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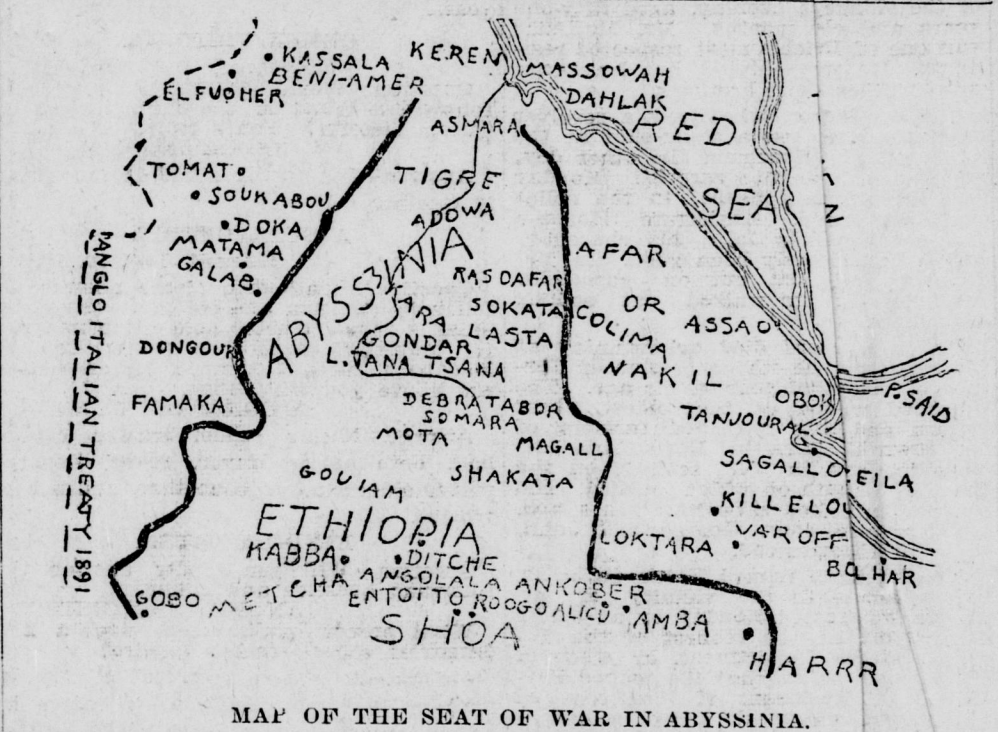
**THE WILD KURD.****A Returned Missionary's Interesting Story.****THEY ARE A WILD PEOPLE.**

Religious Fanatics Who Pray and Plunder—Their Mode of Living—A Border Country of Rocks and Mountains Harbors Them—Armenian Massacres Are No New Thing.



