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FIRST AID TO THE ALLIES
By Heber Blankenhorn

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OUR ARMENIAN ALLIES

BY CHARLES E. HUGHES

PROBABLY at no time in the history of the world have there been so many fatherless and motherless children as there are today. Tens of thousands, probably hundreds of thousands in Armenia, Syria, Caucasus, Persia, Mesopotamia and Palestine are not only without parents, but are without any strong parental government to give them the help and protection which orphan children of other lands enjoy.

American Consuls and missionaries cable the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief almost daily regarding the situation. One message from the Russian Caucasus pleads for the support of 10,000 children at an average expense of two dollars per month per child. Another from Tiflis

reports 40,000 children in one region waiting for an answer to a previous cablegram requesting help. Reports from other points indicate similar conditions. Among the many appeals it is possible for this committee to assume responsibility for only the most pressing cases, and it is upon these that the committee would focus the attention of the American people. Splendid help has been rendered the little ones in other lands, but these in Western Asia are no less human than those who have already been aided by American charity. It is the duty of Americans, as well as a privilege to respond to this great opportunity and keep alive the best civilization that Western Asia has developed.

All expenses of administration for

this relief are met privately so that every dollar sent to the committee is used directly by their agents in purchasing food for the needy who, according to the best advices and from audited reports, receive the full benefit of the funds sent them.

Out of the horror and nightmare thru which these people have passed comes the gratifying word that we can be of assistance; that our efforts will prove availing, and that we can share with these orphan children the bounty which we, as Americans, have enjoyed for years. The work done by this committee has been most unselfish and effective under conditions of great personal sacrifice. May America respond to their appeals.

New York City

MUST ARMENIA PERISH?

BY FRED P. HAGGARD

A rug merchant's shop on Madison Avenue is a long way from Turkey, but it proved to be an open window thru which I beheld Armenia's wo from a new angle. Recognizing the man's nationality, I ventured to express my interest in his people. His reaction was immediate and his trembling voice and moist eye led me to suspect that his feeling was not due simply to race loyalty. Yes, there was more and he would tell me his story.

"It was nearly thirteen years ago that I came to America with my little Armenian bride. Business opened favorably for me and I prospered. When the time came to celebrate our tenth wedding anniversary, we talked over different plans, but at last I said, 'I have it! Instead of a celebration here

The settling of the "Armenian Question" is a task for statesmen, but the feeding and rehabilitation of Armenia, which is being carried on by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, is a task for every man and woman in America.—THE EDITOR.

with presents, I will send you and the children back home. We will not tell the old folks. You will surprize them.' So in the fateful summer of 1914 they sailed. I confess I cried. It was hard to be separated for the first time from my dear ones, but what joy would come to the aged parents! And then," and the man bowed in agony, "came the war! They had just arrived at their

destination and I acted promptly, you may believe. The authorities at Washington were most kind. Thru the Embassy at Constantinople they located my wife and the children and forwarded money to them. I learned that my dear ones were well, but alas! I could not hear from them. More than two years have passed and still there is no personal letter, tho I am assured that they are still preserved. While they are not permitted to return, I have not lost hope that I shall see them again. But you can imagine my feelings in view of what I know is taking place all around them, that practically all the Armenians of the town where they are have been killed or driven away and that any day I may learn that they are no more—or worse!"

The haunting fear express by this one man rests like a nightmare upon thousands of Armenian homes in America, only in hundreds of cases the full story is known—their loved ones have perished or have been driven as exiles into the mountains or deserts, from which they may not live to return.

But Armenian homes are not the only ones in which anxiety and sorrow have found lodgment, as these are not the only people in Turkey who have suffered at the hands of the Turks. Syrians and Greeks have shared a like fate, and also the Jews who just now are seriously threatened in Jerusalem and its vicinity. It is estimated that more than one million Armenians, Syrians and Greeks, resident in the Sultan's dominions at the outbreak of the war, have been destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of others cannot be accounted for. Two and one half million are in a starving condition. A recent communication regarding one Syrian town of nearly 7000 people revealed the fact that eighty-five per cent of the population is missing. Hundreds of vil-



THE MISSIONARY SOUP KITCHENS HAVE SAVED MANY REFUGEES



"KASAB-KANA"—THE BUTCHER SHOP

A building in Erzincan where the Turks killed all Armenians unfit for hard labor

ages have been blotted out. Photographs show nothing but heaps of ruins and practically every pile contains the bones of the once happy dwellers.

The evident intention of the Turkish authorities was to exterminate these Christian races. "Turkey for the Turks" became a watchword of the leaders who thought it possible at last, once for all, while the powers were busily engaged elsewhere, to rid themselves of those who were so provokingly prosperous and who were, when harassed, able to secure sympathy from western nations.

The short sightedness of the Turks in this matter is almost incredible. While all other nations engaged in the war are doing everything in their power to conserve their resources, to anticipate the day of reconstruction, to train those made blind and lame by the war for later careers of usefulness, Turkey sets about the destruction of those of her own population upon whom alone she could depend for her commercial, mechanical and agricultural resources. For where the people dominant in numbers and authority were indolent, uneducated and non-progressive, these persecuted races of Christian ancestry were industrious, alert and eager for education. From their numbers were recruited the farmers, mechanics, merchants, lawyers, doctors and bankers of the empire. Turkey even went to the length of murdering Armenian and Syrian soldiers in her armies. Thousands of them perished miserably in their barracks. So it came about that "this once thriving and prosperous population; innocent, unoffending, industrious; possessor of homes, of business property, farms and gardens; living in comfort and in many cases in affluence, were suddenly stripped of all possessions, driven from their homes and left to wander in the interior, or to find

such livelihood as they could obtain in places already overcrowded and among people to whom they were strangers and where their coming seriously complicated an already well-nigh insoluble food problem."

