

it will be placed in the hands of our soldiers, sailors, or marines. NO WRAPPING—NO ADDRESS. A. S. BUKLESON, Postmaster-General.


AUGUST 1919

THE NEW

20 CENTS

# RED CROSS MAGAZINE





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### NEXT MONTH’S SPECIAL FEATURES

THE dauntless courage and capacity for great detail—which the French women contributed to the war—is the theme of Miss Ida M. Tarbell’s article, “Courage,” which will be a September contribution

CHARLES J. ROSEBAULT, who went to Vienna, Budapest, and Berlin for us, contributes in September a study of Germany to-day and of her attitude toward the Allies. He answers the question, “Are They Contrite?”

HELEN KELLER’S moving narrative of her visit to Evergreen Hospital to greet and help our blinded soldiers, to tell them how even the ghastly handicap of blindness can be beaten, will come in the September number



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# TURKEY'S WAGES OF SIN

By Melville Chater

*IN LAST month's magazine, Mr. Chater described the wretched condition of Constantinople, and discussed Turkish misrule before the war. In this article he continues his narrative until the arrival of the Allied forces in Constantinople, and tells of the ghastly and long-continued atrocities on the Armenian Christians foully planned and ordered by the Turkish "Committee of Union and Progress"—the Ittihat Terraki.*

**B**UT how was the Pan-Turkish scheme to be accomplished? Here is where the *Ittihat Terraki*—or Committee of Union and Progress—enters the story. Evolving out of 1908's revolutionary elements, this had grown into a political ring of unique power and unscrupulousness—an octopus which now wreathed its stranglehold about the country's non-Moslem population. Though the *Ittihat Terraki* may have represented but a class of Turks at its inception, it ended by including practically the whole Turkish people. Its tentacles were to be found existing in every town and village, under the form of Union and Progress clubs. These were exclusively Turkish in membership—a membership which comprised all local officials of the army, government, and police, newspaper editors, prominent citizens, together with various strong-arm characters and ex-convicts. The local club president was directly responsible to the *Merkezi Oumomie*, or Central Committee, and backed by its power, pushed the faithful into office, ousted the unfaithful, and saw to it that government contracts went to the right people. Thus, through these outlying agents, the Central Committee could make or break any man in Turkey by a tap of its invisible hand on the telegraph key. Gathered in the privacy of its headquarters at Constantinople, it administered the country's policies, finances,



*A section of Billis. Along this road the Armenians were killed, and their bodies thrown into the river*

and elections, these last being arranged by simply wiring instructions to local clubs as to what Union and Progress men were to be returned. Hence the Turkish parliament became in essence a mere assembly of the *Ittihat Terraki* and, of course, solidly Moslem. The handful of seats reserved for non-Moslem representatives, for appearance sake, were humorously known as "spectators' seats," since their few occupants could have no possible influence on legislative proceedings.

The Central Committee's president was Talaat Pasha, the Grand Vizier. Of equal influence in the committee was Enver Pasha, Minister of War. Then, too, there were Djavid Bey, Minister of Finance; Said Halim Pasha, who preceded Talaat as Grand Vizier,



"There goes the bride"—an Armenian wedding procession winding through the streets of Buskra, Mesopotamia

and Ibrahim Bey, Minister of Justice, who organized the *Tchétés*—or massacring bands—composed of criminals from the Central Prison at Constantinople. In fact, if one made a list of the *Ittibat Terraki's* leaders for the past half-dozen years, it would comprise most of the highly-placed government and army officials.

The *Ittibat Terraki* began its programme of Pan-Turkism with the Greek deportations of May, 1914, and crowned it somewhat more than two years later by the extinction of the Armenian survivors at the Euphrates slaughter-house at Der-el-Zor. It cannot be too often restated that these atrocities had nothing whatever to do with religious intolerance as between Christian and Moslem peoples, except indeed as a political means of

fomenting the latter against the former. The "white massacres" and "red massacres" were simply the *Ittibat Terraki's* method of crippling two thrifty peoples which, by their commercial dominance and superior acumen, barred the realization of a "Turkey for the Turks." That the Greeks were supposed to be in league with the British fleet off the Dardanelles, or that the Ottoman Armenians were supposed to be in league with Russia, is pure political camouflage. Whatever sporadic instances in the latter case may lend weight to the *Ittibat Terraki's* pronouncement of a "military necessity" therein, the vast number of deportees and dead reveals unmistakably that the crippling of whole peoples was aimed at.

