

# THE ARMENIAN ATROCITIES.

## SUSPENSION OF DIPLOMATIC ACTION.

The European Powers Considering What Action Shall Be Taken Under the Berlin Treaty—President Cleveland's Course Approved.

VIENNA, December 10.—All foreign diplomatic action at Constantinople has been suspended in consequence of the exchange of views which, on the initiative of Great Britain, is proceeding between the Berlin treaty powers with the view of taking joint action on the Armenian question.

The Porte is very anxious at this new turn of affairs. The Turkish ministry, assisted by Kiamil, Said, and Chakir Pashas, sat continuously from noon on Saturday, and was still in session at noon yesterday.

LONDON, December 10.—A despatch to the *Chronicle* from Rome says that Italy is in full agreement with Great Britain and is ready to consent to European intervention in Armenia.

CHICAGO, December 10.—A mass-meeting of citizens was held at Central Music Hall last night, under the auspices of the local Armenian Society, to protest against the recent Armenian outrages. H. H. Higinbotham, president of the World's Fair, presided. Among the speakers were M. M. Mangasarian, Dr. E. G. Hirsch, Judge Waterman, Mrs. Mary Holmes, and Dr. H. W. Roth. Resolutions were adopted commending the action of President Cleveland in appointing a representative of the country to act independently in the commission of investigation, and calling upon Congress and the President to exercise national influence in bringing to speedy justice all who are proved to be in any way responsible for the "intolerable aggressions upon the rights of our common humanity."

## VIEWS OF A FORMER CONSUL-GENERAL AT SYRIA.

The Commonness of Such Massacres—Need of Outside Military Protection.

Speaking to-day of the reported massacre of Armenians, J. Augustus Johnson, who was American consul-general in Syria from 1858 to 1870, said:

"This news may well be true, for there have been wholesale massacres of Christians on Turkish territory periodically during the last four centuries. Eastern Christians estimate one massacre for each generation, and I have heard people in the Island of Cyprus, in Syria, and elsewhere speak of their births and of the occurrence of other events by reference to the last massacre, from which they date.

"The two factors most active in producing these massacres are the latent Moslem fanaticism, ready to burst forth on slight provocation, and the traditional administrative policy of the Turkish government in holding captive races in its Christian provinces with small garrisons of troops throughout its vast domain. 'Divide and govern' is the key-note of this policy, which is carried into effect by pitting one hostile tribe against another and thus weakening both, and siding first with one and then with the other, whenever a tendency appears to revolt against the tax-gatherer or other agent of the government. In stirring up this internecine strife, the fires lighted by the administrative torch sometimes rage beyond governmental control, for the Turkish army, composed of Moslems only, generally joins with the fanatics. European military occupation is then alone adequate to arrest the rage for Christian destruction or submission to Turkish rule. It thus happens, without any direct instructions on the part of the central government, that massacres occur through local exaggerations of the policy I have already indicated.

"American citizens should be gratified that our government has sent a commissioner who is well qualified to investigate the causes and the extent of the Moslem atrocities in Armenia. Given the consent of the Ottoman government, there was no reason why President Cleveland should delay such action. And there seems to be no good reason why the American investigator should not unite with the Turkish and European commissioners in sifting the evidence and attaching his signature to the *procès verbal* of each day's proceedings. Otherwise there is danger of counter reports, which may throw doubt upon the statements of each. To secure united action on the part of the five great powers of Europe, which, under the treaty of Berlin, have guaranteed anew the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, there should be unanimity in the reported statement of facts.

"Assuming that the alleged massacre of several thousand Christian men and women by Turks and Kurds is based on facts, now admitted to be substantially true by the *London Times*, we need not wait for the official report as to details before giving expression on the part of the American people, through its authorized representatives, to the horror and indignation which such barbarities must excite

throughout Christendom.

"As an American citizen familiar with the traditions of our own government under the Monroe doctrine of non-intervention, and with the political status of Turkey in respect to European treaties and the great question of 'balance of power,' I am willing, under existing circumstances, that our government in the interests of humanity, should go to the utmost extent authorized by the Sultan and the great powers of Europe in suggesting a basis of adjustment of the Armenian question, for the following reasons: (1.) Judging from the history of the previous massacres in Syria in 1860, and later in Bulgaria, an army of occupation in the disturbed district will be required to hold in check that Moslem fanaticism which, once aroused, cannot be restrained without the presence of an overpowering military force of a Christian nation, the Turkish government being powerless to restrain its own soldiers from joining in the slaughter of Christians after once tasting Christian blood. (2.) England has no force at its disposal for that purpose in view of the military requirements of Egypt and India; Russia might supply the troops required from her vast reserves, but Turkey as well as the other powers would not trust the traditional enemy of the Ottoman Empire among the hills and valleys and upon the plains of Armenia, from whence it would be far more difficult to retire its army than to induce England to shorten its occupation of Egypt. (3.) Germany is fully occupied in watching her neighbors and guarding Alsace and Lorraine from recovery by the French; and France is less able to spare troops now, under the existing conditions of the republic, than she was under the empire in 1860, when she sent 5,000 soldiers to Syria for two years. Italy, perhaps, is the only European power which might now act as the police of Europe in quelling and holding in subjection

the Turkish fanatics without exciting suspicions of territorial aggrandizement and arousing the jealousies of the other powers. This might be done by common consent but for the impoverishment of the Italian treasury. An arrangement might be made, however, by which the expense of a two years' sojourn of Italian troops in Armenia might be borne by the other powers. Turkey would consent to this, because the alternatives would be either a forced cession of Armenia to Russia or the passage through the Bosphorus of England's strongest fleet. England would consent because she bound herself by treaty to protect Armenia from Russia, and took her pay in advance when she occupied the island of Cyprus, which the other powers were not inclined to permit. Matters could be so arranged with Germany and Austria that they would not object while they were left free to protect themselves from a Franco-Russian alliance. In view of this complicated situation our own government could play a friendly and most important part by reason of its disinterestedness and the joint request of the parties most deeply interested.

"The puzzle is to save the Christians of Armenia from utter destruction without bringing on a general European war. If the United States government is invited to send a special diplomatic agent to Constantinople for the purpose of facilitating such an adjustment, the action would be accepted by all Christendom as an act of humanity which, while it might establish a precedent, would be in harmony with the tendency of the age towards the settlement of international questions by arbitration and not by the sword."