

STORIES OF HORRIBLE ATROCITIES

COME FROM ARMENIAN GIRLS

Deported from Their Homes and Led to Virtual Captivity or Slavery in the Camps of Turks, or Held Captives in Turkish Harems in Asia Minor—With the Signing of the Armistice the Women Were Turned Into the Streets Believing That by so Doing the Turks Could Escape Punishment.

New York, May 31.—Stories told by Christian women and girls of Armenia who were deported from their homes, led to virtual captivity or slavery in the camps of the Turks, Circassians and Arabs or held captives in Turkish harems in Asia Minor have been received here by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief. The statement issued by the committee says that the women whose narratives are made public were rescued by their masters or rescued by Allied troops.

"After the signing of the armistice," says the committee's statement, "many of the Turks, believing that by so doing they could escape punishment, turned the women—many of them with babies—into the streets. Telegrams to the committee have reported that numbers of these women were wandering about the country, preyed by starvation and exposure. As far as possible they are being gathered up by the committee's relief workers and placed in homes established for their care. A late telegram said that fifteen such homes have been established in Asia Minor."

Stories of these Armenian victims of Turkish atrocity were obtained by Dr. Loyola L. Wirt, member of an expedition sent to Turkey by the committee. They are taken down as related by Dr. W. A. Kennedy, Field Director of the Lord May's Relief Fund of London. After taking them down, Dr. Kennedy assured Dr. Wirt, he personally reread the affidavits to the narrators and they signed them in his presence.

Together these tales constitute one of the tragic chapters of the war. They were not isolated cases but in some instances the experiences of as many as 5,000 refugees who had been driven from their homes and forced on journeys of hundreds of miles from fertile Armenia into the borders of the Syrian desert. On the way hundreds at a time were separated and massacred often in the most diabolical way.

Hundreds of girls were torn from the other members of their family and taken none knows where by the Turks, Kurds or Circassians. Scores were compelled to live in the open for months and suffering from sunburns and beatings. Armenian girls who escaped death were bartered like cattle. After their fathers or relatives had vainly paid ransom for them. Some saw their fathers or friends murdered. In the tents of the Arabs in the Syrian desert many were bound and forcibly tattooed on the forehead, lips and chin to mark them as Moslem women.

Generally, the stories indicate that the captives were moved sometimes in large groups from Armenia southward toward the desert of Syria. The stories told by at least three Armenian Christian girls deal with the movement of one of these groups consisting of 3,000 families or 3,000 persons. One story of this awful journey into the desert was told by Takouhi Guezekuchukian, a girl of eighteen who with her father, mother, four sisters and a brother was deported from Hadjin, in Adana province, in May, 1915. They were moved southward to Aleppo and thence further on toward the Syrian desert until the party numbered about 2,000 families. At Sivaria, she said, they were told that on payment of \$500 Turkish liras they would be allowed to return.

"The refugees said they could not give this amount," the Armenian girl told Dr. Kennedy, "then the Circassians of the tribe of Chechens who had control of them separated out 1,100 of the poorer families and took them away. The same evening some of these people returned and said they had escaped and that four hours after they left, the Chechens had begun to

kill them with iron-studded clubs. The remaining families raised 1,500 pounds and sent a deputation of fifty-two men with it to buy their security. The amount was refused and the men were beaten and sent back.

"They raised an additional 500 liras and took 2,000 Turkish pounds in gold to the Circassian boys who took the money and tried to force them to sign a paper saying the Armenians had paid no money to them. The deputation refused to do this and the fifty-two men were bound and taken away."

A few days later, according to the girl's story, the remaining families were deported from Sivaria and after eight days arrived at Shedadih, on the river Harour east of Deir-Es-Zor.

"On the way," the girl's story went on, "150 men were separated and taken away and soon after the Circassians returned and divided among themselves some of the clothing which she recognized as belonging to some of the men which they had taken away. The next day 300 more men were taken away and killed." As the refugees resumed their journey on the following morning she saw the bodies of some of the men she knew. They had been clubbed to death.

A few days after this, reads the narrative, "they were told that for safety each family of women and children was to go to the house of an Arab. The Arabs robbed them and stripped them of their clothing and sent them back to the Circassians who commenced at once to kill them with knives, women and children, about 150 in all. Twenty-two boys and 11 girls were saved and taken to the tents of the Circassians and she was taken with her sister to the village of Gurbeller where she was beaten because she did not give them gold they believed she had."

After having been kept a while by a Circassian who and her sister were sent to another Chechen and then to the house of another Circassian in Shegrash. She is now in the orphanage at Aleppo and her sister is in an Armenian house in Nusebin.