Not Belgium, Serbia nor Poland has suffered as Armenia and Syria have suffered. In a history covering more than two thousand years, the last six hundred of which have been marked by almost constant persecutions, they have now reached the lowest depth of misery, want and woe. A catalog of the methods of torture and of extermination leaves little room for the imagination. Hundreds of authenticated cases under each of these various forms could be given. There was that finer play of "requisition." Receipts may or may not have been given, but never money.

One missionary telling of the gratitude of many Mohammedans for what the missionaries had done for their people, related how one Kurdish chieftain came secretly in the middle of a dark night to his besieged mission filled with refugees, to escort twelve girls from fourteen to seventeen years of age whom he had rescued from a gang of his fellows. While not a Christian, he "could not endure to see them destroyed."

This case was typical of many, for the rank and file of the people lived together in friendly, neighborly fashions without much thought of their religious or social differences. It will be recalled that one of the most striking features of the inauguration of the Young Turk movement in 1908 was the spontaneous and natural outbreak of joy on the part of all the people that at last it was possible officially and by law to mingle freely. Christians, Jews and Moslems embraced one another, drove in triumph thru the streets together and sat down at the same table in harmonious councils. This state of affairs exhibited the real spirit and attitude of the people. It represents their present disposition. Cruel autocracy has for the time triumphed over the better human instincts and practically compelled a reign of terror which naturally draws together the weak, the depraved, the murderous of all classes to prey upon the innocent and helpless.

When it came to the application of force there was nothing lacking—beating to death, torture by pulling out the finger nails or the hair, the cutting off of the tongue, nose or ear, and other nameless cruelties. Naturally the women and girls suffered most. Some escaped life in a harem by self destruction, while Dr. Clarence S. Ussher tells of an instance in which a father shot in turn his wife and daughters and then turned the weapon upon himself—all to prevent a worse fate.

Thousands died in massacres. Favorite methods were literal butchery,



"WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN AND WOULD NOT BE COMFORTED"

burial alive and burning. To consummate the latter a house would be selected, the doors and windows fastened up, a hole made in the flat roof thru which the hapless people would be thrown until the house was filled. Buckets of oil were then poured over the struggling mass and the match applied.

Naturally there were some forced conversions to Mohammedanism, for this step always secured immunity with promise of food, clothing and shelter. An interesting sidelight on this question was thrown by a letter recently received from an American at the headquarters of the Armenian and Syrian Relief Committee. The writer argued that the committee should urge wholesale denial of faith by the Armenians to save further trouble! But these people are not built that way. They have martyr's blood in their veins. In the case of many whose conversion was sought, days and even weeks elapsed while persuasive powers were employed to secure a change of heart. In all cases of ultimate failure of the proselyters, however, death or expulsion followed. The latter usually resulted in death since, even in the case of women, they were stripped absolutely naked and driven out to find shelter in the sand or among the rocks, foraging for food after nightfall, when their shame would be mercifully covered.

That which has distinguished the persecutions of this period from the many that have preceded it has been the deportations. The testimony regarding these is full and unimpeachable, including the report of Lord Bryce to Lord Grey, 1916. While it has been difficult to bring photographs out of the country enough are in existence to eliminate even the shadow of a doubt. First and last the deportations combined the cruelties of all the other methods mentioned. "Military necessity" was said to require concentration, so that populations of whole villages and towns and the residents of the Christian quarters of great cities were ordered to move. At first every courtesy was shown, the people were in



THE ALLIES' CONTROL BRINGS RELIEF IN THE STRIPED AREAS OF THIS MAP, BUT MILLIONS ARE BEING STARVED AND MASSACRED TODAY IN THE DOTTED PORTION, WHERE THE TURKS HOLD POWER

many instances given time to pack up their belongings and even place them in carts. Guards were supplied, and then the caravans started. As a rule the men were left behind or otherwise separated from the women and children. So far as known few of these caravans reached their destinations. Individuals managed to escape, but the others suffered robbery, pollution, exhaustion, starvation, death by the roadside. After months the bleaching bones of these travelers may be seen along the main highways and the

next to the Russian border—thousands escaped, in some cases under the protection of Russian soldiers who had come to the rescue. But even in these instances there was untold suffering. Many died, children were born on the road and, perhaps saddest of all, thousands of orphans are left to bear testimony to the sacrifice of mothers and fathers on the way.

Gruesome as this recital has been, not half the story has been told. Letters, pamphlets, photographs, reports and books by eye witnesses and investigators lie before me in profusion as I write. But further draft upon these sources is unnecessary. The case is established. Armenia's centuries-long persecution has reached its climax. Flesh and blood cannot endure more.

Is there any hope? Can the remnant be saved? Hope lies in the spirit of the race which, but for that, would long ago have become extinct. Even in those who still survive amid the scenes of their desolation that spirit remains unbroken. Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of the sons and daughters of Armenia and Syria, now living in western lands, comprise a fellowship whose love and loyalty have not failed and will not fail. These people will live. Their waste places will be rebuilt.

But while diplomats and statesmen are working on a solution of the "Armenian Question," and without doubt it will, this time, be a final and satisfactory solution, the duty of America is clear. It must feed the starving millions, it must get ready to rehabilitate them when the war is over. It is a gigantic but worthy task. Its accomplishment is entirely within our power.

New York City

