

some other place work was at a standstill for lack of men. One could not write, or read, or talk, except at his majesty's gracious pleasure. And in this everybody was at the mercy of a host of villains—the secret police. A man was once seized and his papers—business letters and accounts—were taken from him. Later a sealed envelope was brought to him and he was asked to sign it, in token that it contained his papers. This he refused to do and therefore he was beaten. Then he was taken to court and the envelope opened in his presence. It did in reality contain his papers, and he admitted as much. But between the leaves of a note-book was found an incriminating document inserted by the police who first examined his papers, and now attributed to him. It was vain to protest innocence, and he went to gaol to swell the number of political “offenders” because he was not rich enough to pay the “baksheesh” which would have freed him from the blackmail. And in these prisons—herded together with criminals of the worst sort, living on bread and water unless the gaoler could be bribed to admit “luxuries,” sleeping on straw mattresses which crawled with vermin of all sorts, not allowed to read or to engage in any labor to pass the time, the political “offenders” spent years. And to this were added light punishments or fiendish torture at the caprice of the gaolers, until the political amnesty set the prisoners free. It is true that the opening of the prison gates freed many real offenders, political and criminal; but it may be safely said that the majority of prisoners were innocent, while the most heinous criminals vaunted themselves as the protectors of the peace.

Under such conditions discontent was natural. That this discontent should show itself in revolutionary movements was also natural. And that in the existing circumstances a successful revolution was hopeless—utterly hopeless—seemed to be true. Nothing awaited Turkey but lingering death. And the European vultures hovered around and had already perched upon the quivering victim. It needed but this to arouse Turkey to a manifestation of life which has astounded the world. We in this land have not yet recovered our balance and wander about dazed and almost unbelieving. But it is true!

The success of the revolution was assured months ago when nearly every soldier in the second army corps in Macedonia had sworn fidelity to the constitution—the constitution drawn up by Mihdat Pacha thirty odd years ago, but doomed then to a life of only two years. An active propaganda had also been carried on among the soldiers and educated civilians in the Asiatic provinces. So secretly and so successfully was this propaganda carried on that the whole structure on which Abdul Hamid's tottering throne rested, was undermined, while he—the worst victim of his own tyranny—in supposed security continued his diplomatic game with the representatives of the foreign powers, themselves equally ignorant of the immense change going on.

It was my fortune to be going to Constantinople by the morning train on Saturday, the twenty-fifth day of July. At Ismidt, early in the morning, we were told that a constitution had been proclaimed. The Turkish papers were responsible for the news. That it really meant anything—at least that it meant any good for the Armenians—we did not believe, for only the initiated knew what had been done. As we neared Constantinople, newsboys crowded the stations and sold