

**THE WORLD WAR
AND THE
TURCO-ARMENIAN QUESTION**

**BY
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PERSONAL EXPLANATION OF THE AUTHOR

The son of a Pole, who having been harbored in Turkey after the Hungarian abortive Revolution of 1848, served this country as an officer and was the object of government favors till his death, I was infeoffed to the Turkish people as much out of thankfulness as because of their numerous, amiable qualities.

In writing this book intended to defend turkey against the Western public opinion concerning the Turco-Armenian question, I have only given way to my grateful feelings towards the country where I was born and which made me, in my turn, the object of her benevolence. These feelings expressed themselves by acts of indubitable loyalty and there is they reason why I fought twice in duel to maintain her honor and served her as a volunteer during the Turco-Greek War.

It is after having ended my career and assured a long time ago of the kind feelings of the Ottoman Government and of my Turkish fellowmen's that I publish this work under my name. Thereby I mean to say that I am only obeying my love towards the country. As to the degree of conviction with which I put my pen to her service in this discussion, where the question is to prove that Turkey is not so guilty as report goes and in which passions are roused to the utmost is sufficiently fixed by my signing this defense in which I speak the plain truth to the Armenian committees and the Entente.

The explanations I have just given were necessary, for, in the presence of the difficulty in which I flatter myself to have put the opposite side to answer to my defense of Turkey, they will seek to attack me personally. They will perhaps say that an Ottoman of Polish origin who undertakes the defense of the Turk against the Armenian can only be a mercenary. They will say also that, having become a Musulman, I am only a renegade whose defense of the Moslem against the Christian cannot be taken into consideration.

What else will they not say?

Buy theirs will always be unseasonable arguments! Supposing that I were the unworthy man they will try to make of me, what would that prove? Two and two are none the less four had this truth been affirmed by a cheat or a murderer. Arguments speak for themselves. These having been admitted to be valid in themselves, the personality of the speaker contributes in no way whatever in annulling or confirming them.

Two words more: I am not in the least prejudiced against the Armenian, on the contrary; I admire them as a people possessing numerous, good qualities. I have among them many acquaintances and a few friends. Saying again what I wrote in the sentence which ends my work, I will say that, as an Ottoman, I deeply deplore the scission that intrigue has provoked between them and the Turk with whom they were made to live in concord. It is for those who have perpetrated this crime against history whose course they have thus turned aside, that, having become themselves again, the Armenian ought to reserve their maledictions.

AHMED RUSTEM

Treatment of the non-Moslem in the Ottoman Empire.

Though very embarrassed in her relations with her Christian subjects whose faithfulness has never been above suspicion, Turkey has earnestly employed herself for nearly a century, in assuring to the non-Moslem elements under her rule the same treatment and rights and to the Moslems.

This idea animates the whole legislation elaborated in the Empire since the “Tanzimat” (era of reforms inaugurated by the proclamation of the Gulhane Charter in 1839) and was for the most part realized, when Russia herself more than ever attacked to a system of Government where her non-orthodox subjects were condemned to a marked state of inferiority towards their fellowmen belonging to the State religion, dared to break war against her in 1876, under the pretext of getting its application.

If the undertaken task had not been entirely accomplished by that time the reason of it is in the fact that the disappearance of the Mussulman supremacy would have given ground to perpetual blows between the different Christian sects whose hatred for each other was boundless¹.

This is how the French diplomat, Mr. Engelhardt, expresses himself on the said matter in his book “*La Turquie et le Tanzimat*” (Turkey and the Tanzimat): However, whilst emphasizing the advantages of a common form of Government, the Divan was careful not to uphold complete assimilation as it would have jeopardized Moslem predominance, which, according to its view, formed the only barrier against anarchy. This precaution found its reason in a fact which was undeniable at that time and could even pass as an axiom: that Moslem rule is one that divides “rayas” the least.

Furthermore, another difficulty, which was not the least of the hindrances encountered by the Sublime Porte in the execution of its task, and which should be born in mind, resided in the attitude of Christians themselves regarding the repeal of certain inequities to which they were subject in special spheres, and their refusal to relinquish privileges they enjoyed in other cases. This is also observed by Mr. Engelhardt, in the above mentioned work, in which he states on the matter: “This experience (the assimilation of non-Moslems to Moslems with regards to military service) bears in itself an unexpected lesson: it shows that during its evolution from theory to practice, the reform would be opposed by the very parties who would be the first to benefit therefrom, a difficulty which tended consequently to aggravate the particular problem upon the solution of which the Powers had laid special stress.”

However, the said author makes a grievous historical mistake in assuming that all the Powers were anxious to appease or satisfy the Christian subjects of the Sublime Porte, by adopting measures which would place them on a footing of equality with its Moslem subjects. As a matter of fact, whilst posing as a zealous defender of their cause, Russia would have been greatly disappointed had Ottoman orthodoxies been deprived of their grievances against the Porte, because her policy regarding Turkey had been for centuries notoriously directed towards preparing the means of conquering Constantinople, by fostering among her neighbors a state of chronic weakness which would have made them incapable of offering any

¹ This is an example out of a hundred concerning that mutual hostility: Orthodox against Catholics and Orthodox between themselves were constantly engaged in bloody fights even within the precincts of the Holy Sepulchre Church. Lastly, the Ottoman Government was compelled to have a company of soldiers standing in that temple – the holiest in Christendom – to prevent the scandalous scenes that profaned it.

serious resistance to her objects. Therefore, she encouraged them underhandedly to lay forward such claims as would prevent an understanding between them and the Porte. On the other hand, England and France contrived, during the period extending from 1840 to 1878, to uphold the Empire's internal and external consolidation: yet, they directed thereafter their efforts the other way about. The Revolution of 1908 which had apparently disarmed them because Turkey was thereby striding in the path of liberalism of which they claimed to be the High Priests, led them nevertheless to increase their hostility when they discovered that the Patriots who had set fire to the Yildiz despotism were determined to complete their task by freeing the country from foreign tyranny, the latter being quite as oppressive as the other.

However, Turkey persevered in her task, and for the past thirty years all distinctions have disappeared between non-Moslems and Moslems, although they had survived during centuries in her national economy merely on the strength of prejudices common both to the East and the West. The assimilation of *rayas* to the Empire's Moslem subjects became complete, and the former can no longer complain even of this humiliating denomination, because it has been purged from Ottoman legislation with all unfavorable distinctions attached thereto.

However, whilst transforming the laws which established equality for all in matters of general administration, Turkey allowed her non-Moslem subjects to preserve their organization in distinct communities, which enjoyed complete autonomy from the religious, educational and judicial points of view; in the latter respect, merely in matters of personal statute. Speaking about the advantages of this situation, which dates back, regarding Greeks and Armenians, to the very morrow of the conquest of Constantinople, Mr. Philipp Marshall Brown, Professor of International Law at the Princeton University, states as follows in his book "*Foreigners in Turkey and Their Legal Standing*": "Whatever may have been the motives which guided Ottoman Turks in their policy towards their Christian subjects, it is sufficient to note that without the help of powerful armies or of big fleets, Christian and other subjects of the Sublime Porte obtained extensive immunities of jurisdiction which were similar to those granted later on to foreigners."

On the same subject, Mr. Brown's book contains another remarkable statement: "This policy (the Turks' policy towards their non-Moslem subjects), was in perfect harmony with Moslem law and thereby refutes the universal reputation of intolerance which has been so unjustly cast upon Turks."

This is a proof of historical integrity which we are pleased to find in a Western book dealing with Turkey, and which honors he who vouchsafed it. Relations between Christians and Moslems would be much improved were the spirit of fairness and impartiality in which the American author has treated his subject extended to all Westerners who claim to know something about Turkey.

Thus liberated, on the one hand, of the distinctions which had encumbered them in judicial and administrative matters, and maintained, on the other, in their ancient privileges, which favored their national development and guaranteed their spiritual freedom, the non-Moslem populations under Turkish domination acquired a status which forms a unique example of liberalism in the treatment of conquered races. As a matter of fact, have Russia, France or England, who boast of their attitude towards subject

racess and who have increased their territories by conquest, the same as Turkey, ever shown such generosity in the principles of their imperialism? The answer to this question is written large in the restrictive laws to which have been subjected, until latterly, Poland, Kiva and Bokhara; Algiers, Tunis and Indo-China; Ireland and India; to mention merely the countries deprived of their independence to the benefit of other Powers.

In this respect, we wish to insist only on one point. Turkish annals contain the names of many Christians: Greeks, Syrians, Armenians, who have been raised to the highest governmental and administrative positions. Thousands have been entrusted with subordinate officers. Yet, on the other hand, it has never happened that a native of British, Russian or French possessions has ever reached the rank of State Minister, of Special Envoy or of Governor-General; the thing itself is absolutely inconceivable, considering the high barrier raised between conquerors and conquered in the said countries. This prejudice is even extended to subordinate positions in Central Administrations, which are open only to Europeans and Christians, the Jews being excepted; but the latter do not represent a distinctly subject race.

Further, administrative disqualifications to which are condemned Asiatic and North African populations under European domination, of which, nevertheless they would be quite capable of assimilating the culture provided they were earnestly assisted thereto, are aggravated by a social ostracism which galls their innermost feelings, and which makes the situation existing in Turkey appear in a more favorable light, because there non-Moslems are allowed to mix with the dominating element on a footing of perfect and friendly equality.¹

It cannot be denied that Christians in Turkey, as such, have been subject to persecutions in times of old.

But the said have never reached the extent of horror raised by "Inquisitions", "St. Bartholomews" or "Pogroms", of which Europe has been the theater. And there is this further things to be said. Excesses committed in Turkey in the name of Islam were the deeds of the crowd or of individuals acting in their own account under the influence of an overpowering fanaticism, truly frequent, but always accidental; the Sultans or the government have never been responsible therefore except in their inaction to prevent or their slowness to repress. In Western States, on the other hand, the unbridling of religious passions was connected with an established official system, the object of which, coolly and firmly adopted, was the

¹ In the United States of America, which boast of their liberal and Christian sentiments, the advertisements of many hotels contain the following mention: "No Jews admitted". In the southern states, the distinction made between whites and blacks is such that the former do not tolerate the presence of colored people, not eve in streetcars, or in their churches. Schools and churches for both races are absolutely distinct, owing to the despise expressed by the whites for the blacks.

In British India, Englishmen will only frequent the members of ruling families. And this, on condition that the latter have received an English educatioin. Natives, even those of the highest classes, are not allowed to travel first-class on railways, pursuant to a custom whereby those seats are reserved for Englishmen. Many instances have ocured of aged Hindoos, in high posigions, being summarij ejected from first-class compartments where they had taken seats because unable to find room in second-class carriages, by young Englishmen of no position at all. The contempt of British soldiers towards natives in their daily intercourse with them often assumes a most inhuman form. Their brutality sometimes reaches the point of murder, the only punishment therefore being their return to England. That is how Great Britian acts in a country which has produced one of the finest civilizations in the world!

forced conversion or extermination of Protestants or Catholics, according to whether either of them belonged to the State religions.

It should be added to the list of religious tragedies of which Europe has been the scene, the bloody prosecutions against the Jews in Spain and their mass eviction from the Peninsula, when conviction gained ground that the most cruel tortures would not induced them to renounce the faith of their ancestors.

The irony of fate caused the unfortunate evicted Jews to find a refuge in Turkey, in the alleged intolerant turkey, where they have now for the past four centuries lived to bless the kindness of their masters. How should we qualify the state of mind in Western countries which dares to accuse Turkey of fanaticism, forgetting the religious crimes it ought to reproach to itself, the monstrous iniquities of the “Holy” Inquisition, a monument of horror which has never and never will be equaled? Hypocrisy or unconsciousness; enough of it!¹

The fact should be insisted upon: it is clearly evident from the comparative history of Turkey and of Western Countries, that the populations she has annexed by force of arms have enjoyed under her domination a political, national, religious and social status far superior to that of the populations which have passed in the same way under the domination of Europe. *She has only been inferior to those States as an Imperial Power, in her incapacity to grant them the benefits of a good administration.* In this respect, Europe and America have certainly the right to criticize her, but even then, the alleged different treatment is a false accusation, because the Turkish people have suffered as much as the populations associated with it from the defects of the administration it has given its Empire.

It should also be observed, in this respect, that non-Moslems had at least if not more to complain about their own spiritual chiefs than about Turkish authorities. To cull another statement from the book of Mr. Engelhardt: “The fact is undoubted that from this period henceforth (the XVIIIth century), the provinces attached to the Patriarchate of Constantinople had as much to suffer from the oppression of their ecclesiastical authorities as from the Pachas’ exactions, and as they were more directly in contact with them, the burden of their own masters weighed the heaviest.”

Such is the status of non-Moslems generally throughout the Ottoman Empire, as can be gathered from a calm and impartial study of historical facts. We are pleased to believe that the straightforwardness and accuracy with which we have attempted the above description will be evident in the eyes of even the most prejudiced reader, and that this statement of facts will cause him to acknowledge that Turkey is being scandalously libeled when accused to treating her Christian subjects as outcasts.

¹ This criticism specially applies to France, England and the United States of America, because in their judgments on other European countries, and on the East as distinct from the West, they pretend to be indignantly severe, whereas they should also consider their own failings and those of the Indo-Aryan race as opposed to others. Germany and Austria-Hungary, in this respect, have always held honorably aloof from the above mentioned countries, by not pretending to moral superiority, and by acknowledging that all nations are alike in this regard. We are please to make this statement about the two Powers allied to Turkey, because the latter is particularly grateful to them inasmuch as they have never taken part in the hypocritical campaigns directed against her.

Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

We can now take up the matter concerning the relations between Turks and Armenians which is the special object of this book.

There is no doubt that in certain provinces inhabited by Armenians much cause for complaint was due to the presence in the neighborhood of many Kurds, a race possessing numerous qualities but primitive and troublesome. It should be added, however, that accusations launched against the latter in this respect have been most partial and greatly exaggerated. In a report under the heading of "*Statistics of the Provinces of Bitlis and Van*", addressed to his Government by General Mayewsky, Russian General Consul during six years, first at Erzeroum and later at Van, this question is set forth in its real light. Here are some of the remarks on this subject made by the said Russian high official and soldier, in the above mentioned report which was published secretly to a limited number of copies by the Military Press of St. Petersburg. He deals therein with the Turco-Armenian question; his sincerity and good faith are striking, except with regards to the rather unpleasant part played by his country in this respect and which he passes over in silence.

"Without any exception whatever, the statements of journalists alleging that the Kurds are striving to exterminate Armenians should be rejected altogether. Were they founded on fact, no individual belonging to another race would have been able to live among Kurds, and the various populations inhabiting in their midst would have been compelled to become their slaves or to emigrate in order to procure a piece of bread. Yet, neither of these cases has been the fact. On the contrary, all those who know the Eastern provinces will certify that Christian villages in the said regions are certainly more prosperous than those of the Kurds. And if the latter were naught else but thieves and ruffians, the Armenians' state of prosperity, which lasted until 1895, would never have been possible. Therefore, until 1895, the distress of Armenians in Turkey was but a legend. Their condition was not worse than that of Armenians in other countries. . .

". . . The incidents about which Armenian revolutionists made such loud complaints, for instance murders and plundering, were just as frequent if not more so in Caucasus (Russia). Regarding the theft of cattle, this matter is of the same character as the robberies committed in various parts of Russia. With regards to the protection of life and possessions, wherever the Government exercised its authority, the said were even better guaranteed than in the district of Elisabetpol (Russia). . .

". . . Kurd chiefs which had long acquired the reputation of being highwaymen and plunderers have been known to protect needy Armenians, even in troublesome times. No better proof can be given that Armenians lived in perfect friendship with Kurds, although the former's committees denounced the latter as brigands. . .

". . . However, there is no gainsaying the fact that in 1895-96, the Kurds were greatly excited against Armenians. But this fact does not at all imply the existence of a fundamental animosity between both races. . .

“ . . . In 1895, the Armenian committees had raised such a distrust between Kurds and Armenians that no reform whatever could possibly last in those localities. . .

“ . . . Here, in Sassoun, Armenians and Kurds had lived together for centuries on most amicable terms. . . In 1893, a man called Damadian appeared on the scene. . . a year later another called Boyadjian took his place. . . and following upon their activities, several riots occurred in a short time between both elements. . . ”

These observations are all the more interesting consider the fact that they were made by a representative in Turkey of a Power fundamentally hostile to Ottoman domination, and which has particularly exploited the Armenian question against her. They prove that Armenians and Kurds had lived on friendly terms for centuries and that, after a certain date, the latter conceived some animosity against the former; further, that the said distrust never assumed the excessive proportions alleged in Western countries, and, on the other hand, that it was merely the result of a discord designedly fostered between both races by the committees.

It should be added that, on their side, the Armenians of the mountainous region of Zeitoun, who had lived in a state of semi-independence until 1895, and who even after that date still constituted a center of trouble and disorder, committed assaults on the life and the property of Moslems inhabiting the neighborhood, which were just as violent and frequent as those they complained of by the Kurds.¹

The Sublime Porte contrived its best to remedy the condition of both races. If, owing to the lack of convenient means of communications, it did not succeed in establishing peace and order in the regions situated on the extreme borders of the Empire and isolated from the Capital; if, generally speaking, it was not able to reform its administration, the fault lies to a great extent on the paralyzing influence exercised by the Capitulations on its financial and administrative action. This means that Europe incurred a considerable share of responsibility in the sufferings particular to Armenians, and in those of the whole Ottoman population, owing to the fact that it obstinately adhered to those abusive agreements inasmuch as they restrained Turkey's economic independence.

If Armenians were more to be pitied than the remainder of their non-Moslems countrymen on account to the incidents of Kurdish violences – and in this respect, as explained hereabove, the case applied merely to a small number thereof and was counter-balanced to a certain extent, in the Turco-Armenian question, by the position of Zeitoun Moslems – they found favor, on the other hand, with Turkish authorities owing to their aptitudes for commerce, finance and administration, and were called upon as agents and counselors to fulfill positions which enabled them to acquire an economic and political situation unknown to the other Christian elements of the Empire.¹

¹ See the book “*Zeitoun*” by Minas Tcheraz, with a foreword by G. Clemenceau, wherein the author, himself an Armenian, glorifies as the expression of patriotism all the acts of devastation, plunder and murder committed by the Zeitoun highwaymen on their Moslem countrymen.

¹ “The grievances stating that the condition of Armenians in Turkey was untenable would hardly concern the inhabitants of cities, because the latter have at all times enjoyed full freedom and have been favored in all respects. Furthermore, the peasant class was even in a better situation than the peasants of Russia, owing to their knowledge of agricultural work and of irrigation.”

Attitude of Armenians Up to the Time of the Last Turco-Russian War.

Right up to the middle of the XIXth century, Armenians have proved themselves worthy of the above mentioned treatment. Their loyal and correct attitude as subjects, their devotion as officials to the interests of the Empire had earned them the surname of *Millet-i-Sadika* (the faithful people). Afterwards, unfortunately, Russian propaganda which had been content hitherto to deal with the Empire's Greek and Slavonic subjects, began to pervade them through the intermediary of the Etchmiadjin Catholicos (the Armenians' supreme authority which had its seat in Russia itself). Russian Armenians, men of letters and intellectuals, were set at work to create an anti-Turkish movement among their Russian and Armenian brethren. Thus, the germ of disaffection was sown from without, and found a favorable ground in the minds of many Armenian ideologists who had brought back from foreign countries the revolutionary microbe of 1848, and of a certain number of priests somewhat inclined to politics on account of their class' indleness.¹

In this matter, intriguing Russia set in motion among the Armenian people a movement which gradually won it over completely and transformed the "faithful people" into the most hostile element of the State. In fairness to them, however, it should be stated that in order to undermine their loyalty and bring about this radical change in their attitude, the unbalanced and unscrupulous politicians who had taken charge of their destinies had to work to this end during seventy years, with the help of Russia as well as of England and France, the latter having joined the former in its enterprises against the Ottoman Empire.

The most remarkable facts about this first phase of the question under review, reside, on the one part, in this that Armenians obeyed to solicitations from Russia where their race, really oppressed and of which many revolted members had sought refuge in hospitable Turkey, would have suffered a thousand new persecutions for the slightest attempt to shake off the Tsar's direct authority; and, on the other hand, in this that the Porte persisted in its attitude of parental good will towards them, unwilling to see in demonstrations akin to rebellion which began to break out in Erzeroum and elsewhere anything else but accidental and passing manifestations of discontent without any connection whatever with politics. Therefore, as in the past, it kept aloof from all supervision over the Armenian Patriarchate's educational and religious administrations, even continuing to grant official support to the Community's national institutions and to cover from its own revenue the patriarchal budget's annual deficit.

Thus was the situation when the war broke out between Turkey and Russia in 1876, and when the fortune of arms brought Grand Duke Nicholas' army at San Stefano.

Unmindful of the real and extensive religious and national franchises which they enjoyed within the limits of their *ecclesiastically* autonomous administration, and unwilling to consider the difficulties which hindered the Porte's endeavors to remedy the defects of its administration, the Armenians availed themselves of the presence Turkey's most deadly enemy at the gates of her capital, to demand that one of

¹ "With respect to the Armenian clergy, its endeavors in religious instruction are meaningless, but on the other hand, Armenian priests have contributed greatly to cultivate national ideals. Within their mysterious convents, the teaching of hatred towards the Turks took the place of religious devotions. Schools and seminaries played a great part in the work undertaken by religious chiefs." (General Mayewsky)

the conditions of peace should be their constitution into a *territorially* autonomous element. A further fact aggravated their request: it was officially and openly set forth by Patriarch Nerses Varzabedian, who sent a delegation to the Russian commander-in-chief with a memorial asking that “the provinces of Asia Minor inhabited by Armenians be declared independent, or that, at the least, they should pass under the control of Russia.”

Yet this Power was not anxious to uphold those demands, although her fallacious promises had led Ottoman Armenians to formulate them. Setting them aside rather bluntly, she merely caused a proviso to be inserted in the San Stefano treaty stipulating reforms in favor of the Sultan’s Armenian subjects. In that, she had no more idea of securing an improvement in their condition than she had of creating a contrast between the latter and the situation of Armenians inhabiting her own territory. Her object was merely to reserve a pretext for intervening in Turkey’s internal affairs, to replace that of which she had availed herself hitherto and whereby she played the part of protector of the Empire’s Slavonic populations; this latter position having found its consummation in the clauses of the San Stefano treaty which gave satisfaction to the claims of Bulgarians, Serbians and Montenegrans.

The Cyprus agreement, concluded between Great Britain and Turkey, and the treaty of Berlin which took the place of the San Stefano conventions, reproduced this stipulation at the official request of Armenians, in the first case, in respect to England alone, and in the second, in respect to Europe collectively.¹

Therefore, Armenians appeared at that time on the political scene of the world as disloyal subjects of the Empire, a position which their situation in the State, although imperfect, did not really warrant.

It is necessary to examine this point carefully. Long before the principle of nationalities had been formulated in Europe, Turkey had already applied it on a very large scale in her territories, this outburst of liberalism having been most astonishing for its epoch (XVIth century). No doubt, the autonomy granted to non-Moslem elements under her domination was based on their ecclesiastical organization, and not according to the principle prevailing in Austria-Hungary, on territorial circumscriptions. Yet, with respect to Armenians, the latter would have been unpractical, even had Turkey thought fit to adopt it, because she had to consider her interests as a State, and because the said race was dispersed throughout the Empire, the Moslem element composing the population inhabiting the territories that had been formerly an Armenian

¹ Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy were perfectly unconcerned with Armenian grievances, which they knew to be fictitious, and which, on the other hand, they had no interest to exploit. If they took part in several of the measures edicted in their favor either by England, by France or by Russia, it was merely *pro forma* and as a matter of regard towards the European Concert. France found in the artificially created Armenian question an opportunity somewhat belated to play the part of “protector of oppressed nations,” but she remained for a long time a mere oratorical exponent of the matter, at least officially. On the other hand, England took up the question at the beginning with a view to substitute her intervention to that of Russia, merely for the sake of counterbalancing the latter’s influence in the Near East, but she soon started to make the best of her position to the direct benefit of her anti-Turkish policy. Mr. Cambon, French Ambassador in Constantinople, in a report to his Government dated 1894, thus described the part she played, on part with Russian intrigues: “Armenians found a better hearing in London than in Paris. The Gladstone Cabinet attracted all discontented parties, grouped them and disciplined them. He promised them his support. Thereafter, the propaganda office was established in London, being inspired therefrom. The question was to cause two ideas to penetrate deeply into the masses of the population: the national idea, and that of freedom. The committees undertook to spread them abroad.” (Yellow Book, 1893-1897)

kingdom, having acquired predominance much before the Turkish conquest. As a people deprived of their independence, the Porte's Armenian subjects could not reasonably and legitimately claim any other right than that of being well governed, as it was materially impossible to guarantee their ethnical and cultural individuality under different conditions of existence than those granted them in the Ottoman Empire. The way was naturally open to them to seek a remedy to their grievances in an alliance with their Moslem countrymen who suffered as much as they did from the imperial administration's defects, and among whom had arisen a movement against Throne absolutism, the only responsible element in the case.¹

Instead of that, they formed a separate body as if they did not belong to the same fatherland or could create a State of their own, and rather than work with the founders of the Empire of whose goodwill they had received ample proofs, they first sought the support of the Empire's secular enemy, although he strove to destroy the very existence of their own race, and later that of Europe, hypocritical and far from disinterested. Had they not thereby committed foul treason, mixed with ungratefulness towards the Empire's dominating element, and an unretrievable political mistake, from the point of view of their own interests as a national collectivity? Fate willed that, far from retracing their footsteps, they plunged headlong in their error, even after the Revolution of 1908, although the latter by abolishing the Hamidian rule had thereby done away with the only excuse they could invoke.

¹ The Young Turks movement dates back to the last years of the Abdul-Aziz reign, the latter's extravagances having ruined the country, and the ruler's condescending attitude towards Russia constituting a danger for Turkey's political existence.

Attitude of Armenians After the Russian-Turkish War.

Deceived in their expectations by the Berlin Congress, which granted them merely an installment on their claims, and allowing themselves to be carried away by the example set by Greeks and Bulgarians, whose position was essentially different from that of Armenians and had made it possible to create an independent Greece and an autonomous Bulgaria, Armenian politicians soon engaged into a clearly revolutionary movement, by which they contrived to wrest from Europe in an indirect manner what they had not been able to obtain directly from her. Constituted into numerous committees, the most active of which were known by the names of *Hintchak* and *Dachnak*¹, they contrived to give their activity a violent form, by means of a campaign directed against Turkey in foreign lands, and of a continuous series of attacks in the interior of the country. England, France and America were deluged by libels on the Ottoman Empire, by appeals to anti-Moslem prejudice, which alone the most perfidious form of malice could suggest. Armed rebellion broke out in the Empire on the slightest pretext; murders, rapes and plunderings were systematically carried out against Moslems. Thereby, the committees expected that reprisals would bring about the intervention of Europe. And that, in due course, the latter would tend to satisfy their political aspirations.

This design underlined all the committees' ultimate endeavors, and on the other hand, they succeeded in making the occidental public believe their version that in the Turkish drama unfolding itself, Armenians were the victims of Moslems.

Undoubtedly, occidental fanaticism was only too willing to accept this monstrous perversion of truth, and to make it the basis of another crusade. Furthermore, the Armenian question was calculated to create sooner or later an opportunity for Governments hostile to Turkey to fish in troubled waters. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that by its long-standing equanimity towards the propaganda of committees, and its spasmodic and most often clumsy interference, the Sublime Porte has greatly contributed itself to perpetuate a legend which finally succeeded in raising Europe and America against the Ottoman Empire, and in causing England, France and Russia to take common action against it. The fact is obvious: Turkey proved herself powerless to obtain justice before the tribunal of public opinion; the result of carelessness, of inexperience or of ill-conceived parsimony. She allowed herself to be convicted even in matters where right was clearly on her side.

The strenuous resolution of the committees, especially of the *Dachnak*, was such that in their subversive endeavors they did not scruple to murder members of their own race in easy circumstances who refused financial contributions, or who dared to disapprove of their ways, whether they judged things in a saner manner or whether they felt a certain amount of gratefulness towards the Turks.¹ The terrorism soon

¹ The *Dachnak* was first called the *Drochak*. Its organ has retained the former name (see on the organization of said committee and the form assumed by its action, annexes No. 3, 4, and 5).

¹ Thus, the priest Hampre, lawyers Hatchik and Sehouh, Apik Oundijian, a tradesman, and a well-to-do Armenian, Dicran Karageuzian were assassinated in broad daylight in Constantinople. Many Armenians who had held aloof or had opposed the committees appeals were treated in a like manner in the provinces as well as in America, where there are rich Armenian colonies. (See in this respect the reports of Mr. Cambon, French Ambassador in Constantinople, dated 27th March and 3rd June, 1894. (Yellow Book, years 1893-1897)

extended to the country side.² Furthermore, the *comitadjis* began to kill their brethren at random, under circumstance which would help to father the guilt for those crimes onto the shoulders of their much enduring Moslem countrymen. In this way they managed to involve in the movement the members of their race who had hitherto remained refractory to persuasion or intimidation.

² See herein annex No. 4 (Report by the Russian Consul at Bitlis).

Massacres of 1895-1896.