Of Greeks, some 795,000 were sent into exile; of Armenians, not less than a million were deported and, as a result of 1915's frightful massacres, half a million more fled into the Caucasus. This makes a total displacement of about 2,300,000 for the two peoples. The best present estimates indicate that about 600,000 Armenians and some 350,000 Greeks perished by massacre, starvation, and exposure; and when the whole story is known, it will probably be found that the *Ittibat Terraki* is responsible for the obliteration of a million human beings.

The procedure with the Greeks was to oust them at a few hours' notice, transport them into the interior as far as Caesarea, Sivas, and Angora, and decentralize them by a wide distribution through the Moslem villages. A large part of this "white massacre" occurred in winter, exposure and starvation being relied upon to do their work. Child-stealing and the abduction of young girls, to swell Islam's future generations, were commonly perpetrated as the columns of deportees wound eastward through Asia's snows. Meanwhile, their emptied houses were sold for firewood, or were occupied by Moslem families of the refugee hordes which swarmed into Turkey from Bulgaria and the Caucasus. The *Ittibat Terraki's* programme of re-Turkeyfying

Turkey on the absent-tenant principle, had begun. Those deportees who have returned home since the armistice have found either burned villages, orchards, and vineyards, or Moslem squatters who, having sold the absentee's flocks and herds, are firmly entrenched in their homes. The very cemeteries in many of these evacuated towns have been robbed of their gravestones for the manufacture of lime.

When we turn to the Armenian's story, we find the very antithesis of that of the Turk. Closely paralleling the case of the Jews, this small race has cohered into self-development; first, by very reason of that external pressure which knits together a tenacious people; and next, by the adoption of a state religion.

Indeed, Christianity was Armenia's national expression even before Constantine proclaimed it as the state religion of his empire. Marrying within their own race to an almost exclusive extent, they are essentially a home-making people of close family ties, intelligent and thrifty, of keen trading instincts and a traditionally strong bent toward education. Among them one seldom sees a beggar or an illiterate. The patriarchate under which Armenians are permitted to gather vital statistics, arrange divorces, and administer their schools, less instances Turkey's benignity than her political astuteness; for the result of thus placing her various subject peoples under different patriarchates has been to prevent Christian unification and to strengthen Islamism thereby and, while the Patriarch has no voice in politics, he is held strictly responsible for his people's loyalty.

**B**UT Armenian loyalty was not likely to be encouraged by the ravishing of their women, by highway brigandage and murder, by Kurdish despoliations of live stock and grain, by the extortion whereunder some half depopulated village was taxed on the basis of ten years before, and by the utter futility of applying to Moslem law-courts for redress in these things. Is it remarkable that the Armenians began forming revolutionary societies in Paris, as far back as 1880? These societies—notably the Armenian Revolutionary Federation—aimed at the arming of their people and the creating of propaganda which would elicit European intervention. They secretly formed and armed regiments which drilled in the mountains. Over in Constantinople they just missed assassinating Abdul Hamid with a carriage load of bombs, and seized the foreign-owned Ottoman Bank, threatening to dynamite it—an affair which ended in massacre. And there are still those European observers—men who certainly have no reason to plead the Turk's cause—who say that the Armenian extremists of this period deliberately courted massacre as the only way of arousing intervention.

Finally, in 1913, the various European embassies appointed two inspectors to reside in Armenia; but under cover of the following year's general conflagration, Turkey set about eliminating the Armenian question, once and for all. "A national and historic necessity," was the defence of the *Ittihat Terraki* for what followed—a phrase which inevitably recalls that pronouncement of "military necessity" under which Germany ravaged Belgium.

The story of 1915's Bloody Trek is already familiar to Americans. That Turkish epithet, the *rayah*, or herd of cattle, becomes perfectly visualized as we watch the interminable columns of humanity being driven across the desert. But it is only since the armistice that some few gaunt survivors have returned to tell of the "herd's" ending at the slaughter-house of Der-el-Zor.