Other incidents evidently dealing with this terrible journey of the Armenians to Shedadih were related to Dr. Kennedy by Araxa Barutjian, a girl of seventeen who was a pupil in the American girl's school at Adia Bazar, in the western portion of Asia Minor near Constantinople. She spoke English. "At Shedadih," the narrative says, "she saw a party of 300 men, women and children all naked. It was in July and their backs had been blistered by the sun and many of them had bruises all over their limbs and bodies and sores caused by the beatings they had received. During the heat of the day they would lie covered in the water as the pain in the sun was unbearable."

"Before she arrived at Shedadih, two of her brothers died at Bab and her father at another place. As the Arabs were taking only unmarried girls from among the refugees, her mother told them she was married. At Shedadih her mother was sold to one Arab and she to another and the girl lived in his house for a year.

"She ran away and an Arab girl took her into a tent where she stayed for eighteen months when she again ran away and finally reached Nusebin. This journey from Adia Bazar across Asia Minor to Deir-Es-Zor occupied a year and a half, according to the story told by another girl of seventeen years, Arpench Der Harutunian, daughter of a teacher in a high school at Bardizag, a bright intelligent girl whose family was known to Dr. Kennedy. Reporting her story of the journey Dr. Kennedy wrote:

"Her grandfather was killed before

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her eyes and she was between 200 and 300 men shot and cut down by the sword. These men were bound in groups of ten, arms up. She saw at the same place women and children killed with iron-studded clubs or knives. The boatmen and set on fire. This was done by Chechen Circassians on the side of a hill near Shedadih with their rifles.

"After 100 young Armenian men who dressed as girls were discovered and put to death by the Chechens. One of these was flayed alive and thrown into the river Harour."

"After this the Circassians would not allow them to get food and two weeks later they were sent to Sivaria. Marjan Gamsushlian bribed the Chechens not to send them further into the desert. Arpench was taken to the tent of an Arab and kept for eight months when she escaped with the assistance of her younger brother. During her stay, Arpench moved from place to place as the Arabs changed the tents for better pasturage for their camels. She was firmly bound and held to the ground by Turkish soldiers while her face was being tattooed. The family was united afterward with the exception of the father who disappeared at Deir-Es-Zor."

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ASQUITH RAPS LORD FRENCH

Says His Plans, Before Kitchener Visited France, Would Have Been a Blow to That Nation.

London, June 3.—Herbert M. Asquith, who was Premier at the outbreak of the war, replying in a speech, today, to criticism made by Viscount French, the first commander of the British forces in France, in a book concerning the government in the early days of the war, said that prior to the visit to France of Earl Kitchener, the intended movements of Lord French had filled the cabinet with consternation. The movement, the former Premier said, would have had, in the judgment of the cabinet, the effect of leaving the French army in the lurch in the moment of supreme need.

YAQUI INDIANS CAUSE WORRY

State Dept. at Washington Requests Mexican Authorities to Send Troops to the Yaqui Valley to Protect Lives.

Washington, June 3.—Reports of disturbed conditions in the Yaqui Valley in Sonora, have caused the State Department through the American embassy in the city of Mexico to request the Mexican authorities to station a sufficient number of troops in that section of the country to safeguard American lives and property.

FRANCE RIDDEN BY STRIKERS

Over 500,000, of Whom 200,000 Are in the Metal Trades, Are on Strike.

Paris, June 3.—There are at present 500,000 persons on strike in France, according to an estimate by the newspaper La Verite. Of these 200,000 are in the metal trades in the Paris section.

NORTHERN CANADA SEES PROHIBITION MAY BECOME HUGE PRODUCER OF FOOD

Gov't Considers Scheme for Growing of Reindeer and Musk Ox Herds.

Ottawa, May 30.—The Canadian government is giving serious consideration to a scheme outlined by Vilharmur Stefansson, the famous explorer, for converting the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions of Canada into a vast wool, milk and meat producing country. Mr. Stefansson recently addressed a gathering of members of the Senate and House of Commons on this question and so keen has been the interest aroused that a favorable announcement from the government is expected very soon. The Stefansson scheme involves the introduction of large herds of reindeer into the far north of Canada and the domestication and development of large herds of musk ox. Both these animals have about large herds of reindeer into the far north of Canada and the domestication and development of large herds of musk ox. Both these animals have about large herds of reindeer into the far north of Canada and the domestication and development of large herds of musk ox.

Food for Animals All Year. The members of both Houses were greatly surprised when Mr. Stefansson told them that climatic conditions in the Far North were such that both summer and winter there was an abundance of nutritious food for grazing animals.

Mr. Stefansson recalled that about twenty years ago the United States government introduced 120 domestic reindeer into arctic Alaska. The sole aim in doing this was to give the Eskimo a possibility of economic independence. Few expected the enterprise to succeed, but under Eskimo care these animals have increased at the rate of doubling every three years, and the few animals in the hands of white men are found to double every two years, due to better care.