In spite of all, the Moslem population made no attempt to parry. Deprived of all protection in foreign countries where interest was only extended to the Empire's Christian subjects, the Hamidian rule had reduced it to a state of insensibility almost akin to stupor. The answer came from another quarter. Exasperated by the committees' boldness which cut his despotic vanity to the quick and wishing to put an end to their dealings in one fell swoop, Abdul Hamid determined to react against their provocations, which merely tended to shed Armenian blood, in such a way as to terrify them and show them that whatever happened in this respect, Europe, being disunited, would but interfere platonically. On the other hand, Russia perceived in this plan a means to further the policy of denationalization and extermination she pursued against the Armenian race in her own territories, and to discredit Turkey; she therefore, incited Armenians to greater violence, and encouraged the Yildiz Recluse to strike as hard as he could.¹ Such is the explanation of the 1895-1896 massacres.

The responsibility for this tragedy may be shared between the committees supported by England and France², Russia, whose double-dealing has been described hereabove, and Abdul Hamid. The Turkish people had nothing to do therewith, either in fact or intention. Their true feelings were expressed in Constantinople and the provinces where hundreds of Moslems at the peril of their lives saved many peaceful Armenians attacked by Yildiz myrmidons, and gave them a refuge, thus incurring the tyrant's wrath. At any rate, western countries were fair towards Turkey and exonerated her from blame. Reprobation was cast on Abdul Hamid, who became known thereafter as the "Red Sultan", as well as on the committees, a surprising demonstration of clear-sightedness in the fathering of responsibility for Turkish affairs, which, unfortunately, did not recur again during the prolonged Turkish-Armenian drama.

The result of the committee's endeavors proved that Turkish soil had been sodden with Armenian blood, and that, as foreseen by Abdul Hamid, Europe merely protested in indignant tones; further, the desperadoes who formed those associations became the object of the Armenian people's vituperations, the latter having been sacrificed by them to the wrath of Yildiz without any benefit to the race accruing therefrom. They renounced for the time being to their system of assaults against Moslems and rebellion against the imperial authorities. Thereafter, they concentrated their activity on the person of Abdul Hamid, resumed their strenuous campaign against him in foreign countries, and even fomented plots against his life, one of which almost succeeded. This was the famous bomb outrage at Yildiz, to which the Sultan escaped as if by miracle.

On their part, the Young Turk committees thinking that the change of plan in Armenian committees would give rise to a possible understanding between them, made overtures to the latter with a view to common action against Hamidian rule. The exorbitant claims set forth by the Armenian

¹ The attitude of Russia towards the Armenian race has been one of duplicity and contradiction. She persecuted Armenians inhabiting her own territories whilst pretending to protect those inhabiting Turkey. Her double-dealing became obvious after the Russian-Turkish war, as stated above. This tortuous policy continued until 1907. Thereafter, having granted a more liberal treatment to her own Armenians, Russia's Armenian policy crystalized into a real although interested support given to the Ottoman section of the race.

committees put an end to their negotiations. Things then dragged on until the Revolution of 1908, the success of which was exclusively the work of the Union and Progress committee.

In their enthusiasm following upon the breakdown of the Yildiz despotism, Turks and Armenians threw themselves in the arms of each other. This fraternization is proof that the former made a distinction between the committees and the Armenian people, the latter having remained faithful to the Empire, and the Armenians on their side, showed that they did not cast on the dominating race the responsibility for the Armenian blood so unjustly shed during the blind repression carried out in 1895 and 1896.¹

² See footnote page 14.

¹ In fact, nearly all the leaders in the events which gave rise to this bloody repression managed to escape, thanks to the protection of Russia and France. Innocent lives paid for the penalties they had incurred.

Attitude of Armenians After the Revolution of 1908.

The historical date of July 23, 1908, marks the end of the second and the beginning of the third phase of the Turkish-Armenian question.

Naturally enough, the Union and Progress party assumed power in constitutional Turkey, the latter having acquired this character thanks to their efforts. The task which this group representing the fundamental element of the Empire has set itself to carry out was most legitimate. It consisted in re-establishing the country's independence towards Europe, and in uniting all the races inhabiting Ottoman territory into a group filled with only one national conception: that of the preservation of Turkey as a reformed and progressive State. It is obvious that Union and Progress would succeed easier in this arduous task, if it found support among one of the Empire's Christian elements. Therefore, they expected to obtain this support from Armenians.

There is a great affinity between the latter and the Turks, both being of Asiatic origin, intellect and customs. They have lived for centuries closely bound to one another in excellent terms of citizenship. No doubt, foreign intrigues had raised trouble in those relations, by giving rise among the former to a movement against the latter's domination. But, as explained hereabove, although very violent, this movement was merely the work of a small minority composed of adventurers, of dreamers and fanatics.

The majority of enlightened Armenians were deeply conscious of the artificial and politically immoral character of the committees' seceding action; the commercial and industrial classes clearly saw that this movement threatened their material interests, and the mass of the working people, which had succeeded in attaining a prosperous condition in spite of the imperial administration's failings, were also opposed to separation.

Would it be possible in this respect to disarm the said minority? This would have been indispensable, as it comprised the whole Armenian organization, and its propaganda constituted a great danger, although it had not hitherto been over successful. Besides its scabby sheeps, it included many disinterested parties whom it would be worth while to enlighten and win over, by proving to them that the major interests of the Armenian race could find no better ground for development than in the Ottoman Empire, now that the constitution had created new guarantees, and considering also that former prerogatives had been safeguarded therein right until then. Separation, on the contrary, would not form a bulwark against the Russian menace, and as a matter of fact, the only real grievance of Armenians, that concerning the defects of imperial administration, would tend to disappear owing precisely to the radical change brought about in the political situation of the country.

All those considerations were set forth by Union and Progress to the Dachnak, the most honorably recruited of all Armenian committees, the one whose organization was the soundest, and which consequently offered the most chances of fruitful support in a task the object of which tended to consolidate the Empire internally, by subordinating the particular interests of the races inhabiting the land to those of their common fatherland. According to this program, they would each preserve their personal value, being

merely reduced to a common denominator: Ottomanism. Armenians could easily accept this conception, as they had no sacrifice to make in this respect, their superior interests being identical with the Turks’.

There was in that appeal a most extensive basis for an understanding.

The Dachnakists answered thereto. An alliance was concluded between their group and the Union and Progress, in which the latter gave proof of their broadness of mind. For instance, they agreed that Armenians should have a number of seats in Parliament great than their numerical importance warranted. They also allowed their revolutionary committees, at the head of which figured the Dachnak itself, to survive the breakdown of Hamidian rule and to maintain their foreign ramifications, a thing particularly to be born in mind. They even went further. Forcing the interpretation given to the amnesty law covering political crimes and misdemeanors, they authorized the return to Turkey not only of Ottoman Armenians who had been most compromised under the former rule, including those who had committed horrible common law felonies, but also of revolutionary Armenians from Russia, who had exerted the most baneful influence on their local brethren, by inciting them to follow the path of propaganda by the deed.

Unfortunately, Union and Progress were sincere whereas the Dachnak were full of duplicity. Secretly clinging to their counterfeit ideal of autonomy, they had resolved to attain their ends, by availing themselves of the facilities allowed by the new Government. Almost on the morrow of their agreement with Union and Progress, they threw off their mask and started their campaign. Carried away by the wine of liberty, all the other Armenian organizations followed suit. This was more particularly the case with the Hintchak, which had been mortified by the fact that Union and Progress had preferred to deal with the Dachnak, it assuming thereafter an attitude as extreme as that of its rival.¹ Thus with great gusto, Dachnakists and Hintchakists, the educational and ecclesiastical authorities of the community and of numerous new associations, created for soi-disant benevolent and cultural objects, started a campaign purported to generalize the Armenian revolutionary movement. This action took the form of political dissoluteness, one of the most striking phenomenon of the new order of things.

Think of it: abusing of the freedom acquired by the country and which was added to the franchises they already enjoyed as an autonomous community, forming a real State within the State¹; thinking further that the concessions made by Union and Progress were due to weakness instead of considering them as the effects of too much confidence and perhaps of momentary elation, Dachnakists and Hintchakists, priests and school masters, writers and artists, undertook a frenzied propaganda the boldness of which was on par only with the tolerance shown by the new imperial authorities. The Press, the church, the theater, the school were used openly and impudently for the purpose of obtaining the support of the masses. Not a newspaper article, a sermon, a dramatic performance, or a conference out of ten, but the subject of which

¹ A violent hostility had sprung up between both organizations almost from the first day of their inception, each aspiring to predominate in the minds of their countrymen. The question of money played a great part therein. They concluded an agreement only after the Balkanic War.

¹ The maintenance in the Empire of the organization of non-Moslem elements into distinct bodies enjoying special privileges, even after the establishment of the Constitution, was an anomaly explained by the fact that their suppression would have raised general protest not only in the country but also in Western Europe. Union and Progress did not feel powerful enough to touch those institutions, although they warped the working of the new Constitution.

was independent Armenian, which it was the sacred duty of the race to re-establish by wresting the so-called Armenian provinces from the domination of the "barbarous and sanguinary Turk". When recalling that period to mind, one doubts whether it was not a dream. The only mistake of the Young Turk Government towards Armenians was to encourage their proceedings by its benevolent attitude. When it awoke from its strange heedlessness, at the eve to the present war, it attempted to react, but it was already too late. The action of Armenian leaders had succeeded in uniting the greatest majority of the people into a compact group, which had resolved to avail itself of the first favorable opportunity to create an autonomous Armenia in the provinces of Eastern Anatolia which they obstinately claimed as their own, in spite of the facts laid down by statistics and history. In this, Armenians were supported by Russia, England and France, which had formally entered into a common policy of hostility towards the Empire after the Revolution of 1908.

The Adana Conflict.

The counter-Revolution of 12th April, 1909, seemed to provide the committees with the opportunity they required, although it broke out before their propaganda had produced the desired effect. Availing themselves of the temporary absence of Government, and thinking the Empire's last hour had struck in the terrible crisis it was passing through, they resolved to provoke a conflict between Moslems and Armenians in the city of Adana, and its neighborhood. To this end, they set to work to incite both elements one against another. Wild sermons were delivered in churches¹; theater halls rung with revolutionary songs; they city walls were covered with posters full of gross insults and threats towards the dominating element; the houses of Moslems were marked with a cross, purported to mean the coming of Christian triumph; assaults against Moslems caused blood to run freely in the countryside; finally, arms were distributed to Armenians with which they daily performed military exercise.

The committees expected that, in the conflict which they knew would result from those proceedings, Armenians would be the more numerous party and able, with the help of a formidable armament, to resist long enough to allow foreign troops to arrive on the scene, the port of Mersine, connected with Adana by a railroad, being suggested to the Powers as the landing place for their forces¹. This practical demonstration of European sympathy would be the signal for a general rising in Eastern Anatolia, an upheaval which added to the crisis occurring in the European territories of the Empire would hasten the latter's downfall. And an autonomous Armenia, if not an independent State, would thus arise from the ruins.

The result showed how the committees had miscalculated their plans.

Whether the explosion occurred after an Armenian or Moslem outrage in the city of Adana itself, is immaterial. The fact is that the event had been prepared by the committees. In this respect, evidence is provided in the report addressed to his Government by Major Doughty-Wily, who was at the time British Consul-General in Adana. In this document, the Consul states that the tragic events of Cilicia were due to the provoking attitude of Armenians, and he even blames the local authorities for not having interfered *manu militari* – these are the words he uses – to prevent the incident they openly intended to create.² Surely, this witness could hardly be recused as unworthy. He lays the whole truth bare, and breaks down the opinion only too readily accepted in Western Countries on the faith of Armenian evidence, naturally inclined to distort facts, and of declarations made by foreign residents whose judgment was somewhat

¹ An eloquent detail: a priest named Fanlian caused gunpowder to be burnt in censers during a divien service he conducted at the time.

¹ As a matter of fact, foreign med-of-war anchored in the Mersine roadstead. But no landing took place, the tragedy having ended when they arrived on the scene.

² Two copies of this report handed by Major Doughty-Wily himself to one of the members of the Commission of Inquiry sent ot Adana by the Sublime Porte, found their way into the hands of Turkish authorities. One copy, a page of which had been torn out by an Armenian, as it was most compromising for his people, perished in the fire that gutted Tcheragan Palace. The other copy, handed over to replace the former one, disappeared in a manner as yet unknown. So far as we know, this document has not been published by the British Government, although they were only too willing to publish in their Blue Books on the Armenian question all reports from their agents that were unfavorable to Turkey. Why has not this report been published?

thwarted by a biased feeling of Christian solidarity, that the tragedy of Adana had been the result of a Moslem conspiracy.

In this case, the Moslem population reacted against Armenian provocations. The Turks had awakened from the stupor into which they had been plunged by thirty-three years of despotic rule. If they gave vent to their wrath and committed excesses here and there, it should be stated in exoneration of their attitude, that Armenians had chosen a way to reach their goal which passed over the dead body of Turkey, and that in the hope of hastening her death, which they prematurely expected, they did not hesitate to strike her in the back. To put it in other words, the Turks are human beings and are not different from other people when their national sentiments are roused. Quite so. It is unfortunate that they committed deplorable assaults. More often than not, they struck down non-combatants on the side of armed men, innocents with guilty parties, and took up with a vengeance the challenge that had been flung at them. All that is quite true. But to use excesses committed in the wrath of natural passion, and which never reached the character of a general massacre¹, in order to cast special aspersions on Turkey, such as Western opinion immediately did, is an act of consummate injustice which is unfortunately only too frequently resorted to when the Ottoman Empire is on the saddle. Let Western opinion think a while about their own "jacqueries", their "communes", their "pogroms"; let them think about the abominations of the French Revolution where two parties of the same race fought each other, before they deal with the conflict between Turks and Armenians, aggravated by their diversity of origin, and before they cast aspersions on Turkey on the mere pretext of the Adana reaction. Let them suspend judgment, because History could abash them, especially when they accuse the Turks of religious intolerance!

We have seen that Union and Progress wished to associate Armenians to its policy of Imperial revival. Therefore, the bloody incidents of Adana were a matter of grave concern for the Porte. A reactionary movement had broken out in the capital, divesting her of all authority; and the consequence was that she could not interfere efficiently enough to stop the bloodshed. However, a few days later, when restored to power, Union and Progress gave the measure of its civic courage and of the value it attached to its reputation and to its alliance with the Dahnak, by sending on the spot a commission of inquiry. The latter's conclusions were unfavorable to several Moslems who had set the example of the killing; they were hung. Yet many Armenians just as guilty as the former were not prosecuted. This was going a long way on the road of sacrifices, because, by acting in this manner, Union and Progress not only compromised its popularity among the Empire's Moslems, who were indignant at its leniency, but also seemed to render justice to the Adana Armenians. In their anxiety to appear just in the eyes of Western countries and of the Empire's Christian subjects, they had showed themselves unjust towards the Turkish element. However, this attitude can be understood from a group representing constitutional Turkey newly born to existence:

¹ There is an essential difference between the events of 1895-1896 and the Adana tragedy. The reaction of Abdul Hamid was perpetrated in cold blood on defenseless Armenians, which were struck down uphazard. That of Cilician Moslems was an immediate and direct retort to the provocation of well-armed Armenians. In the first case, there was a massacre. In the latter, there was a fight, a battle between two elements. The excesses committed were the same in both camps.

they did all they could rather than perpetuate the legend according to which the Porte always cast right and law aside in her dealing with her Christian subjects.

Extension of the Committees' Program.

The system of isolated assaults and of partial risings has completely failed. Therefore, without positively renouncing to those minor operations which tended to keep its agents in practice, the Dachnak undertook the task of converting the Armenian people to the idea of a general insurrection, whereby, with the help of Russia, who was no doubt quite willing to assist, an autonomy would be obtained by the force of arms. Thereafter, it contrived with its usual energy to enlist all Armenians able to bear arms, to give them military instruction and discipline, and to establish stores of war material, so that the smallest Armenian villages should have arms at its disposal.

It should be observed that even at such an advanced period of the committees' activities, the mass of Armenians, with the exception of those inhabiting cities, merely desired to live in peace with the authorities, because their administration, although imperfect, was kindly and had enabled them to acquire a condition of ease and even of prosperity. Persuasion, therefore, did not produce any more effect than in the past, and the Dachnak, consequently, resorted again to terrorism. Further means were added to those already described, which need to be specified herein. The leaders themselves went from village to village presenting to their inhabitants a list of demands. In the first place, they were requested to register in the books of the committees and pay the numerous taxes levied by the latter, such as the "committee tax", the "school tax", the "arm tax", the "watch tax", etc. next, they had to acquire, cash down, numerous arms the distribution of which was effected on the spot. Any attempt to oppose these demands was met by a series of penalties, beginning with eviction from the village, interdiction to marry, to inherit or to vote, and ending with drubbing and death. It was more especially by means of penalties forfeiting civil and religious rights that the committee reached its purpose, because the ecclesiastical authorities had resigned their powers into its hands. How could the unfortunate Armenian people resist such tyrannical proceedings? Any recourse to the political authorities was considered by the Committee as one of the foulest crimes against the "nation" and incurred a death penalty. Thus, Armenians were entirely at the mercy of the Dachnak, and even the most refractory or hostile were compelled by their enlistment in the organization or by some criminal act committed sooner or later by order of their chiefs, the new recruits, although unwillingly, became fanatic opponents of the State and imbued with the same ardent spirit as their leaders. Considering further that the Hintchak was also working energetically to the same end, it will not surprise any one to know that when the Great War broke out, almost the whole Armenian population was leagued against the Empire. As evidence of this statement, we mention the fact that in the vilayet of Bitlis alone, the Dachnak organization had a membership of over 170,000 men.¹

The second part of the Dachnak's new program, that is to say the creation of military instructed bands, had been facilitated by the law passed before the Balkanic War, and which extended the military service obligation to non-Moslems as well as to Moslems.

The third part of the plan, the purchase of arms on a sufficient scale for a general insurrection, was favored by the geographical and administrative conditions of the country, and by the Capitulations which

granted full custom franchises to foreign consulates. Turkey is a country with a disseminated population; it is rather mountainous, with extensive seashore development. The State machinery could not work with sufficient efficiency, owing to lack of revenue, and the administration being unable to employ the necessary personnel, had great difficulties in repressing many unlawful enterprises, one of which was contraband. Owing to this situation, and also to the help given by Russian, French and British consulates, who abused of their franchises in order to carry on an active contraband to the benefit of the committees –an example of indecency and unscrupulousness among many which Turkey could lay at the charge of the Powers' official representatives residing there until the present war – an astounding quantity of war material, rifles, revolvers, bombs, dynamite, etc., was stored in many places by the committee.¹ The cities of Cesaree, Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, Gueverek, Trebizond and Samsoun, in Eastern Anatolia; those of Adana, Marache, Aintab and Alep, in Cilicia; finally, Brussa, Ismidt and Ada-Bazar nearer to the Capital, and the latter itself, were selected as centers of distribution.

Among the places where imported or manufactured weapons had been concealed, should be mentioned more particularly all Armenian churches, monasteries and cemeteries, in which the authorities could not effect searches without raising an outcry: the Patriarch in such cases would shriek the word “profanation”, and Western opinion would immediately accuse Turkey of religious persecution. It will be fathered thereby how difficult it was for the Porte to check the movement. It was only after the outbreak of the present war, when it recovered its independence by an act of energy which had been too much delayed, that the Government could oppose the activity of its police and of other authorities to that of the committees. It was only then that it was able to gain an accurate knowledge of the extension acquired by the said activity. There was only one way of dealing with the matter: to strike and strike hard.

The fact is obvious that the Armenian, Macedonian and Albanese questions arose merely through intrigues from without, and that the tyranny exercised by the Great Powers over Turkey fostered, and stirred and perpetuated them. To hinder administrative reforms which the Porte was striving to introduce in the country; to avail themselves of the rising discontent caused by the delay thus created among Christian populations of the Empire, in order to incite them to rebellion and secession; to abuse of the Capitulations in order to paralyze the repressive or preventive action of the authorities; to carry on all kinds of disloyal maneuvers and afterwards to denounce the Turkish people as incapable of Government; such in a few lines was the iniquitous and ferociously selfish policy followed by nearly the whole of Europe towards Turkey.

No doubt, the Sublime Porte had many wrongs to atone for, but her main faults in the past were due to her fear of domineering Europe, and to her weakness towards the Empire's Christian elements, which she allowed to abuse of privileges that had been granted them in such a liberal manner, in order to cultivate the hatred of her domination and open if not boastful treason.

Nominally independent, Turkey was deprived of the right to exercise her authority on her own territory, to such an extent that she could not even charge a business tax on foreigners, or determine custom

¹ See annex No. 3, series I (Report by the Russian Consul at Bitlis).

¹ See annex No. 3, series I (Report of the Russian Consul in Bitlis).

dues according to the needs of the country; she could not build a railroad, a port or even a pier if it did not suit one of the Great Powers that she did so. Such restrictions in her freedom of action were the main cause of the economic stagnation into which the country had fallen; she could not freely arrest, imprison or pass judgment on any foreign criminal, which gave rise to the most scandalous abuse and to frequent denials of justice; she could not even apply the Imperial laws to her own subjects, which was the reason of many serious internal disorders. She could not use any of her own rights, much less those which are the basis of national independence and progress. All she could do was to live and bow down her head under the insults of her oppressors.

With respect to her apathetic attitude regarding the working of the national institutions of Christian communities, and to the effects of her listlessness on the latter's conduct, we refer again to General Mayewsky's report, whose observations on the matter are most enlightening: "The responsibility for the outbreaks occurring now and again in the East has always been shouldered on the Turks, partly also on the Ottoman Government. . . However, the fact of the matter is that those rebellions were not due to any act of oppression committed by the Turks, but resulted from the too liberal attitude of the Porte in questions of religion and nationality. . ."

"The Turks have never interfered in those matters, which they entirely left to the populations under their domination. Christian schools and churches have never been subject to any sort of control. This system of Government gave rise to an excessive development of religious and national feeling among non-Moslem communities."

"The idea of fomenting disturbances at any cost, with a view to provoke an intervention of Europe, is never absent in the minds of Christians in Turkey. And it is quite natural that it should be so: the example set by the liberation of Greek, Roumanians, Serbs and Bulgarians being a proof of the method's effectiveness. . ."

Many details could be added to General Mayewsky's description: for instance, the Porte tolerated the teaching of history and geography in community schools exclusively from the point of view of their national aspirations, the comments of teachers being merely a development of nationalist claims. She allowed Greek national establishments to substitute the King of Greece's portrait to that of the Sultan; Bulgarian schools to use the features of the Tsar; Armenian institutions to display pictures showing *Hayasdan* (Armenia) heroes. She never protested against the omission of the Sultan's name in public prayers, nor even against the insertion in the later of other rulers' names, according to the respective aspirations of the various communities. In a few words, she looked on calmly, undisturbed by the progress of the rebellious spirit which was rising in non-Moslem communities thanks to the franchises that had been so generously granted them.

Had she recovered thirty years sooner the independence she so foolishly alienated, and shown greater determination towards Europe; had she treated the nationalities under her domination with the necessary firmness, and maintained them under her rule as long as possible, Turkey would be today, perhaps somewhat dismembered, but at any rate reformed and prosperous. To say that the Turkish people

are incapable of Government, considering that for centuries their first institutions were perfectly adapted to the needs of the vast and heterogeneous Empire it had created, is a statement that history clearly refutes. If they did not alter those institutions according to the progress of civilization, with due regards to the awakening of the conquered races which they had been generous enough not to assimilate, this was owing to the fact that they have been the victim of a conspiracy against their own development. At the beginning of her career, Turkey had shown remarkable powers of Government, and will do so again in the future, when she has reconquered her national rights. She is not a country fallen into decay. She is merely and organism that has been stopped in its growth before reaching the age of maturity. The extraordinary vitality of which she has given proof in all the crisis she has gone through, and especially during the present conflagration into which she was led on the morrow of two other disastrous wars, is sufficient evidence that in spite of appearances she possesses fundamental source of strength, and may hereafter continue to live and rise. No better proof could be given in this respect than the remarkable judicial, administrative and social reforms she has introduced in her national economy during the past three years, that is to say since she has recovered her external independence and her internal authority. Thanks to this transformation in her conditions of existence, the progress accomplished during the past three years of terrible warfare has been greater and more radical than all the development acquired during hundred years of submissiveness to Europe, and of weakness towards the Empire's disloyal elements.

The main fact of the situation should be born in mind: this people has faced the needs of the war, and displayed in this tremendous task a spirit of heroism and sacrifice of which no other nation has ever given higher proof. Therefore it would be a sin to linger on the scandals that have occurred in the treatment of certain administrative problems which arose through the war, and to lay stress on certain manifestations of disorder and confusion, in order to conclude that the Turkish people is rotten to the core, incapable of revival, and doomed. The fact should be considered that the upheaval to which the national structure has been subject necessarily caused many superficially decayed parts to fall to atoms; that the nation has not had material time in which to eliminate from its constitution the poison carefully inoculated therein by Abdul Hamid, and that the chapter opened by the Revolution of 1908 is not closed; which means that the present period is one of transition, of settlement. Consequently, the mistakes made by Turkey in the course of the present war are not worse than those that have been observed in other belligerent States; they are mere transient incidents arising from accidental causes which will disappear when peace is re-established. They cannot give any cause for glee, such as expressed by the enemies of Turkey, nor of concern as discussed by superficial observers in the country itself.

Attitude of the Dachnak During the Balkanic War.

The unfavorable course of the Balkanic War seemingly gave the Dachnak an unexpected opportunity to carry out its designs.

Besides the means they were already using to enlist the support of the mass of Armenian peasants, the committees found therein a reason to hope that Russia could be induced to occupy Eastern Anatolia and distribute Moslem lands among them.¹ This prospect was eagerly welcomed and acted almost as magic, land hunger, a characteristic of agriculturists in general, not being lacking among Armenian peasants. This was a master stroke on the part of the Dachnak, and those who had not yet giving it their support flocked to its banner. Thereafter, it could be said that almost the whole of Armenia had enlisted, and thrown in their lot with the Dachnak or the Hintchak.

The Dachnak then resumed its operations, resorting to its former methods of action: the provocation of strife in cities where incidents of the kind would naturally create a greater stir than in the countryside. This plan failed, thanks to the self-restraint of Moslems.²

However, had it succeeded, Russia would not have contented the Dachnak's expectations. No that this Power was at all opposed to the idea of occupying Eastern Anatolia, because it had no doubt concluded a secret agreement with the Armenians to that effect. She had even threatened Turkey that she would take this step, should the Moslem population rise against Armenians. But the Bulgarian victories, which she had been far from expecting, had imperiled the Ottoman capital in which she wanted to be the first to enter some day in order never to leave it, and deterred her from pursuing this plan. Therefore, Russian troops did not cross the boarder.

Disappointed in this respect, the Dachnak resolved to avail itself of the situation in Rumelia, where Turkey was struggling against invasion. Thus, Andrinople, Rodosto, Malgara, Kechan and other places became the scene of nameless atrocities perpetrated by Armenians on Moslems, under the leadership of the famous brigand-patriot Antranik. Many of the outrages then attributed to Bulgarians were committed by these dastardly bands. Furthermore, Armenians also acted in the service of the enemy as spies and guides.

¹ See annex No. 5, series I (Report by the Russian Consul at Bitlis).

² See annex No. 3, series I.

Opposition Raised by Armenian Committees Against the Empire's Ottomanization.

Meanwhile, the Armenian parliamentary group, consisting of Dachnakist, Hintchakist and other elements, joined issue with the Greek party in order to hinder the efforts of Union and Progress tending to reconstruct the Empire on a really Ottoman basis. For instance, they opposed the Porte's legitimate desire to create a national sentiment which would be common to all the races inhabiting the Ottoman Empire, but which would not affect in the slightest their cultural or ethnical individuality.

On this matter, we borrow the following from Mr. Brown (*loc. cit*): "The question of military service, and others relating to the right of suffrage, the alleged right of national representation, etc., revealed the extraordinary pretensions of Greek and Armenian Patriarchs, as well as of other religious leaders, regarding their capacity to represent their 'nations' as political entities. One of the main difficulties of Turkey's new constitutional Government resided in the reluctance of the various communities, especially the Greek nation¹, to subordinate their own national sentiments to the higher and broader claims of Ottoman nationality."

In a footnote, the most impartial Mr. Brown adds the following remark: "The Young Turks committed perhaps an unretrievable mistake in treating the various religious communities as if they constituted distinct nations, and in failing to establish their representation on a strictly Ottoman basis. In the correspondence exchanged between the Grand Vizir and the Greek Patriarch, the former seemed to deal with the Ambassador of an independent nation."

Union and Progress had sought to create an Ottoman fatherland wherein all elements would be united in a common love, without having to renounce the peculiarities of their distinct origin, and for that reason, the Dachnakists severed their alliance with the above party. That is the great crime committed by the liberators of Turkey against the Armenian nation! That is the reason why three years later the Hintchakists proclaimed dramatically that they would resume their freedom of action, reserving their right to defend their existence by such means as would be convenient², and why they claimed that in spite of its promises, Union and Progress had proceeded to suppress the Armenians' national privileges without which their race would be condemned to disappear.

Mr. Brown's book is there, together with a hundred other proofs, which convict Dachnakists and Hintchakists of flagrant imposture in this matter, as in twenty others. Yet, they succeeded to hoodwink Western opinion, the latter being but too readily eager to accept without the slightest discussion all that appeared as unfavorable to Turkey. It would have been too much disappointed had it been undeceived.

