

HAROLD BOWLBY
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Literary Editor

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THE DEPOPULATION OF ARMENIA

THE shocking news of the massacre, torture and deportation of Armenian Christians makes a special appeal to American sympathy and helpfulness. From numerous and reliable sources in Turkey it seems certain that this is not a matter of local disorders or petty oppression, but a systematic effort to extirpate the Armenian race. Thousands of families have been driven from their homes to starve upon the roads. Towns and villages have been divested of their inhabitants. Many are being put to torture to force them to renounce their Christian faith. Women are interned in the harems and children are sold as slaves.

These outrages cannot be excused on the ground of military necessity, for the regions devastated are in some cases beyond the reach of any possible Russian invasion and the Armenians have not manifested any disposition to revolt except where, as at Van, they have been driven to it in self-defense. It looks as tho the Turks, despairing of maintaining their supremacy, were resolved to crush out the Armenians so as to forestall forever the establishment of an autonomous Armenia in case the Allies conquer Turkey.

But this is something in which we have a deep interest, for American money and American lives have been spent for the uplift of the opprest peoples of the Ottoman Empire. The American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions has been at work in Turkey for almost a century and has expended some twenty million dollars. There are now maintained in Turkey ten American colleges: Robert College, Constantinople; Constantinople College for Girls; Syrian Protestant College, Beyrut; International College, Smyrna; Anatolia College, Marsovan; Euphrates College, Harpoot; Aintab College; Central Turkey College, Marash; St. Paul's College, Tarsus; and Teachers College, Sivas. In these institutions and other schools there are over 40,000 pupils, a large proportion of whom are Armenians. It is not too much to say that the Armenian people owes its racial consciousness and ideals chiefly to American influence, altho our missionaries and teachers have always been careful to discourage any insurrectionary movements. Thousands of Armenians have sought refuge in America from Turkish tyranny and have become good citizens of our country. The present distress and imminent danger of the Armenians in Asia will cause widespread concern in the United States.