R. E. T. Allen, of this city, who for the past five years has been laboring in the mission field in the border between Turkey and Persia, or what is generally termed Kurdistan, gave an interesting lecture to the Y. P. S. C. E. of the Centennial Methodist Church Monday evening, describing the habits and customs of the Kurds, to whom so much attention has lately been called, on account of the numerous massacres of Christians in Armenia by these wild, reckless tribes. The attention of the Christian church at large was to-day centred in Turkey and Kurdistan, he said, and her sympathies were with the Christians inhabiting those districts. These Christians were being persecuted more than any people anywhere in the world. Repeated journeying among the Kurds has made one familiar with their ways and manners. The Kurds are a wild, reckless race, inhabiting the lofty range of mountains that runs from the Black Sea southward to the Persian Gulf, forming the boundary between Turkey and Persia, and what is geographically termed Kurdistan. They are a tall, athletic race, numbering about 3,000,000 souls, and are much like the Arab Bedouins, who infest the plains of Arabia. They live in tribes somewhat like the American Indians, and like them are always at war with one another. They have never been more than partially subjected to any of the ancient empires that once ruled around them, and to-day only those tribes who inhabit the foot hills of the mountains, on the western side, are fully subjected to the Turkish rule, and those who inhabit the low-lying hills on the east side to the Persian rule. They have no constitution or code of laws by which to govern themselves, but the Sheikh, or chief, of each tribe has almost absolute power over his people. Many tribes dwell in tents and roam about the mountains finding the best pasture lands. They come up from the low land pastures during the heat of summer to pasture their flocks and herds, where the melting snows keep the grass fresh and green. Their outfit is very simple, some camel's hair cloth, similar to what our potato bags are made of, spread over short poles stuck in the ground at irregular distances, form their tents. There are no sides to the tents, and inside a similar piece of cloth laid on the ground is the only protection they have from the damp earth. No other furniture adorns the tents, unless it be a few earthen jars, in which water, soured milk and other necessities are kept. A tripod supporting a suspended skin, wherein milk is churned into curds, of which they are very fond, is found outside the tent. A few pieces of stone serve as a fire place, and a copper kettle is all that is needed in which to cook their food. Furniture of all kinds, including knives and forks and spoons, are considered by them to be a nuisance, and a good dagger, sword or spear, a rifle or revolver, is more highly prized. An innumerable host of savage dogs are always lying around the tents, waiting for any intruder. Other tribes live in villages built of sun-dried mud or rough stones, with general view of the purpose of mortar. Generally, these villages are built high up on the side of the mountain, in the most rocky and inaccessible place; for two reasons, firstly, because arable lands are scarce among those rocky hills, and all that can be cultivated is needed for the subsistence of the villagers, and secondly, because a place as secure and defensible as a place as possible when they are raided by rival tribes. The villages are built as compactly as possible, all the houses being connected. In fact, the village, when built on a level, is one large house with division walls to separate the different families, except when it is very large, when it is one narrow, winding lane divides it in two parts. The houses are all one story, half of which is dug out of the earth, and the other half built above the ground, except that of the Sheikh, which is generally somewhat better than those of his subjects. They are all flat-roofed, and frequently they are built in terraces on the side of the mountain, the lower roofs forming yards or roadways for the houses above. Most of the work, and gossiping, too, is done on the roofs. Here the "white beards," or those men who have grown too old to participate in the raids or plundering expeditions, sit and discuss the plans of the younger braves as they make ready to proceed on their errand of pillaging the villages or caravans. Often four or five generations occupy the same room, with their cattle and sheep. There are no windows for ventilation in these rooms, but a small, round hole in the centre of the roof serves the purpose of both window and chimney. A hole in the floor about 18 inches in diameter and 3 inches deep, immediately under the hole in the roof, is where all the cooking is done, with dried manure as fuel. A huge wooden door is hung on heavy wooden pivots, and creaks as it swings back and forth. A correspondingly large wooden lock, opened by a wooden key, is the only way of securing the house against thieves. They have no title deeds to the lands they occupy but those of custom and

