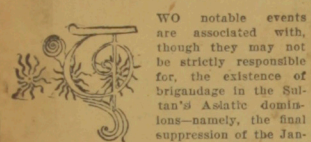


## AMONG ARMENIANS IN ASIATIC TURKEY.

Comments on the Atrocities of the  
Kurds and Armenians Among  
the Turkish Peasantry.

### "BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS."

Brigandage and the Struggle for Inde-  
pendence Among the Jealous  
People of Armenia.



NO notable events are associated with, though they may not be strictly responsible for, the existence of brigandage in the Sultan's Asiatic dominions—namely, the final suppression of the Janizaries and the close of the Crimean war. It is at this latter date that occurred that influx of the Cherkesses, the collective name of the refugees from the regions of the Caucasus. The Turkish government, fearing that the lodgement of these mountain birds in the mountain recesses, their congenial homes, would render them too independent for government control, forced them against their own and the will of the native inhabitants to settle among the Turks and Hellenes. With these they have never affiliated, and have abandoned, by degrees and through forcible persuasion, their original marauding habits. Hence, they naturally came to be regarded as intruders and brigands; and the sudden disappearance of one of their number in some hostile district of the country would seldom lead to an investigation. These are the people who, as the Bashi-Bazouks, or Turkish gendarmes, committed the horrible Bulgarian atrocities in revenge against their former oppressors, the Russians. To them the natives have frequently referred in our presence as the "unprincipled wretches, who shoot first and rob afterward." But the opprobrious description is rather sweeping in its scope, if even true in the main, as the following story will illustrate.

CAPTURED BY BRIGANDS.

It is told of an English Consul at Erzeroum, and comes from the same Constantinople representative at Sivras, as strictly authentic—

The opening scene is in a rather unfrequented portion of Armenia, where the Consul, with an escort of half a dozen men, was travelling on some government mission. Toward evening the party stopped at a little village for refreshments. Here the Consul, being unavoidably detained, ordered his guard to go ahead, and after a short while started to overtake them. He had not proceeded far before he came to a lonely stretch of road running through a dense forest, where the dusk of evening deepened almost into darkness. Suddenly from ambush a troop of horsemen sallied forth and in less than a moment the muzzles of half a dozen rifles confronted him. There was no alternative but to yield to the situation. His captors, he soon learned, were a band of notorious brigands, whose depredations had frequently spread terror throughout the country. At the brigand camp he found that his bodyguard had already fallen an easy prey.

A paper was now drawn up and addressed to the nearest representative of the English government. They demanded a high ransom for the release of their prisoner, whose life was to be the cost of refusal. This paper the Consul was ordered to sign, but with resolute courage he refused to comply with their demands. That night he was thrown into a tent, bound hand and foot, and kept under a vigilant watch. The chief left him with the "pleasing assurance" that he would never see the morning sunlight. If, in the morning, his determination was not altered. Together with the morning dawn the chief again entered his tent, and ordered him to be bound to the tip of a jagged pole, which peeped above the neighboring mountain top. The axe in the chieftain's hand was raised to give the fatal blow.

"Englishman, will you sign?" echoed from the mountain sides and broke in trumpet tones upon the appalling stress. With calm resignation the doomed man turned to the chief and said—

