why do you

present them under color of religious persecution?"

People who venture so to speak must be ignorant of the fact that the Sultan is the Calif of Mohammed "the Prophet," that all civil and political order in the State are to be based upon, or in harmony with, Islamic law and traditions—that all modifications pressed on the Turks by Christian diplomacy are held in abomination. Such modifications have been submitted to, rather than admitted by, the two predecessors of the present Sultan, and the Christian subjects of the Ottoman throne have been declared by "the Hatts" to be equal to the Moslems, but Abdul-Hamid has proved to be a reactionary Padishah and has undone all that was done by European diplomacy since half a century. He has thrown off the civilizing gentle yoke of Christian Europe. He has trampled upon their treaties and signatures. He has reasserted his absolute right to do whatever he pleases with his Christian subjects. He has made a mockery of the solemn promises and engagements of the six Powers for the protection of Armenian life and property. Do you know this, Gentlemen of so questioning a disposition and so comprehensive minds? have you comprehended this. This is the sum and substance of the question—The Great Assassin of the Armenians is such not because the Armenians have rebelled against him, but because he himself, as Calif of the Moslems, has rebelled against Christian Europe, and in his impotent rath against the Powers he has fallen upon his own helpless Armenian subjects. The contest is between Europe and Hamid. Europe said to the Sultan: You must not oppress the Armenians. The Sultan answered in spite: I will kill them.

And he is still continuing his murderous work with impunity.

If the slightest doubt is yet possible as to the religious motives which animate the Calif and give rise to the Turkish hatred and persecution of the Armenians, let us remember the circumstances under which many of the slaughtered Armenians died. The leaders of the Moslem mobs asked each of the Christians: "Do you choose Islam or

death?" And the answer was: "I am ready to die for Christ's sake;" and he died. Is this not martyrdom?

Thus 130,000 of them have been slaughtered. 55,000 orphans are left at the mercy of the elements. Armenia has become the valley of sorrow, the land of orphans and widows.

May the Father Almighty pour his blessings on all those who befriend the orphans and widows of the Armenian martyrs in their immense affliction!

THE MASSACRE AT EGIUN

HOW IT WAS PLANNED AND CARRIED OUT.

BY MRS. RENDEL HARRIS

(From the "Daily News.")

"Some little time before the massacre the Kaimacham and officials sent for the leading Christians, and said to them:—'We know that there are revolutionists among you. Give up ten of them and we will spare you; otherwise we will punish all.' The Christians replied:—'We are loyal subjects of the Sultan. There are no revolutionists among us. If you please to imprison us, or even to kill us, you must do so, but we cannot denounce our friends.' They were then threatened and sent away, and afterwards all of these true men, with the exception of one or two, were brutally murdered in the massacre. About two or three days before the massacre the roads to the city and bridges were guarded, and no Armenian was allowed to pass out. At the same time the Turkish Colonel communicated with the Kurdish chiefs in the neighbourhood, and the City Council ordered one hundred axes to be made, which were afterwards used for slaughter. As the day fixed for the work of destruction approached the Armenians became very anxious, and would have closed their shops and remained in hiding, but they were ordered to remain at their places of business, and dared not disobey for fear of precipitating the evil. Then a false telegram, purporting to be from Constantinople forbidding the massacre

and commanding quiet, was put into the hands of the solitary Armenian member of Government, and he, deceived and rejoiced at once, sent off a messenger to re-assure his friends, and this messenger was the first man killed.

"Besides this ruse, and in order to lure the men into the streets, a crier was then sent out proclaiming, 'All is quiet. There is no cause for fear. Return to the market place.' At the same time the Kurds were being admitted, and the slaughter, after a brief feint of resistance, was commencing in a distant quarter of the city. Everything on the part of the Government was done with system. The town was searched and massacred by districts, and lists made each day of those unkilld and to be still sought after, the effort being to kill every man and boy over the age of fifteen. The lowest computation of numbers gives between five and six hundred as so slaughtered, and the highest approaches two thousand. Major Bulman, the British Consul at Sivas, thinks about a thousand, but it is very difficult to obtain exact numbers. Many of these were killed with every accompaniment of atrocity. Then the houses were looted, and the treasure secured was largely divided between those who had planned and carried out this atrocious crime—the Kaimacham, a young man, since decorated by the Sultan, having, no doubt, the 'lion's share.' Almost the entire male Protestant population were killed, and both the Protestant church and mission-house and the two large Gregorian churches were looted, the windows smashed, and all available woodwork broken or burned, and from the Gregorian churches much treasure was taken. Many women and children were killed as well as their husbands and fathers, and many women were dishonoured, while at the neighbouring village of Pingan, massacred and looted just about the same time, fifteen women drowned themselves and some threw themselves into the fire to escape the same fate. Then the houses were fired, and 500 in one quarter and several hundred in others were destroyed—about 800 in all.