When the American government gave reindeer to the Eskimo, explained Mr. Stefansson, each Eskimo was made to promise he never would sell a female reindeer to a white man, the object of the government being to promote the economic welfare of the Eskimo. But it was found necessary to get several dozen Laplanders in the Arctic to take the care of the reindeer, and these Laplanders were allowed to own reindeer herds. The Laplanders recently sold practically all their reindeer to American capitalists, who now own about fifteen thousand deer. This company last year sold on the American market the best fifteen hundred carcases of reindeer meat at a price ranging from five cents to fifteen cents a pound in excess of the current price for corresponding cuts of domestic beef.

As an illustration of development possibilities Mr. Stefansson said that the 150,000 square miles of grazing lands in Alaska were capable of sustaining seven million reindeer, producing as much as meat annually as fourteen million sheep, or the present present market production of all the settled portion of Canada. But as compared with Alaska, Canada has about two million square miles of territory entirely suitable for reindeer grazing. One of the many misconceptions of the North, said Mr. Stefansson, was that vegetation consisted of nothing but mosses and lichens. "I have spent ten years north of the Arctic circle," said he, "on the mainland of Alaska, the mainland of Canada, and in most of the Canadian islands, and in all places visited by me grasses are more abundant than mosses or lichens." This fact stated of nothing but mosses and lichens.

To begin with, this is the only animal of importance of which Canadians have a monopoly. In the United States Indians and the Eskimos, as they also have been in all the settled portions of Canada and Greenland.

Musk Ox Meat Like Beef. "So far, as I know," said Mr. Stefansson, "members of my expedition are the only white men who have ever lived on terms of intimacy with the musk ox which about three times as much as beef. Through occasionally killing a cow in milk we found that the milk has the same taste as cow's milk, being about one-half as abundant in quantity, but somewhat richer in cream or butter fat. The

GRAPE GROWERS' COUNSEL SAYS DAY IS FAR OFF WHEN IT WILL BE EFFECTIVE.

San Francisco, June 2.—The day when the Sheppard amendment making the United States bone-dry shall take effect is regarded by Theodore A. Bell, attorney for the California Grape Protection Association and directing the referendum fight against prohibition, as so indefinite it cannot be fixed in the vista of coming events.

"The referendum having been invoked in 11 states," says Bell, "operates as a suspension of ratification of the Federal amendment which cannot now take effect until two of these states have approved the measure. The referendum has been invoked in California, Washington, New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Missouri, Ohio, Arizona, Michigan and Maine, thus reducing the number of states where the action of ratification by the legislatures is final to 24, or two less than the number required to put the amendment into effect."

"Until elections have been held in these states and at least two of them have voted for ratification, there can be no valid ratification of the 18th amendment. The only one of these 11 states in which an election will be held this year is Ohio, and she will undoubtedly reject the amendment. The next state to vote will be Maine, in September, 1920. We confidently expect to carry that state."

"Should the Prohibitionists succeed in winning two of the referendum states at the general election, the dry amendment would go into effect some time in November, 1921, providing no further steps are taken to defeat it; it being provided that the amendment shall not take effect until one year after ratification."

There would then remain the legal questions to be determined by the courts, such as the point that the Tenth Amendment specifically reserves to the states the police powers, and that no amendment stripping the states of these powers can be adopted until a single state dissents. Three states have refused to ratify—New Jersey, Delaware and Rhode Island."

Bell says the country is only just beginning to appreciate the significance of the movement to compel a popular vote on National Prohibition in the states. He refuses to comment upon what may happen to the general subject matter of the referendum in the elections and legal proceedings are pending, but the wise men of California entertain the belief that the upshot will be a measure which will be effective making effective suggestions of President Wilson for the last six months of this year and saving wicks and waxes.

"In the meantime," Bell says, "it will be interesting to listen to those who have been prating about the rights of the people against the right of the public to vote on a proposition of stripping the states of the fundamental rights reserved to them by the express terms of the Federal Constitution."

Musk ox weighs about three times as much as our domestic sheep, and a lot of wool of excellent quality and yields a fleece about three times the weight of that of the sheep. Woolen manufacturers have pronounced the wool high grade and state it would make the finest quality of woolen goods.

"We have them in the musk ox an animal three times the size of our domestic sheep, that produces three times as much wool, two or three times as rich milk and two or three times as much meat. When we realize that these animals need no bars to shelter them, no hay to feed them and no care or coddling of any kind, and when we know from their habits that it has been man who has driven the rest of Northern Canada, it becomes evident that, should we have the right, we can raise them in all the far range to our great profit. There are, we estimate, about four thousand musk ox on Melville Island and perhaps ten or twenty thousand on the various other Canadian Islands. These numbers are small, of course, but are comparatively ample for breeding purposes. If we take up the domestication of these animals and do it on a large scale, and if we take up the reindeer as well, we shall, through these two animals, within the next twenty-five years convert Northern Canada from a land of practically no value into a great and permanent wool, milk and meat producing country, the greatest of the western hemisphere."



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