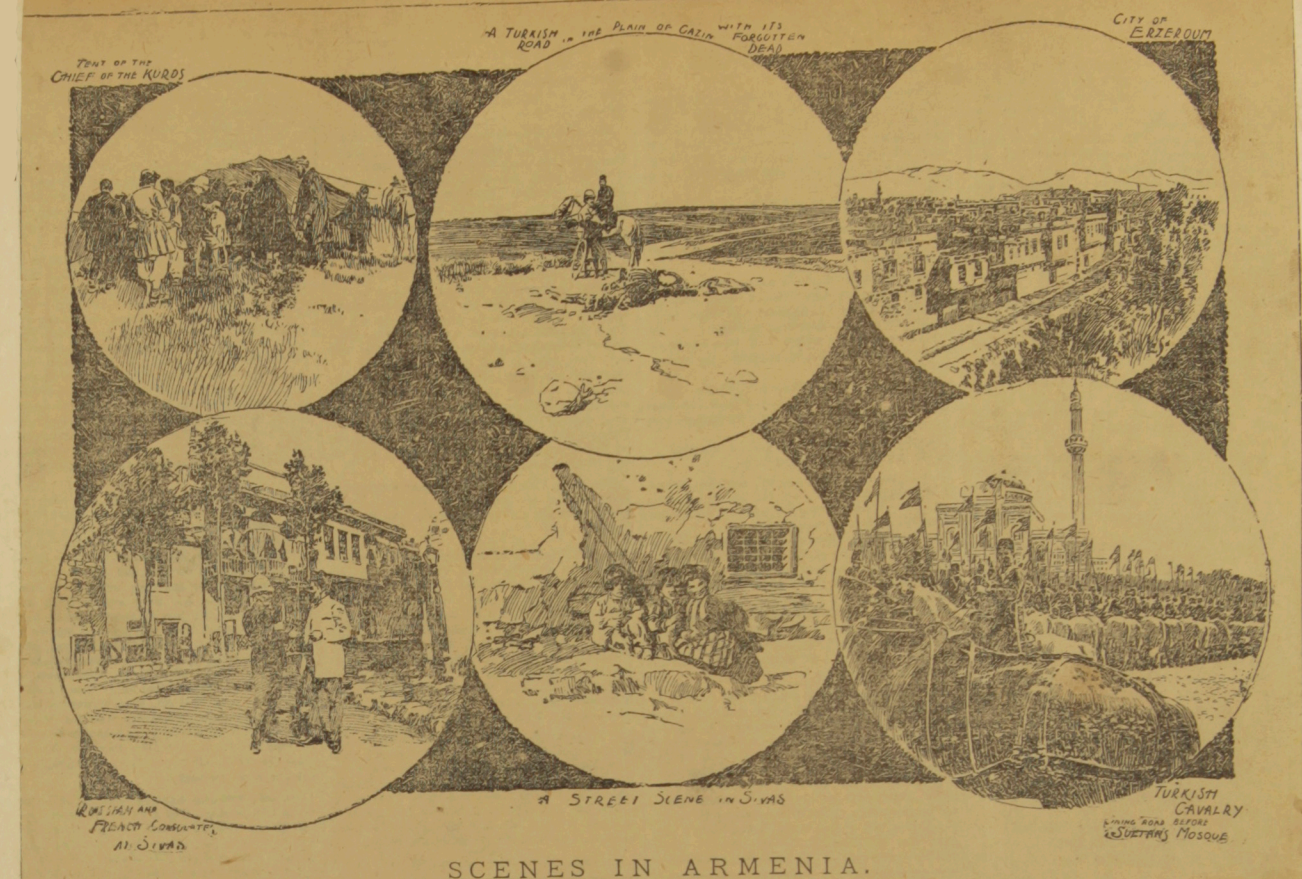
"Sir, I will not ask the Queen to pay for my life. She has already paid me to fight, and I suppose that includes to die."

The axe was thrown to the ground and in its place was grasped the hand of a hero. The sun arose that morning to shed its rays of glory upon an impressive tableau, and to give a brighter lustre to the character of a brigand chief.

Thanks to the Turkish government, these organized lawless bands no longer exist. It is only the Kurdish nomads, in their semi-independent state, that still maintain a formidable reputation among the selection of people for their occasional marauding expeditions. These are the people who, with the Turks, as was recently reported, committed the recent atrocities among their Armenian neighbors.

BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS.

The Kurds have a history even since the time of Xenophon, who spoke of them as the Karduchi, offering resistance to the rest of the world. They were once free men and independent race and there is no evidence to



SCENES IN ARMENIA.

show that they have ever since been subdued. These "proud birds of the mountains," whose plumes have never yet been torn, have always lived the life of pastoral nomads and plundering robbers. As nominal subjects of the Sultan they have paid taxes only when the number of Turkish troops in the country became too strong for them to resist. With their unsettled, independent nature they have been a constant plague to Turkey's dying sleep.