"The distress of the unhappy survivors of this wickedness, when the killing ceased

at the close of three days, was, of course, beyond words to describe. A short time since these women were so happy with husbands, sons, children, and bright beautiful homes! Now all is gone, and only terrible memories of the past, scenes never to be forgotten, and abject misery in the present remain to them! Oh that the Powers of Europe, who, were they willing to help and redress the wrongs of these helpless ones, have it in their power to do so, could but once see and hear for themselves!

"A month after these atrocities I was in Eguin, and heard for myself. The survivors are largely widows and orphans. Of men, only those of the uninfluential class were left. These unfortunate and bereft creatures are in misery unutterable. By it they cry to Europe for pity and protection, as to God for mercy. Surely a more righteous cause was never offered to the strong in the interest of the oppressed! May God so touch the hearts of those upon whom the responsibility of Government rests in connection with the Eastern Question that in the shortest time possible these horrors may be tales of the past."

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

— of the —

FRIENDS OF ARMENTA

with which is incorporated the
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OBJECTS.—(1.) To furnish information upon the subject of Armenia, by means of a central depot for the publication and diffusion of literature, leaflets, maps, etc., of an accurate and trustworthy character.

(2.) To supply the means of inter-communication between the various societies engaged in the work of Armenian relief.

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The attention of the public, and especially of members of local Armenian Relief Committees and others interested in Armenia, is invited to this Association, the general object of which are stated above.

The need of some such convenient centre of information and inter-communication has long been recognised. The Association is absolutely unconnected, directly or indirectly, with any political party or organization; nor is it intended to add to the number of existing Relief Agencies, or to interfere in the slightest degree with their respective operations. Its purpose is to promote a wider and more intelligent interest in Armenia, and to provide a means of placing those who are already working in its behalf within immediate reach of mutual information. The Association will thus, it is hoped, render effective service to the various existing Societies, by giving wider publicity to their work and by promoting a more general knowledge of those terrible facts of suffering and destitution in Armenia, which still appear to be so inadequately realised.

MRS. GLADSTONE unveiled the memorial window to the Armenian martyrs in the Hawarden Church last week. Mr. Gladstone delivered a speech before the ceremony to an Armenian deputation, in which he said that although the agitation in behalf of the Armenians had failed to arouse the six great Powers, he had an unquenchable hope that the triumphant career of wickedness of the greatest assassin in the world (meaning the Sultan) was doomed to be short-lived.

ARMENIANS WILL NOT BE APT TO GO TO CANADA.

Rev. R. Chambers of Woodstock, Ont., a Presbyterian missionary to Turkey, some time ago communicated a suggestion to the department of the interior that the Canadian government might assist in the transportation of a number of Armenians to the northwest, or, if they could not do that, to give a block of land to a company who would do so. A reply was made to Mr. Chambers that it was impracticable to do this.

A dispatch has been received by the Government from Joseph Chamberlain, colonial secretary, asking what had been done in the matter and if Mr. Chambers' suggestion had been acted on. In reply to this the Dominion Government has passed an order in council and forwarded it to Mr. Chamberlain, setting forth that there was no appropriation for assisting immigrants to Canada, and that in view of difference of climate in Canada and Turkey, it might not be in the interests of the Armenians themselves to bring them to Canada.

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The returns from this edition, less cost of publication, will be used for the further

relief of the Armenian sufferers.

In justice to the Armenian Relief Committees, it is eminently proper to emphasize the fact that all business relations between them and the Red Cross naturally closed on our return home. This fund is, therefore, entirely independent, and will go direct from the Red Cross to the needs of the field so well known to it.

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