² The honorable author errs in making this distinction. Armenians were more accommodating than Greeks only in the matter of military service. The reason why is obvious: they saw in the accomplishment of this duty a means to form the instructed officers necessary for their revolutionary bands.

The Committees' Opposition Against the Plan of Administrative Reforms Prepared by the Porte with Respect to Eastern Anatolia Provinces.

Although Union and Progress met with overt or concealed hostility at every step, in its relations with Armenian Committees, it resolved, however, after the disasters of the Balkanic War, to disarm them at any price. This explains the concessions made to them as well as to other communities, and which Mr. Brown rightly calls "unrecoverable mistakes." This explains also why the Porte decided on a plan of administrative reforms to be carried out in Eastern Anatolian Provinces, and resolved to entrust their execution to officials borrowed from England.

Impartial foreigners who were in contact with private and official circles in Turkey, at the time when the Porte decided to settle the Armenian question once for all by going the whole length of concessions compatible with State integrity, will readily admit the sincerity and warmth of sentiment which prompted the enlightened section of the Turkish people to give its assent to this policy.

Yet, this goodwill was to no purpose.

After having promised to grant the Porte's earnest request to allow a certain number of her colonial officials to enter the latter's service with a view to control administrative machinery in the above mentioned provinces, England backed out of her word. Proud Albion had the sorry courage to withdraw her promise, on the ground of Russia's opposition; the fact being that she had secretly admitted the latter's claim on Eastern Anatolia as a part of her sphere of influence in Turkey.

On their side, Armenians became all the more unmanageable, inasmuch as they perceived that the execution of the Government's plans would mean the death-blow to their political aspirations. They disdainfully rejected the Porte's proposals, although they would have ensured peace and prosperity in Eastern Anatolia, under the guidance of a reformed administration. They next organized a movement against its adoption, and suggested in its stead a plan drafted by the Great Powers, which favored their national claims, and which would be carried out under their collective supervision. Proceeding in the same way as in 1877, they appointed a delegation which visited the capitals of Central and Western Europe, under the leadership of Boghos Nubar Pacha, a rich Egyptian Armenian. They requested the Catholicos to represent their claims before the Russian government. Finally, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, chief of the Ottoman community, agreed to fulfill the same office before the Ambassadors in Constantinople. Treading in the footsteps of his predecessor in office, Patriarch Varzabedian, whom we have shown hereabove in criminal conference with Grand Duke Nicholas at San Stefano, he officially opened negotiations, under the indignant eyes of the Porte, with the Russian Ambassador at the Sultan's Court.¹

Exhausted and discredited by the Balkanic War, Turkey was unable to avoid this further interference in her internal affairs. After negotiations lasting seven months she was compelled to accept the principle of the Power's project, and the conditions they had laid down for its application. Among the latter, the harshest consisted in an obligation to select from a list of Europeans drafted by the intervening

powers, two foreign inspectors-general who would be placed at the head of administration in Eastern Anatolia.

Thus, what was meant as a voluntary action on the part of the Sublime Porte and had been conceived in a perfectly sincere spirit, was transformed into an international obligation further restricting Turkey's independence.

Constitutional Turkey owed this to Armenians that she had suffered a humiliation similar to those which had occurred during the Hamidian rule, and that she had to put up in Eastern Anatolia, with a situation which would apparently remedy administrative grievances, but which, as a matter of fact, would serve as a transition stage towards the final occupation of the country by Russia. Such was the real object of England, of France and of Russia, now the Entente, when they admitted Armenian claims as valid, although they knew them to be fictitious, and extended their patronage over them. They had little concern with Armenian welfare. What mattered most for them, speaking in the vernacular, was to make a bargain on the back of Turkey just as they had done so previously on that of Persia, just as they were ready to do so at the expense of any other country able to resist, provided it was non-Christian and outside of Europe.

We can now give more extensive details of the Armenian question, from the demographic and historic standpoints.

According to foreign census, effected in 1897, the number of Armenians is in excess of that of Moslems only in 9 cazas (counties) out of the 159 which constitute the nine Ottoman provinces included in the territory alleged to have been at a certain epoch the kingdom of Armenia. Out of a total population of 6,000,000, there was at that time only 1,000,000 Armenians, as against 4,500,000 Moslems (in round numbers), that is to say that the former were in the proportion of 1 to 4 ½ to the latter, and from 1 to 6, in relation to the whole population.¹

It should be observed that the Porte never carried out a colonization policy in Armenia with a view to benefit her domination. The spasmodic endeavors she attempted regarding the settlement of Circassians in that part of the Empire were directed against Russia, and were not worthy of the name. The numerical inferiority of Armenians in those regions was already marked at the time of the Turkish conquest (1514), and has constantly increased ever since. It resulted, on the one hand, from Persian and Arab pressure which caused, on several occasions, an exodus of the native populations towards the north and the west; and, on the other hand, from the slow infiltration of Persian, Arab, Seldjouk, Turkish and Byzantine elements. In more recent times, the transplantation of about 100,000 Armenians by Abas Schah, after his victorious campaign against Turkey (1643), and the voluntary emigration of a considerable number of them to Russia, after the treaty of Turkmen-Tchai (1828), contributed to give the Moslem element the important majority which it wields at present in "Armenia."

Such is the position of Armenians, from the geographical and statistical points of view.

¹ See annex No. 8, series I.

¹ The said provinces are those of Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, Kharpout, Diarbekir, Alep, Adana, Trebizonde. As a matter of fact, the territory covered by the said provinces was never at any time united under Armenian domination (See *British Encyclopedia*, article Armenia).

Historically, their political aspirations are just as much devoid of real basis.

A historical title is valid only in the case of a domination in fact, and as a complement to ethnogeographical claims. In order to prove the existence of Armenian domination in Eastern Anatolia, it is necessary to trace events back to antiquity. Armenian nationality existed as a political organism in the IIIrd century before Christ; it then consisted of two independent States: Armenia Major and Armenia Minor. The celebrated Tigrane (famous only because he was a friend of Lucullus), ruled the former State when it came into conflict with Rome; he was defeated and had to submit to the latter's suzerainty. Thereafter, both States became a battlefield between the West and the East, then represented by the Roman Empire and by Persia, respectively, and they finally agreed to share between themselves the government of the said territory. Several more or less independent Armenian States existed later on, ruled by more or less national dynasties, but they were of slight importance in extent, and short-lived, with the exception perhaps of the Armenia Minor, reconstructed in the XIIth century A.D. and which resisted ruing two hundred years against all attacks. When Selim II conquered the territory, Armenian domination had been extinct for the past two centuries, and replaced by that of Arabs, Persians, Seldjouks and Byzantines.

It will be seen from the above that the Armenian claims to govern Eastern Anatolia are null and void, either from the point of view of numerical superiority in the country or from the historical standpoint. Yet, in order to gain their point, there are few alterations in statistics and in history to which Armenians have not resorted to.

They have succeeded to a certain extent in France and the United States, where geography and history are not held in great repute; and the idea prevails that the Turks in Eastern Anatolia, which is always called Armenia, are a mere handful of intruders exerting barbarous domination over millions of Armenians dispossessed of their native land.

However, the Entente Governments cannot plead ignorance. As a matter of fact, the French Government publicly stated in 1901 that Armenian claims had no foundation; this was at a time when it had been won over by the subterraneous diplomacy of Abdul Hamid, and when Russian policy had assumed an anti-Armenian character. Answering a question in Parliament, Mr. Gabriel Hanotaux, then Minster of Foreign Affairs, and surnamed on this account Hanotaux Pacha, declared that France had found it necessary to shelve the Armenian question, French and British consular reports having established the obvious numerical inferiority of Armenians in Eastern Anatolia.

Thereby, it will be seen that the Entente, of which France is one of the members, is merely imposing on public opinion when it seeks to give Armenian aspirations the sympathetic appearances of a national cause. The fact cannot be repeated often enough: there are Armenians, but there is no Armenia, and there cannot be except in flagrant violation of historical right and of the principle of nationalities, in the name of which the restoration of an Armenian state is impudently demanded.

A further aggravation of the Entente's attitude in the Armenian question lies in the fact, as hereabove explained, that the object of this colossal hoax is not in the least to give satisfaction to the Armenians' spurious claims, but to advance Russia's territorial ambitions. An Armenia created to the

benefit of a small Armenian minority, and at the expense of a great Moslem majority, would inevitably become a center of chronic disturbances, thus providing a pretext for a neighboring Empire to occupy the new State, under the pretense of restoring peace and order, and, as a matter of fact, to settle therein for all times. Have not similar pretenses been used as pretext by England to occupy Egypt, and by France, to enter Tunisia? Decidedly, those three Powers appear to be as thick as thieves, although dressed in the garments of honest tradesmen.

If a positive proof of our contention is needed, it may be found in the fact that after the Balkanic War, the Entente had divided the Ottoman Empire into spheres of influence; Eastern Anatolia being the ground precisely allotted to Russia. And England then backed out of her promise to provide Turkey with officials who were to undertake the administration of those territories, owing to the Tsar's opposition, which she had to acknowledge as legitimate.

Nevertheless, let us admit for the sake of argument, that in that case the said political Trinity was sincerely and earnestly carrying out its duty of protector of small nationalities – a part in which hitherto it had merely acted with consummate hypocrisy where would have been the justice of “saving” Armenians by sacrificing the Turks?

The machinery imagined by the Great Powers for the administration of Eastern Anatolia was already at work when the great war broke out. The conspiracy directed against the Porte had failed. But the last blow had been dealt at the Porte's forbearance. Having endeavored by all possible means at her disposal to conciliate her Armenian subjects, she now considered them, and could not reasonably be expected to view them otherwise, as an element on which negotiations with foreign powers had conferred a character of irreducible hostility, and which had become, thereby, a grand danger for Turkey. To persevere in her tolerance towards such an element, would have been a crime against the fatherland.

After the Outbreak of the European War.

Fourth and Last Phase of the Turkish-Armenian Question.

Hostilities having broken out between both groups into which Europe had split itself, the Turkish-Armenian question henceforth entered into its fourth and last phase.

We have hereabove described the tragic and dangerous disposition of mind in which Turks and Armenians looked upon each other on the eve of the great event; the latter were more determined than ever to succeed in their subversive enterprise, even by using the most abominable means; the former were just as firmly resolved to defend their land against Armenian machinations.

The outbreak of war electrified the Armenian committees, which, as already stated, had put an end to their own quarrels and united against Turkey. Could they ever expect a better opportunity to realize their hopes? According to their point of view, Turkey would be inevitably drawn into the conflict on the side of Germany, and exposed thereby to the direct blows of Russia, whose territory bordered the provinces inhabited by their race. They could therefore rely on the latter's assistance in such circumstances as seemed to promise a sure success, considering that Turkey's means of defense in those regions were limited; for instance, military fortifications and road were lacking, whereas, on the contrary, Russia had long ago transformed the Caucasus into a formidable base of operations. Further, the enlistment of nearly all the Armenians in the cause of territorial autonomy, and the completion of her preparations with a view to a decisive action, constituted two other favorable factors in Russia's plans.

Anticipating the Entente's victory, Armenians broke out into wild demonstrations in her favor. This meant that they had indirectly applauded at the defeat of Turkey, considering that they expected her to join in the war by the side of Germany. Worse still, Ottoman Armenians in France and the United States gave active support to Turkey's adversaries, sending considerable bodies of volunteers to France and Russia. This was an act of disobedience to the laws of Ottoman citizenship, and its meaning was aggravated by the statements published in their foreign press. Armenians would do all in their power to help the Entente, as its victory would mean the downfall of Turkey.

Attitude of Armenians During General Mobilization.

Armenian attitude during general mobilization far exceeded the worst fears entertained by the Ottoman Government. Half of them avoided the summons. Some crossed the frontier – this was the case with those inhabiting the provinces bordering on Russia. Others fled from their residence, concealing themselves here and there, and awaited a favorable opportunity to rise in arms against the State. Of the other half, a great number were led off to barracks under escort, involuntarily submitting to military law. Others who presented themselves voluntarily were simply playing a part with a view to deceive the Government, and to obtain possession of the improved weapons provided by the State for its defense, which they intended to use against the latter and the Moslem population.

All the defaulters joined the Russian army or the terrorist bands which had never ceased to infest the country since the beginning of the Armenian campaign. The effects of this rising of the Armenian revolutionary element were soon evident: bold attacks on isolated detachments of the Ottoman army, the almost daily interception of military convoys, the destruction of military stores, continual assaults on Moslems who were voluntarily going to the recruiting stations; in a few words, they carried out a systematic action against Turkey's military preparations. On the other hand, they renewed with even greater fury than heretofore their outrages on the life and property of Moslems.

The Armenians' attitude more than justified the necessity of dealing with them collectively with the utmost rigor. They had added to their former crimes, their refusal to bear arms in defense of the country, their conspiracy to desert wholesale, and their voluntary enlistment in the Entente's armies.

The Minister of War retaliated by disarming all Armenians who had joined the colors, drafting them into labor battalions which had been created to remedy the deplorable state of roadways in the country, and especially in the regions under discussion. Truly they had to endure, on this account, more privations than would have been the case had they been maintained in combatant ranks; the latter were better cared for than non-combatants, the military authorities being compelled to make a distinction between both classes owing to the difficulties encountered in supplying the needs of the army. But Armenians had only themselves to blame for this change in their situation.

Nevertheless, the committees did not hesitate to represent this natural measure of defense against them as an instance of the discriminating treatment to which Armenians had been subjected at all times in the Empire, and which, in those circumstances, had finally driven them to shun their duties as citizens in sheer disgust.

This is a sample of the way in which they have always misrepresented the truth regarding their relations with the Porte. Their cleverness, their promptitude in discussion whereby they can turn the most compromising facts into arguments in their favor, have always been their most effective weapons against Ottoman rule, and those qualities form a striking contrast with the slowness and clumsiness of Turkey when defending herself against their libels. Truly, they have not procured them a material victory, but they have largely contributed towards the moral success of their cause before Western public opinion.

Armenian Action After Turkey Joined in the War.

We have hereabove described the criminal form assumed by Armenian activity in the short time that elapsed between the outbreak of the war and Turkey's participation in the conflict. However, the conspiracy they had planned against the Ottoman State only unfolded itself in its lurid extent after the latter event. Here is a description of their plan: Pursuant to secret instructions the committees had sent even to the smallest Armenian hamlets, all valid men were to form bands under the leadership of deserters from the imperial army, their numbers, ranks and duties having been previously drafted out; next they were to destroy and kill throughout Turkish and Kurd villages, and this not only to terrorize the Moslem population, but with a view to cause Turkish soldiers to leave the army and rush to the help of their families. Then, in order to complete the disorganization of Turkey's military forces, they were to attack military convoys, to lay ambushes for isolated detachments to fall into, and to act as spies for the enemy on the point of crossing the border. Having thus prepared the ground in front of Russian armies, they were to join the latter, acting as scouts, occupying positions in the rear and cutting off the retreat of Turkish troops.

The Armenians carried out this task with demoniac frenzy. Hundreds of Moslem villages fell victims to their fury. At the battle of Sari-Kamish, they fought by the side of Russian troops. . . The city of Van, where local Armenians had taken arms to oppose military service, was captured by the Russians with the help of Armenian volunteers; its fall had been preceded by devastations and massacres in the neighborhood, and was followed by similar horrors within its precincts. In Pounar, Guevach, Tchatac, they indulged in the same outrages. At the outset of hostilities, the practically defenseless city of Bayazid was captured by an important detachment of Russian and Ottoman Armenian volunteers. The same as at Van, armed rebellion broke out in Zeitoun, Haizan and Koms, with the accompaniment of all kinds of assaults. All along the Black Sea and Mediterranean coast, they acted as spies in the service of the Entente, and resorted at the same time to similar acts of terrorism as in Eastern Anatolia.

Further details would prove wearisome. The reader may form an accurate idea of the extent to which Armenians helped the Russian army¹ and perpetrated outrages on the Moslem countrymen, from the perusal of the documents annexed to the present book.

Proof positive will be found therein of the Armenian population's share in the worst crimes ever committed by a group of citizens against another, and against the State of which both were members.

¹ If the attitude of Armenians during military operations on the Eastern front is taken into consideration, it will be admitted that the Ottoman army, rather small and badly equipped, had great difficulty in resisting the Russian invasion, inasmuch as the enemy from without had been assisted by an enemy from within, most dangerous owing to the number of its means, its determination and knowledge of the country.

Warning to Armenians at the Outset of the War.

On of the first acts of the Minister of War, Enver Pacha, after the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, was to give the Armenian Patriarch a solemn warning that any attempt at insurrection, or any aggression against Moslems by his community at such a serious time for the Empire, would expose Armenians to the most terrible consequences. He explained to him, in a clear and unmistakable manner, that the Ottoman Government had to defend the country against three powerful enemies, and would, therefore, deal rigorously, on its own account, with the slightest outbreak; however, it if could make a distinction between innocent and guilty parties, yet it would not be able to preserve the Armenian population against the just but blind fury of the Moslem crowd, which was four times and half more numerous. He stated that if he, himself, the Minister of War, had sufficient troops at his disposal, the absence of means of communication would prevent him from interfering in time, and, under such circumstances, any provocation would not only be a crime, but sheer madness.

The Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Halil Bey, sent a similar warning to Armenian representatives. They remained undaunted. Deeply convinced of the Entente' prompt victory, especially in her operations against Turkey, and heightened in their determination by the prospect that the latter had set before their eyes of an independent Armenia. Armenians launched with enthusiasm in the above described campaign. The inevitable happened.

The Government's Defensive Measures.

Relapsing into tolerance, the Porte bore with patience the months that followed, its attitude, it will be readily admitted in this case, going the full length of forbearance. At last, it realized that the country's salvation needed prompt and decisive measures. Setting aside all hesitation, the Government dissolved the committees and arrested the leaders. Searches were carried out in the Armenians' public establishments as well as in their private residences, with the result that hundreds of them were convicted of revolutionary designs and deeds. The guilty were sentenced to such penalties as are the common practice in all countries where the notion of State security is prevalent. Suspected parties were imprisoned preventively, and the whole Armenian population subjected to severe restrictions regarding their freedom to travel. All these measures proceeded from the natural and elementary course of things. Further, the Porte resorted at the same time to a heroic remedy: the transfer to the interior of the country of the Armenian population inhabiting province bordering on Russia, and regions where an enemy landing was possible.

The outcry raised by this measure in Western countries was quite in conformity with its inveterate attitude towards Turkey. What Barbarousness? Such was the cry heard everywhere, especially in England, how inhuman! Turks were decidedly unworthy of being counted among civilized nations! Let the infamous, murderous horde be sent back to Asia! And many other wrathful expressions in the true Gladstonian style.

No doubt, in normal times, the transplantation of the whole population of a country would meet with the utmost reprobation. But it should be considered that Turkey was fighting for her life, and that Armenians had just then seized the opportunity to strike her a death-blow in the back, after having systematically attacked her rule during the past seventy years.

Could she allow rebellion, allied with invasion, to continue to use its bases of operations, either in cities or in the countryside, when it extended it almost all Armenian homes? Was it possible for her to sacrifice the supreme interest of the State, its preservation, for the sake of humanity, at a time when, owing to the effects of war, all the laws of humanity were generally accepted as being in suspense? She would have been more than human had she done so. *Salus regnis prima lex esto.*

This point should be insisted upon. The triumph of either of the groups engaged in the present war can only entail for the beaten party, with the exception of Turkey, a loss of territory and prestige; that is all. On the other hand, defeat would bring about Turkey's downfall. The Entente has clearly warned her to this effect. Having all to lose, if the fortune of arms is against her, she is of all belligerent countries the only one that is not free to spare any means in the pursuit of victory.

Sufferings of Armenians.

Deported Armenians undoubtedly suffered in several instances through the unconcern, the brutality and violence of soldiers and constables commissioned to escort them to their new homes. But even in official capacity, a man is yet a human being. The thought of the crimes recently committed by Armenians, in many cases under their very eyes, and perhaps against one of their friends or relatives, were constantly before the minds of those soldiers and constables; is it impossible to excuse them for having allowed resentment to stifle the voice of duty? On the other hand, many instances could be stated of those primitive men sacrificing themselves to protect their charge against the attacks of brigands.

Regarding the detachments from the imperial army, several of which have committed excesses here and there, was their conduct so essentially contrary to human nature, and in contrast with that of Western troops? Considering that they were maddened by the action of Armenians, whose cooperation with Russians had decided the fate of more than one battle in favor of the latter! Could it be expected that they would not avenge the misdeeds of the whole Armenian population on fractions of this race, which were perhaps not in actual criminal activity, but which they had reasons to believe guilty of past crimes or ready to commit and felony at the first favorable opportunity? Are there no precedents to "blood lust" at the thought of the savage attacks perpetrated against soldiers' homes, of the ruins, of the mutilated bodies? Can it be wondered that here and there, soldiers from those detachments should have lost their senses to the extent of carrying out on their adversaries the cruel methods the latter had practiced on themselves? Can the atrocities committed by Wellington's troops in Spain be recalled? Can we speak of the American Indian Wars, and of the struggle against Filipinos?¹

As much could be said about the subordinate officials of the Ottoman administration; some of them assumed the duty of avenging their race, their chiefs being unable to thwart their designs owing to their multifarious occupations resulting from the war.

Furthermore, there is little to doubt that the Moslem rabble lost all restraint in certain circumstances. But, as in the case of the troop and the constabulary, an outrage paid for another, and a massacre retaliated for another. Armenians had acted as demons. Was it expected that the Turks would act as angels? All foreigners who know Turkey, and who express impartial opinions on the matter, are unanimous in stating that the Turkish peasant is the most enduring and peaceful being existing in the world. But there is a limit to his patience. When exasperated, he is just as terrible as any virile individual whose wrath is slow to break out. Yet, he is not so ferocious or cruel as the French, the Italian or the Portuguese, for instance, who exceed all bounds at the first provocation. At any rate, he is less inhuman in his anger than his Christian neighbors, the Armenian, of which we have described the barbarous methods, the Greek and the Bulgarian, whose atrocities during the Balkanic Wars were described in the Carnegie

¹ There are no atrocities or acts of brigandage that the troops of Wellington did not commit in Spain whenever they met with any resistance in cities.

In the first Indian Wars, American soldiers amused themselves by throwing to one another babies captured from the enemy and catching them on the point of their bayonets. In the Philippines, they resorted to torture in order to

Commission's report.¹ The Government was unable to interfere effectively. The exasperation raised in the army and the people by the Armenians' attitude was such that its appeals to reason and moderation remained a dead letter.

Professional Turcophobes, such as Bryce, Buxton, and others, claim that 800,000 Armenians perished as victims of Turkish "savageness" during the ebb and flow of the Ottoman Army in Eastern Anatolia, and their transfer from one locality to another. This is false, both in the figure itself, and in the explanation given.

The precise number of Armenians who were killed in the upheaval that shook Eastern Anatolia at the outset of hostilities can only be established after the war. But it may be asserted even now that the figure of 800,000 advanced by Armenians and confidently accepted by their Western patrons is a gross exaggeration. Whatever may be the real number, it may be taken for granted that it is very much inferior to that of Moslems who perished at the same time, if to the number of those massacred by Armenians and their Russian allies are added the tens of thousands Turkish soldiers fallen on the battlefield, and who would have been spared, if the former had not assisted the others in their military successes.

Regarding the causes of the said loss of Armenian lives, they were mostly due to hunger, exhaustion and epidemics, the latter having played havoc in the Armenian population during its transfer and after.¹ The authorities cannot be made responsible for those circumstances. The Armenian revolutionary movement had taken such a form and had extended to such a point that the transfer to the interior of *the whole* Armenian population had become an absolute military necessity. On the other hand, in those regions that are naturally poor and were soon exhausted by the State of war, the Government was powerless to prevent the mowing down by death of transplanted Armenians. It should be considered that it could hardly feed its own soldiers, to whom it had naturally to give the preference, and whom it could not even protect against the ills that decimated them as much as the civilian population. This means that, in the matter of the transfer, the Armenian population fell victim in the first place to the baneful policy of committees, who had caused the Government to take this step, and on the other hand, to the fate that willed this measure to become the source of inevitable sufferings during its application.

The situation thus created by the committees' folly and under the stress of circumstances was evidently a great misfortune for the Armenian population. We are the first to deplore it, but we bear in mind the fact that, next to the Armenian fatality, there occurred simultaneously a Turkish tragedy, at all points similar to the former. Western opinion has grieved over the Armenian misfortune. Thousands of Moslems, as ourselves, have shared the grief of Europe and America, even forgetting the relation existing between both tragedies. But why should Western opinion remain indifferent at the sad plight of our

elicit information from the natives concerning the movements of Aguinaldo. One form of this torture was the famous "water cure."

¹ "The Turks are the best element, not only in the Moslem population, but also among all the peoples of Asia Minor. Most of the vices attributed to the Turks by the Russian and European press are not in his character. If the truth must be told, it will be admitted that in the East, it is not the Moslems who are barbarous, but the Christians." (General Mayewsky)

brethren? Is a Turkish life worth less than an Armenian, because the former is a Moslem and the latter a Christian? Should there be two weights and two measures, even in matters of mercy?

¹ The Moslem population fleeing before the Russian invasion suffered even greater losses, owing to the same causes. From all points of view, the Moslem drama is just as sad as the Armenian tragedy.

The Turkish Reaction Was Not More Violent or Cruel Than It Would Have Been in Any Other Country.

Let us admit that the deportation of Armenians was really in itself a barbarous measure; and that we have underrated the excesses committed in this circumstance and in others by the Turkish side, although in any case, they have not surpassed in horror the Armenian atrocities of which they were a rejoinder. Let us admit, further, that we may have to conceal the Government's share of responsibility in those incidents. In spite of this, we boldly assert that, from all points of view the Turkish reaction was not more ruthless than any reaction that might have occurred in any western State faced with the same provocations in similar circumstances.

Let us take, for instance the case of Russia, England and America; these States, like Turkey, have in their midst certain elements that they have not completely assimilated.

The treatment inflicted by Russia on her Polish subjects is a matter of record. The manner in which she put down their insurrections of 1831 and 1863 now belongs to history, although those risings were justified, the Poles having been deprived of their civil, religious and ethnical rights, and their very life having been made intolerable by means of continuous persecution. The Poles could advance many reasons to justify their grievances, whereas Armenians could assert no reasonable ground to rise against Turkish domination, unless it is admitted that their administrative complaints formed the basis of their cause. But neither the Revolution of 1831 nor that of 1863 coincided with a war in which Russia was engaged, and in which the Poles acting as insurgents, had supported and abetted the enemy. Neither is the first case nor in the second could the Polish insurrection have an effect on the destinies of Russia as disastrous as the Armenian rebellion would have on the fate of Turkey. However, Russia went as far in its repression of the 1831 and 1863 risings as Turkey did in 1915, even admitting that it really reached the alleged extent Polish men, women and children by tens of thousands were then deported to Siberia, perishing on the way under "the knout" and the "nagay ka" having to suffer even a worse fate on arrival at their destination point. Mass executions were resorted to; whole districts were devastated and all their inhabitants massacred; forced conversions to orthodoxy were the (?) pay for life. All that is mentioned as included in the Turkish horror, all that is alleged occurred in Russia and what not. Proscription, confiscation of property, the murder of hostages, the whipping of women in public, are things that could be added to the Russian accounts.

Russia's past could be charged with many other abominations, for instance, the famous "pogroms," of which we have spoken in several occasions: sudden outbreaks of politico-religious fanaticism which have occurred periodically and which were directed against a race that had always observed a most correct attitude towards the State. Judging from this, what would have "Holy" Russia done if the Polish rebellion had presented all the characteristics of the Armenian Revolution? What would she have done, during the present war, if Poland, whose population had welcomed Germans and Austro-Hungarians as liberators, had fallen again under her domination before the breakdown of Tsardom?

The present occurrences in New Russia, in the land of Bolsheviks, Maximalists and Soviets, where those pretended liberators of the Empire are perpetrating all kinds of crimes against justice and humanity, are instances of governmental rigor and national savagery which can far outcrie all the heinous actions imputed to Turkey. Furthermore, they cannot be excused as a supreme measure of preservation or as reprisals on behalf of a population systematically provoked and finally exasperated.

The sufferings of Irishmen are perhaps not so well known as those of Poles in Russia. In another form, they were even more intolerable. We refer to those of our readers who wish to be accurately informed on the matter to a book recently published by Dr. Chatterton Hill, in which the misdeeds of British policy in Ireland are set forth in detail. They will find out therein how the British Government unrelentingly contrived, during the seven centuries that her domination over the Green Island has lasted, to stifle Irish nationalism and religion by means either violent or cunning. As an instance, could be mentioned the systematic settlement of Anglo-Saxon colonies in the midst of the Celtic population, and as a complement to this policy, which was concealed under hypocritical assurances and religiousness, the methodical manner in which poverty was artificially maintained in the island with the object ruthlessly pursued of reducing the native population, the number of which had alarmed British domination.