The Kurds differ from the Turks in religion, and from the Persians in language, so that they cannot be strictly classed with either. They are troubled with very few religious scruples, and are very much in the various observances of Mussulman piety. It is a proverb among the Kurds that "no saint can come out of Kurdistan." The Kurdish women, too, are much more free and independent than those of either Turkey or Persia. They are not veiled, move freely among the men, and do a great deal of men's work as is done by the male portion of their more settled neighbors. The men are very strong, well built, with high chests and broad shoulders. Their dark faces and fierce looking eyes give them that formidable, warlike appearance that shows one at once why they have always been a terrifying menace to the neighboring population.

WOMEN EMPRESS JOIN.

As misdeeds of the Kurdish shepherds, who, in their search for pastures, have roamed for forty miles over the Russian border, Russia has long since maintained a Cossack station on the high plateau overlooking the two peaks of Great and Little Ararat, the latter of which is the interesting point of vantage of the three great empires of the East, the Sultan and the Shah. As the "possessor" also of Etchmiadzin, the Armenian holy city, which lies on the Russian side of the mountain, Russia has a certain guardianship over the Armenian people.

With these claims and her practical working proximity to the present scene of disturbance, she may now feel called upon to insist upon those administrative reforms which British influence has hitherto been powerless to introduce, and to redress the so-called grievances of her neighboring world. From our own brief experience, however, and the testimony of nearly every resident foreigner we met, including even the missionaries themselves, we are led to believe that the many stories of Armenian oppression which have found currency in the European press are, for the most part, the exaggerated or fabricated of the Armenian agitators. If any foreign intervention is necessary, the Turkish peasant, it seems to us, should be first considered.

THE ARMENIANS.

Like the Jews, whom they resemble very much in features and to whom they are related, the Armenians seem fully capable of fighting the battles of themselves. They are everywhere in the Levant that a Jew cheats a Turk, a Greek cheats a Jew, and an Armenian cheats a Turk. In the Levant, the Armenians are heavily handicapped, being mostly ignorant and artless, and speaking their native tongue, which is not understood by the Greeks and even the Armenians and native Greeks are clever, full of subterfuge, and acquainted with several languages. Honest and faithful to his pledged word, the Turk will to the end of his days in order to discharge a debt, a quality of which the money lender takes advantage to offer him long and ruinous credits. "If you wish to succeed," says an Anatolian commercial axiom, "trust the Christian to one tenth, the Mussulman to tenfold his income. Therefore, the Turk has no longer anything he can call his own. Deprived of all share in the maritime traffic and in the industrial arts, he is being gradually driven from the seaboard to the interior, where little remains open to him except the guidance of caravans or a purely pastoral existence.

There was a time when the position of an Armenian in this country was extremely precarious. He had to attach himself to some influential Turk to be assured of protection in case of need, but in return he was little more than a slave to his master. There was a time when an Armenian was compelled to dismount from his horse at the outskirts of a town or village and go through on foot. No "deed of a Christian" was allowed to walk past a walking Mussulman. But all this now is so radically changed that they are objects of sympathy rather than compassion. They even have some rights not granted to their Moslem neighbors, and are able to appeal to foreign Ministers and Consuls, and the right to publish and circulate newspapers printed in their own language. Through the influence of the spirit of the Mussulman religion several hundred Armenians now hold lucrative and responsible positions under the Turkish government,

one being even Minister of the Crown. More than this, they are allowed to avail themselves of the almost freedom of their own laudable enterprise in the matter of education. Good schools, besides those of the Protestant missionaries, have been erected in various parts of the country, and in many cases at private expense.

A REMARKABLE COLLEGE, founded by an Armenian philanthropist of that name at the Armenian capital of Erzeroum, was filled with surprise and wonder that such a well equipped and well regulated institution, with such a thorough course of training, was to be found in this out of the way corner of the globe. Our visit was the occasion for a performance by the school orchestra, consisting of twenty pieces, which rendered in admirable unison and harmony some very difficult selections from the European masters. The most remarkable feature, however, was a manual training shop, in a separate outlying building, where the students had made several ornamental pieces, and done some fine work in metal, such as combination locks and tools. In other words, the great feature of modern education, manual training, had found its way across the Asiatic border to this remote region, and strangely, too, in the very home of the ancient Chalchies, the original workers in metal, who forged instruments of bronze and iron when Europeans were polishing stones.