This Turco-Arabian town, situated ten days' journey beyond the rail-head in a shadeless, rock-strewn desert, with the slimy Euphrates oozing past, had been augmented up to July, 1916, by some 150,000 Armenians. They, the remnant of a million deportees, represented the survivors of those successive parties which had been

driven eastward during fifteen months. Huddled under tents of tattered blankets, existing on pounded date stones, and even washing their excrement in search of food particles, this ghastly crew of emaciated, half-nude wretches—comparable to the damned in some Dantean hell—sat day-long, dull-eyed and with parched lips and protruding tongues, awaiting the final act of their nation's tragedy. Presently the local governor, having failed to "lighten the Armenians"—as the telegraphic massacring-order ran—was replaced by one Salib Zeki Bey, a Circassian, and the *Ittihat Terraki's* specially picked man.

"Why do you suffer these Armenians to live among you?" he asked, upon arriving at Der-el-Zor. "They will monopolize your country; and therefore I have been sent here to attend to them." He gathered together five hundred Circassian *tchétés*—assassins—and four days later the public crier announced that all Armenians must evacuate the town. Day after day successive bands of a few thousand each were marched out on either side of the Euphrates and despatched by fire, sword, drowning, and live burial. In the killing of these wretched creatures, the massacres searched every part of their bodies for hidden jewels—even the gold dental work was removed from their mouths—and those who were supposed to have swallowed valuables were cut open and their intestines searched.

One young man, who escaped to tell his story, fled for a whole day and night through a continuous scene of after-massacre. There were pyramids of heads with human trunks surrounding them, the men's ears having been sliced off and their eyes gouged out. The women's stomachs were cut open; their severed heads hung by the hair from the tops of set up poles, and often to their slashed-off breasts there still clung a dead baby. The children had been cleft up the middle by one stroke, as if in a prefatory test of the sword's sharpness. The sexual mutilations were indescribable. Many of the men lay face downward, with two great transverse cuts across the back, suggestive of a cross. By day the refugee heard victims' cries resounding from far off in the desert, and by night his way was lit by distant flares which betokened some hecatomb of petroleum-soaked corpses. Once he passed a shrieking crowd of fugitives who, having escaped, had apparently gone hunger-crazed, and were tearing each other to pieces.

**R**EACHING the Euphrates, he swam, or rather climbed, through its blood-red waters, across a solid log-jamb of bodies. These victims had been tied together in groups of four, and cast in to drown. Wandering onward and living on grass for four days, he came upon a Der-el-Zor deportation-band of twelve thousand women and children, all absolutely naked, awaiting further orders. Presently Zeki Bey arrived.

"Do you save these wretches so that they may make known the massacres to the world?" he demanded of the *tchétés*. And accordingly the twelve thousand were butchered next day—Zeki Bey watching through his field glasses from a distance—and their petroleum-soaked bodies were burned that night, lighting the desert like a torch, as the fugitive fled onward.

Another survivor of Der-el-Zor—a young married woman who had buried her three children, one after another, during the deportation—describes being driven out into the desert amid a band of some two thousand Armenians. Soon a crowd of Circassian horsemen, dressed in white and armed with swords and daggers, galloped down the hills toward them. Their *hodja* (priest), having performed some kind of religious ceremony in front of his band, divided the waiting victims into two groups—men and all boys over eleven in one group, women and all children under eleven in the other. The men and boys were made to kneel and to repeat three times, “Long live the Sultan!” Then the horsemen dashed upon them with uplifted swords. There was a terrible outcry of groans and screams. Some of the women fainted, and the rest rushed blindly across the desert. Everywhere they came upon corpses. Some of these, locked in each other’s arms, had met death together. Dead mothers lay with dead babies still at their breasts. There was one great circle of men and women, who having first been bound, then buried upright in sand to their shoulders, had thus perished of hunger and thirst.

In the next few days these survivors saw band after band driven out of Der-el-Zor along the Euphrates’ opposite bank and massacred, while Zeki Bey watched from his balcony near by, smoking a cigarette and applauding the work. Then after two weeks, during which they lived on the flesh of the dead, and cleared spaces in the corpse-choked river to drink from, the women were rounded up, stripped naked, and divided among the Circassians—those not so chosen being thrown into deep pits to die. The narrator of this account was taken with three other Armenian girls to the tent of their master, who would return to them every night, bearing sacks of fresh victims’ clothing in his bloodstained hands. As he tired of the girls he sold them to other Circassians for five Turkish pounds and two camels apiece. The narrator lived a nomad life with him for a year and a half, then she managed to escape across the desert, and finally reached home.