The first part of this program did not succeed: Irishmen remained Irish and Catholics, true to the core. On the other hand, the second part obtained results that could have, no doubt, vindicated Great Britain in her own eyes. The following figures will prove this point: the native population of the island, which amounted to 9,000,000 in 1850, is now merely 4,000,000. This decrease was not only due to death caused by poverty and hunger, but more particularly to emigration, to which they had to resort as a remedy to their sufferings. Expatriation proved to be an excellent idea, because, thanks to emigration, 16,000,000 Irishmen have survived in the United States, where they are prospering and increasing. No doubt their existence would have been killed in the germ had their parents remained in their native island, owing to the murderous effects of British policy. The fact that 16,000,000 Irishmen live in America, as against only a quarter of this number in Ireland (the latter being now reduced to that figure from 9,000,000 they were in 1850), means a loss of 21,000,000 individuals for their own country; a constitutes a damnable proof that British rule in Ireland was either intolerably oppressive or absolutely incapable. As a matter of fact, it was a combination of both. And if the present condition of the 4,000,000 Irishmen now inhabiting the country is examined, it will be observed that they live in hovels which, in her unconsciousness, prosperous England who rules Ireland from the other side of a sea channel hardly a few miles wide, disdainfully declares unfit to lodge pigs; that their food consists almost exclusively of potatoes, and in certain districts of wild weeds, although the land is naturally fertile; that they still grovel in ignorance and medieval superstition; and finally that they are ruthlessly exploited by large land owners and manufacturers, all English. Is it to be wondered that they rose against their masters ever since the conquest of their country and persisted in their attitude until present times? They conduct merely aggravated their condition and gave cause for British reactions which proceeded by violence and injustice.

During the past twenty or thirty years, England has apparently relented and pretended to atone for her past injustice; she had even intended to grant Irishmen a certain measure of Home Rule. It would have been more advisable to treat them with greater fairness from the economic point of view, because steps in this direction would have proved her sincerity. For instance, what prevented her from repealing the export taxes on woollens, which killed in this industry one of the main sources of income existing in the island? Why would she not allow Queenstown to play its natural part as the nearest port to America, instead of favoring London and Liverpool? In 1850, she placed whiskey on the list of duty free imports, but raised her tariff on all other goods. In 1891, she raised an export tax on woolen goods, although all other products could be exported freely from the island. In these two instances we find the extremes of England's economic policy with regards to Ireland, two extremes that are akin in their malicious intent.

With respect to Home Rule, this measure has not yet been carried out and it is a question whether it will ever be. Yet, England has granted autonomy or self-government to all the populations of European race incorporated in her Empire, even to the Boers whom she proclaimed to be the scum of humanity until the iniquitous South African War had subjected them to her domination. And, England had been one of the loudest advocates of Armenian autonomy. But with regards to the Irish, she answers No! they are not fit to govern themselves. Do you know why? Because they are too frivolous, too thoughtless, most impractical. All that they are good for is to fight for England and win her battles. For the remainder, they can just perish at home.

Now, compare the violent or cunningly malevolent policy of England towards the Irish, with the paternal and forbearing attitude of the Porte towards her Christian subjects, and particularly regarding Armenians; compare the conditions of life on the Connaught peasant to the easy circumstances of the Armenian peasant in the highlands of Eastern Anatolia, alluded to in General Mayewsky's report; further, compare the crass ignorance of the former to the education acquired by the latter, and which is amply sufficient for his needs; consider also that if peace and order have been lacking in "Armenia" they were not precisely evident in Ireland, where agrarian and political crimes were added to riots between Catholics and Protestants, real fights between the constabulary and the people, and converted this annex of the most powerful and civilized England into one of the most miserable and disturbed lands in the world. Just think a while about all these things, and you will understand why England has very slight cause to rise as an indignant accuser of Turkey, considered as an Imperial Power, and as the ruler of a part of the Armenian people.

The Turkish domination in "Armenia" was evidently in default from the administrative point of view, but it was marked by religious and political tolerance towards non-Moslem elements, and this more than compensated their material grievances.

The Prussian domination in Posnania, another international situation which England considers as oppressive, endeavored to safeguard the Poles national and religious rights until 1880. If, after that date, Prussia adopted a policy of denationalization and disruption towards the native element, which did not have the slightest result, on the contrary, the reason of this resided in the difficulty for any State ruling over a

conquered population of different origin and religion to establish a basis of common existence which would give enduring satisfaction to both sides. This explains the change of tactics from compression to liberalism, an vice versa. Nevertheless, Prussia can assert that she first endeavored to establish a tolerant and liberal system in Posnania, and that she observed it loyally during ninety years out of the one hundred and forty that her domination has lasted. On the other hand, she has remarkably succeeded in introducing peace and prosperity in the part of the Ancient Piast kingdom that fell to her share, and which, prior to the Partition, was in a state of anarchy and dire distress; furthermore, by her, school education and her example, she has effected a notable transformation in the national character of a greater part of the Polish race. No doubt, after the war, she will resume a more liberal treatment of the Polish question.

Nowadays, the 4,000,000 Poles ruled by Prussia form a social class on par with the Germans from the point of view of race qualities: love of work, method and tenacity in initiative, thrift and economy, order, comfort and cleanliness. Their transformation has been almost miraculous.

Thereby, German domination has rendered a most valuable service to the Polish nation. In its independent state, the latter had many sympathetic qualities, much brilliancy and picturesqueness, but it lacked those that are at the basis of political and economic success. Without attempting to be paradoxical in this respect, it may be state that inasmuch as the Polish nationality has survived the Partition and is even on the eve of rising again in national form, the Polish people should thank its fate, and no longer consider its breakdown as a terrible calamity. Had it escaped the Partition, it would certainly not have been so well armed in the struggle for life as it is today, after a century and half of German, Austrian and even Russian domination. The latter has even been to its advantage, it has forced it to acquired self-possession and discipline and induced it to substitute to its sterile idealism and nefarious individualism, a practical conception of life and the sentiment of solidarity.

The British domination in Ireland, on the other hand, has neither been marked by tolerance, the lack of which England reproves in Prussia's rule over Posnania, nor by the benefaction of a good administration, which she accuses Turkey of having failed to give Eastern Anatolia, nor even by the preservation of peace and order, which she claims to have maintained in the other parts of her Empire under the somewhat pompous name of "*pax britanica*". This might have been true in the past, but is more and more denied in present times.

The insurrection organized by Sir R. Casement broke out under those circumstances. All the past conduct of England toward Irishmen, a conduct woven with violence, injustice and fraud, commanded her to be moderate in repression, inasmuch as she had to deal with a political movement from which were excluded the common law crimes that had been a marked feature of the Armenian rising against Turkey. She acted quite the other way about. It is useless to described herein all the measures of rigor in which she drowned the island.

What would she have done had the Irish acted in exactly the same way as the Armenians, had their insurrection succeeded and a German landing been effected, a contingency we admit as possible for the sake of argument, and if she had finally reconquered the island? Would she hesitate to transplant the whole

population, considering that, in the Transvaal, where she had not the slightest right to be, she carried out with the utmost brutality a system of concentration camps? Would she hesitate to force the population into loyalty by the whip and the bayonet, considering that among other most civilized measures of repression she employed in the Peninsular rising of 1856, she caused insurgents to be tied to the mouth of guns and blown to pieces; considering that her troops used “dum-dum” bullets in their “punishing” expeditions against frontier tribes, in her Asiatic and African possessions as the best means to “stop those b....” considering that the same troops exterminated the wounded, “because you never know with those b.... whether they won’t send you a bullet even in the throes of agony”; considering lastly, that she soaked several Chinese ports in the blood of their inhabitants in order to force China to import opium, which the Chinese Government would not have?

What would she have done in India where, outside of the misdeeds of her rule in matters of superior justice and high humanity, a mere soldier may kick a native to death in a drunken frenzy without incurring any other penalty than to be sent back to England?

What would she have done in Egypt, considering that the measure of her domination in this country may be estimated from the abominable incident of Denshawouai? In this case four native were hung within three days because an English officer had lost his life in a fight raised by himself and his shooting companions; and this in spite of the report of a British medical officer who stated that his death was caused by a sun stroke, and not by the blows he had received on his head.

It would be childish to deny that the British are a great nation, on the first ranks of civilization, and who govern *themselves* according to admirable principles. It should also be admitted that even in their administration of the countries they have conquered, they generally show a great respect for justice and humanity. But it is not true, as they allege, that in their relations with those countries they have set aside the rights of the conqueror, of which they might just as well avail themselves considering they are generally acknowledged, and that they act merely as tutor and instructors, devoting their care to prepare populations a to future independent state. On the contrary, they diligently repress for many kinds of plausible reasons all the efforts attempted by natives to rise for their state of ignorance, although the latter is the main cause of their sufferings and of their backward state. No sooner those endeavors tend to elevate them to a level of education which would enable them to free themselves from British domination, then England steps forth, opposing their wishes, and declares that the country is being demoralized. As a matter of fact, the British deliberately practice obscurantism in their possessions. Generally speaking, as soon as their rule is questioned, when for instance, their prestige is on the balance, they manifest an official and private frigidness, a rigor, a despotism which are in marked contrast with their usual conduct. With regards to the material progress which has followed their occupation of their Asiatic and African domains – the case is different with Ireland, as we have already shown – the said has been but the automatic result of a superior civilization operating in backward or decayed countries, some of which, Egypt for instance, possess wonderful natural resources. Even in those cases, they are guided merely by ferocious egotism. For

instance, they have clearly sacrificed the industrial interests of India and Egypt, that is to say, of 400,000,000 individuals, to the greediness of Manchester and Birmingham.

That is a fact: as long as England has not her back up to the wall in pursuit or the defense of her superior interests – her domination, her commerce and her industry – she does not transgress the laws of humanity and justice; but when the case needs the most extreme measures, then she is ready to do almost anything, bringing down at the same time the Bible from the bookshelf, and referring her action to the word of God himself! It was an Englishman, Lord Roberts, the kindest and most courteous among all men in private life, who, finding himself in an almost desperate position as commander-in-chief in South Africa, was the first to denounce the military maxim that “it would be in the interests of humanity to resort to the most rigorous measures against an enemy if, in the manner, the advent of peace could be hastened in order to save either belligerents from the greatest of all calamities: War.” Pursuant to this maxim, his successor, Lord Kitchener, carried out the famous concentration camp system. Had he not obtained victory by those means, he would no doubt have poisoned the wells, impaled all the prisoners, and what not, in the name of humanity, well knowing that clergymen in the metropolis were ready to justify his action from the Holy Scripture, as was the case when England decided to carry out its cruel plan of starving the Central Powers.

Another feature of England’s political psychology should be mentioned in this instance. She rose with virtuous indignation against Germany’s attempt to extend her domination over the world, although this is the right of all nations, and especially of those that are conscious of their civilizing power. She even honored Germany with special hatred. England opposed this tendency, stating that such action was only permissible in the form of a commercial, moral or intellectual penetration. Yet, this argument was used by a nation that has no doubt rendered valuable services to humanity, but whose dominating position in the world is essentially based upon conquest, upon a systematic and fraudulent annexation of territories carried out for the past three centuries, upon the mastery of the sea – to which she clings with all her might – and upon a system of naval bases, of coal stations, of cables, of telegraphic and press agencies covering the whole world with its network. Even were it admitted that Germany’s plans, in the present war, had in view the acquisition of new territories, could England reprove this ambition considering that she possesses of fifth of the whole world, in which are included its best parts? Even admitting that Germany’s occupation of Curland is merely an indirect way used for the purpose of settling therein forever, could England reprove the method, considering that her own annexation of Egypt is an instance among hundred of her own false pretenses and fraud? England may be allowed to build a railway north and south of Africa, and to connect Calcutta and Koweit by rail. England may be allowed to cover the world with a network of naval stations. All this is most legitimate and laudable. But no sooner Germany intends to connect Berlin with Bagdad by means of a railroad than England puts the world on its guard: it is a clear case of *leo quem devoret querens*. Although she asserted a theory that suited her because of the universal character of her commerce, which she believed to be protected from any competition, England nevertheless opposed Germany’s right to exercise political influence over countries in which the latter’s commercial interests were not yet firmly established, such as in Morocco and China, etc. Germany could have answered that she desired to create a

political situation in those countries precisely because she wanted economic development in those regions. Yet no sooner had she succeeded in ousting British trade from positions which were considered as impregnable, and had begun to undermine it in England itself, than the latter, being unable to stop her competitor on pacific grounds, had recourse to arms in order to crush her. When England alleges that Germany wishes to submit the whole world – which at any rate would be bad policy – she speaks of a problematic situation that may occur in the future. On her side, England is striving to maintain the world under her own economic and political influence, which is a situation of fact, existing in present times. All the fine speeches and beautiful words uttered by the Allies cannot conceal the fact that the calamity now fallen on humanity consists in the first instance of a desperate effort made by England to defend by the force of arms her exorbitant predominance against the *automatic increase of German power*. It merely means a reaction on the part of conceit, pride and possession, against method, science and untiring energy. No one can foretell the result of the present conflagration. But one thing is certain, it will liberate the world of England's hegemony, the paralyzing action of which, on other countries, has been demonstrated during the present war.

Now, it should not be thought that, in general, England's conduct has been more despotic or inhuman than that of other powers. What is intolerable is the *hypocrisy* of it. She is always pretending that she is moved by higher motives than her neighbors, and she covers her most abominable actions under the appearances of noble and virtuous deeds. Why should she persist in this heinous comedy, considering that nobody pretends to be better than she? Cannot she content herself with the social superiority that belongs to the individual Englishman, generally considered as the most perfect type of humanity?

Having granted this point to an enemy who persists in libeling and insulting his adversaries, let us now proceed with our expose.

The great North American Republic asserts that she is the guardian of the laws of right and humanity, and that she has entered into the war in order to defend them; yet, the American people "lynches" every year several hundred Negroes, without mentioning some Italians. That is to say that the people acts as judge and avenger of certain crimes attributed to those individuals, and after seizing the, ties them to a tree, soaks them with petroleum and burns them alive.¹ What would this nation do if she were engaged in a life and death struggle, say with Japan, and the descendants of the slaves she had purchased during centuries and which right until 1863, she had heinously ill-treated², sought to revenge themselves for all the past and present injustice and disdain they had suffered at the hands of white people, and rose in alliance with the Japanese, burning and massacring everything within their reach? Ask the Americans themselves – and not a few of them are ready to acknowledge the wrongs done by their country, in which

¹ There is not a case in which the leaders of those outrages, which as a matter of fact are part and parcel of American common law, have ever been called upon to answer for the deed before the authorities.

² Slavery has also existed in Turkey, but it was characterized by such kindness on the part of masters that it forms a striking contrast with the abominable cruelty of the system in the United States. Mrs. Beecher Stowe, herself an American, had given thereof a dramatic description in her book "Uncle Tom's Cabin". For this reason, the emancipation amendment was hailed in America by the negroes delirious enthusiasm. In Turkey, when granted their freedom, most of them refused to leave their masters.

they greatly differ from Englishmen – and they will tell you that there would not remain many of those impure beasts (such as they call them) alive to shed tears on the others.

Such is the case we have made out for Russia, England and America. The former, no doubt, is not yet sufficiently civilized, but the two others have always pretended to be at the head of civilization, whereas Turkey honestly acknowledges her backwardness. Is there not in this an excuse for her defects which is lacking among her conceited traducers?

Is it necessary to seek other terms of comparison, and may we speak of Italy, of the Tripoli expedition during which she defied political decency, and the laws of right and humanity? Can we forget that she proclaimed Lybia an Italian possession before she set foot on the land, and pretended to treat as rebels the natives who had defended their country and who were authentic Ottoman subjects? Can we forget that after her Generals had captured the defenseless city of Tripoli, they had to deal with an outbreak of the population, to which they retaliated by causing the inhabitants to be assembled in the center of the town, there to be mowed down by rifle fire until all life was extinct?

Shall we speak of France, “the protector of weak and oppressed nations”, of her conquest of Algeria, of the inhuman means she resorted to in order to put down the Abd-el-Kader insurrection, which was merely a native reaction justified by the iniquity of her rule? Shall we speak of Marshal Bugeaud, another Bayard, who caused a detachment of insurgents hidden in a cavern to be smoked out as rats? Shall we mention the fact that the native population was given over to a gang of vultures going by the name of colonists, and pursuant to fanatic laws of exception, with the support of Government, was pressured, hunted to death, and generally speaking, exploited and ill-treated in a manner recalling the ancient colonial system of Spain?¹ In truth, there was in this a fine example of the “*gesta Dei per Francos*”.

Shall we also speak of Belgium, of her atrocious treatment of Congo natives, systematically practiced with a view to increase the production of ivory and rubber on the principle that a gain of a few cents meant much more than the preservation of human life? This was a scandal far exceeding that of Negro-trading, the suppression of which was finally decided in an agreement signed precisely in Brussels.

Further extending our investigations on human nature, such as revealed in national collectivities fired by interest and ambition, shall we speak of the Boxer Expedition, in which all the Great Powers of Europe, as well as America and Japan, were represented by choice contingents, and during which brigandage and vandalism, murder and rape were common and daily occurrences?

Just one more question. What was the starvation plan carried out by England, mistress of the seas, against Germany and her allies? What was this infamous measure, but the execution of a death sentence, of a cruel and slow death, on hundreds of thousands of individuals whose guilt merely consisted in the fact that they were the countrymen of Turkish, German, Austrian and Hungarian soldiers, which the Entente sought to vanquish not by fair means, but by attacking them in their homes, their wives and children? At the very least, 200,000 inhabitants of Libanus and Syria, 100,000 Armenians, not to speak of Moslems over

¹ See an article on this subject by Mr. Ali Back Hamba, in the “Revue Politique Internationale”, July-September, 1917.

which Western pity does not extend mercy, have perished as victims on this measure. *And the Entente has dared to declare that she will compel Turkey to account for the death of those unfortunate people!!!*

When the Allies, taking upon themselves the right to judge Turkey, proclaim her unworthy to exist among civilized nations, because she placed the preservation of her existence above certain laws of humanity, and because the Moslem rabble and subordinate agents in authority applied the *lex talionis* to Armenians, they do not seem to understand that they condemn themselves thereby, and with them, the whole Western opinion!

Considering that military necessity knows no law; that this principle is current among civilized nations and that the Entente has given it its most extreme significance during the present war; why then should not Turkey be allowed to benefit therefrom?

The Entente accuses the Porte of having availed itself of the upheaval caused by the general political conflagration in order to suppress the Armenian question by exterminating the Armenians. Admitting that Ottoman leaders had really conceived such a plan, and attempted to carry it out, they would not have gone so far as the Entente in its war of starvation, because the latter was directed against the whole civilian population of the Central Powers, that is to say against women, children, sick and old people. But was it so in fact? A little reflection will set forth the absurdity of such an accusation. The effect of the Central Powers' victory in the present war would have set aside automatically the Armenian question from the list of international diplomatic problems. Their defeat would result in the downfall of Turkey itself. Under those circumstances, to exterminate Armenians would have been sheer madness. On the other hand, it will no doubt be admitted that there are yet several hundred thousand Armenians alive. Therefore, there was no extermination. However, the Porte knew very well that the existence of a mere handful of Armenians would suffice to prolong the Armenian question, it having been artificially created, and used for purposes that had nothing to do with the interests of the race. Therefore, having begun to exterminate, why should she have stopped on the way? Did she fear public opinion or did her conscience awake? There is no degree in crime at which responsibility before God and men is bound to stop. The killing of 8000,000 human beings of 1,500,000 or of 10,000,000 is all one, from the point of view of reprobation and of deserved punishment.

Well, the Turks are not barbarians; truth is quite different so far as they are concerned.

They perhaps lack mechanical civilization and science. But with respect to sentiments, natural spirit and manners, they are a people just as refined if not more so than those who despise them. One of their main qualities, as a people and as individuals, is their self-possession. The fact that they lost their patience and allowed the brutal instincts that are dormant in the heart of humanity to overwhelm them, is proof positive that they were faced with prolonged provocations, of which no other people would have born one half. War does not precisely lead to kindly manners. Yet, in their battles at the Dardanelles, at Kut el Amara, and elsewhere, they showed such humanity and chivalry that raised their enemies' admiration, and which the latter could not help expressing publicly. And in their treatment of prisoners of war and of enemy subjects who had remained in Turkey, no other belligerent country has been as generous as they

have proven themselves. England and France have insulted and despised prisoners fallen into their hands. They cannot speak of Germans without calling them “Boches” and “Huns”, whereby they forget that they degrade themselves without affecting in the slightest German grandeur, whose wonderful manifestations in matters of thought and action defy all heinous attacks; in this way, the reputation of Englishmen that they are “sportsmen” has miserably failed. In Paris, Bordeaux, Lyons, German subjects could not venture into the streets without danger to their lives. Their stores and shops have been closed down, if not plundered. Yet, Turkey has lodged General Townshend in a villa at Prinkipo, where he is the object of the greatest regards. In Smyrna, Beyrouth and Constantinople, French and English shops have remained open, and are doing a flourishing business. French, English and Italians go about freely, and are politely treated. In fact, one wonders if this attitude is not the result of mind derangement. Foreigners are still occupied in public administrations, at the Public Debt for instance. They can be seen in dining rooms, public houses, casinos, theaters. They are received in clubs just the same as before. And how do they retaliate for such generosity and delicacy? By libels and false pretenses. It is useless to insist further.

Let us now conclude: the historical survey we have given hereabove concerning the relations between Turks and Armenians showed that Russian propaganda had set at work among the latter about the middle of the XIXth century, and had provoked a revolutionary movement which, after the Russian-Turkish War, assumed an organized form under the leadership of numerous committees, the Dachnak and the Hintchak being the most active thereof. The object of those committees was to sever all the bond uniting Armenians and Turks in a common loyalty to an Empire in which the latter had applied to the former the conqueror’s law with an astounding mildness. Provided with a form of autonomy, all the more intelligible inasmuch as it was based on their ecclesiastical organization, and extended from one end of the Empire to the other in such a way that each individual belonging to that race benefited therefrom wherever he resided, Armenians were able to develop freely from the ethnical, cultural and religious points of view, their nation having ceased to be a geographical unit. They had no other grievance than the bad administration of the Empire, which, however, had not prevented them from enjoying great prosperity; and the mass of the Armenian people resisted for a long while to the various means of persuasion and violence used by the committees to lead them astray. Finally, they yielded to the action of those national organizations which consisted of unbalanced, fanatic and ambitious individuals, and were supported by the Powers for their own ends, this being specially the case with Russia and England. Breaking away from the secular traditions of an honorable loyalism which had arisen from the goodwill of Turkish domination and had been rewarded by the imperial Government, they dreamed of a territorial autonomy which, were it to be realized, would not only be a political absurdity but also an act of flagrant injustice towards the Moslem element, which had been, during the past eight centuries, much more numerous than the Armenian in the in the very regions claimed by the latter as his own.

Thereafter, having joined the national organizations which were all centers of revolutionary actions, in spite of their modest names, they took part in the campaign waged for the past thirty years by the

committees against the State, and used the most abominable means to gain their ends: armed rebellion, assaults, treason, libel, etc.

The committees availed themselves of the present war as a supreme opportunity for a general insurrection the plans of which had been prepared after the Balkanic War, and in those circumstances, the whole Armenian population, with the exception of perhaps a few tens of thousands, joined in the subversive enterprise, with a determination really worthy of a better cause. They added to the crimes they persisted in committing, all kinds of operations directed against Turkey's military preparations, wholesale desertion, rebellion and connivance with the enemy, even before the outbreak of hostilities between the latter and Russia. Right until that time, with the exception of about ten years during the reign of Abdul Hamid, the imperial Government had replied to the demonstrations directed against the State by tolerance, kindness and persistent efforts towards conciliation. Having finally understood that it had to face an element of hostility which nothing would deter, and acting in *legitimate defense*, it determined to fight it with all the more rigor inasmuch as it *had placed itself beyond the law* and the state of war then existing did not allow of any restraint. To repeat what we have said: the thing happened that was to be expected.

Masses of Evidence Against the Armenians.

If any reader should, after reading the above description of the Turco-Armenian question, doubt that the Armenians themselves and their Western patrons were the artisans of their misfortune, we refer him to the crushing mass of evidence collected against them. He will find therein the history of the Committees' action between 1880 and the eve of the war, an action which constitutes a formidable argument against them; evidence is also contained in the Armenian press itself, especially after the outbreak of the present war, in the circulars and secret instructions issued by the committees, in the declarations made by Entente statesmen, in the reports of the two Russian consuls in different cities of Eastern Anatolia, in the admissions of many Armenians, under the influence either of their boastful nature, which is a characteristic of the race¹, or of their desire to be well received by the Entente, or else of their artfulness; finally in the reports by Turkish commanders and the statements made on oath by a crowd of Moslems, who were victims of or witnessed Armenian cruelties. A selection of those documents will be found in the annex to this book.

After having believed the worst of all the things advanced by Armenians against Turkey, it should not be said that the Ottoman Government's counter charges are unworthy of consideration. If the Turkish side is interested in perverting truth, the same could be said of the Armenian side. However, all the books considered as authorities on Turkey agree in stating that the Turks tell the truth, and deplore the absence of that virtue among his Christian countrymen. At any rate, in the Turco-Armenian question, the Committees have raised lying and duplicity to the rank of art and science.

We will now take up the book published by Lord Bryce on the Turco-Armenian question. It consists of a collection of documents which he himself assembled, and which were published as a blue book under the title of "Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire."

This publication is purported to be a formidable case against Turkey; this, at least, is the opinion expressed by three commentators, two of which are Americans. Although they have probably not examined the whole contents of this publication, and certainly do not know a word of the Turkish case, we will nevertheless see what it really means.

The main object of this collection of documents is obvious; it has been deliberately prepared with a view to condemn a whole nation, and a great and venerable religion, one hundred million followers of which live under British rule. Not the slightest trouble has been taken therein to lay before the public materials that would enable it to form an opinion on a point of considerable importance in current history. The book is exclusively composed of documents mentioning Turkish atrocities. We have already acknowledged that excesses had been committed on the Turkish side. Does Lord Bryce allege that there

¹ "For some time past, Armenians in the cities have begun assuming special habits. Every one of them who has passed through an elementary school is wont to display deep opinions on the (?) policy. The thirst of glory and grandeur, the pretension that they alone have correct opinions, the idea that Armenians can not play an important role in politics because they are under Turkish domination, all such things fill their minds. . . the main concern of the present day Armenian is to be a public speaker. Many peace loving Armenians have suffered at the hands of those braggarts, who are totally ignorant of the nation's needs; and it may safely be said that among the revolutionaries who have died in Turkey, there was not one true patriot. . ." (General Mayewsky)

were none at all on the Armenian side, and that they were not the first to be committed? If so, we will not accuse him of bad faith, but we will state that he has not taken the trouble to study the question on both sides, and thus incurred severe reproof, especially for a man in his position who intervened between Turks and Armenians in the name of Truth and Justice. If not, then why did he omit in that collection of one hundred and forty-nine documents against Turkey at least the most important of those accusing Armenians? It is a question whether there was ignorance – unforgivable ignorance – or partiality.

The historical survey forming the last chapter of this compilation was written by Mr. Arnold J. Toynbee, whom Lord Bryce describes as a “young historian of high academic distinction.” This part of the book has also the character of an *ex parte* statement; it is in keeping with the remainder.

Mr. Toynbee, in order to appear impartial, concedes several minor points to Turkey, but he is so much prejudiced against her that he commits the following on the organization of non-Moslem elements into autonomous communities: “The Government ruled out Christians so completely from the dominating commonwealth that it suffered and even encouraged the latter to form distinct communities. The ‘rayas’ became ‘millets’, not yoke oxen but unshackled herds. . . .” The Editor did not know or preferred not to mention the fact that those institutions had arisen through the difficulty of establishing a legislation equally adapted to the needs of Moslems and Christians, owing to the radical differences between their personal status, and the Mehmed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, examining the question whether he should force his Christian subject who were then in majority to join the Islam¹, or adopt another basis for the future organization of the Empire, had finally resolved to grant the latter permission to govern themselves.

We have referred to Mr. Toynbee, a historian who appears to be at logger-heads with history, at any rate, with that of Turkey.

Let us now consult Mr. M.P. Brown, who has resided several years in Turkey as American Charge d’Affaires, and took the trouble to study on the spot the position of foreigners and Christians in Turkey before committing himself to write a book on the matter. In this respect, he has displayed a spirit of fairness which, we are sure, Mr. Toynbee will certainly envy him. The American author is now professor of international law at Princeton University, and in his book “Foreigners in Turkey, Their Juridical Statute”, he says the following regarding the origin and working of Turkey’s Christian communities in the form of “millets”: “The main concern of Mehmed the Conqueror, after the conquest of Constantinople, was to erect a system of administration which would save much trouble to the Government and would be suitable to the needs of his newly acquired subjects.

“His idea was very simple. It tended to leave to Greeks the full enjoyment of their own laws and customs, under the responsible control of the Patriarch acting as their intermediary or ambassador near the Sublime Porte. . . .

“He also granted the Patriarch, in a solemn form, an almost unlimited jurisdiction over the members of the Greek ‘nation’. . . .

“Several of the Sultan’s successors explicitly confirmed the Greek community’s charter, and with the exception of certain restrictions which had become inevitable during the course of more than four centuries, the Greek Patriarch still enjoys those exceptional powers, the same as with all the chiefs of other communities who obtained the same concession later on. . .

