

THE RELIEF OF ARMENIA.*

The situation in Armenia is simply appalling ! No words can describe the suffering which these Christians in the land of the Turk are experiencing daily and hourly. In the dead of winter, wounded and weak and weary, many of them without homes or even a place of shelter from the wintry blasts, barefooted and almost naked in the snow, they are likewise perishing from hunger by thousands. All Christendom has been thrilled with horror at tales of robbery, rape, and murder, which has been heaped upon innocent and defenseless men, women, and children. In a single province a Moslem official underestimates the total killed as nearly 40,000 men, women, and children ; of these 30,000 were murdered outright, and 10,000 perished in their burning homes. Besides this deaths from cold and hunger (in the one province of Harpoot, remember) number about 10,000 more. Women violated and abused in unspeakable ways number nearly 6000, and those forcibly circumcised (converted to Islam) are over 15,000, besides 1500 women and girls consigned to Moslem harems. The heroism with which hundreds—nay, thousands—have stood ready to suffer the most horrible and ignominious tortures, and to submit to a lingering death rather than deny their Lord, makes them worthy to be added to the memorable list of the "heroes of faith" (Hebrews 11). Christian pastors have unflinchingly faced death and called upon their congregations to follow them ; women have by hundreds sought death rather than submit to a worse fate—surely these are they "of whom the world was not worthy." No one with a spark of Christianity or even of humanity in them can read these tales of persecution without being moved to his inmost soul with sympathy and a desire to help them, and yet there are thousands in Christian lands who have not as yet lifted a finger to relieve the distress of the survivors. In the province of Harpoot nearly 100,000 Armenians are destitute of the bare necessities of life, and in other parts of the country there are three times as many more. Many have generously responded to the call for help, and much has been done to relieve the sufferers. From the first, money sent from America and England has been distributed through the members of the British Embassy and the American missionaries. Amid direst peril these missionaries, men and women, have stood nobly at their posts, and thus have been the one hope of the Armenian. Now that the Red Cross Society has entered the work, the door has been opened to distribute food in new centers. The method of relief work is generally to establish soup kitchens and bread bakeries, employing large numbers of the sufferers in preparing food and clothing. About twenty relief stations are in operation, and \$200,000 has already been expended in food and clothing, but not more than one half of the destitute are yet reached. Only about one to two cents a day is needed to keep a man from starvation, but this means \$4000 to \$6000 a day. At Van alone 16,000 gather each day who have no other means of subsistence than that offered by the missionaries. The need is most urgent ; competent and reliable agents are ready to receive and wisely distribute the aid which is so sorely needed. It is heartrending to see the suffering of these people without the means to relieve them. No man, woman, or child can afford to lose the opportunity to give something to this cause ; give it NOW !†

* Valuable information regarding the Massacres, Destitution, and Relief Work in Armenia may be found in the following : "The Rule of the Turk," by F. D. Groene (Putnam) ; *Christian Literature Magazine* (February, 1896) ; *Independent* (March 5th, 1896) ; also weekly editions of the *Christian Herald* (New York).

† Sums in any amounts from one cent upward will be received and forwarded without delay, if sent to the Managing Editor of this Review, or to Frank H. Wiggin, 1 Somerset Street, Boston, or to Brown Brothers, New York (Agents for Red Cross).