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Toronto, December 12, 1895.

### The Armenian Atrocities.

THE Armenian atrocities may be regarded from three standpoints. 1, That of the English bond holders, 2. that of the International Politician, and 3. that of the Christian. The first is of special interest to the capitalist and money has generally held life cheaply. It has a powerful influence with a certain class of politicians whose God is mammon, and that influence is dominant in England in the present grave crisis. The second is a step higher in human estimation for international complications are not to be lightly courted, although they may be made use of as mere bugbears to frighten the timid, or to emphasize the technical scruples of the lovers of pure form. But it is difficult to believe that there is any good reason why the European powers who have assumed the responsibility of maintaining good government in Armenia, should not come to a simple and definite understanding as to a common cause of action to carry out their pledges to the civilized world. Viewed from the third standpoint, while the people in their capacity of citizens are not relieved of their due and necessary responsibility, the Church is the organized body which ought to lead in a moment to see that justice be secured to the persecuted brethren of Armenia. To the Church is entrusted the weighty responsibility of holding the nations to their moral duty, and of arousing the public conscience when iniquity flares in the face of Heaven. The Church in Britain has not done her duty. The bitter cry of the victims of Turkish rapacity and blood-thirstiness has moaned on the breezes passing over every land under the sun but that cry has not reached the heart of the Churches of Great Britain and Ireland. They have been remiss in their duty and it would appear that the time for seasonable action will have passed from them ere they realize their culpability. There have been remonstrances, but they were feeble, petitions, resolutions and an occasional demonstration there have been, but where has been the mighty voice of awakened British Protestantism? Where have been the burning eloquence, the public indignation, the marshalling of the moral forces which would have made the strongest government which Britain has ever seen tremble for its fate and which would have made trifling and vacillation impossible? The Church has lost a glorious opportunity, but she did worse, she neglected to perform a plain duty, for Britain is a treaty power directly responsible for the state of affairs which has disgraced the annals of Europe for many months past. How far Canada, as an integral part of the British Empire, shares in that responsibility it is difficult to estimate, but it is a matter of regret that no formal remonstrance has been sent by the Church and Government here to the Imperial authorities. It ought

to be done even yet. Soon Parliament will assemble and petitions ought to be sent from congregations and Presbyteries praying for a resolution of the House expressing regret at the inaction of the British Government. Is it our affair? It is the business of humanity. We are all of us our brother's keeper; the bond of humanity knows no national boundary, but as has been pointed out, we are proud of our British connection, and Britain is a party to this eastern question; and if so how are we free from all blame? It is not sufficient to say that our Government is a federal one without direct voice in the Imperial Parliament, because there are precedents when our memorials have reached the British Government on questions not pertaining to Canada or its Government. Surely when those poor Armenian Christians are being persecuted to the death because they are Christians and refuse to accept the Turkish form of religion, Mohammedanism, it is but the merest human duty for every one who professes the religion of Christ to convey sympathy in its most tangible form available. To show how bitter is the Turkish hostility to Christianity and that it is a religious war of extermination that is being waged against the Armenians the following extracts from a recent article by Rev. Canon MacColl are quoted:

"There is no justice even in Constantinople; his life and property are at the mercy of the meanest Mussulman who may assail them. Even where the Christian pays his yearly tribute, and is especially under the protection of the Government, the sacred law of Islam expressly declares that if a Moslem believer deliberately kill a glaur, the murderer is not to be punished in any way. Furthermore, Christian evidence is inadmissible; and not a single case is known where a Moslem murderer was convicted on purely Christian evidence. . . . As showing the bitter feeling entertained toward the Christians by the Mohammedans, it is only necessary to cite the Moslem statutes in which Christians are designated as "dogs" and "pigs"; and in the burial certificates Christians are not said to be dead but "damned": e.g., a burial certificate attested to by the British Ambassador certifies to the priest of an Armenian church that "the impure, putrid, stinking carcass of N—, this day damned [deceased], may be concealed under ground!" so rigidly is the censorship enforced, that Canon MacColl declares that in 1892 he could not find a copy of Dante or Shakespeare or a single issue of Murray's Handbook in Constantinople. And—just to think of it!—the publication or public utterance of such expressions as "the grace of God," "the Gospel of Jesus Christ is good news," is forbidden, because it is not admitted that Christians hold any relations with God but those of condemnation and wrath! Ministers, too, are "forbidden to recommend the virtues of moral courage, of resignation under affliction, of hope in God under adversity." . . . But all this is mildness itself in comparison with what follows. In 1891 the Sultan organized his force of 30,000 Kurdish cavalry, and officered them by notorious brigands and criminals, for the extermination of the Armenians. These quartered themselves on the farms of the Christians, stole their cattle and goods; then, demanding a year's taxes in advance, which the poor Armenian Christians could not pay, but promised to if given time, thousand of the Christians were "reduced to feeding on roots and grasses, with the result that thousands of them perished from starvation and disease in their despairing endeavors to feed themselves on garbage."

And yet this the monstrous power that civilized Europe not only permits but protects in its autonomy