“Although the judicial duties of *Milletbachis* (community chiefs) had been gradually restricted to matters affecting mainly the personal statute of the various communities’ members, there was a marked tendency in those communities to preserve national solidarity on the basis of political exclusivism. Tax collection was generally carried out through the intermediary of Millet chiefs¹, an arrangement which suited the Government and its non-Moslem subjects but which distinctly defined their juridical statute of tributary nation, under the Sultan’s suzerainty. The humiliating capitation tax (*Kharadj*) formerly collected from the Christian as a mark of submission, the same as with the offensive denomination of ‘*rayas*’ (cattle) has been abolished. In its stead, was substituted in 1856, the military exemption tax (*Bedel-i-Arkiere*) which is naturally collected almost exclusively from non-Moslem subjects, owing to the Turk’s disinclination to incorporate unbelievers in their army and on the other hand, owing to the non-Moslems disinclination to serve in the latter. . .

“Such an abnormal state of things – the existence of real *imperia in imperio* – could not be expected to last indefinitely. But with regards to jurisdiction immunities in matters concerning the personal statute of non-Moslem subjects, which were spontaneously granted by Mehmed the Conqueror as an act of constructive statesmanship, it seems that those privileges may continue to exist for a long time yet.

“The reason for perpetuating those privileges is founded, in last analysis, on the fact that the Moslem consider race, religion and law as one and the same thing. The *Cheriat* – a blend consisting of the Coran and of the sacred law – is the basis of all Moslem legislation regarding an infinite variety of matters.² Its prescriptions concerning rights and duties can only be applied *in toto* to followers of the Prophet. This being true in such matters as those regarding personal statute, it stands to reason that non-Moslems, the same as Moslems, must enjoy the right to observe their own laws and customs.

“Therefore, Mehmed the Conqueror was probably guided by considerations of tolerance and political wisdom when granting such extensive privileges to his conquered subjects, but at the same time, he was actuated by the necessity of solving a problem which found its origin in the Moslem conception of State and religion.

“And consequently, the solution adopted by Sultan Mehmed in granting immunities to his Christian subjects may be considered on the whole as wise and satisfactory.”

Such is Mr. Brown’s opinion, according to a study of facts; it is not based on prejudice. To which of both, this one of that of Mr. Toynbee, will the reader give preference?

¹ Mehmed the Conqueror displayed such broadness of mind and liberalism in his organization of the Empire, that several historians have gone so far as to believe he intended, at a certain moment, to adopt the Christian faith as well as the whole of his people.

¹ This system has been suppressed. It was too much in contradiction with modern State principles.

Regarding the Oxford graduate's assertion that *Millets* are unable to express their political conceptions, that is also a mistake, both with respect to their own standing and to that of the State. Mr. Brown has explained that those national corporations were free to assert their political individuality, and most anxious to lead a separate existence. Regarding the political working of the State, the Constitution of 1908 has granted them as well as to Turks similar rights of initiative and critic, of which they have made ample use; prior thereto the latter were quite as powerless as they, with regards to the Throne. Even admitting that non-Moslems had been deprived of those rights, we do not see how Mr. Toynbee, an Englishman, could reprove Turkey for this, considering that conquered subjects in most of the Western Imperialist States do not enjoy such rights, this being particularly the case in India, a British possession, the 400,000,000 inhabitants of which have no share whatever in the administration of the Empire "on which the Sun never sets."

In the same measure as Mr. Toynbee endeavors to deprecate Turkey's liberal and tolerant policy towards her Christian subjects, he seems to have set himself the task of suppressing truth regarding the Armenians' attitude in retaliation thereof. There is not one word in his "historical survey" concerning their revolutionary campaign and their dastardly methods of action. Not one word on their persistent efforts in this direction, which started immediately after the Russian-Turkish War, continued without interruption right up to the eve of the present conflict, and were in full swing after its outbreak.

In short, Lord Bryce and his Editor have apparently taken up the position of staunch Armenian partisans, being perfectly unconcerned with fairness and historical truth. Obviously, they hold a brief in the Armenian cause – a revolutionary cause that lacks the foundation of legitimacy – to which they have sacrificed accuracy and right. Considering that they have taken up this position in the name of justice and humanity, those gentlemen would certainly have been better inspired had they left it aside and defended the cause of Poles and Jews in Russia, whose treatment constitutes a real case for intervention, or looking a little closer to their own sphere, they had pleaded in favor of Indians and Irishmen.

So much for the general character of Lord Bryce's anti-Turkish demonstration. It seems to us that it is sufficiently tainted with sectarian spirit to disturb all prejudices in favor of his book. Impressed by this gentleman's importance, the Western public has not troubled to read the six hundred and forty nine pages of literature published under his responsibility, and has trustingly accepted the unfavorable conclusions regarding Turkey which he, and many others equally determined to ruin the reputation of a whole people have drawn somewhat carelessly from its contents, as we shall be able to prove without the slightest difficulty.

As a matter of fact, our concern is to determine whether, as alleged, the documents industriously collected by Lord Bryce prove, on the one hand, that nothing in the Armenians' attitude could justify the deportation measure adopted by the Ottoman Government, and, on the other, whether the conditions under

² successive reforms in the Ottoman State organization have restricted the Chariat jurisdiction to such a point that civil law now rules throughout the whole Empire, with the exception of matters dealing with personal statute.

which this measure was carried out could leave no room for doubt as to its real object, that is: to exterminate the Armenian race.

The foregoing pages clearly show that this was not the case, but we will go over the ground again more particularly with regards to the noble Lord's compilation.

In his historical survey, Mr. Toynbee states that the Ottoman Government found cause for the deportation decision in three considerations: 1) the Armenians took arms and joined the Russians as soon as the latter had crossed the frontier; 2) there was a general conspiracy among Armenians throughout the Empire with the object of fomenting an internal revolution, at a time when its military forces were engaged at the frontier, and thus to give the country over to the enemy; 3) that the Armenian civilian population owes its misfortunes to Armenian volunteers, or to express this more intelligibly, to the Armenians' participation in the war as volunteers in Russian armies.

That is quite true; that is the case for the defense adopted by the Ottoman Government.

Concerning the first point, as Mr. Toynbee states, the main charge consists of the Van rebellion. He refers the reader to documents Nos. 120, 121, 122 and 15, which are all qualified as evidence from neutral parties, although one of them, No. 122, is a statement made by a full blooded Armenian; this with a view to prove that the Ottoman Government has "lied direct" when it state, in its pamphlet "Truth on the Armenian revolutionary movement and governmental measures", that: 1) the Imperial Government abstained from exerting the slightest pressure and adopting repressive measures against Armenians until an armed rebellion broke out in Van, about the middle of April, 1915; 2) that no coercitive measure was passed by the Imperial Government until the time of the armed rebellion which broke out in Van and in other military zones in the course of the month of *June* (underlined by the Editor), and 3) that after the occupation of Van by Russians and Armenians, the Moslem population of the city was ruthlessly murdered.

Leaving aside the discrepancy as to dates, which is of small importance, and either due to the writer's absent mindedness or to a confusion caused by the fact that the Ottoman Government had to face several riots, some of which preceded that of Van as others followed it, let us examine the documents referred to.

No. 15 is a letter from Miss Knapp, of the American Mission in Van, in which she relates the tragic events that occurred in that city.

Here are the parts of the letter which have a direct bearing on the point under consideration¹:

"The inhabitants numbered 50,000, of whom three-fifths were Armenians and two-fifths Turks. The Armenians were progressive and ambitious, and owing to their numeric strength *and the proximity of Russia, the revolutionary party became a power to be reckoned with.* Three of its noted leaders were Vremian, *Member of the Turkish Parliament*, Ishkhan, the most versed in military tactic, and Aram, of whom there will be much to say later on. . .

"When Djevdet Bey (the governor-general) returned in the early spring, everyone felt that there would be 'something doing'. There was. He demanded from the Armenians 3,000 soldiers (a perfectly

¹ The italics and parenthesis have been inserted by the writer hereof.

legal and natural demand considering that general mobilization had been decreed. What is surprising is that he should have had to make a special demand for these men, seeing that Armenians were under obligation to present themselves at the recruiting stations). They were so anxious to keep the peace that they promised to accede to this demand. (This was admitting their disinclination to fulfill their military duties) But at this juncture trouble broke out between Armenians and Turks in the Shadak region, and Djevdet Bey requested Ishkhan to go there as peace commissioner *with three other noted revolutionists*. He had them treacherously murdered on the way. This was *on Friday, April the 16th*. He then summoned Vremian, under the pretense of consulting with him, had him arrested and sent to Constantinople.

“The *revolutionists* now felt that they could not trust the Vali Djevdet Bey (could he trust revolutionists?), and that consequently they could not give him the 3,000 men. They declared they would only give 400, and gradually pay off the exemption tax for the others (an extraordinary instance of bargaining concerning military duty). He would not accept the compromise. . . He had to be obeyed. . . (how strange!) He would stamp out the rebellion at any cost. . .

“The fact cannot be too strongly emphasized that there was no rebellion (?). as already pointed out, the revolutionists intended to keep the peace (then why were they called revolutionists?), if it lay in their power to do so. But for some time past a line of Turkish trenches had been secretly (?) drawn round the Armenian quarter. The *revolutionists*, determined to sell their lives dearly (evidently as revolutionists) then *prepared a defensive line of trenches*.

“On Tuesday, the 20th of April at six o’clock a.m., several Turkish soldiers attempted to seize a group of Armenian women going down town. Two Armenian soldiers stepped forth and asked the Turks what they were doing. The latter fired on the Armenians, killing them. (Miss Knapp was evidently not an eye witness of this scene.) Thereupon, fire was opened from the Turkish trenches. The siege had begun.

“*The Armenians captured and burnt down the barracks north of our premises*, but attempted no other attack, *their number being too small*. . .

“In the evening, a letter came from the occupants of the only Armenian house with the Turkish lines that had been spared, giving information of the Turks’ departure.

“On Wednesday, 19th May, the Russians and Russo-Armenian volunteers entered the city. . .

“All the Turks had not fled; old people, women and children had remained, most of them in hiding. The Armenia soldiers, unlike the Turks, would not wage war against such creatures. *Yet, there was only one place where the captives could be secure against the rabble*. . . Hardly had 6,000 Armenian refugees left our premises (the American mission) that we had to care for 1,000 Turkish refugees, some of whom came from the villages (Turkish) then being *cleaned up* by Russo-Armenian revolutionists (a nice expression for a lady to use in connection with the eviction of unfortunate people from their homes).

“The wild Cossacks considered Turkish women as their legitimate prey, and although the Russian General had given us a small guard, almost every night Dr. Usher and Mr. Yarrow had to drive away the marauders who climbed over the wall of the compound and eluded the guard (?).”

What conclusions may be drawn from this quotation? It is obvious that the Armenians of Van, who were lead by the revolutionary party (the Dachnak), to which Miss Knapp constantly alludes and of which the reader knows the former activity and the subversive program, had refused to obey the mobilization summons, and when the military authorities had taken steps to compel them into submission, they offered armed resistance, capturing the city barracks and joining the Russians after the fall of the town. Is not this a clear case of armed rebellion, and of complicity with the enemy?

After mentioning a series of facts which obviously prove the existence of rebellion, Miss Knapp emphatically denies that there was any. One would understand, strictly speaking, that Miss Knapp would try to *justify* the rebellion by invoking the misdeeds she charges against the Imperial Government, such as abuses in summoning the Armenian population, the disarmament of soldiers of that nationality, the murder of several revolutionary leaders ordered by the Vali, the destruction of neighboring Armenian villages and the massacre of their inhabitants, but to *deny it!* Miss Knapp is a woman, and an American, and therefore she is deplorably ignorant of European institutions. But how can we qualify the *Editor* whom it would be thought, would possess a knowledge of continental military codes, considering he is a European and a historian?

Let us add, concerning the grievances of Van Armenians related by Miss Knapp, that this lady, as well as most Westerners interested in the Armenian question, was apparently only too willing to allow herself to be hoodwinked by the committees, which for Europe and America have never been anything else than defenders of a peaceful Christian element, against a Moslem Government, despotic and cruel. As they trustingly accept as a rule all the latter's statements, they have very seldom undertaken a personal inquiry. Even when, as in the case of Mr. Henry Wood, an American (documents Nos. 1 and 572) they took the trouble to corroborate their information from Armenian sources by other statements from parties of the same nationality, there would naturally be perfect concordance owing to the vast and clever lying organization created by the committees throughout the whole Armenian population. With respect to Consuls and other foreign officials who reside in Turkey, they are generally ignorant of Turkish language, even when they pretend to know it. They have no constant intercourse with the Moslem element, although the latter is conversant with French, either because they disdain it or because they find it difficult to do so owing to the customs of the country. Their opinion on local events is usually a repetition of that of their drogman (interpreters), and are generally tainted from information in the latter's reports. And drogman are almost invariably Armenians, who can thus quite naturally avail themselves of their position to foster the campaign of libel directed against Turkey. We have already explained that one of the methods of the committees' campaign was to denaturate the most justified measures of the Government and to invent Turkish atrocities, or else, having themselves committed all kinds of crimes, they conceal them skillfully, and represent the repression effected by the authorities and the reprisals of the Turkish population as sudden and groundless explosions of Ottoman fanaticism.

It will be evident that having practiced those methods unrelentingly and successfully during thirty years, they would not suddenly renounce them during the present war, especially as the latter's result was

likely to bring about a transformation in Europe's political conditions whereby their national aspirations would be easier realized.

Let us take the events of Van for instance. *Disarmament of Armenian soldiers?* This was a legitimate measure of precaution. The murder of revolutionist leaders by order of the Vali? A mere assertion concerning individuals who had already caused the death of numerous innocent Moslems, treacherously or otherwise, a fact that can be proven. Devastation of neighboring Armenian villages and massacre of their inhabitants? In this there was only a continuation of the give and take struggle between Turks and Armenians, the first blows having been struck by Russo-Armenians. To mention Shadak, as Miss Knapp does, thinking thereby that this case would prove Turkish savagery, means that attention should be called on one of the localities where the Armenian rebellion broke out, which the Government had to repress with more or less rigor.

English or American readers know that before a court of Justice a witness is examined *and cross-examined* that is to say that direct evidence is always sifted, and facts clearly outlined by means of cross-questions by counsel for the defense. Had Miss Knapp's evidence been subject to cross-examination, the fact would have been elicited that she knew more about the Revolution than she stated in her direct testimony. In the latter, she alludes constantly to revolutionists, she even acknowledges that an armed revolt did break out in Van, and that it was due to the Dachnak party's activity; which is proof that it was not an accidental outburst of Armenian discontent, but the result of a deep laid political plan. Furthermore, cross-examination would have elicited information as to the manner in which Miss Knapp had been acquainted with the Revolution, and in all probability, public opinion would then have learnt of the Manifesto issued by the "Armenian Committee for National Defense" in Van, and addressed to the Armenian Nation. This document, which we reproduced hereunder, bears the date of April 10, 1915. Considering that this Manifesto was published in Van four days after the outbreak of open warfare between Armenian revolutionaries and Turkish military, there is little to doubt that, on the dates mentioned by Miss Knapp, a revolution did exist, to which she unconsciously bears witness. Here is this sample of Armenian phraseology:

Countrymen!

In the deafening roar of the enemy's desperate and savage cries, the booming of his hundreds of guns and thousands of rifles, we have now been fighting *four* days with greater courage and hopes than ever.

At Itch-Oghlou and Arak, in the street of the Cross, and even in the barracks of Hamid-Agha, the refuge of tyranny and oppression our brave *soldiers* have been everywhere victorious, fearlessly facing the death hovering over their heads.

Our bullets have caused enormous losses to the enemy, and when our *soldiers* understood that the Government wished to turn our country into a slaughter-house, they would wait no longer but wanted to conquer at any price. We are flying from victory to victory, kindled by the sacred fire of love for our country, and ready to die for it.

To die for thee, o! Armenian nation! For thine happiness and thine lasting Freedom!

Neither the approach of death, nor the number of our enemies can frighten us. We want to get acquainted with death in its divine essence, and prove that in this gigantic battle of nations, the Armenian people – a centuries' old tree deeply rooted in the East – will stand in arms on the smoking ruins of the barracks and the numberless corpses of its enemies.

Armenians!

The struggle we have begun must be continued to the last drop of our blood, until our ferocious foe is annihilated.

Be Bold! We will vanquish at all cost! Let your hearts be animated with the same courage as your *soldiers*. Be as staunch as they and know how to resist. Do not leave the whole burden of this enormous struggle on the shoulders of those heroes. *Everyone must do his duty, the old folk and the children, the women and the young girls must join the soldiers and help them.*

We are fighting not only for our existence but also for Right and Justice. Let us be brave and valorous, and to attain further successes, let us all work like one man.

Contemplate the enemy's barracks in ruins and his stupendous losses! Admire the heroic valiance of our *soldiers*, and prepare your hearts full of courage and hope, for the celebration of our nation's resurrection!

Long live the Armenian soldier!

Long live the Armenian nation!

This bombastic proclamation probably escaped Miss Knapp's notice, but it demonstrates beyond any doubt whatever, that the armed rebellion began on the 6th of April. No wonder, therefore, that Miss Knapp knew of revolutionist on the 16th of April, as she admits.

Other Armenian documents connected with this matter consist of daily reports issued by the Armenian military committee, in Van, between the 13th and 16th of April and a general report from the same source, covering the period extending from the 6th to the 16th of April.¹

This settles the question of the Van outbreak!

No. 120 (a letter dated 20th June, 1915, from a foreigner residing in Turkey and mentioned as being Dr. L.A.) only mentions the following regarding the Government's measures: "Deportation began about six weeks ago, and 180 families of Zeitoun were then transferred. Since that date, all the inhabitants of this place and of the neighboring villages were deported at the same time as most of the Christians at Albustan, and many of those of Hadhin, Sis, Kars, Pazar, Hassan Beyli and Dort Yol."

Any opinion to be drawn from this letter would establish the fact that the deportation of Zeitoun Armenians had started only in the first week of May. As a matter of fact, however, he began earlier, on the 16th of April

Let us now take up No. 122, a statement by Rev. Dikran Andreassian, an Armenian, which is reported by Rev. Trowbridge, an American:

¹ See documents annexed under Nos. 16 and 17, series I.

“On the 10th of August, 1914, the Turkish authorities in Zeitoun proclaimed general mobilization. . . Many inhabitants of Zeitoun fled to the mountains in order to escape military service. Among them, there were about twenty-five notorious highwaymen who made a living by deeds of violence (naturally at the expense of Moslems). This little band was sincerely disliked and dreaded by the *peaceful* and thrifty inhabitants of Zeitoun (then why did they tolerate them in their midst?); it attacked a detachment or raw Turkish recruits, robbing them and insulting them (as a matter of fact they were murdered). Thereupon, Haidar Pachak the Mutessarif of Marache, appeared on the scene, on August the 30th, with 600 soldiers. . . The Zeitoun population was informed; one of its best known citizens, Yehya Agha Yenidounyayan, advised his cousin, Nazaret Tchaouch (corporal), to go and meet Haidar Pacha with 5 or 600 armed young men, because he feared the latter’s intentions were not kindly. But Nazaret Tchaouch answered: No, his arrival may mean my death (why? Was he not a *peaceful* resident of Zeitoun?)k but I would rather die than to see Zeitoun in ruins, and I know that the moment is not at hand yet to show opposition (consequently the idea of resistance existed in some minds, and its outbreak was only a matter of opportunity). . .

“This force was not opposed. The Pacha demanded the surrender of the 25 highwaymen. They were all arrested and handed over to the Turkish governor. This seemingly satisfied the Pacha’s most extreme demands. Yet, he was not content, and he issued a proclamation requesting the surrender of all fire arms, and others (how strange!).

“There were in all about 200 Martini rifles among the 8,000 inhabitants of Zeitoun, 150 of which were confiscated by the Turkish officers (as a matter of fact, there were 3 or 4 times more, and the question rises to the lips: how is that the population had such arms?).

“Then, about the end of February (1915), several hot-headed individuals assembled one night and conceived the plan of attacking the governmental palace. (Had they thought otherwise, they would no doubt have approved it?).

“Then about 25 young men who had been brutally ill-treated by Turkish officers took to the mountains. *They attacked and killed nine mounted constables on the road to Marache.* All the Zeitoun population inveighed against this deed. But a night attack against Zeitoun was carried out by this band, and failed. . .

“Gradually, 5,000 soldiers were collected round the city. . .

“the Armenians agreed unanimously to the Government’s proposal (that it be informed of the band’s hiding place) and stated the insurgents were in the monastery.

“The next day, 25/27th April, the monastery was attacked. . . The fight lasted until the evening. But during the night, *the insurgents effected a sortie, killing an officer and many men,* making good their escape into the mountains, leaving only a few of their own behind.

“*The Turks lost between 2 and 300 men. . . The Zeitoun inhabitants eagerly desired that the Allies should break through the Strait of Gallipoli. They hoped that the Turks would suffer a crushing defeat, but there was no insurrection* (again, this disclaimer, recurring as a leitmotiv!). the two or three seditious plots that had been hatched miscarried owing to the opposition of sane Armenians. The whole evidence

proves (?) that the destruction of the Zeitoun population was deliberately (?) planned by Turks and Germans.”

To sum up: *Many* Armenian had fled to the mountain in order to avoid military service; a band of twenty-five attacks Moslem recruits and robs them; the question is discussed whether a party of 5 to 600 armed Armenians should or not oppose Haidar Pacha’s entrance in the city; several “hot heads” plan to attack the Palace; another band, only 25, takes to the mountain, killing none mounted constables on the way; it fails in a night attack on the city, but seeks refuge in a monastery and kills 2 to 300 of the soldiers sent to dislodge them; the inhabitants have in their possession 200 Martini rifles of which 150 are given up; the whole population wishes that the Turks should suffer a crushing defeat at Gallipoli.

All this is explicitly admitted by the Rev. Andreassian who nevertheless concludes that there was no insurrection.

No doubt, it was not a general outbreak as at Van, because circumstances were not so favorable, but there is no question about the fact itself.

There were attacks committed by the bands spoken of by Andreassian, and the latter were much more numerous than he admits (for instance, the party that sought refuge in the monastery mustered at least 200 men, and the very fact that it inflicted a loss of 300 men to the regular troops who besieged it, in the course of a few hours, conclusively proves that it consisted of a great number than admitted by the Reverend); the arms concealed in the city were in any case numerous enough and of sufficient quality to equip the men whom it was suggested should resist the 600 well armed and instructed soldiers of Haidar Pacha; the revolutionary spirit was undoubtedly rampant, awaiting only an opportunity to break out; the former deeds of the *peaceful* population of Zeitoun, who has already taken part in 51 insurrections¹; its sympathies for the cause of the Entente against which Turkey was at war, and the possibility of a landing in the neighboring region of Zeitoun; all this was more than enough to justify the transfer of the local population. It should also be observed that this measure was ordered by the military commander of the zone, pursuant to his discretionary powers held by all officers in his position with regards to the civilian population, and not by the Porte, whose general deportation order was issued only after the Van rebellion.

Admitting that the soldiers were brutal towards the inhabitants during the search for arms, and that they assaulted women, as stated by Andreassian, yet it should not be forgotten that there was deliberate concealment of arms, considering that only 150 of the 200 Martinis were given up (the figure of 200 had been stated by the population itself), and that the troops had serious cause to be suspicious towards people who had killed twenty of their comrades a few days before; further, there is always more or less brutality in war operations. It could not be reasonably expected, under the circumstances, that the Turkish troops should conduct themselves better than the European and American detachments sent against the Chinese Boxers. . .

Document No. 121 merely states that on June 14th, the Christian inhabitants of Zeitoun had all been removed.

¹ See the book already mentioned by Minas Tcherza: *Zeitoun*.

This much regarding the report on the deportation measure and the attitude of Armenians in Van and Zeitoun.

With respect to the Ottoman Government's statement that the fall of Van was followed by the massacre of a part of the Moslem population, a portion of Miss Knapp's letter, in which she states "that there was only one place (the American mission's premises) where the captives could be in security", confirms it *a priori*, as well as the outrages that had been committed previously in about twenty villages. As a matter of fact, after the departure of the American mission, upon the entrance of Russians in the city, Armenians and their allies set out to perform the dastardly work. Positive proof of this can be found in the evidence given by many Moslems.¹ and in the relation of those events made by an American missionary and published in the "Christian World", November, 1915.

Thus, the *Editor*, Mr. Toynbee, is proven to have set aside, in a deliberate manner, the most elementary principles of justice, because his own witnesses, had they been cross-examined by the defense, as they should have been, would have shown that the "direct lies" he attributes to the Ottoman Government were absolutely based on facts.

Let us now take up the second point of the Ottoman Government's declaration on the matter of deportation, in which it asserts that there existed throughout the Empire an Armenian conspiracy tending to cause a general insurrection at the moment its military forces would be engaged on the frontier, and to deliver the country over to the enemy.

We cannot allege that the documents contained in the Bryce collection mention any direct evidence on this point; in this respect, discretion had the better over verbosity.

We could not expect, of course, that in each Armenian statement against the Ottoman Government, there should be found proof of the baselessness of their own case. There is evidently a limit to compliance. Yet, is it necessary for Armenians to admit in as many words that they had organized a general insurrection? Facts exist that are more eloquent than their silence: in 1877, already, they presented to the Russian commander-in-chief who had entered one of the suburbs of Constantinople, a memorial demanding the independence of the Empire provinces inhabited by Armenians, or, in the alternative, the establishment of Russian control over those regions. Since the, according to their own statements, their condition in the Empire has grown worse. Consequently, should there be no positive proofs that their efforts were constantly directed against Ottoman rule, there are formidable presumptions that they would avail themselves of the present war to realize their national aspirations by a general rising, tending to give the country over to the Entente; considering further that the latter had proclaimed that one of the objects for which it had drawn the sword was to liberate the Armenian people. As a matter of fact, however, we have shown them hereabove working unrelentingly towards this object for the past ten years, using means of extreme violence, absolutely unconcerned with the consequences of their attitude. If the intended insurrection did not break out, as the Government expected, when the Allies effected a landing in Cilicia, a

¹ See annexes Nos. 6, 7, 9, and 18, series II. There are hundreds of documents to this effect, but we have selected only a few bearing on the Van massacres, owing to space limitations.

circumstance of which the *Editor*, Mr. Toynbee, makes a strong point, or during their operations in the Dardanelles, the thing itself little matters. It is enough that it should have occurred in Eastern Anatolia, where its general and combined character was proven by simultaneous Armenian risings in more than twenty different places.

The fact that they imported war material is proven by the correspondence exchanged between the committees and their foreign branches, a few documents thereon being annexed to the present work.¹ It may please the Editor, Mr. Toynbee, to say that “there were not enough arms in their possession to go round the comparatively small number of men who had escaped mobilization” and that “the bomb stories are still more extravagant”; but that is not proof, it is mere argument. Mobilization precisely constituted one of the circumstances which enabled them to possess so many arms; after having joined the colors, Armenians lost no time in deserting with the Mauser rifles that had been given them. When the Editor says: “the accusation of spying may be controlled, because the eyewitness of those hangings (a Cilician resident a neutral nationality and in good position) states emphatically that only one Armenian had been in communication with the Allies’ men-of-war”, he implies that all foreign residents knew about Armenian actions, and that the absence of any assertion on their part in this respect would tend to disprove the allegations of Ottoman authorities. If he were to follow Mr. Toynbee in this manner of reasoning, we might go very far; it is useless to consider such argument seriously; in fact, it is too silly for words.

Regarding the third point of the Government’s declaration on the deportation measure, to the effect that many Armenians had enlisted as volunteers in the Russian army, we think it advisable to go at length into the matter.

The Editor, Mr. Toynbee, believes he gives the lie to the Ottoman Government when he says: “It is significant to observe that the Turkish complaints are directed against Russian Armenians in the Russian service. There are no allusions to treason or default on the part of Ottoman Armenians incorporated in the Ottoman army, many of whom illegally(?)¹, and no insinuation that their conduct had not been just as satisfactory in 1914 as it was in 1912.” – Mr. Toynbee is evidently playing the fool. How could the Ottoman Government abstain from direct and specific allusions to the Ottoman Armenians who had enlisted in the Russian armies to the number of tens of thousands? As a matter of fact, it referred to this matter more than twenty times. We will not give a whole list of those traitors to the Ottoman cause; it would not mean anything for the reader hereof. There were of course few noted Armenians who passed over to the enemy side, because they were to remain in the country to direct to direct local operations. But some are known to have done so, for instance Suren and Pasdermadjian.

But let us argue the matter. Could it be reasonably expected that Armenians would not enlist in Russian armies? They were hostile to the State, they had committed all kinds of other crimes against it, political and felonious; this has been proven. It was quite natural and almost inevitable that enlistment

¹ See annexes 9, 10, 11, 12, series I.

¹ Among many of the inaccuracies contained in the historical survey written by Mr. Toynbee, one of the most prejudiced is that in which it is alleged that the population of Zeitoun enjoyed a Charter granting them the privilege of bearing arms, and exempting them from military service. The Zeitoun Charter was abolished in 1895.

under foreign colors should be part of their program, as the latter included armed rebellion, murder, etc. what sudden pang of conscience or fear would have held them back? The Russian territory bordered on the provinces they inhabited, which fact gave them facilities. Document No. 17 in the Bryce collection provides indirect evidence on this matter, whilst incidentally setting forth the more than tolerant and conciliating attitude of the Government. Here is what is said therein, the witness being an Armenian, Mr. Rushdooni:

“The Government treated the Armenians of Van most generously, exempting Gregorian and Protestant teachers of 25 years old and allowing them to continue their classes, provided they registered at the Government palace to be called upon, in case of need, as militia-men to protect the city. . .

