

In "England's Responsibility toward Armenia" Canon MacColl places the ultimate responsibility for the recent massacres at the door of the people of Great Britain. By the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1880 England undertook two things: a military obligation binding her to defend the Armenian frontier against Russia; a civil obligation giving her the right and imposing on her the duty of seeing that effectual reforms were carried out in the administration of the province. Article I. stipulated that these reforms were "to be agreed on between England and the Porte." Yet from that day until the wholesale outrages of a few weeks ago England did nothing to fulfil her solemn obligation under the Convention. England was the only Power that insisted on the submission of the treaty of San Stefano to the revision of a European congress. In that congress, at which Lord Salisbury was the colleague of Lord Beaconsfield, the clause in the treaty of San Stefano which made effectual provision for reforms in Armenia was, by the influence of England, expunged in favor of the 61st Clause of the treaty of Berlin. And when that treaty was discussed in Parliament the Christian subjects of the Sultan were assured that England would see to it that they did not suffer by the substitution of the collective guarantee of the six great Powers for the single guarantee of one of them. The result was only a neglect for which Conservatives and Liberals showed themselves equally to blame. After vigorous polemics in opposition, the Radicals allowed their consciences to slumber and sleep in office, just like the others.

The Canon of Ripon makes out a convincing case against the Turkish Government. His authorities are quotations giving line and page from British consular reports, statements of existing conditions fully credited by the Foreign Office at London.

In addition to ordinary taxation the Chris-

tians are subject to a number of special imposts as :

(a) A capitation tax, called " the humiliation tax," for the right to live from year to year.

(b) A tax in lieu of military service (from which Christians are rigorously excluded) assessed on all males from three months old and upward.

(c) Extraordinary taxes. Christians were compelled to pay the expenses of the Sultan's visit to England in 1867.

(d) Sometimes the Christians are made to pay their taxes a year or two in advance on promise of exemption from taxation in the interval. But the promise is never kept.

Failure to pay any of these taxes is legal rebellion, involving forfeiture of property and life. The Armenian Christians are obliged to pay blackmail to the Kurds in the effort to save their property and lives and the honor of their women, because the Turkish officers persistently refuse to protect them. The consequence is that the mass of the Christians are so impoverished as to be unable to pay the Government taxes in addition. The natural result follows, accusations of rebellion are made and summary vengeance is meted out.

The Turkish system of taxation reminds one of the " security tax " that used to be levied in Mexico in the good old times that Diaz has put an end to. The security tax was first imposed on travellers in order to raise a fund for ridding the roads of robbers. A diligence would arrive at its journey's end with a band of passengers clad in newspapers. The robbers had stripped them to the buff. As they alighted, to the delight of the populace, the officers at the town gate cheerfully collected the security tax.

How far the miserable Armenians succeed in protecting their women by payments to the Kurds is shown by one simple fact. As the result of careful inquiry it was stated that there was no exaggeration in stating that there was scarcely a Christian woman in Armenia who had not been outraged before she was married.

Christian evidence is not admissible against a Mohammedan. This provision of the Sacred Law has prevailed in every Mohammedan state from Mohammed's time to our own, and is in full force throughout the dominions of the Sultan. Christian evidence is never admitted against a Mohammedan; but the uncorroborated and unsworn accusation of any Mohammedan scoundrel will suffice to send a Christian to prison or death. This is the normal condition of the Armenian population.

Another provision of the Sacred Law of Islam forbids the Christians to possess arms.

The Hospitality Tax is another requirement of the Sacred Law, and is enforced against all Armenians. Every Christian householder is bound to provide three days' gratuitous entertainment for every Mohammedan traveller or officer who may choose to ask for it, from the Pasha to the beggar. The women of the family are included among the luxuries required by this rite of compulsory hospitality. At nightfall the men are ordered out of the house, and the women are left at the mercy of the Mussulman guests—policemen, soldiers, roving dervishes, and the like. The evidence that this is the normal condition of affairs is overwhelming in its conclusiveness.

The Turkish fable that the atrocities were provoked by an attempt at rebellion on the part of the Armenians is emphatically denied.

Canon MacColl charges the Sultan with being the direct instigator of the Armenian massacres. The consular reports show that as early as the summer of 1890 he had begun to lay his plans for one of the periodic massacres of his Christian subjects. In March, 1891, 30,000 Kurds were organized into a military force of cavalry. The British Consuls hastened to inform their Government. It was pointed out that the greatest apprehension was felt because it was officially known that these soldiers were to find their own equipment and depend on the State for arms and ammunition only. It was understood, as it turned out, that these 30,000 men were to support themselves, like conquerors in a beaten country, by plunder taken from the Armenians.

A Turkish journal in the confidence of the Sultan stated that " the initiative of this happy idea and the great success which will certainly crown its execution, are due to the wisdom and foresight of his Imperial Majesty the Sultan."

The evidence produced as to Turkish official initiative in the Armenian horrors is in flat contradiction to the report sent to Washington recently by Admiral Kirkland. Some British admirals have been taken in in the same way. The Turk on his good behavior is a deceptive person. He can be a charming host and dines and wines his guests gracefully. The men who have given the vital facts are the foreign Consuls in the interior, not the official class at Constantinople.

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