In view of the facts just cited it would not seem that Turkey is bent upon the annihilation or even suppression of its Armenian subjects. There is but little provocation, we think, for the inflammatory literature circulated by the various revolutionary societies which exist not only in France and America, but secretly in the very breast of Turkey itself. As a typical specimen of this kind of literature we have recomposed the following poem from a translation by an Armenian friend.

ADDRESS TO THE ARMENIANS.  
Stand firm, O Armenians! Stand firm for the land  
That gave rise to your country's cradle, thy grave—  
The country that reeks with the blood of thy grave.  
Stand firm for thy country's cradle, thy grave—  
The country that reeks with the blood of thy grave.  
Great Greece, great Greece, on thy memory engraved,  
The blood of thy fathers so freely has flown:  
This is the land where still thou hast saved,  
Great Greece, great Greece, on thy memory engraved,  
The blood of thy fathers so freely has flown:  
This is the land where still thou hast saved,  
Great Greece, great Greece, on thy memory engraved,  
The blood of thy fathers so freely has flown:  
This is the land where still thou hast saved,  
Great Greece, great Greece, on thy memory engraved,  
The blood of thy fathers so freely has flown:

Armenia still lives, and out to the world  
Her flag of distress she now has unfurled;  
Let kind Mother Earth to her bosom unfold  
The corpse of a nation, all bloodless and cold.  
The nations, astonished, may view her dark grave,  
And see the ruined homes they neglected to save;  
And thousands of hearts with repentance may grieve  
For the lost Chaldean nation they failed to relieve.

ARMENIAN-AMERICANS.  
During our winter sojourn at Athens we met and befriended an Armenian revolutionist who claimed to be a fellow countryman. He had gone to America when quite young, and, having obtained a thorough college training, as well as the title of American citizen, he returned to Constantinople with the project of founding a university similar to the present Roberts College, on the Bosphorus. For this purpose he was provided with letters from influential Americans, including one from Mr. Hayes, then United States Minister to Constantinople. However, in his object of the refusal of the Sultan, he had lapsed into less ambitious undertakings, until at length, led by a misguided patriotism, he joined a secret conspiracy against the Turkish government. This was finally detected and its members arrested. In the middle of the night, as he told us, he was dragged from his home, thrown into a dungeon, and threatened with immediate execution. As the bearer

of an American passport, however, he appealed to the American Consul. Through diplomatic intervention he was released to await his trial, but, in the meantime, escaped through the connivance of a friendly steamship captain.

The history of our Athens acquaintance was only a typical one. Hundreds of Armenians have gone to America to remain there long enough to secure an education and the rights of diplomatic of their own country to embroil our diplomatic representatives in their petty litigations and contentions. Under our treaty with Turkey, which dates back to 1830, all American citizens, whether native born or naturalized, are entitled to the same privileges in Turkey that the citizens of the most favored nation enjoy, but this privilege has been shamefully abused. It was only during the present administration that our government was convinced of the wrong thus being perpetrated upon the Turkish government, and sent instructions to Minister Terrell that "We are in Turkey that the citizens of the most favored nation should be excluded from her borders all undesirable citizens."

ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE.  
The cause for which the would-be Armenian patriots are so assiduously working and in which they are endeavoring so hard to enlist the sympathies of the Western world is the establishment of their country upon its old national basis. Mutual jealousy is a national trait in the Armenian character, which is sometimes so unreasonable and absurd as to amount almost to insanity. Even if commiserated from the Turkish rule it is extremely doubtful if the "green eyed monster" would not then destroy, as he did before, the whole national fabric.

In view, however, of the present position of the Armenians this cry for national independence seems to us almost superfluous. Already, by the force of their superior education and business capacity, the Armenians and the Greeks are rapidly becoming the commercial masters of the Turkish Empire. The Armenians and the Turks are as rapidly drifting back to the normal life of their forefathers from Europe has been issued not only against the ruling Ottoman, but also against the mass of the Armenian nation, and we know that the cruel mandate has already been to a great extent realized. And now the Turks are threatened in Asia itself. The ominous cry, "To the steppe!" has been raised, and one asks in terror, must this mandate also be realized? Is there no possibility of reconciliation between the conflicting elements? Is the unity of civilization to be had only by the sacrifice of whole populations, and those above all, which are always hated by the highest moral qualities—uprightness, truth, manliness, courage and tolerance?