“During the first two weeks this impartial treatment (it was more than condescending) on behalf of the Turkish Government filled Armenians with joy and confidence, and Armenian soldiers who had deserted (therefore, some *had* deserted) returned and gave themselves up. . .

“And it seems that, on its side, the Government used all possible means towards and understanding with Armenians. It published a special proclamation exempting all non-Moslems of more than 25 years of age, from military duty, on payment of a special tax. . .

“Even when it was still neutral, the Government took the German side, whereas Armenians – *unfortunately* – sympathized with the Allies. But even then, no special act of injustice had been committed. The Government showed a great deal of kindness towards Armenians, apparently at least, and the governor Tahsin Bey (the predecessor of Djevdet Bey) entertained such close relations with the Dachnakist party that it was thought he was their special friend. Beyond this, it was decided that two Members of Parliament who represented Van, Mrs. Vahan Papazian and Vremian, should remain in order to maintain good relations between the population and the authorities (consequently, the population was not favorably inclined).

“After the Turks joined in the war, the situation underwent a great change. The Government seemed to distrust the Armenians who had done their duty towards it as far as they possibly could (no doubt, in deserting)?

“Nevertheless, a great coolness sprung up between elements and became most apparent when it was discovered *that Armenians had sent volunteers to Russian troops and that their own detachments had occupied Bayazid.* . .

“The most unfortunate thing of all was the fact that governmental circles spoke only of Armenian volunteers.

“This was the reason why Tahsin Bey asked the Dachnakist leaders to come and see him and informed them that the Armenians had started a movement of voluntary enlistment, which might be a serious matter for them; and in a special letter, he suggested that they should write to the Dachnakist leaders in Bayazid requesting them to stop this movement. . . (Could there be a better proof that noted Armenians were among those who had capture this city?)

“Thereafter, owing to Turkish successes and to the enlistment of volunteers, the attitude of the Turkish Government and population changed a great deal. . .”

Now, may we ask Mr. Toynbee whether he thinks that Mr. Rushdooni would not have specified that *Ottoman* Armenians were *not* implicated in this movement, if such had been the case? Would he have dealt at such length with the discontent of the Van authorities which was due to Armenians enlistment in the Russian army, with the warnings addressed to their leaders, with the change that occurred in the attitude of the authorities, if such had *not* been the case? And would the Dachnakist leaders not have answered to Tahsin Bey that the matter was not of his concern? Why, any fool could have done so in such circumstances, if the case had been as stated by Mr. Toynbee.

Yet, for the foregoing argumentation may not be sufficient to convince the latter. Let us therefore bring forth the big guns we have in reserve. Our witness is Armenian, and a noted personality, Mr. G. Kh. Chalkussian, vice-president of the Armenian pan-Russian Congress held in St. Petersburg on the 24th May, 1916. Here are the munitions he places at our disposal.

In a speech he delivered on this occasion, he spoke as follows: “Reports on the national misfortune will be read during the next three days. A terrible calamity has struck us, *owing, firstly to our sympathies for the Entente, and secondly, to the direct participation of the Armenian people in the present war.* The French have picturesquely and amicably called us “their little allies.” It may be that we have rendered little services to the worldwide cause, but we have paid for them a price worthy of “big allies.” The war has implicated *the whole Armenian people*, but there was no hope for us from the beginning(?). The Russian Government would not have any complication and endeavored by all means to prevent the war(?). This point of view coincided with our wish, because we feared pogroms (sic) and massacres. But from the beginning, our sympathies were for the Entente, because Russia was at her head(!) and Armenian loyalty towards her has been a feature of history. Take for instance the wars against Persian and *Turks*. Armenians went to meet the Russians all the bells ringing loud, the priests in their sacerdotal dress, and in this war, the Armenian people was entirely on the side of the Russian people. A little before the Turkish War, private conferences were held between Armenian leaders and the Turkish authorities, in which the Turks endeavored to bring Armenians to their side. The latter rejected those proposals with aversion. Then the war broke out, and volunteers began to enlist. Armenians came in crowds from *Armenia* (Eastern Anatolia), from *Egypt* (a portion of the Turkish Empire), from *Roumania*, from *Bulgaria* (both of which were inhabited by Ottoman Armenians and not by Russian Armenians), volunteers who *knew Asia Minor so well* (it was their own country) *that they were able to render great services to the Russian Government.* Then an unparalleled massacre began, leaving us the only alternative, as the Spaniards say, of crying from the gaps of our wounds.¹ (Chronologically, therefore, the massacre began after Armenians had passed over to the Russian side).

The second general question we have to deal with regarding the Lord Bryce collection of documents is to determine whether the Ottoman Government used unnecessary or excessive rigor in

¹ See the “Times”, 29th July, 1916, Russian section.

carrying out the deportation measure, and if it is responsible for the great loss of life and the excesses which accompanied it.

Undoubtedly, the *whole* Armenian population was transferred, including women and children. But that was because the *whole* Armenian population, without exception, women and children, were poisoned with the revolutionary virus and had waged war in some way or the other against the Turkish Government and the Moslem population. Mr. Chalkussian does not mince words about the matter (see further, document No. 17, page 64, in the Bryce report). It was impossible to make any distinction between guilty and innocent parties.

On the other hand, it is true that in most cases, the delay allowed for Armenians to prepare for their removal was short. But danger was near. The Government had no time to lose, as the Russians were advancing everyday in to the interior of the country.

We have already admitted and deplored the great loss of Armenian lives and the excesses committed. But we have explained at the same time that the former were mostly due to accidental causes, against which the authorities were powerless. More than one document in the Bryce report bears witness that the loss of life was due to lack of transport, hunger and disease. This is what document No. 121 says, for instance: "Another factor added to the horror of the situation was that most of the horses, asses and mules had been requisitioned, so that the population had few animals available for transport, and the Government could not provide many". . . Further on: "Another factor added to the horror is this: the Government cannot even feed its soldiers; how could it, therefore, provide for its instructions on paper to be carried out so that the civilian population should be well fed and lack nothing."

If a certain proportion of deported Armenians perished on the way owing to the brutality of soldiers and constables, this conduct has been excused to a certain extent by the resentment caused among Turks by the numberless assaults committed by Armenians themselves and their actively hostile attitude towards the State. Furthermore, passion generally breaks out in a most brutal manner among individuals belonging to the lowest classes of society. . . Considering that American soldiers, by way of amusement, have been known to toss enemy children on the points of their bayonets, in the course of a victorious campaign which involved but minor State interests, could it be expected that Turkish soldiers would not commit cruel deeds by way of reprisals, in a natural outburst of passion, during a way in which the very existence of Turkey was at stake?

The higher authorities could not do more than they did. They had enjoined subordinate officials and officers commissioned to carry out the deportation measure, to see that Armenians should be "well fed and lacked nothing", as stated in document No. 121; they had at the same time endeavored to prevent excesses by giving precise orders in this respect, as stated in document No. 120, which mentions: "The orders issued by commanders were reasonably human, but in most cases their execution was severe beyond all necessity and accompanied, in many instances, with horrible brutality towards women and children, sick and old". . .

Lastly, we will repeat here what we have already said: at the beginning of the war, the Government had frankly and distinctly warned Armenians to abstain from any rebellion or assault, otherwise they would have to suffer cruelly through the vengeance of the Moslem population, who would use with terrible effect its numerical superiority and its position of dominating element, without the authorities being able to interfere in an effective manner.

Notwithstanding, as Mr. Chalkussian declares with conceit and satisfaction, the *whole* Armenian population sided with Russia in the war, took an active part therein, sent her masses of volunteers *who knew Asia Minor so well* that they could render her great services. And, although Mr. Chalkussian abstained from saying so, this time, they could not help communicating numberless atrocities on their Moslem countrymen.

We appeal to the world at large to say who is to blame in all this!

The Bryce collection contains a document concerning the attitude of Turkish authorities which needs special treatment. It has no number, and is inserted in the foreword (page XXXIII) no doubt with a view to call the reader's most particular attention thereon, and with a purpose. It is a letter written by four German missionaries, two of which have appended their signature, in which the authorities at Halep are accused of carelessness and tacit approbation regarding the sufferings caused by hunger and thirst(!) to a group of Armenians transferred to that city.

Let us take the bull by the horns and reproduce the essential parts of this document: "How could we possibly teach our disciple¹ when in the enclosure next to our school death was carrying away their starving countrymen, and young girls and women were laying between dead bodies and *the coffins prepared for them beforehand*, in the last throes of agony.

"Of the 2 to 3000 Armenians who reached this place in *good health*, there remains but 40 to 50 skeletons. The prettiest (of those skeletons?) have fallen victims to the lust of their jailers; the ugliest are dying of ill-treatment, hunger and thirst; they lay by the side of the water but are not allowed to drink. Europeans are to permitted to distribute bread to the hungry. . .

"All this goes on under the eyes of Turkish authorities."

Let us analyze this document, in which words have been underlined or bracketed by us.

We observe that a group of more than 3000 Armenian peasant women have been transferred from the Armenian highlands to Halep, which they have reached in *good health*. Considering the natural difficulties of travel in this mountainous region, which were considerably increased by the state of war; and considering further the difficulties encountered by the Government in feeding and equipping its own soldiers, this would mean that far from having suffered privations and ill-treatment on the way, those deported women had been the object of special care, no doubt owing to exceptionally favorable circumstances. It is only after their arrival in a city of more than 200,000 inhabitants, many of which are foreigners, that they were deliberately starved to death, if you please, pursuant to the famous extermination plan; and this, under the indignant eyes of German missionaries who were almost sought out as witnesses,

¹ This phrase is a free translation of that inserted in the text, and which would not be otherwise understood.

those unfortunate people having been lodged in close proximity to their premises? Is that not absurd? Setting aside the statements and insinuations of the four German missionaries, as due to prejudice or to a derangement in their judgment or their observation faculties (Germans have not always been friendly to Turks), would it not be more natural to seek an explanation of the Halep tragedy in the scarcity of foodstuffs, a dearth that occurs now and again in acute form in certain localities, to such an extent that soldiers die of hunger, although particularly cared for.

Regarding the paragraph of the letter stating that foreigners were to be allowed to give bread to the said Armenians, it is purely and simply contradicted by document No. 4 of the Bryce report, in which we read: "At any rate, at Halep, the authorities permitted the distribution of assistance to those unfortunate people (the Armenians)."

On the other hand, what could be said of the gruesome detail dealing with the coffins prepared beforehand for the unfortunate victims? Could any idea of giving the latter a decent burial remain in the minds of those who were so callous as to let 2000 human beings die of thirst and hunger, and so unconcerned of public opinion as to proceed openly with this torture under the eyes of foreign witnesses? Does not the human respect that is prevalent in this action exclude the accusation of premeditation on the part of local authorities with regards to the death of the said group of Armenians? No, all that is not worth discussing.

So much for the main document in the Bryce collection.

If the same care is brought to bear in studying the other documents composing the latter, it will be seen that they are all tainted with unreality, inaccuracy and exaggeration, and that in most cases, they do not constitute hostile evidence against the Ottoman Government, but on the contrary, they are mostly in its favor.

If to this we add the observation that most of those documents are anonymous, even when attributed to foreigners, the latter concealing their names for no apparent cause; and that most of them have reached Lord Bryce by indirect means about which little is said; it will be gathered that the noble Lord's report, considerable as a formidable case against the Ottoman Government, has very little value in fact.

Take for instance document No. 62, which is a letter from two sisters of the *Danish* Red Cross, who were *formerly* attached to the German military mission at Erzeroum, a letter communicated by "a gentleman from Geneva." What reason is there for the said sisters not to mention their names? And what can the "gentleman from Geneva" be afraid of?

What seems to have caused foreign witnesses to accuse the Government of having ordered the extermination of the Armenian race, is the attitude of the troops and local authorities in certain cases. In this, however, there is only a mere presumption, which cannot hold in front of the explanations given above of their attitude. There are no positive proofs. Document No. 13, purported to be a letter from "a foreigner residing in Constantinople" to a "Swiss gentleman in Geneva", cannot be considered as proof although claiming that: "The Minister of the Interior (Tallat Pacha) states that 800,000 Armenians were deported and that about 300,000 of them have been killed or have perished through other causes." To

whom, when and where did Talaat Pacha make this statement? No proof either can be found in document No. 23, another anonymous declaration, according to which “the Mutessarif of Mouche, *who is a very great friend of Enver Pacha*, has openly stated that they (who, Enver Pacha and himself?) would slaughter Armenians at the first opportunity, and exterminate the whole race.”

But enough of these absurdities.¹

The above ends our statement of the Ottoman Government’s case, in answer to the accusations launched against it concerning the last phase of the Turco-Armenian question.

In summing up the case for the Armenians, Mr. Toynbee says: “Thus, the various Turkish contentions fail, from first to last, to meet the point their object. They all attempt to trace the atrocities of 1915 back to events arising from the war, but they not only cannot justify them on this ground nor even suggest an adequate motive for their perpetration. It was obvious that the war was merely an opportunity and not a cause; in fact the deportation plan and all it involved inevitably proceeded from the policy followed by the Young Turks Government. This inference will be confirmed by an analysis of the political tenets to which the Young Turks were committed.”

We take the liberty of stating in this respect, and we believe we shall be excused in doing so in forcible language, that Mr. Toynbee’s conclusions are either the outcome of some derangement in his judgment or the result of a deliberate intention on his part, arising out of sheer prejudice, to blacken the Turkish people. He may be a historian of high academic distinction, but he still needs the main qualities necessary in that vocation, for instance those of Gibbon and Carlyle: dispassionate and scientific impartiality, and a close and comprehensive survey of facts. His prejudice against Turkey, his prepossession in favor of Armenians are obvious. His inaccuracies in essentials and in matters of detail, his ignorance of the true relationship between the Sublime Porte and her Armenian subjects – unless it be a case of *suppressio veri* closely akin to *perversio ver* – are most striking. His historical survey is a speech by counsel and not a contribution to historic truth. He may perhaps have earned the gratitude of Armenians when he wrote it, but his work will certainly not lead him onto the path of historical fame. His parting shot is directed against the Union and Progress party, which it is apparently the duty of every good Englishman to hate no doubt because it obtained the assistance of Germany as the only alternative to England’s disdainful rejection of its advances. This party may have made mistakes; they could hardly be avoided coming from a group of young and inexperienced men who had assumed power in a time of great stress. But to overlook their patriotism, their sincerity and spirit of sacrifice, their success in the domain of national regeneration, and to pass a sweeping condemnation on them, like England has done, merely means the acme of spitefulness. Mr. Toynbee alleges against them their chauvinism, because, thanks to the war, they attempt to and succeeded in

¹ In the Vilayet of Smyrna, where the Armenians abstained from giving the slightest provocation, thereby persisting in the correct attitude they had observed before the war, the deportation measure was not applied. And the Moslem population did not commit any outrage against them.

It should be added that numerous villages were founded in Syria, then placed under the authority of Djemal Pacha, Commander of the 4th army corps, where deported Armenians were comfortably settled as and when they arrived from Eastern Anatolia and Cilicia. These facts constitute further contradictions to the libelous legend of the extermination plan.

Ottomanizing the State and suppressed the Capitulations with a stroke of the pen, those Capitulations which were a monument of absurdity on the part of Turkey, and of ferocious selfishness on that of Europe. Let Mr. Toynbee study the true character of those immoral institutions in Mr. Brown's book! Turkish jingoism? Think of it! The reaction of a nation against the tyranny of Europe and the dissolution forces at work in its midst! To discredit the efforts of a people striving to defend its independence against enemies at home and foreign foes, is on the same level as the dishonest conspiracy organized against Turkey, and tending to attribute to every political and national reaction of the Sublime Porte a character of religious fanaticism. And even if there was some jingoism in that policy, would it be at all strange and censurable in a nation for centuries under foreign oppression? And even if there has been some fanaticism in its attitude towards its Christian subjects, and Western countries in general, whose religious spirit may be defined in the well known words of Gladstone: "So long as there will be believers in this damned book (the Coran), Europe will never be at peace"; would it not mean paying them both back in their own coin?

Conclusion.

A terrible tragedy has occurred in Turkey, during the present war, upon which the curtain has not yet fallen.¹ The Armenian people has cruelly suffered, but not more than the Turk.

In her soul and conscience, Turkey can honestly assert that her responsibility for this tragedy rests with the Committees and the Entente countries: Russia, England and France, which, for sordid purposes of political gain, have encouraged them in an enterprise as criminal as it was visionary, and by means of methods borrowed from the worst ages of humanity.

To pretend, as the Committees have not hesitated to do, that the Armenian people's fate was the outcome of a plot hatched by the Turkish Government against an obnoxious race, is a most emphatic and damnable lie. And to believe in such a version is going to limit in gullibility and blindness.

If the Committees, and the Entente of the early days, that is to say the Anglo-Russian and French combination, have not the courage to won up and admit that injury they have done to the Armenian people, they should have at least the decency to keep silence. It behooves them to throw a veil over their wicked work kneaded in mud and blood, and if they are Christians, as they claim to be, to cry in the stillness of their conscience, beating their breasts like great sinners: *Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!*

We do not wish to close this statement of the Turco-Armenian question, without expressing our deepest regret that the two races who have lived for centuries on terms of friendship and goodwill as subjects of the same Empire, and whose qualities, blending into one and other, formed the basis of an understanding which would have gradually born rich fruit, should have become enemies.

It should be to those who have been guilty of this crime against history of which, by their sacrilegious hands, they have attempted to alter the course, that Armenian should cast their curses. It should be recalled that one of them, Armene Aktoni, a committee leader, after waiting vainly for the promised arrival of the British fleet, for which he was watching in the Soulou monastery at Psamatia, whilst his brothers were attacking the Ottoman Bank, committed suicide in despair, and in his dying gasp cursed the "protectors" of his race. In this pathetic immolation, and the cry of revolt with which it ended, there was a deep lesson and a great advice given to his brethren, which was unfortunately not listened to.

Constantinople, 30th March, 1916.

¹ After the evacuation of Eastern Anatolia by the Russians, pursuant to the peace treaty concluded with the Bolchwiki Government, Armenian partisans, *commanded by French and British officers*, have again committed dastardly outrages on Moslems.

**DOCUMENTS
RELATING TO
THE TURCO-ARMENIAN QUESTION**

FIRST SERIES.

DOCUMENTS

**Concerning the organization of Armenian committees,
Their objects and methods prior to and after the present war.**

SECOND SERIES.

DOCUMENTS

**Concerning atrocities committed by Armenians, and their acts of open
Hostility against the Ottoman Government during the present war:
Atrocities and hostile actions which date back to the outbreak of the
European conflict, and which justified the measures adopted by the
Sublime Porte regarding the Armenian population inhabiting Eastern Anatolia.**

**(These two series of documents are only a small portion of the mass of evidence mentioning
felonious outrages committed by Armenians. Limitation of space alone commanded their omission).**

**FIRST SERIES.
DOCUMENTS**

**Concerning the organization of Armenian Committees,
Their objects and methods, prior to and after the present war.**

No. 1.

**EXTRACT FROM THE INSTRUCTIONS
Issued by the Committees in 1910, and circulated broadcast
Among Armenians in tens of thousands of copies.**

Those instructions were issued under the heading of "Instructions for personal defense".

These words, "Personal defense"¹, became almost a password.

THE CHOICE OF ARMS.

Those who need weapons should first of all ask some trustworthy person for advice. Naturally, those manufactured in Europe are the best, but the Armenians cannot procure them because we cannot go to Europe, and European arms cannot reach Armenia.⁽¹⁾ Even if some could be obtained, it would not be possible to manufacture bullets. Therefore, we must look for weapons around us. We border on three countries, where there are at present two sort of arms. In Russia, there is nowadays the "Moussine"; formerly, there was the "Berdan". "Martinis" were formally used in Turkey; nowadays, they have the "Mauser". The best of these, the new ones, are in the hands of the Governments. It would be easy to procure at a good price the cartridges for those arms, but no Governments allow them to be used by the population, and to buy or sell them would be compromising. We must, therefore, prefer the older weapons that are easier to procure.

A question may arise in this case, as follows: how can one, armed with an old pattern rifle, resist one possessing a new and good weapon? This observation is out of place 1) because it is impossible that our enemies use their weapons as well as we can our own, and 2) because everybody knows that a good quality weapon is not always of great use in the hands of the commonest people.

THE VILLAGES.

We have three kinds of villages:

- 1) Those situated between other Armenian villages and exclusively inhabited by Armenians;
- 2) Those situated in non-Armenian zones, but nevertheless exclusively inhabited by Armenians;

¹ By using this denomination, the Committees played a comedy before their own countrymen. It will be gathered, from the said instructions, that the object of personal defense was to attack Moslem villages. (Note by the author).

(1) This was accurate only with regards to war materials. Hundreds of thousands of magazine pistols have been imported by the Committees.

- 3) Those inhabited at the same time by Armenians and non-Armenians.

From the organization point of view, there is no difference between these three kinds of villages. Each of them will organize a special detachment, and all existing forces will join it with their weapons. Each detachment will be divided into two sections: “the stationary force”, and the “active force”. Each section shall have a chief and an assistant chief. In each village, the stationary force and the active force⁽¹⁾ will jointly select their leader among the most experienced. This leader shall hold the highest authority in the village and all the forces in the place will be under his orders. He will be at the same time the representative of the zone command and of the general staff.

The chiefs of villages situated in the same zone shall assemble and elect among them a provisional staff composed of three members. On days of battle, the staff, or the commander of the zone, may, under their own responsibility, take their weapons from those who would not be able to use them and give them to more experienced men. Villages attacked by surprise shall immediately send messengers to neighboring localities asking for assistance. Armenians inhabiting mixed villages and who, being a minority, cannot expect assistance from neighboring villages, must at once join the Armenian zones, taking with them their lightest chattels.

In mixed villages, where the enemies would be in minority in relation to Armenians, the enemies must be kept as hostages if they have previously fled, or requested to leave the village, according to the attitude adopted by them or by their Government.

During battle, the doors of houses must be left open to assist combatants fleeing before regular troops or policemen. In those circumstances, unarmed people must absolutely remain indoors. All the village must pay the price of any weapons that might fall into the hands of the enemy. Arms taken from the enemy belong to those who have captured them.

TO ATTACK VILLAGES.⁽ⁱ⁾

In order to attack villages, it is necessary:

- 1) To know the fortified sections of enemy villages;
- 2) To select beforehand the line of retreat and have it guarded by sentries;
- 3) To ascertain from where the enemy may receive reinforcements and prevent their arrival.
- 4) To attack the village only on three sides, leaving a side free for the besieged to make good their escape. (If the village is attacked on all sides, the enemy may fight with desperation and compromise victory) However, on the side left free, a section of attackers must conceal themselves in order to pursue the enemy and cause him as much damage as possible. Furthermore, the object of leaving a side free is, rather than favor the retreat of the enemy, to break up his force of resistance and thus hasten victory;

⁽¹⁾ The existence of the active force next to the stationary detachment obviously proves that the Committees' plans consisted not only in resistance to repressive operations by imperial troops, but also in attacks on Moslem villages. In fact, the attacks by these active forces caused the punishing expeditions undertaken by State troops, which stationary forces were to repel. (Note by the Author).

⁽ⁱ⁾ We draw notice to this heading. It proves that the Armenians had a regular war plan.

- 5) In order to disturb the enemy, the time of attack should be fixed at the early dawn. If began sooner, it might stop fighting owing to darkness, which would uselessly cause victims;
- 6) In order to provoke a panic in the adversary's camp, fire should be set and kindled in several places at the same time. All that is necessary for this should be provided before beginning the attack;
- 7) If the detachment delivering the attack is not mounted, several horses will have to be held in reserve to transport the dead and wounded to Armenian villages, and thus *prevent their being recognized.*⁽¹⁾

A few days before the attack, several capable and trustworthy men, chosen and appointed by the staff, must be sent to the village without disclosing their identity; each one of them will remain in the assigned zone as long as necessary, and after having completed his investigation, will sent his report upon the basis of which the attack will be prepared.

⁽¹⁾ This precaution is significant. It shows plainly that the offensive was on the Armenian side.

No. 2.

EXTRACT FROM A REPORT

Handed by the Dachnak Committee to the Socialist

Congress in Copenhagen, in 1910.

(As an auxiliary weapon, the Dachnak often used socialism, posing as a partisan of this system; it could thereby more easily attract the sympathies of the Armenian mass as well as those of the European proletariats).

“ . . . Our organization is the same in Turkish Armenia. At Van and Bitlis, in both those large Armenian provinces, we had, until 1908, enlisted under the banner of our Committee, the village folk and the sane and sound population to form political bands. The latter still exists, but their number is naturally more restricted.

Until 1908, the activity of our Committee in Turkey was clandestine and operated only by night. In the daytime, the members of the Committee were not to be seen abroad: armament, exercises, everything was done at night. Our activity had quite a political and revolutionary character. This same activity continues nowadays in all the centers of the Ottoman Empire, with this difference – that it is now openly displayed in broad daylight. In other parts of Turkey inhabited by Armenians, our Committees have large detachments of well-organized revolutionaries. . . .⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ We have underlined these sentences.

No. 3.

REPORT BY THE RUSSIAN CONSUL IN BITLIS.

Dated 3rd December, 1910.

No. 602

A fact worthy of attention in the vilayet of Bitlis is the activity constantly displayed in the interior of this province by the Armenian revolutionary committee. Tachnaktzoutioun (Dachnak) regarding which I have the honor to send Your Excellency the following information:

The Armenian population, hardworking, although ignorant, had latterly shown open and real antipathy towards this committee, the members of which, *who assumed the title of "saviors of the nation"* had brought down on it for the past few years untold sufferings. In spite of this, the Tachnaktzoutioun still exists in the Bitlis vilayet. *And without renouncing its former aims*, is striving to educate the masses, leaving the matter of arms aside, and quietly waiting events. *By an inscrutable transformation, the former men hunters of the Mouche valley have become teachers in the Armenian schools of the provinces.*⁽¹⁾ *The revolutionary chiefs who had fought in 1909 and 1910 at Sassoun against imperial troops* have assumed in Bitlis the position of judges, and without any authority, have opened negotiations "in the name of the nation", to settle all disputes between Armenians. . . .

The activity of revolutionists has somewhat decreased since the proclamation of the Constitution, and they are now very quiet. But it would be difficult to say how long will this change last, and to what extent it will be necessary. *The Armenian committees have up to the present very cleverly availed themselves of the nation's ignorance. Nowadays, the membership of the Tachnaktzoutioun in Sassoun, in the Sandjak, the Valley of Mouche, the Cazas of Boulanik, Ahlat and Malazguer and in the city of Bitlis, reaches about 100,000.* The principal chief of this organization in the interior of the vilayet is Carmen, otherwise called Karnik.

The central seat of this committee with 100,000 members is at Mouche. This organization is divided into 20 committees, 100 subcommittees and 8,000 groups. Consequently, each group numbers about 10 to 12 members. One hundred to a thousand Armenians form a subcommittee, and from 1 to 5,000 form a committee. The central seat is at Mouche, and the Tachnaktzoutioun section in the city and the valley of Mouche, Boulanik and Malazguer, and the city and neighborhood of Bitlis are attached to this center. All the members of the Tachnaktzoutioun have to pay a monthly subscription ranging between 10 paras and one piastre. It is believed that, in this respect, merely in the vilayet of Bitlis, this organization has an annual income of 1 to 1,500 pounds Turkish.⁽¹⁾

The money thus collected by each group or committee is sent to *Western Office of the Tachnaktzoutioun*, in Geneva, the latter spending it according to the directions issued by the *High Tachnakist Committee of Switzerland*.

⁽¹⁾ The Italics are our own.

⁽¹⁾ This would mean at one piastre per head, a membership of 150,000 in one province only of the Empire. (Author's note)

Armenian revolutionists – that is to say the members of the Tachnaktzoutioun – in the vilayet of Bitlis do not receive any official pay or remuneration from the Committees or the Office. Of course, those people can compel the population to pay more money than is needed and keep the surplus. The maintenance of revolutionists who are not natives of Bitlis, such as Karnik, is at the charge of the committees.

The chiefs of committees and subcommittees, and former revolutionists who have fought against Ottoman troops, possess revolvers, Moussine or Berdan rifles, and a sufficient number of cartridges. The other members of the Tachnaktzoutioun possess about 7 to 800 rifles of different types (Gras, Berdan, Martini, Kramnowka, etc.) Under the former reign, those weapons were hidden underground in the villages. Nowadays they are openly carried.

Since the proclamation of the Constitution and especially this year (1910), the Tachnakists appear to have renounced armed activity in the interior of the vilayet. They *apparently* are merely concerned with national affairs, endeavoring, according to what I have heard, to apply the decentralization system in the provinces and to develop public instruction among Armenians. . . .

The Tachnaktzoutioun's power is felt in all Armenian communal affairs in localities where, as at Mouche, the Tachnakists have succeeded in monopolizing the spiritual administration. The Armenian Member of the Ottoman Parliament for Mouche obeys the order of the Tachnakists. In the Mouche law courts, Armenian judges carry out the advice given by the Tachnaktzoutioun; finally, in the valley of Mouche, the teachers and Elder councils execute *voleus noleus*, the orders of the Mouche committee.