THUS were Der-el-Zor’s 150,000 Armenians “lightened” in a few weeks. Some survivors claim that the massacre was accomplished in ten days, and that 50,000 people perished in one day alone. Those who took fright and fled the town doubtless perished in the wilderness, while to this hour there are thousands upon thousands of Armenian slave girls and young boys serving in their Circassian masters’ tents. Nothing in history—not even in the Armenians’ history—is comparable to this epic of horror. Der-el-Zor is the *Ittibat Terraki’s* bloody minaret of infamy.

And now, having murdered a million of its countrymen, the *Ittibat Terraki* proceed to milk the country itself. Food speculation had been bad enough throughout the war; but when things began to look ominous in 1917, the feverish selling and re-selling of staple foods and manufactured articles became a national gambling game, comparable to the South Sea Bubble. This game was run, of course, for the benefit of the Committee of Union and Progress, whose tactics were rapidly con-

centrating trade and commerce into Moslem hands. And, indeed, had the Central Powers won the war, this aspect of Pan-Turkism would have been a solidly established fact. With *Ittibat Terraki* members in charge of the food-control and the railways, the whole fruitful field of revictualment lay open to graft. Only those shippers who belonged to the Union and Progress were allowed freight cars—which is to say, that when a non-Moslem producer wished to forward his goods, he must either sell them to a Turk in the organization or else be prepared to pay big “backsheesh” to various Union and Progress railway officials. It is easy to see where the unfortunate consumer “got off” as the result of this procedure, nor is it surprising that in 1917 food prices suddenly leaped up five and tenfold. While bread was reduced in weight from 2.82 pounds to 2.2 pounds the loaf, it rose in price from six to thirty cents. It is true that the Government sold a small, daily loaf by card for nine cents—a chocolate-colored loaf consisting of just enough flour to amalgamate such adulterations as sawdust and macerated straw—but even this war-bread soon became subject to speculation, until to-day it sells on the streets for fifteen cents. Flour, costing the Government  $3\frac{1}{2}$  piastres (a piastre is worth  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cents) for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pounds, was retailed at 50 to 60 piastres; Austrian sugar, entering Turkey at 20 piastres, was sold at 250 to 300 piastres; and the Government’s payment-price of 15 piastres per kilo for gasolene became 250 to 260 piastres to the public.

BECAUSE of the blockade, all manufactured articles were undergoing a continuous, speculative turnover. A bale of rugs or a consignment of cotton goods, for instance, might be sold or resold half a dozen times without having ever been opened, much less displayed for retail sale. And now the Union and Progress stepped in once more—this time, apparently as a public benefactor—announcing that all such price-inflated goods must forthwith be transferred back to their respective manufacturers, to be put forth later at normal figures. So that Greek, Jewish, and Armenian merchants unloaded, thereby cleaning out their stocks; whereupon the invisible business partners of the Committee of Union and Progress cornered these same stocks through the manufacturers, then sold them exclusively to Turkish merchants. They, in turn, re-introduced the régime of speculation which, however, was now being run for the benefit of Union and Progress members, and not for non-Moslems.

Finally, having lined their pockets up to the very hour of Turkey’s crash, the *Ittibat Terraki’s* ringleaders retired gracefully from power. The Isset Pasha cabinet was formed, and overtures toward an armistice were begun. And when, in the early morning hours of November 13th, the Allied fleet came up through the fog-draped Bosphorus and set certain officials ashore, there was found only a disorganized government and a war-pinched and exploited people. For Talaat, Enver, Dr. Nazim, Bedri Bey, Ismail Hakki Pasha—these and the other big chiefs of Union and Progress bossism had fled Berlinward from the wrath to come.