force. As there are no laws for the protection of life and property, the men and boys are always armed with daggers, spears or rifles—which are rapidly taking the place of the old flint-locks, which missed fire as often as they were fired. Carrying a belt of cartridges around the waist and one over either shoulder, boys and girls alike are taught to ride, almost as soon as they can walk. And their excellent horsemanship, and pride themselves upon their wild, reckless riding. When they begin to train their horses when they are about two years old, they ride their wily steeds up and down the steep hills and among the rocks and loose stones at full speed, and again, going at a dead run, they rein them up so suddenly as to throw them on their haunches. Sitting in their saddles and holding a spear at arm's length, stuck in the ground, they will gallop their horses around it for several revolutions, and then turning suddenly, dart off at right angles, to go through the same performance a short distance away. Probably the majority of the Kurds live peacefully on the income from their fields of work. But not a few of them live by plundering travellers and caravans. These robbers, well armed with daggers, spears or rifles, mass themselves in the narrow valleys, or hide themselves among the huge rocks along the caravan routes, and when a caravan passes will suddenly sweep down upon it, yelling at the top of their voices and shooting their rifles, making the hearts of the travellers quake with fear, while they carry off their merchandise, slaying the men if they offer any resistance. Likewise they plunder Christian villages, or those of rival Kurdish tribes. Lurking around the village until the inhabitants have gone to sleep (which they do in the summer on the roofs, and in the winter in the same room with their cattle), they quietly surround the village and begin firing off their rifles. The people, terror-stricken, having no arms at hand, seek safety among the rocks, leaving their herds and houses in the hands of the robbers. If the inhabitants offer any resistance they are shot down like game. A short time before I left Persia, not less than seven Kurdish villages, just a short distance from our hotel, were destroyed by a tribe of Kurds living just on the border between Persia and Turkey. We could see the fires caused by the burning of the newly-harvested crops, and hear the firing of the rifles. The women, as wild as the men, join with them in plundering villages or caravans. They do not as a rule take part in the actual fighting, but follow along behind the men with the beasts of burden and carry off the plunder as fast as it can be loaded on their animals. They are sometimes left at home to protect their own villages, as I realized one day last summer when I reached a village from which all the men had gone pillaging, and the women—furious at their guard—told me to "go," setting their dogs on me and sending a volley of stones after me. The men take charge of the herds and drive them up the hills under the protection of their rifles. Often the villagers, being apprised of danger, sleep with their arms close by, and a pitched battle ensues, causing the death of both sides. In such cases the villagers generally get the best of it, having the great advantage of being able to fire at the enemy from their roofs. Bands of these Kurdish robbers are all the time plundering and destroying villages along the border line between Persia and Turkey. When pressed by the Persians they flee into Turkey, where they remain quiet for a time. Then when the Persians have forgotten the old score, they plunder a few Turkish villages and flee back to Persia when pressed by the Turks. So the border between these two countries is continually in a turmoil. One of the most noted of modern Kurdish robbers was Hessa, who lived with his raids and depredations were such that the Turks finally made an attempt to catch him. He, with twenty brave followers, laughed to scorn all such attempts. They knew every path on the mountains and every rock, and while the Turkish army during the day kept up the pursuit, he hid himself among the slip rocks. At night they would slip down from their hiding place surprise the soldiers before they were fully aware of what had occurred. Hessa and his men had secured the provisions they needed, and were on their way up the mountain again. At one time Hessa and sixteen followers, coming by night to a Persian fort, surprised the watchmen and setting a guard over them. They mounted the roof of the fort and commenced firing down into it. The soldiers were panic-stricken, and before they could grasp the situation, Hessa ordered them out one by one, disarmed and robbed the one, disarmed and robbed the other, and sent them home. Finally, hard pressed by them, he took refuge with the Chief Mushahed, or High Priest, of the Persian religion, near Baghdad, who interceded for him to the King. He was made an officer, salaried, and put back in his old home to watch and keep in order other less fortunate Kurds. They are devoted to



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thing, for those countries have been drinking the blood of Christians ever since the sixth century when Mohammed raised the sword and said that by it he would make his religion the universal faith. These massacres are nothing more than a religious crusade against the Christians, and the Sultan knows it, but does not care to stop it, for it is not to his advantage. There are to-day hundreds of thousands of Christians starving to death in these districts, and unless help comes speedily from Christian England and America they will all perish. Have the Christians of this city no heart to help in this matter?

Mr. Allen was accorded a hearty vote of thanks by the society.

their religion, indeed would put to shame many siled Christians in that respect. So are they in their superstition and kness, that they are doing good, they never go out on these plundering expeditions before going through their devotions, which consists in aimless forms of standing, bending, kneeling and kissing a piece of hearth from the city of Mecca, in bla. And their prayer at such a time "In the name of God, the merciful and shower and doer of mercy, we forth to slay those infidels (Christians)." Their hatred of Christians thus defies our imagination. The Mohammedan religion took its rise between 550 and 600 A. D., and was founded by its founder, Mohammed, who excelled Christianity. He thought the Christians would gladly welcome the change and the privileges accord to the adherents of the new faith which he called "Islam," and which was resignation to the will of God, but when he found that they still adhered to the old faith and that his wily and lustful religion, false on that of it, could not lure them away anger knew no bounds, and his dvers were allowed to plunder and pillage Christians and their villa. More than that, they had set forth them, to urge them on to this, four-fifths of all the plunder, Paradise if they should be killed in the combats. These Armenian massacres are no new

MAP OF THE SEAT OF WAR IN ABYSSINIA.

THE THIRD MEMBER.

Baltimore, Md., Dec. 30.—Hon. Richard H. Alvey, Chief Justice of the United States Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia, has been requested by President Cleveland to become a member of the Venetian Commission. The proposition took Judge Alvey by surprise, and he begged for time to consider the matter before committing himself. The President granted, and Judge Alvey now has the matter under consideration. He is at his home in Hagerstown, Md., and will be until his court meets on the first Monday in January. Last evening Judge Alvey said he had not fully made up his mind whether he would accept or not. Because of his heavy judicial duties, and for other good reasons he hesitated about immediately accepting the President's offer. He is forty-four years of age, and has been in the District of Columbia, has been requested by President Cleveland to become a member of the Venetian Commission. 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