With regards to Armenian village folk, although they complain now and again to the Ottoman authorities of the Vilayet, they cannot get rid of the Tachnakists, and all the others, with more or less hesitation, enlist in the Tachnakzoutioun's membership; *and under the influence of blows and threats give a part of their earnings for objects which they are not even able to understand*. Admitting that the village folk were formerly partial towards the Committee, they are far from being that at present.

Regarding the relations between Tachnakists and foreign countries, they have considerably developed after the proclamation of the Constitution, owing to the abolition of former police prescriptions and to an entire freedom to travel.

No. 4

FURTHER REPORT FROM THE RUSSIAN CONSUL IN BITLIS.

Dated 19th November, 1912.

No. 630.

The Tachnakist Committee has just decided to act against the Ottoman Government, although it has concluded an agreement with the Union and Progress party in view of concerted action, undertaking to mutually assist each other in Persia and Caucasus. This decision is no doubt due to the fall of the latter party, and the conviction arising there from that no result would accrue from supporting Turkish interests. The Tachnakist Committee has 38 members in Bitlis, 190 in Mouche, 5 in Guendj and 2 in Saard.

The committee's decision was also dictated by the numerous crimes and robberies that constantly are occurring throughout the vilayet, and more recently, by the murder of an Armenian priest and the school inspector, Raphail, both killed at "Karkar", on the limit of the Van and Bitlis provinces.⁽¹⁾

The news having reached here of the demonstration organized in this respect by the Tachnaktzoutioun Committees against the Van authorities, the Bitlis Tachnakists decided also to show themselves and availed themselves for this purpose of a most favorable opportunity: the Ottoman defeats in the Balkan war. Those defeats, the animosity of the Moslem population towards the Christians, the general situation of Armenians who imagined that in such circumstances Turkey could not live without massacres, were as many provocations for the Tachnakists, who therefore began to agitate, but without success. On Friday, 9th October, several Armenian shoemakers closed their shops, circulating the news Moslems would massacre the Armenians. However, nobody initiated them, and thanks to the measures taken by the police, nothing serious happened. The ringleaders were arrested.

Although this movement fostered by the Tachnaktzoutioun led to nothing, it deserves the attention of the local authorities as being the prelude of the committee's activity, the latter awaiting an opportunity to avenge on Turks the murder of two Armenians in Karkar, and bring about the disorders in the country.

The murder of those Armenians⁽¹⁾ has caused the appearance in Karkar and Hizan of two armed bands, each twenty men strong. The latter have concealed themselves after killing a Kurd in order to enrage the Moslems, and are roving about the mountains. It is believed that a part of those bands has passed into the Van vilayet, and that another is hiding in the Armenian villages of the Mouche valley. Last autumn, many arms were transported to the latter valley.

⁽¹⁾ We have already referred to General Maiewski's report in which it is stated that the Committees did all they could to induce the Kurds to commit assaults against Armenians, which they used as a grievance against the authorities and the Moslem population.

⁽¹⁾ One of those Armenians was a teacher by the name of Raphail, a member of the Dachnak; but he having opposed the latter, he was murdered in retaliation. Of course, the Dachnak endeavored to accuse the Kurds of this outrage, which had been committed by their orders. (Note of the author)

No. 5

**REPORT FROM THE RUSSIAN CONSUL IN BITLIS TO THE
RUSSIAN EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE**

Dated 24th December, 1912

No. 63

Having reported the effects of the Balkan War on Turco-Armenian relations in Eastern Anatolia, the consul states what follows:

“I have seen and heard myself Armenians and their religious chiefs complain to the Vali that they could not live any longer with the Turks and the latter stating they could not bear Armenians furthermore. There is therefore at present, in the provinces of Bitlis, a violent animosity which increases or decreases according to developments in the Balkan War and its expected consequences. Should this state of things continue, as I have already stated, it is to be expected that the slightest pretext will cause an outburst of Moslem fanaticism.⁽¹⁾”

“The activity of the Tachnaktzoutioun Committee has a great deal to do with the excitement of Armenian public opinion. This committee is unrelentingly working to bring about collisions between Armenians and Moslems in order to avail itself of the misfortune that may arise therefrom, and cause a Russian intervention, and the occupation of the country by our army.

“The members of this committee have recently met at the monastery of Sourp Cabaret, near Mouche, and after passing a resolution to the effect above mentioned, they have appointed a delegate to the general Congress to be held in Geneva or Constantinople.

“At present, Tachnakists are striving to rehabilitate themselves before peaceful Armenians who had turned away from them, accusing them of having caused this misfortune and misery of the Armenian nation. They act according to their new motto, which in their own terms is “to bring the Russians round here.”

“To this end, Tachnakists resort to different means and try to bring about collisions between Armenians and Moslems, and especially Ottoman troops. For instance, the Tachnakist Committees of Bitlis and Mouche, with a view to spread a panic, have induced the bazar Armenians to close their shops. They have further armed a band of revolutionists which overran, in October and November, the casa of Hizane, and murdered several Kurds in order to avenge the death of Raphail, an inspector of Armenian schools and a member of the Tachnaktzoutioun. Should they reach their purpose, the Moslems would naturally attack Armenian villages, and this would cause an intervention of Russia. Noted Tachnakists of Bitlis state that they would make a great mistake if they did not avail themselves of the present situation to bring the Russians here. . . .

“Armenians, in the cities, as well of those in the countryside, and their religious chiefs, have always shown inclination and affection for Russia, and stated several times that the Turkish

⁽¹⁾ Always this same old story: Moslem fanaticism, regarding acts of defense and reprisals by Turks and Kurds. (Author's note)

Government is incapable of establishing order, law and prosperity. Many Armenians have already promised to give up their churches to Russian soldiers, to be used as orthodox temples.

The present situation in the Balkans, the victory of Slavonic and Greek Governments have excited Armenians to the highest pitch and filled their hearts with the hope and joy of being delivered from the Turks. Armenians are boiling over with the desire of revenge, and consider Turkish defeats as a Godsend, and atonement for the misery and humiliation of their race. Comparison between the cities and provinces of Bitlis, Erzeroum and Van with those of Caucasus; between the condition of population of commerce and means of communication in Caucasus with those of the vilayets inhabited by Armenians, proves to them in eloquent terms that they have no happiness or freedom to expect from Turkish domination⁽¹⁾ All the hopes of the Armenians, and I believe of Christians generally, in Bitlis and the neighborhood are centered in Russia.

The Tachnaktzoutioun Committee, morally discredited in the eyes of the calm and peaceful population, hopes to regain their confidence, and as already stated hereabove, is trying to bring about collisions between Armenians and Kurds, and in general, between Armenians and Moslems in order to cause disturbances and create a pretext for Russian intervention.

⁽¹⁾ Compare this description to that given by General Maiewsky in his report, extracts of which have been inserted herein. Who to believe of the two consuls? Evidently, the one who favors Turkey because the representative of a Power essentially hostile to the latter had no interest in taking her part, whereas there was some advantage in flattering the unfavorable opinions of the Government regarding the Turks. We do not know whether the report of the Russian Consul in Bitlis inserted under No. 3 herein is by the same official as the one who wrote the above. At any rate, it is couched in a different spirit than the former. (Author's note)

No. 6

MANIFESTO ISSUED BY THE DACHNAK, AFTER THE BALKANIC WAR

(Most confidential).

5th March, 1913.

Comrades!

The resumption of the Balkan war has again disturbed the political horizon. Some believe that the Armenian question will therefore enter into a better phase. That is not the case. Several persons, several institutions, and more especially our Committees have taken steps to prepare the ground for discussion towards a favorable settlement of the Armenian question by diplomatic means. From letters that have reached this Office on the subject, we reproduce the following important information:

“Regarding the Armenian problem, we may inform you of three points:

- 1) The Armenian question shall not be included this time in the program of the ambassadors’ Conference;
- 2) France, England and Russia have decided to take up the matter after the conclusion of final peace;
- 3) Those three powers are in agreement on the point of organizing a special administration in Armenian province. In other words, the application of reforms will be assured by those means. Poincare in Paris, Sir Edward Grey in London, Sassonof in Petersburg, and their friends in Constantinople have suggested this idea, advising us to have patience.

The Anglo-Armenian Committee in London, which includes the most influential members of the Balkanic Committee, is displaying great activity. It has sent a report to the sovereigns and the cabinets of those Powers, and forwarded a copy thereof to the President of the United States, Taft. According to our information, the Embassies of England, France and Russia have received instructions enjoining them to take up the Armenian question. We are endeavoring to obtain that the other Governments should also join in the steps to be undertaken, or, at least, that they show no opposition. The most certain feature, at present, is that the Armenian question will not be dealt with at the Ambassadors’ Conference. The public need not be concerned about this, because it has been decided that the Asia Minor question will only be taken up after the settlement of that of European Turkey. The French Government and Embassy are warmly in our favor; but the most important point is that differences should not arise between Russia and England on the Armenian question. In Petersburg, the Armenians have waited on the Prime Minister and on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who have told them they would instruct the Ambassador in Constantinople, and advised them – which is rather strange – to carry out propaganda in France and England.

As we have already stated, the Patriarchate has immediately and completely accepted our proposals. We are now requested to indicate our points of view in detail. We are busy on this and hope to soon be able to publish the main lines of our program.

Two Armenian delegates have come from Petersburg to meet Armenian circles in Constantinople, and have returned with important information on the matters that interested them. We are advised that in

Van, our "bands of personal defense" have made an impression on the Kurds and that even the governor-general is abandoning his policy and trying to approach our organization.

At the same time as political questions, that of personal defense is of capital importance for us. The situation in certain regions has become unbearable for the Armenian element, and we have to turn all our attention towards those places in order to avoid the storm threatening us. (Storm that the committees had done in all their power to provoke. Not only did they deceive foreigners, but they even sought to mislead their own people.)

Comrades!

Owing to the present situation, we request our branches:

- 1) To collect and send us at once the subscriptions paid in by members for 1913;
- 2) To give instructions to the Red-Crescent association and to musical societies, theatrical and others, attached to the Tachnaktzoutioun Committee, to make further efforts in their activity in favor of "personal defense";
- 3) To continue their propaganda and their meetings, with the certainty that the better part of the population is with us;
- 4) To increase the subscription "Pro Vita" opened by the paper "Hairenik";
- 5) To make collections to the benefit of "personal defense", in assemblies, marriages, banquets and other festivities.

The further part of this document deals with the importance of "personal Defense" organization. Several extracts are also given from publications by the "Trochak" on this organization, which were introduced in Turkey by several of the committees' chiefs. Mention is also made of the situation of bands in Persia and of the firm attitude observed at that time by the Russian consuls in Erzeroum, Bitlis and Van, where the Russian agent had even threatened the Vali with an invasion of Russian troops through Azerbedjian, should Armenians be at all in danger.

No. 7

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS AT THE HINTCHAKIST CONGRESS Held in Constantinople, in 1913.

(The same includes an explanation by Armenians regarding the Union and Progress plan of Empire organization).

Constanza, 17th September, 1913

Situation in Turkey of the Hintchakist Committee S.D. As a consequence of the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution, on 10th July, 1908, following upon a military revolution, it was necessary for the different elements existing in Turkey to preserve their national existence, and among the, that the Armenians should have the means to develop in conformity with their rational principles, outside of any administrative pressure.

After sixty-two years of rebellion and strife, and almost doomed to disappear, the Armenian nation needed some rest, if only temporary, in order to recover its strength and reappear on the political scene.

The promises vouchsafed by the Constitution appearing limited, our committee endeavored to bring to maturity the ideas it spread abroad, hoping thereby, as much as possible, to benefit by existing circumstances. For that reason, at the sixth council of Hintchak delegates, there was no question of secession from the Ottoman constitutional Government, and it was resolved to adopt legal form towards it in order to better pursue our activity.

During the ensuing period of four to five years, it was discovered that the Ottoman Constitution merely contained words and was devoid of real promises; that governmental laws tended to oppress all political parties, especially the left and extreme left, and that the administrative ideal, and the new organizations, had no other object than to absorb and crush the different elements. And proof was given that the dominant nation was incapable of giving being to any new Government. It is known that an oligarchy rules the Union and Progress Committee, which holds at present the reigns of administration. This party's program is to preserve Turkish bureaucracy and not to allow the creation of a progressive Government. Its apparent object is to unify the different elements, but its policy is to hold these under constant pressure, in order to annihilate them in case of need. With respect to the Government, it encourages and upholds unrelentingly a policy of Armenian destruction which was inaugurated by the dominating classes. The Armenian nation is on the point of vanishing under the effects of this policy and of the forces that have always been used against it, and in these circumstances it is natural that it cannot pursue the realization of its principles. Armenians are convinced that they should hereafter adopt a firm and courageous attitude in order to free themselves from the dominating class and elude the murderous sword suspended over their heads.⁽¹⁾

The seventh general council of delegates from the Hintchakist S.D. party has resolved, unanimously less one vote, that in order to obtain the national and individual rights that can no longer be assured by legal means, it would be more opportune, hereafter, to adopt an illegal position, and to give a greater impulse to party strife, until new political and economic conditions have arisen.

Passing for legality to lawlessness – prior to the meeting of the seventh general council of delegates, it had been agreed to reorganize and centralize all the sections of Turkey and of foreign countries under legal form. But owing to that present situation, the seventh council of delegates from the Hintchakist S.D. party resolves:

- 1) To dissolve the administrative board of the Turkey Committee – which has not been able to gain the confidence of other sections in the Ottoman empire, nor to meet the present requirements of the party, and to appoint in its stead a new council;
- 2) To give hereafter the name of “Turkey Administrative Board” to the central administrative council which is the supreme center of executive power for the committee branches in Turkey;

⁽¹⁾ The committees indulged in socialism to attract the masses.

- 3) The members of the Turkey administrative board, being elected by the branches of the committee in the Ottoman Empire, to give this council a certain authority over the administrative board of the Central Office, whilst subordinating its decisions to the latter's ratification;
- 4) Whilst apparently maintaining the existing branches and organizations of their present form, to try and create new secret branches, and to work underhand to maintain unlawful activity, in agreement with the active members and delegates of our committee, and in conformity with the instructions of the Central Administrative Board and information given by the Turkey Administrative Board;
- 5) To alter the former interior regulations, and adapt them to present circumstances, and to abolish the economic and political principles followed up to the present in order to replace them by those recently adopted by our committee, whilst appointing the active members who will have to apply them.

GENERAL AND SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS.

Independent Armenian – Although it will not interfere in the question of general and special reforms to be introduced in Armenia by the Ottoman Government, and will not oppose them, the Hintchakist S.D. Committee *is convinced that the population of Armenia, in any element to which it belongs, can no longer live in peace and prosper, and that the Armenian nation will only be able to preserve its national existence against the attacks from the interior and the exterior by the formation of an independent Armenia* has resolved to uphold this idea.

The unworthiness, incapacity, the ignorance, external relations and political tenets of the Turkish dominating element, and of the statesmen who are at the head of affairs, being well known, it is necessary to uphold the idea of Armenian independence under the control of Europe.

No. 8

NOTE HANDED BY THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCH

**To the Russian Embassy, through the first drogman of the latter,
Regarding the plan of reforms in Eastern Anatolia.**

Dear Friend,

Our National Council requests me to express its deep gratitude to H.E. the Ambassador with regard to the formula he considers as the only one that could safeguard or rights in the appointment of a General Inspector.

The Council awaits with a most comprehensible anxiety the draft of the Note to be handed today by the Porte to the Imperial Embassy, before its official communication of the Powers.

Considering the habits of the Porte, it is to be expected that either in the powers of the Inspector General, or in the participation of non-Moslems in Assemblies, Councils and public offices, or finally in the other dispositions, it will try to bungle the formulas suggested by the Imperial Embassy. The Council hopes it will be able in time to express its views on the matter. Considering the concession made in the formula of appointment, it becomes indispensable to compensate this by maintaining absolutely all of the other dispositions.

19/1st January, 1914.

No. 9.

To our beloved comrades of the Constantinople section:

The Hintchak Committee.

Kighi, 31st January, 1913.

. . . We will not try issues with such frivolous people. We have an extreme need of arms. The money is ready. The important point is to get the arms down here. We call your attention to this.

For the Committee:

The President, L. MARDIROSSIAN.

No. 10.

To Morate the Hero.

City of Kighi, 23rd January, 1914.

The question of arms is of the utmost concern to us. Very few of the members of the Hintchakist band under our administration are armed. In my point of view, affiliation to the Committees is useless if only platonic and without activity.

For the S. Lays Regiment

The Chief Secretary

K. POSTADJIAN

The President

VAHAN ZEITOUNLIAN

No. 11.

To the Constantinople Section of the Hintchak Committee.

. . . The arms of our Committee consist, at present, of 60 large "Moussine", 2 Russian trigger-rifles and 3 revolvers.

For the Committee:

The Chief Secretary

K. SALAK

The President

K. DADJAD

NO. 12.

To the Alexandria Section of the Ramgavar Party.

20th Feb/5th March, 1914.

Comrades,

We have received your letter of 24th January and thank you for the affectionate sentiments you express regarding the Central Section of Constantinople.

1) The question of arms is fundamental. Nobody can of course deny its necessity;

- 2) Our Central Section, in conformity with the decision of the delegate's council declare that its rights have been protected according to the dispositions of the special chapter of Internal regulations.

“Our most ardent wish is to act in conformity of views with the Hintchak Committee. Our section has worked to this end and will continue to do so in the future. Furthermore, it is not difficult to agree on this matter with the Ragazmiak-Hintchak, because there are no differences of principle between us on any matter,

At present, it is just as necessary for us to unite as soon as possible as to act in concert. For this purpose the competent groups of the Ramgavar and the Hintchak should enter in agreement with the Tachnaktzoutioun and the Veragazmial-Hintchak.

For the Central Section of Constantinople

Of the Ramgavar Committee:

The Secretary, the President,

HATCHIK INGLISIAN DIRAN KELEKIAN

No. 13.

LETTER FROM THE DACHNAK TO THE DAMAS BRANCH.

Constantinople, 1914.

. . . The Ottoman Government ordered mobilization on the 21st September, 1914. The same day, there was an extraordinary activity at the Tachnaktzoutioun Committees in Constantinople. The chiefs met together and issued instructions in cipher to the provincial branches. The same activity was observed at the Hintchak, the Ramgavar and the Veragazmial. All those Committees were already agreed on the matter of reforms, and were endeavoring to maintain and consolidate their union.

Should the Russians advance beyond the border and Ottoman troops withdraw before the, all will have to rise at the same time everywhere and use all the means at disposal. The Ottoman army will be caught between two fires. All State buildings will have to be destroyed. The Government forces will be busy in the interior, and supply convoys will be attacked. On the other hand, should the Ottoman army advance, Armenians soldiers will desert their battalions, form into bands and join the Russians.

No. 14.

Prior to the war, the newspaper “Areve” published in Bakou, had inserted the following article in its number dated 11 September, 1914:

“DECISIVE MOMENTS.”

“Events now occurring on our frontier, and all that is happening around us, are worthy of our attention. Present times are important not only in Russian history, but also for us, Armenians. A people bowed down for centuries in the bonds of slavery, the supreme ideal of which it has been sought to destroy,

is now rising before us, and demands the solution of the Armenian question. Armenians have accomplished great deed to this end, and more particularly during the past quarter of century: they have produced heroes and devoted men who have fought their enemies with courage and firmness.

“There must be an end to the question of Ottoman Armenians, in order to close the tragedy in which, for centuries, has been plunged an honest, active, hard-working and virtuous population.

“Since the Berlin Congress right until the present times, the European Powers have done nothing for us. In periods of peace, we resorted to a weak and ineffective policy towards the Ottoman Government; but today, a cyclone is sweeping the world and each people is seeking means to ensure its existence and to have a place in the sun. the question of nationalities has now emerged in a new form with a vigor unprecedented in history. Should we sleep when the destinies of all the nations, large and small, are in the balance? Armenians have never faced a moment of greater import during their secular existence. Our forefathers were able to save a nation from destruction and to preserve it until nowadays. They defended Armenian virtues and qualities against the assaults and attacks from Asia, and thanks to this, although politically weak and small, we are counted among the number of nations. Should we now abandon our position and retire in shame, or work towards a suitable future? That is the question in this important moment for our generation to decide.

“The nations are in strife; borders are being altered, each one wished to be master of its history. In such serious times, Armenian Youth and Armenians must think of the inheritance they have received from past generations and to what we expect from the future. *Conquering all the difficulties that history had accumulated around them, from Van to Constantinople, from Zeitun to Sassoun, from Erivan to Chiraz, at Lor and at Karabagh, the Armenians during the course of the XIXth century had attempted to create a new Armenia.* It is this new creation which has now to face such important events. It may disappear, or, on the other hand, develop and grow as other small nations in the XIXth century. Tomorrow or the next historical events may occur on the frontier, and the sounds from the general war find a repercussion on Armenia’s horizon. Armenians should be prepared for that day and welcome it by action, and not by mere appeals to union and concord. Up to the present, a part only of the Armenian people has sacrificed itself, and suffered all the risks and torments. Is it not time for those who have criticized the Committees right and left to show themselves and fulfill their national duties?

“Armenians, the heroic souls of our glorious ancestors are looking down upon us. Are we able to understand them, and in such serious days, can we expect to realize the new life for which they had started to fight in a time of great peril and under the worst conditions? . . . ”

No. 15.

PROCLAMATION BY THE HINTCHAK

In the paper of the same name, immediately

After the Serajevo outrage.

“ . . . The Social-Democratic Hintchak Party which has, for the past quarter of a century, stepped through blood-stained paths in order to deliver the Armenian element from all exactions, and reinstate it in its rights, avails itself of the present political conditions to give the signal of rebellion and strife, and from the summit of the Taurus and the confines of Armenia, to come down in the arena with a view to drown Ottoman tyranny in blood.

“The Hintchakist Committee, assembling all its material and moral forces, will participate with the sword of insurrection in this gigantic fight for the existence of nations, and as an ally of the Triple Entente, and more especially of the Russian armies, with all the revolutionary forces and means at its disposal, will help the Ententistes to win the victory in Armenia, in Cilicia, Caucasus and Azerbedjian; and guided by patriotic necessities, will do its duty towards itself and civilization.

“Let the heroes willing to sacrifice their lives for the deliverance of Armenian throw themselves in the arena with their material and moral forces so that, in tomorrow’s Congress, Armenians also may take their place, after having shed their blood in their own cause and that of civilization, and obtain their independence, under the aegis of their country and of the Entente, by proving their right to live and to political freedom. Let the dawn of war arise and cast its light on right, justice, freedom and fraternity.

“Forward, comrades, and to work! By our death, let us stifle the death threatening Armenia so that she may live forever! ! !

The Central Office of the Social-Democratic Hintchak Committee.

No. 16.

REPORTS

By the Armenian Military Committee in Van.

13th April, morning.

- 1) On Sunday, we killed a Turkish soldier before the Hadji-Bekir barracks.
- 2) We killed yesterday two Turkish soldiers in front of Arak.
- 3) We killed a Turk in our position of Vezonz.
- 4) Yesterday, we killed a Turk and Saturday a volunteer Turkish muleteer in front of our post of Chehbender.
- 5) We killed a Turk at Itch-Aghlou in front of the barracks of Hadji-Bekir.
- 6) The Kurds carried away the cattle of the Germans at Engke Bagh.
- 7) A violent musketry fire was heard this morning in the direction of Couronyache. It is probable that an encounter took place between Armenians and Turkish detachments. We saw the enemy flee.

The Military Committee.

13th April, noon.

- 1) We burnt the house of Hamza, situated opposite the position of Chah Baghi. A Turkish detachment was in it. The enemy fled leaving a few dead.
- 2) A Turk was killed yesterday in our position of Tutundjian.
- 3) We took yesterday three new positions in the center of Arateveze and killed several Turks. In the night we set fire to several of their advanced positions.
- 4) After a small fight on the bridge of Atna Kanz, we captured eight boxes of munitions.
- 5) We killed today a Turk at Cahn Dagh.

The Military Committee.

No. 17.

REPORT BY THE MILITARY COMMITTEE AT VAN.

For the period 6th April to 16th April.

The struggle we have been waging for the past ten days in order to deliver our nation is developing every moment, and becoming increasingly heroic and sacred. Our hereditary enemy, this time, wants to annihilate us and to wipe out the Armenian name from the list of nations, we are firmly determined to defend our lives, our dignity, our religion, to avenge our dishonored mothers and sisters and to obtain guarantees for our existence.

We have been fighting during six centuries against this savage and cruel Government, and will always struggle against those murderers who trample on right and civilization, and quench their thirst in the tears and blood of Armenians. At the same time as they proclaim Holy War, they are murdering women and children, old and young, ailing and impotent.

Armenians of Vassporagan (Van)! *For ten days we have fought with all our forces and all our means.* This struggle, unparalleled in history, will raise the admiration of all civilized people in this general war. All the world will know that a handful of heroes are fighting for Right and Justice. The avenging God is with us, and the glory of our heroes will be our reward. These ten days of struggle are on the point of ending. Let us prepare for new fights, for new victories!

The fires. The activity of our soldiers continues at night. Last night we burnt at Chah Dagh the house of Botchke Ahmed, which served as a relay for Turkish soldiers. According to information from the Office at Arak, the Armenians burnt last night one of the most important positions of the enemy, that of Arerotexe. The hero of this deed, one of our soldiers, quietly returned to our lines with his arms. Our night detachment set fire yesterday to the house of Holi in the street of the Cross. The fire could only be put out in a café of the neighborhood.

The same evening our detachment recaptured the position of Saradjian, which the enemy held until then.

This morning our auxiliary troops killed a Turk at Chirvian. We killed another from our position of Izro.

Towards three o'clock, after a violent cannonade and musketry fire, the Turks of Chah Dagh attacked our positions in the streets of Chag Bey, but were compelled to withdraw. Gun fire still continues. We noticed yesterday boats on the lake; three were going to Devan, and another coming to Van.

SECOND SERIES.

DOCUMENTS

Relating to outrages committed by Armenians and their acts of open hostility against the Ottoman Government during the present war; these outrages and acts of hostility date from the very morrow of the beginning of the war, and were the immediate uses of the measures adopted by the Porte regarding the Armenian population inhabiting Eastern Anatolia.

No. 1.

DECLARATION

Made on oath by Ali, son of Suleiman, from Bitlis; now residing in the village of Kayalou-Mardine (Bitlis vilayet).

It was about the end of February, 1915. Armenians of Bitlis and Van who had been early informed of the Russians' intention to occupy Bitlis, attacked the Moslem population which they murdered ruthlessly using all means possible to prevent it from escaping. Meanwhile, my brother-in-law, Ali, aged 21 years, his mother Rebiche, Cheikh Ahmed of Kazaran, his wife and one of his servants; our neighbors Ahmed Oglou and his child, eighty-year old Hassan, his son Izeet and two soldiers on convalescent leave were victims of their wrath and slashed to pieces.

Of our family, composed of 17 persons, only three escaped with the greatest difficulties. One of my niece's babies was tossed up in the air and cut in two as it fell down by Armenian bandits.

They raped young girls and dragged all bloodstained through the streets. Most horrible and indescribable outrages were committed by Armenians on the Moslem element.

No. 2.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by Abdul Razak, son of Kiamil, from Bitlis,
Now residing in the village of Kayalou-Mardine (Bitlis vilayet).**

At the time of the occupation of the city, we went in the early morning to the bridge of Arablar, with the families of my uncle, and my brother. Armenians suddenly fell upon us killing my brother, Tchekess Daout Oglou, Abdul Kadir and his sister Eminee.

We fled on all sides, and out of the eighteen persons in our group, only five managed to save themselves and reach Mardine. The remainder, including our children, were made prisoners or killed.

No. 3.

COLPIK VILLAGE

(in the Caza of Hizan).

Declaration made on oath by Eboubekir and Abdul Kerim,

From the said village (Bitlis vilayet).

We were concealed in spots situated in front of our village. A few of our elders had gone on to Bitlis. When they returned, they told us about the latter's fall. Then learning that the enemy was advancing towards the commune of Tatique, a body of our men went there to try and stop him, the remainder going on to Kardjian. In our engagement with the enemy, we saw how useless it was to resist very long, so we did all we could to save our families. At this critical moment, consisting of Russians with a great number of Armenians, entered the village on two sides, killing all the inhabitants and setting fire to the houses. Some of us managed to escape, but 150 persons, including women, men, boys and girls, were not able to save themselves and were killed.

Those Armeno-Russians committed such outrages that when we returned to our village, we could not help crying. Naked men and women, tied to each other, were hanging from trees; bodies of women were headless, their breasts cut off, and in their arms, children cut in two. The prettiest young girls had been carried off and the others put to death. The sexual parts of the victims were slashed. The best furniture had been carried away; other things were burnt on the spot.