It is most significant that, within three days of the



*Aintab—after the Turks had sacked it; once a large prosperous Armenian city*



*A family of Armenian refugees, with the calves they have saved, arriving at the Mount of Olives*

Armistice, the Government abolished all Union and Progress clubs throughout Turkey. But the *Ittibat Terraki* ringleaders had not decamped without first seeing to it that all records were destroyed and, thus far, in the trials of those officials who stand indicted with massacre or maladministration, the witnesses have revealed but feeble memories. Some fifty or sixty of the Union and Progress gang have been imprisoned, and it is said that the lists of those charged with various offences mount up into hundreds of names. The daily papers are filled with hysterical letters, urging all sorts of immediate, drastic reforms. In short, Turkey is intensely desirous of setting her house in order and of giving that house an immaculate coat of whitewash.

Meanwhile, in response to an official proclamation—I had almost said an amnesty—wretched groups of Greeks and Armenians are drifting back to what were once their homes. Herein they are being greatly helped by the American Committee for Relief in the Near East. Formerly known as the Armenian and Syrian Relief Committee, and founded as America's answer to the massacres of 1915, this body's representatives have maintained a splendid work among the deportees throughout the entire war. Up to 1919 they had disbursed some three and a half million dollars in aiding Turkey's persecuted subject races—this not-



Since the Armistice, the Turks in the remote districts of Asia Minor have continued the slaughter of the Armenian Christians. The massacre of these forty Armenians occurred in February, 1919

withstanding the severest handicaps and a complete lack of Turkish governmental cooperation.

As for the Armenians, it was just before the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in 1917 that they proclaimed the existence of an independent state in the Caucasus. With its 44,000 square kilometers, one and a half million people, and an army of 25,000, New Armenia consists of five small departments which are working toward liberal principles and a decentralized form of government. Its leaders confidently expect that many of the returning deportees will quit Old Armenia's blood-soaked soil forever, marshalling themselves in the Caucasus under the red, blue, and orange flag of recent adoption—all this, subject to the Peace Table's decisions.

Across the Bosphorus in Asiatic Turkey, chaos reigns and starvation is slaying its thousands daily. There is no coal—the Turkish miners immediately dropped work at the Armistice—and locomotive fuel is supplied by tearing down houses and up-rooting olive orchards for wood. (Houses may be rebuilt, but the newly-planted olive tree does not bear full crops until after fifteen years.) The returned deportees' possessions are in the despoilers' hands—their homes, their fields, and, many hundreds of miles away, their women. The Turkish Government has ordered the immediate release of all Armenians and Greeks now held in captivity. This is, of course, an emulative echo of General Allenby's orders in Palestine; and it is said that, upon the strength of a few judicious hangings at Bagdad, some five thousand captive women and children were produced in that city alone. Brigandage, too, is flourishing in Asia Minor, where various bands of army deserters—as many as 200,000 men, it is reported—have fortified themselves in mountainous strongholds from which they descend

periodically to pillage the towns, driving off livestock, pillaging houses, and holding citizens for ransom.

To that handful of Americans, who have kept the splendid work of Robert College and Constantinople College in being for these many months of the war, it was a thrilling moment when the first American food-ships, the *Western Plain* and the *West Mohammed*, came up the Golden Horn in mid-February, flying the Stars and Stripes. Hard upon these came other Yankee ships, one bearing the United States Food Commission, and another, Admiral Bristol and his staff—the first American admiral who has flown our colors in Constantinople since 1871. The Commission at once established warehouses, sent its investigators into the famine regions, and is now distributing American flour to wholesalers at cost price—a step which has effectually cut the ground under the food speculators.

And what are the net results? Of Prussian penetration there remain but some rapidly dwindling stocks of German goods, a few Turkish officials who still wear the gray, field-service uniform, and hard by St. Sophia, Wilhelm's imposing gift, known as the "Emperor's Fountain." If this last was supposed to have typified *Kultur's* revivifying flow through Islam's veins, the symbolism is now made perfect, for to-day the fountain no longer functions—it has run dry. And what of Turkish bossism? Having played its magnificent game through four centuries of sultans, it ends in a national orgy of blood and graft—a panic-stricken, greed-frenzied country tearing at its own vitals as the curtain falls. And when that curtain rises again—whatever the peace delegates are preparing behind it—we may be certain that barbarism will have vanished, and that betterment will await the Near East peoples.