THOMAS G. ALLEN, JR.

A CRANK HEARD FROM.  
TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—  
I suppose you will not dare to publish this letter in your newspaper. I am not a Christian. I am a Mussulman. I am a Turk. I am a fanatic. Do not talk any more of religious toleration in America. There is none. Religious toleration is a mere word. You have seen it in all the calumnious statements, in all the resolutions, in all the votes of the Congress, that the Armenians are Christians and that they ought to be defended for that reason alone. America ought to be ashamed of herself, ashamed principally to trust and believe the Armenians, known as the biggest liars of the East. But you are not only dishonest but you are so unfair.  
Be certain of this. You Americans are a nation of Christian fanatics! A MUSSULMAN.  
New York, Dec. 14, 1894.

### SHOULD KEEP HANDS OFF.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—  
Your exceedingly able editorial in this morning's HERALD, entitled "Greshamism," was an unblatant review of the foreign policy of the government since the accession of President Cleveland and his somewhat meddlesome Secretary of State.

As you truly said, his first act of any importance was in favor of favoring the people of Hawaii to send their ex-Queen upon a throne which the people had gladly discarded. Both Mr. Gresham and Mr. Cleveland were departing from the traditional policy of our ancestors of

mind our own business, and the annexation craze came very near precipitating serious difficulties.

His interference in the Japanese and Chinese trouble was not diplomatic in any sense, and reminded the government that the victor can command its own terms of peace. His participation in the Armenian affair is, to my mind, eminently ridiculous, and your spirited rebuttal this morning was very timely.

Such unwarranted interference has caused considerable mirth at the expense of the United States, and, as you say, it is time that we keep our hands off foreign disputes that do not concern us and steer clear of foreign entanglements.

FREDERICK C. NORTON, Editor Echo,  
GILFORD, Conn., Dec. 13, 1894.

### TO REPORT ON ARMENIA.

The British, French and Russian Consuls  
Will at Once Investigate the Al-  
leged Atrocities.

[BY CABLE TO THE HERALD.]

LONDON, Dec. 15, 1894.—Mr. Graves, the British Consul at Erzeroum, has forwarded to the Foreign Office, through Sir Philip Wodehouse Currie, the British Ambassador to Turkey, a statement in which he urges the government not to put off interfering in the Armenian affair until the report of the European Commission appointed to inquire into the circumstances of the outrages shall have been secured, as that report will necessarily be delayed until spring. He states that immediate intervention is advisable.

Lord Kimberley, upon receipt of Mr. Graves' communication, at once communicated with the French Foreign Office, with the result that it has finally been agreed to instruct the French and Russian Consuls at Erzeroum to join Mr. Graves and start without delay upon their mission to reach the scene of the atrocities within ten days, there being only one difficult pass for them to cross on the route, via Melasgrad, which they will be obliged to make with pack mules.

The Foreign Office denies that the appointment on this special commission of only the British, French and Russian Consuls implies that a special entente has been established between the three Powers mentioned, and says they were appointed because they were the only European Consuls at Erzeroum.

### TO PROTEST AGAINST TURKEY.

Arrangements for the meeting to protest against the Turkish government in the matter of the butchery of the Armenian Christians have been completed and announcement of the holding of the meeting on Tuesday evening, December 18, in Cheltenham Hall, has been made by the committee having the subject in charge.

The committee whose names are appended to the call are Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott, Rev. Dr. David H. Greer, Rev. Dr. William S. Rainford, Rev. Dr. George Alexander, Rev. Dr. George S. Baker, Rev. Alfred C. Whittemore, Rev. Dr. R. S. MacArthur, Rev. Dr. Henry Y. Satterlee, Bishop E. G. Andrews, President Seth Low, Norman B. Eaton, Richard Watson Gilder, Professor T. Galliard Thomas, Professor Alfred L. Loomis, Professor D. B. St. John Brooks, General James R. O'Brien, Colonel Alexander S. Bacon, Dr. Cyrus Edson, Andrew Gihon, J. B. La Rue, Cephas Brainerd, J. R. Dwyer, William D. Dickerson, and S. Victor Constant, chairman. It is expected that President Seth Low will preside.