No. 4.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by Ahmed Nouredin Effendi, former Mudir of the
Commune of Akdjan, now temporary sub-governor of the Bervair caza (Bitlis vilayet).**

The general mobilization was ordered by the Government and a month later I was called as Mudir in the commune of Akdjan. Servet Bey, now dead, was then governor of Mouche; he was very gentle and kind towards the population of the Sandjak, without distinction of race or religion. However, when occasion arose, the Armenians of Mouche were wont to create difficulties to the Government, in the matter of tax collections and recruiting. We could clearly see the subversive maneuvers of Armenian priests and of Russophil Tachnakists. Most of the Armenian villages, under the influence of seditious suggestions, soon began to commit acts of savagery. In fact, some soldiers, volunteers or militiamen, were induced into Armenian houses by gifts of bread and water, and were then strangled; their heads were afterwards cut off and their eyes gouged out. Armenians were not deterred by anything to procure the arms of soldiers. They mostly perpetrated their outrages in the village of Avran which numbered 300 houses. Our inquiry in this village revealed the following facts:

In the neighborhood of a house belonging to an Armenian, member of the Dachnak Committee, we discovered a well, the opening of which was very narrow and artfully concealed. When the covering was removed, a horrible stench was emitted. A man was sent down and reported the well full of human bodies. We had them taken out to establish their identity. There were nineteen of them, those of unfortunate and innocent soldiers. The state of the bodies proved that they had met with death three or four days previously at the hands of those Armenians who have been, for four hundred years, kindly treated by the Ottoman Government. After burying the bodies, we left the village.

No. 5.

DECLARATION

Made on oath, before the Mudir of Hani, by Mehmed Resoul Abdurrahman

Oglou, aged 18, one of the refugees from Mouche.

I was wounded in the fight of mid-January, 1915, near the village of Betkevo. Together with three sick comrades unable to follow the army on its march, we were captured by eight enemies. They gouged the eyes out of my comrade Hussein, telling him "Stand up now, and see if there are any Ottoman soldiers coming?" They next dragged him to a neighboring well and shot him. Later on, they seized another of my comrades and killed him after torturing him terribly. My third comrade's turn came next. They cut off his genital organ, put it in his mouth, and next slashed his throat open. I recognized among them three Armenians: Kechick Oglou Aran, of the Jakar quarter in Mouche; Bagdasar Keurup Oglou Alexan, and Hrant (son of the lawyer Hrant), of the Back quarter in Mouche. The five others were Russian soldiers. They then came to me, telling me what would be the fate of all the Moslems. They lit a fire in which they heated the muzzle of their rifles till they were red hot, and with these cauterized my body in twenty-four different spots. My shrieks were so awful that a Russian soldiers said he would deliver me from the torture. Talking to me apart he said his name was Abdul Malik, that he was a Moslem from Kasan and that he could save my life. My persecutors, the Russian soldiers and myself started then towards the lines; we were soon joined by a body of a hundred Cossacks and Armenians. We were going towards Til, when we met 800 Moslem emigrants, men and women of all ages. The Cossacks and the Armenian bands attacked them, till none remained. We reached the village of Til in the evening. The Armenians had brought with them two Moslem women carried off from Kara-Miche. They were both pregnant. They were among the Armenians; then two Russian soldiers and two Armenians made a bet of two medjidies as to the sex of the children born by the pregnant women. Thereupon, using knives, they slashed their bellies open to extract the fetus. One was a boy; but there was a discussion as to the other's sex. Five minutes later, four Russians and six Armenians brought six Moslem young girls. Among those Armenians, I recognized one from the village of Ziaret (Mouche). The girls were put I a row. A Russian officer came up, chose one of them and took her away. The remaining girls were then ordered to say their prayers (namaz) by the Russian soldiers. When doing so, they were seized and outraged in all manner of ways against nature. At the same time, pointing to me, the Cossacks were telling Armenians: "Ask him if Moslem prayers are done in this way. Tell him we will make all Moslem recite their prayers in this manner." I stayed three nights in the Til village. Although greatly suffering from my wounds, I managed to escape thanks to the help of the Russo-Moslem soldier. About dawn, I reached the heights around Kasan village. Piercing shrieks came from the latter. When day broke, I saw that the Armeno-Russians were murdering the Moslem inhabitants. I was so terrified that I could not move from the spot until night. I set out in the dark, and after great trouble managed to reach Hani.

No. 6.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by a police-constable of Bitlis, Yassin Effendi,
Son of Hadji Ahmed, now serving in Mardine (Bitlis vilayet).**

When the city of Bitlis was occupied, I was on duty in the guard room, at 10 o'clock at night. My sister, much frightened, came to tell me that the city had been entered by the enemy. When we went out with the comrades in the street, we saw the inhabitants fleeing. Musketry fire was most violent.

In order to save my family, I went to the spot called Arabe Keupri, half an hour away from Bitlis. Behind us, Russian troops and Armenian bands were mowing down all Moslems trying to escape; Russian Cossacks were also charging them, crushing them under their horses.

Children's cries were heard everywhere, as they were struck down by Russian lances. A small group was miraculously saved, including ourselves. During our flight, Nehmed Vehbi Effendi, assistant-commissioner, was wounded in the foot, and we had to carry him away with us.

All those who could not escape fell victims to the Russo-Armenian hordes. Among those struck down, are the following persons with whom I was acquainted: Vefik Bey, Chief of the Van police; Ali Effendi, police-constable; Suleiman Effendi, assistant-commissioner; Rmzi and Said Effendis, of Van, both on service in Bitlis; Hamdi and Resoul Effendis, police-constables in Bitlis; Chaban Vehbi Effendi, clerk of the Court at Bitlis; the famous scholar Molla Said Kurdi, and twenty of his friends, and Abdurrezzak, son of Hadji Isshak, a tradesman.

No. 7.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by the police-constable of Van, Suleiman effendi,
Son of Sadoullah, now on service in Mardine (Bitlis vilayet).**

When the Russians neared Van, all the Armenians of the city and neighboring villages began to agitate and to demonstrate against Ottoman authorities. They would no longer obey administrative orders (regarding tax collection and military duties), and set out to join the Russian army. They roamed about from village to village, attacking travelers and killing every Moslem they met on the roads. They also murdered sick soldiers who were going to their villages on furlough.

After some time, the Armenians of Van openly rebelled against the Imperial Government and strated in the streets to attack constables, soldiers and policemen. They killed every Moslem that fell in their hands, firing on people when they looked out of windows, or stood on the doorstep of their houses.

(This lasted 27 days). After the occupation of the town by the enemy, the Armenians were even more violent. They pursued refugees, killing them in the streets. Hundreds of Moslem men, women and children who had remained in town were tortured or killed by Armenian bands.

A number of inhabitants who had sought escape in three boats were exterminated at the Tarkat pier, in the district of Adildjavaz. The police accompanying them, Djelal, Hachim and Moustafa effendis,

were wounded during the fight and managed to reach Bitlis after meeting with great dangers and difficulties. The inhabitants of the villages of Zive, Molla Kassim, Cheikh Kara, Cheikh Aine, Ayans, Zorayad, Pakes, in the commune of Timar, were exterminated by Armenian bands, as well as those from other places.

Before the occupation of Van by the Russians, Cheikh Zade Agha, Risa Memo, mounted constable, Hodja Hassan effendi, former Chief accountant of Van, and his family consisting of six persons; Rassim effendi, a professor at the Ruchdie school and his family, and other persons were all killed by the Armenians of the city. Lieutenant Hussein effendi was attacked in his own house, and his daughter Nadide, wounded and outraged. Other Moslem women and young girls were also outraged, and thousands of houses burnt down with their inhabitants.

No. 8.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by Mehmed Toufan effendi, son of Mayor Essad effendi,
Assistant-judge at the Court of Hakiari.**

The Armenians of Turkey had long been hoping for independence, and worked by all the means in their power to detach a part of the Empire to their benefit.

When the general war broke out, Armenian bands which had been formed previously started their activity and acted as scouts and runners for the Russian troops on the Persian frontier. They called the Russians over and led them on the 9th of November, 1914, into the village of Dir, seat of Chikefti commune, in the district of Hekguiari.

Whilst the Russians were occupying Dir, Armenian bands killed all male inhabitants in the Kurd villages situated on their way, and slaughtered thousands of children.

More than 400 Kurd women and young girls were outraged. Old women were struck down.

Before the enemy had occupied Back-Kale, seat of the district, Armenian bands had entered the city, on Tuesday 17th November; they established in the Armenian Church an alleged state of siege administration under the presidency of Ossep, son of Hatcho, and imprisoned in one of the building's annexes, over 200 Moslems, which they subjected to all kinds of tortures in order to extort money from hem.

On the other hand, the members of the Armenian Committees under the commandment of Carabet formerly a judge, entered the houses of Moslems and Jews, which they plundered after outraging the women and the girls.

In this manner, all the houses of officials and inhabitants, of which those of Cheikh Taha, Cheikh Youssouf, Cheikh Seid, Ibrahim and Ali effendis, were plundered and ransacked by those Armenians. My furniture and effects, as well as my jewelry, valued at 300 Turkish pounds, were seized and taken away. Furthermore, they ransacked the stores of the Food commission, as well as those of Gouril Oglou and other

Moslem tradesmen. Suleiman Gouril Oglou was taken to church, where he was subjected to all kinds of tortures, and finally set free on payment of 1000 Turkish pounds.

The enemy remained thirteen days in Bach-Kale. During that time, Armenians gave free play to their savage hostility against the Moslem element; they did not even respect their mosques in which they carried on their orgies. When the Russians were driven away from the city, Armenian barricaded themselves in the houses and fought all day. Unable to withstand longer the attacks of our troops, they took to flight and joined the Russians, leaving behind them ruined villages and numberless bodies.

Wherever they had passed, can be found the bodies of women, with their bellies slashed and breasts cut off; of children cut into pieces; of outraged young girls, of men with their eyes gouged out. It is impossible to enumerate all the outrages committed by Armenians.

No. 9.

DECLARATION

Made on oath by Mouheddin effendi, son of Hussein, aged 45,

A grocer of the Tache quarter in Bitlis, now a refugee in Savar (Bitlis vilayet).

It was the end of February, 1915 (1331). I was at home one Friday evening when I heard a loud noise and many shots from all parts of the city, announcing the arrival of Russo-Armenian bands. I went out at once in the street. The bands were already slaughtering right and left. I rushed home in order to try and save my family. I saw Fazil effendi, of Viran, an official, being slashed to death in the street; so we ran towards the Governmental Hall. All the streets were full of Armenians killing and cutting to pieces all Moslems rushing into that direction, men, women and children. Finding no escape possible in this direction, and in order not to fall into their hands, I attempted to commit suicide, and threw myself in the river that runs through Bitlis. My brother Moussa stopped me,, and somehow we were save by Providence from the general massacre.

Among the thousands of victims are the following well known persons: 1) Toussou effendi, son of Hadji Chemseddine; 2) Abdul Baki effendi, son of Hadji Youssouf, of the Mersan quarter; 3) Hadji Mehmed, son of Hadji Hassan; 4) Nadir, son of Mahmoud; 5) Abdurrazzak, son of Djemal; 6) Torssoun, son of Mahmoud; 7) Hamid, son of Redjeb; 8) Djemil, son of Bilal; 9) Cheihk Abdul Malik effendi, son of Chekh Mehmed Muvrevi; 10) the Commander of the Mouradie constabulary, Ismail bey.

Ahmed effendi, formerly a cadı of Mouradie, was killed in his bed; his sister, Bedrie Zeman Hanim, Perichan Hanim, daughter of Redjeb effendi, Leila wife of corporal Halid, his son Salih, were also killed in their homes, after atrocious tortures.

No. 10.

DECLARATION

Made on oath by Fehim bey, son of Kahraman bey, from Mouradie,

Member of the city's Administration Council, now a refugee in the village of Klet (Van vilayet).

It was at the beginning of 1331 (1915) that Russo-Armenian bands, consisting mostly of Armenians, had invaded the district of Bayazid, as well as three hundred villages of the commune of Ayara, dependent from Mouradie. There, they slaughtered all the Moslem inhabitants they met on their way, without even sparing those who surrendered. Knowing that our fate would be the same, if we surrendered to those bands, we decided on flight and left for Erdjiche with the inhabitants of the neighboring villages of Mouradie.

Whilst leaving our village to go to Erdjiche, several thousand inhabitants from the commune of Ayara, who had escaped from the Russo-Armenian bands, sought refuge in Mouradie. The same day we left the locality. Later on, several women and children who had also saved themselves told us, with tears in their eyes that all the other inhabitants of Ayara, who had remained in Mouradie, had been exterminated by the band commanded by Surpine Armenian, a Russian subject, who had a business in Bayazid.

During our march, we learnt from Salih bey, son of the Mayor of Gumuche village, that the inhabitants of the latter and neighboring localities had been murdered by the Armenian band commanded by Aram, of Van, a Committee Chief; he had caused children to be burnt alive in baker's ovens. On the way, we observed with Salih bey that the Moslem village of Iguidje, of 30 houses, and that of Gumuche, of 100, had been completely devastated by Armenian bands. Horribly mutilated bodies of men and women were strewn about the place. The charred remains of what had been children were to be seen in baker ovens. Several women and children who had escaped from Gumuche joined us and said that all the inhabitants had been ruthlessly killed or burnt.

No. 11.

DECLARATION

Made on oath by Mollah Mehmed, son of Abdurahman,

From Kizil Kilisse, district of Mouradie.

In this declaration, the witness bears out the statements in the foregoing document. He adds that the sole survivor of Gumuche was Salih bey, who escaped by hiding himself in a well. The Armenian band commanded by Aram of Van, Committee chief, has organized the general massacre, when retreating to the frontier.

No. 12.

DECLARATION

Made on oath, before the Mudir of Hani, by Mevloud Oglou Mehmed, Constable in Mouche,

Aged 37, one of the last refugees from Hani, formerly residing in the Kale quarter (Mouche).

I had been taken a prisoner, two and half months previously, by the Russians. I escaped ten days ago, and learning that my battalion's office was in Hani, I came to this place.

I had left Mouche on the 8th January 1331 (1915) to carry messages to the commander of the detachment in the sector of Liz (Mouche). When I reached the heights of Molla Davoud, I found I was

surrounded by Russian soldiers and Armenian bands. I managed to destroy the messages I was carrying before being taken prisoner. The Armeno-Russians took my rifle, watch and money. Among the enemy soldiers, I recognized a number of Armenians, among whom: Kechich Oglou Quinaz, of Boulanik; Gazar of Ayri; Dedo, of Quelan, and Vano Melkon Oglou, of Mouche. The latter wanted to kill me, but I don't know for what reason, the Russians prevented them. However, the Armenians gave me a sound thrashing and took me to Molla Davoud, where they showed me to their officers and locked me up in a house guarded by six Russian soldiers. At nights, one of them mounted guard, whereas the five others went in the other villages, brining back the young girls and newly married women. They forced them to dance and drink wine, then outraged the, telling me "Look on, this is how we will treat all the Moslems." And they grossly insulted the Moslem religion.

When leaving the village, the Armeno-Russians took me with them, but they slaughtered after the torturing them all the inhabitants who had remained. We next reached Razanan, where they locked up all the women in one house and the men in another; I was also locked up in a third building. This is what I have seen from my window: the Russo-Armenians called the men out one by one; after robbing them of their money, they were tortured in different ways, eyes gouged out, scorched alive, mutilations of all kinds, and finally killed. They next went among the women, choosing the newly married and young girls; they forced them to undress completely and outraged them. Two of those unfortunate women were pregnant; the Armenians collected around them, betting on the sex of the child in their bosom for an amount of four rubles, and ripped them. The next hung six women to the trees and slashed them to pieces. They then told me "That is what you deserve." We left this place to go to Molla Yaya. There I was again locked up in a house and further outrages of the same kind were committed. At night I managed to escape, reaching this place after many difficulties. Moslem refugees I met on the way stated that they had seen similar outrages committed on Moslems. All the inhabitants of Kara Hussein and Kuchanli were thus butchered by Armeno-Russians.

No. 13.

ATROCITIES

Committed in the villages of Korso and Sekur, depending from the commune of Hakif.

Declaration made on oath by Fevzi effendi, Mudir of Hakif commune, in the Caza of Hizan.

We had been sent in October 1330 (1914) to the village of Hillis with twenty constables in order to collect the recruits to be sent to labor battalions newly formed. The Council of Elders informed us that there were no more recruits in the village and that most of the people were already in the army or at Revan. This statement being false, we made a list of 50 to 60 men who were to come forth the next morning. The recruits not being forthcoming, I sent four men to the village of Korso, and two to that of Sekur in order to discover the defaulters. On their arrival at Sekur, the inhabitants, all Armenians, insulted the constables telling them "Go away, your Mudir has no authority over us; tell your governor to come with two battalions." I was then compelled to add seven men to the two already sent and to send them back again to

the village. They were received by musketry fire, two of them, Ismail and Nezir, being killed. The others, after a fight of several hours, had to return to Hakif.

The other constables sent to Korso were first of all well received by the Armenians; yet when invited to dinner in a house they were attacked by eight Armenians and butchered. On hearing this, I set out with the forces at my disposal towards the said villages in order to make an inquiry. The Armenian population having rebelled, we had to renounce this plan, and went to Hicht, a neighboring Moslem village. Soon thereafter, an Armenian woman by the name of Soltan, from the Dikri village, came as a messenger from Dalo, of Ozin, and Calos, of Sekuli, both of them Armenian Committee chiefs. Soltan told us: "If you do not hand over the Armenian soldiers recruited as laborers to the revolved Armenians, they are determined to pass you all through the sword and to destroy your villages with bombs." Of course, we did not obey this order. The Armenians surrounded us; shots were exchanged all night long; the next day, other constables and Kurd forces came to our assistance, and we were able to repel the aggressors. During those events, several women and children were killed without any reason. As is proven by the facts related hereabove, Armenians unceasingly fomented disturbances in the country, and did all they could to hinder civil and military administration.

IN THE PROVINCE OF ERZEROUM

General Statement.

Last year, when the Russians were driven from the line Hassan-Kale, and pursued to the frontier, it was observed they had taken with them more than 2000 Moslems, mostly inhabitants of Passinler. A few of those were sent to the interior of Russia, and the remainder slaughtered.

Armenian revolutionists entered the village of Salimli and outraged all the young girls.

The step-daughter of Rechid bey having resisted, she was murdered; her mother-in-law was wounded.

The family of lieutenant Abdoullah effendi, of the Frontiersmen, which had remained in Bayazid, was sent to Russia with the families of five other Ottoman officials.

In the city of Erzeroum, all the population, including children of fourteen, were sent away to different unknown destinations.

At Ache-Kale, Iidja, Pekridj, Russian detachments, consisting of Cossacks and Armenian volunteers murdered about one hundred persons, and outraged nearly all the young girls before the eyes of their own families.

At Terdjan, a council of Armenian bands was constituted. After a pretence of judgment, more than 400 Moslems were executed. The names of those victims will shortly be published.

The refugees of Narman, as well as of other frontier villages, who escaped from the outrages and are now residing in the village of Motni-Erzindjan, state on oath that all the population of their villages, numbering several tens of thousands, were completely exterminated, and all the women and young girls outraged.

At Tavskerde, Artvine, Moslem centers, there are no longer any Moslems. In those regions, the Russo-Armenians have exterminated a population of 40,000 inhabitants.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by Cherif bey, Director of Public Institution at Van,
Who escaped the massacre almost by a miracle.**

The governor general of Adana, Djevdet, then in Van, together with Halil bey, military commander, saw on their way several thousand bodies of women and children.

The crimes that have been established up to the present in a most formal manner, according to statements made on oath, after the recovery of Van, are as follows:

In the City of Van:

During the occupation by the Russians, the latter distributed poisoned bread to the Moslem population, with the result that mortality was frightful.

In the Halil Agha Quarter:

In the family of Hussein effendi, formerly chief accountant for the province: his young daughter was outraged; his wife murdered; his brother Hussein effendi, a school teacher, the latter's wife and their four children were butchered.

In the family of Derviche effendi: a retired official of the revenue department: his two young daughters, Hourie and Chadie, were outraged under the eyes of their mother, their uncle and their aunt. After the scene, the latter were murdered. One of the young girls has died as a consequence of the outrage.

In the family of Vehbi effendi, chief accountant of Chatak: his father, his uncle Youssouf bey and his wife were murdered.

In the family of Natchadji Edhem, consisting of 15 persons, all were murdered.

Three religious men, Issa effendi, iman of the quarter, aged 90 years; Rasih effendi, retired school master, aged 70 years; Derviche effendi, iman of Vidjdabich, had their faces shaved clean of beard and mustachios, and next covered with filth. They were afterwards dragged along the streets on asses, and finally assassinated. The aged wife of Rassih effendi, 60 years old, died from loss of blood consequent of the tortures she had to suffer.

In the families of Hourchid and his brother Kiamil, consisting of 12 persons, only three escaped.

Suleiman agha and his wife, Halil effendi, a retired official who was blind, his son Sidki effendi, the preceptor Hadji effendi, formerly wounded, as well as his young wife and five children, two boys and three girls, were all killed.

In the Chamran quarter:

Two hundred women and children who had sought refuge in the house of Mehmed bey, where already lieutenant Izzet effendi, and a surgeon were bed ridden, were all butchered, their murderers singing whilst carried out their deed.

The two children of Scheer, wife of Djemal effendi, aged five and seven, were torn from the arms of their mother and cut into pieces with knives. The same process caused the death of the wife of Abas, son of Hamza, and of his three daughters.

Aiche, sister of sergeant Halil; Adboullah effendi, aged 80, and his wife were tramped to death; their heads were smashed in with stones.

In the Chabanich quarter:

Lieutenant Abdurahman effendi, who was bedridden, was beaten and murdered, after horrible tortures.

Hadji Eumer effendi, tradesman, was robbed and afterwards killed.

Zaide, aged 12 years, niece of Bekir effendi, former mouhtar of the Topdji-Oglou village, was horrible outraged, and died soon afterwards.

In the Hafuz effendi quarter:

Adile, mother of Ismail Menhenouz Oglou; Beiram and the butcher Abbas were murdered. The two young daughters of Abbas, Fikrie and Chadie, were taken off by the Russians.

In the Emin Pacha quarter:

Mehmed Ali effendi, a retired officer, was attached to a tree and used as a target. His sister, aged 80 years, and his wife, exasperated by this torture, tried to protect the body, and were slashed to pieces. The wife of Nedjib effendi, ironmonger, was treated in the same manner.

In the Selim bey quarter:

Halid Souvar Oglou and 50 of his neighbors had asked mercy of the Russian soldiers roaming about the place in company with the Armenian revolutionist Panos. Nevertheless, they were all shot down, men children and old women. Two boys were thrown in a well of the house of Hadji Zia bey, situated in the Senemque street.

Salih, of Yessir Capoussi, his wife Fatna, his four young daughters of 5 to 10 years of age, his brother and his sister, as well as seventeen other persons were impaled.

The children were cut into pieces, and their mothers' hair soaked in the blood of their children.

The three sons and the two daughters of Salih's sister, the two children of Kassim, in the Djamil Kebir quarter, had their throats cut. The mothers of the poor victims were forced to drink the blood of their children and butchered afterwards.

The wife of Hassan effendi, an officer from Sivas, who had remained at Van, was robbed and killed with her two children.

IN THE PROVINCE OF TREBIZOND

Russian soldiers who entered with Armenian bands the village of Lazandos, in the district of Of, outraged Yasemin, wife of Dilsis Oglou Ali Osman, before the latter's eyes, wounding the latter with bayonets. The same soldiers were guilty of many other outrages and murders committed on the population of that region.

In the village of Pirvana, district of Surmene, the Russians murdered Sou Itchnes Oglou Bidjan Agha, after outraging his wife before his eyes. The inhabitants of Pirnak, Zimle Koua, Zimeli Kebir and Zimeli Saghir who could not escape were ruthlessly murdered. The women of the Elana-Of village were carried by the Russian soldiers into their trenches and outraged. The wife to Tchakir oglou Suleiman, from Polid, was outraged and murdered.

The wives of Tehi Oglou Emin, in the village of Sabava, of collector Ali, of Hadji Moustapha Oglou Mehmed, in the village of Zino, and of Molla Mehmed Oglou Asker Mahmoud were outraged.

The young daughters of Kemahdji Zade Ahmed, in the Komanit village, of Ali Oglou Mehmed and Dai Oglou Hussein, agha of the Kel-Ali village, were also outraged.

Omer Oglou Osman, in the village of Inoz Tach, Surmene, was murdered and his wife outraged by Russian soldiers and Armenian revolutionists.

The Russian troops distributed between the Armenian bands all the young people they met with.

The Armenians who had the duty of escorting inhabitants murdered all the old people and the children with bayonets, and outraged the women. This was reported by an unfortunate woman, aged 40 years, of the Karanli village of Pomre, who, after having been outraged, managed to reach the village of Kadarouz, in a pitiable state.

The Armeno-Russian barbarians, in their retreat from Loma, murdered all the women and children who had sought refuge at the house of the collector Osman effendi, in the village of Sumla, commune of Vitche.

Women and children who had remained in several houses of the Ab Emchin village were taken to a ravine and slaughtered by a band of 30 Armenians.

Another Russo-Armenian band of 5 men attempted to outrage a woman in the presence of a Turkish constable; the latter, who tried to prevent the deed, was murdered with bayonets. One of the assaulters threw himself on the poor woman and bit away a piece of her cheek.

After the retreat of Turkish troops from Of, the Russo-Armenians assassinated many ulemas, as well as the mufti.

In the villages of Akrche-Abad, they set fire to the houses, drove off the cattle belonging to the Greek population and carried away, to an unknown destination all the women and young girls.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by Ali effendi, son of Hadji Youssouf, aged 62 years,
From Hins, residing in the Djami-I-Kebir quarter at Ergani Madon,
And member of the court of Vartou (Erzeroum).**

We emigrated from Vartou on 31st January. The enemy, consisting of Russian regulars and Armenian bands, was marching on our city, murdering men, children and old women, outraging young girls, burning some of them alive in the houses they set fire to, ripping pregnant women with their swords. All those victims, to the number of 500, were fleeing before the enemy, but snow prevented their progress, and they were caught by the latter. All the cattle and effects belonging to them were plundered by the Russo-Armenians.

I was an eye witness of those atrocities, which I saw perpetrated from the top of a height in close proximity.

Tevfik effendi, son of Yakoun, aged 35, clerk of the Court of Vartou, and Ali effendi, judge at the Court, were also witnesses from the same spot of the Russians' entrance into Vartou; they have made similar statements regarding the criminal conduct of Russo-Armenians towards Moslems.

DECLARATION

**Made on oath by Mevloud effendi, son of Ibrahim, from Mouche,
Now residing in Ergheni Madeni (Erzeroum).**

I distinctly remember, with their exact dates, the atrocities perpetrated by Russo-Armenians on Moslems.

The 25th November 1330 (1914), the Russo-Armenians burnt alive on a dung hill soaked with petroleum all the inhabitants of the Merguenhi village, in the district of Serai, without distinction as to age or sex.

The 7th January 1331 (1915) burnt in their own houses all the inhabitants of the villages of Taman Yourdji, Herenil and Bildejaik. A number of inhabitants from the village of Sire and Kumber, in the commune of Batchirghe, having emigrated on 25th April 1331 (1915), those who had remained were arrested and taken to Batchirghe, to be burnt alive or murdered by Armeno-Russians.

On the 21st January 1331 (1915), on evacuating Marache, the Russians burnt alive the whole Moslem population of the village of Ourma, in the commune of Aza-Khour, sparing nobody, not even children, and proceeded thence to Kon and Boulanik where they perpetrated the same atrocities.

DECLARATION

Made on oath by Hassib (Erzeroum).

The emigrant Hassib, who traveled from guermousson to Melazgherd at the beginning of hostilities (October 1914) states as follows the horrible outrages he witnessed.

In the parts invaded by Russians, Russo-Armenian bands vied with each other in committing all sorts of outrages against the Moslem population that fell into their hands.

Suron, of Bayezid, one of the Chiefs of the Armenian Committee, Pastirmadjian, former member of Parliament for Erzerou, and Karaguine, at the head of a band numbering about 1200 Armenians visited villages inhabited by Moslems, ripping pregnant women to extract their fetus, outraging those who were pretty and killing others in frightful tortures. Among those victims, was the step-daughter of Gulchen Agha, of the village of Kavak, the sons and the wife of whom were impaled.

On 28th April 1915, when Melazgherd fell into the hand of the Russians, I was with my family in the Circassian village of Yaremich, distant about an hour and half from the district seat. Following upon a sudden attack by the Russians, those who resided there were slaughtered, including my family. I managed to escape along and to reach the village of Holik, in the commune of Ahihat. On 23rd May, this village also fell in the hands of Russians, but its inhabitants made their escape good, whereas those from Aktche Viran, mostly Circassians, could not be saved. All the effects in the houses and the cattle belonging to both villages, of a total value between 30 and 40,000 Turkish pounds, were carried off by Armeno-Russians.

Moussa and Sadoullah beys, well known inhabitants of Aktche Viran and ten of their companions were taken to Melazgherd, and after being questioned, handed over to the Armenians. The latter took them to a place called Kire, gouged their eyes out and killed them.

From there I went to the front at Liz. This place was occupied and then evacuated by the Russians. The wounded Ottoman soldiers who were in treatment at the hospital erected in the locality and which it had not been possible to take away before the Russian occupation, were found in a horrible state. Out of forty of them, some had their eyes gouged out; others were headless; others were skinned over half their bodies and hung.

Moussa bey, my brother in law, Djemal and Hussein effendis, all three Circassians, we were all heartbroken at the sight.

Moussa bey, whilst rambling about the city, discovered in the cellar of a house an Ottoman soldier half dead of hunger. He gave him the attendance he needed. This soldier was named Memiche, son of Abdullah, from the village of Baba Yagjour (district of Bogazlyan): he stated that the atrocities committed at Liz were the work of Armenians and of Armenian women who had remained at Liz.