



Refugee "Homes" in Tents in the Mountain Villages of Macedonia

The Tragedy of the Near East

A million and a quarter people—the ancient Christian population of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace—have been uprooted from their homes. They have lost all their possessions. They have left behind their able-bodied men, as corpses or as captives. After weeks and sometimes months of agonized wandering, they have at last found refuge in Greece.

Today, in Greece, one person out of every five is a refugee. Nearly one million people are still without adequate means of support, and more than half of these are children. "It is always the children that are ground in the mills of international disputes," Mr. Hoover has truly said.

Here is a typical story of a woman refugee, named Panayota Kostoura, from Aidin in Asia Minor:

"During the first fighting that occurred in 1919, her mother-in-law was killed by a shell and her feeble father-in-law burnt alive in the fire that destroyed the greater part of Aidin. Her husband lost most of his property at the same time. . . . After the final disaster in 1922, she herself, her son a boy of seven, and her mother fled to Smyrna, arriving there at the same time as the Turks. With a number of other refugees they hid in the big Orthodox Cemetery, where they were shortly after discovered by a party of looters, who robbed them of their money and all objects of any value. Her husband was carried off and she was knifed in the back for having hidden some valuables on her person. She lay where she had fallen until a landing party of British sailors carried her off to safety. I may add she was pregnant.

"On arriving at Volo she was lodged in an old fowl house (where she still lives), and there gave birth to a child which died forty days later from exposure. This woman has suffered from stone for some time past and is quite unable to work. She is burdened with her aged mother and little boy. Charity has so far kept them alive. The boy is just recovering from malaria, and is in an appalling state. He is anaemic, and has a swollen spleen."