

STAMBOUL IN TERROR.

INCIDENTS OF THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE ON THE BOSPHORUS.

Constantinople, July 14.

Turkey always has the reputation of clinging with affection to ancient usages. We now have, in an earthquake for which one has to go back over three hundred years for a parallel, an example of the wiping out of cities of the East in ancient times. The city is not destroyed, nor anything near to it. But the native business quarters of the city are so nearly wiped out that its prosperity as a mercantile centre would be ended but for the modern facilities for bringing the energies of the West to bear upon the work of restoration.

At about noon on Tuesday, July 10, a sinister rumbling startled the people of the city. It increased in intensity, until curiosity had given place to a vague terror, and then the solid earth began to quake. People in these regions are not afraid of earthquakes, for they merely shake one up a little, knock over an old chimney or two, and then have done. So they merely made exclamations of surprise at the unusual violence of the shock, and looked at each other as those do who have passed through a peril. But in five minutes more came another shock such as the memory of man in these parts falls to remember. It was a series of perpendicular blows, with a slight lateral vibration from north to south. It was such a shock as the Moslem books of physics say are caused by a fly getting in the nose of the ox who bears the earth on his back. It was no time for remembering the maunderings of these sleepy-headed old philosophers, however. The second shock lasted about ten seconds. In these ten seconds every inhabitant of Constantinople who could walk had run in a frenzy of fear to the open air. Some in their terror leaped from third-story windows. The home for which man will fight had become transformed into the worst of enemies. The houses were swaying to and fro, and groaning and cracking and hurling blocks of stone and brick in every direction. Merchants left their shops unguarded. Bankers left their gold on the counter, and their safes wide open. Jewellers forgot the value of the diamonds in their showcases. All fled pell-mell into the streets, and then stood and looked back, or, if the street was narrow, rushed for the nearest open ground. Hundreds, as they came into the street, were struck by falling stones and maimed or killed. The spectacle from any high point that gave a view over the city was enough to make the stoutest tremble. A vast cloud of yellow dust was rising into the air. A strange crashing, breaking sound filled the whole dome of heaven, and high above this grinding and crashing of the disrupted walls rose one long, ear-piercing wail—the cry of the women in their agony. What the women of a nation are, that the men sooner or later become. That wild all-pervading shriek of the women filled with terror all who heard. But the earth had stopped its shaking, and was the firm friend of yore. Men began to remember their wealth open to the hand of pillage. Those who dared not venture back themselves ordered their servants, or offered large sums to less wealthy neighbors, to go and lock the safes or bar the shop door. But all such late precautions had to be taken within ten minutes, for at the end of ten minutes came another of those awful pounding, vibrating blows from the depths of the earth, and again the clouds of dust arose and the air was full of flying stones, and the long wail of invisible and despairing women once more arose to heaven. That finished the work of panic. Without waiting an instant the men in the business quarters fled for their homes, and the men and women at home fled for the parks or gardens or open fields, or took boats and went on the ships in the harbor. The bridges over the Golden Horn were crammed with people who had gone there for refuge from the terrible death-dealing houses and walls, or who were fighting their maddened career toward the steam ferry-boats that ply up the Bosphorus or down to the Prince's Islands. The steamboat companies did not wait for the regular hours of departure, but as the boats filled to and beyond their usual capacity for passengers, they sent them off. Of late-comers there were plenty, but to all complaints of the failure to have boats at the appointed times the gatemen would say: "The world is turning upside-down. Do you suppose the time-table will not be turned upside-down, too?"

The first shock was at twenty minutes past 12 o'clock. There have been twenty shocks in the three days since that time to keep up the panic, but the damage was all done in the first fifteen minutes. But it has required three days to form in this city of vast dimensions and small means of communication any full notion of the amount of calamity. The greatest loss of life was in the great bazaars. The heavy vaults of the roof by which the streets are protected from the rain were pierced with windows and rested on insignificant walls. Whole streets of these bazaars have been blotted out by the crumbling of those heavy arches of the vaults. Even now the work of extracting the dead and the living is far from complete, for the recurring shocks bring down new sections and make the work of rescue exceedingly dangerous. The next greatest destruction of life was along the line of the ancient city walls. These ancient walls, which have stood for a thousand years, have been the delight of antiquarians, and have in fact been preserved from destruction during recent years by the protests of Europeans against the vandalism of tearing down such monuments for the sake of the building stone which they would afford. But with the great shock of the earthquake masses of the wall, both on the land side, on the Golden

Horn and on the Marmora, came crashing through the frail houses at their base and blotted out families in an instant. The walls remain with rent towers and broken front. But now it will be recognized that they are a danger to the city which they were built to protect, and it is probable that they will not long be spared. At the moment of the earthquake the Mahometan muezzins were in the minarets of the mosques calling the noon-hour of prayer. At least fifty of these tall, graceful stone structures fell in complete or partial ruin, and in many cases the muezzins were killed or dangerously wounded. The Turkish baths are massive domed buildings of stone, heated by internal fires. In them people not only bathe, but linger for hours to recover from the intense heat of the operation. Quite a number of these were wrecked, the dome coming crashing down upon unsuspecting people lounging below. In many cases the bathers fled for their lives without stopping to gather up their raiment. Native business men coming to Constantinople live and have their business offices in the Hans. These are large stone structures built around a quadrangle upon which the rooms face and to which access is gained by a single door. Some twenty of these Hans fell, carrying death and destruction in their way. Whatever is of stone in the city has been injured more or less. But the greater part of the damage has fallen upon the old city, and that part of it which lies between St. Sophia, the Adrianople gate on the land side and the Sea of Marmora. The European quarters of Pera and Galata have escaped with comparatively small loss, and the same is true of the districts lying along the Bosphorus for twenty miles to Buyukdere. The centre of disturbance appears to have been in the Sea of Marmora, and there it seems reasonable to believe that there has been a subsidence of the bottom of this little sea. The Prince's Islands, a favorite summer residence for Constantinopolitans, have been terribly shaken, and hardly a habitable stone house remains upon them. Outside of the city the towns and villages on a line about 100 miles long, from Silivria, on the Marmora, to Adibazar, just beyond Nicomedia, have suffered severely with considerable loss of life. But the great loss has fallen upon Constantinople. The people in the city proper and in many of the suburbs are living under tents, afraid to return to their houses, or left without houses to which to return. Unless Western benevolence comes to the help of these poor people the greatest misery will result. For they are not only houseless, but the business of multitudes of them is ruined by the destruction of the bazaars and the vast stocks of rich goods contained therein. Two results of this great catastrophe are already to be foreseen. The trade of Constantinople is doomed to pass more than ever into the hands of the Europeans, and hereafter the construction of stone houses will cease. This generation will never consent, not even in order to diminish the danger of fire, to incur the danger again of riven walls and of avalanches of stones slaying men as they pass in the street.