

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED TO VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

*By Viscount Bryce
With a preface by
VISCOUNT BRYCE*

**Extracted from "THE TREATMENT OF ARMENIANS IN THE
OTTOMAN EMPIRE 1915-1916", LONDON, 1916.**

***This part of the book contains a brief description of documents included in the collection.**

PREFACE BY VISCOUNT BRYCE.

In the summer of 1915 accounts, few and scanty at first, but increasing in volume later, began to find their way out of Asiatic Turkey as to the events that were happening there. These accounts described what seemed to be an effort to exterminate a whole nation, without distinction of age or sex, whose misfortune it was to be the subjects of a Government devoid of scruples and of pity, and the policy they disclosed was one without precedent even in the blood-stained annals of the East. It then became the obvious duty of those who realized the gravity of these events to try to collect and put together all the data available for the purpose of presenting a full and authentic record of what had occurred. This has been done in the present volume. It contains all the evidence that could be obtained up till July 1916 as to the massacres and deportations of the Armenian and other Eastern Christians dwelling in Asia Minor, Armenia and that north-western corner of Persia which was invaded by the Turkish troops. It is presented primarily as a contribution to history, but partly also for the purpose of enabling the civilised nations of Europe to comprehend the problems which will arise at the end of this war, when it will become necessary to provide for the future government of what are now the Turkish dominions. The compilation has been made in the spirit proper to an historical enquiry, that is to say, nothing has been omitted which could throw light on the facts, whatever the political bearing of the accounts might be. In such an enquiry, no racial or religious sympathies, no prejudices, not even the natural horror raised by crimes, ought to distract the mind of the enquirer from the duty of trying to ascertain the real facts.

As will be seen from the analysis which follows, the evidence here collected comes from various sources.

A large, perhaps the largest, part has been drawn from neutral witnesses who were living in or passing through Asiatic Turkey while these events were happening, and had opportunities of observing them.

Another part comes from natives of the country, nearly all Christians, who succeeded, despite the stringency of the Turkish censorship, in getting letters into neutral countries, or who themselves escaped into Greece, or Russia, or Egypt and were there able to write down what they had seen.

A third but much smaller part comes from subjects of the now belligerent Powers (mostly Germans) who were in Turkey when these events were happening, and subsequently published in their own countries accounts based on their personal knowledge.

In presenting this evidence it has been necessary in very many cases to withhold the names of the witnesses, because to publish their names would be to expose such of them as are still within the Turkish dominions, or the relations and friends of these persons, to the ruthless vengeance of the gang who now rule those dominions in the name of the unfortunate Sultan. Even in the case of those neutral witnesses who are safe in their own countries, a similar precaution must be observed, because many of them, or their friends and associates, have property in Turkey which would at once, despite their neutral character, be seized by the Turkish Government. These difficulties, inevitable in the nature of the case, are of course only temporary. The names of the great majority of the witnesses are known to the editor of this book and to myself¹, and also to several other persons², and they can be made public as soon as it is certain that no harm will result to these witnesses or to their friends. That certainty evidently cannot be attained till the war is over and the rule of the savage gang already referred to has come to an end.

The question now arises - What is the value of this evidence? Though the names of many of the witnesses cannot be given, I may say that most of them, and nearly all of those who belong to neutral or belligerent countries, are persons entitled to confidence in respect of their character and standing, and are, moreover, persons who have no conceivable motive for inventing or perverting facts, because they are (with extremely few exceptions) either neutrals with no national or personal or pecuniary interests involved, or else German subjects. Were I free to mention names, the trustworthiness of these neutrals and Germans would at once be recognised.

Let us, however, look at the evidence itself.

(i) Nearly all of it comes from eye-witnesses, some of whom wrote it down themselves, while others gave it to persons who wrote it out at the time from the statements given to them orally. Nearly all of it, moreover, was written immediately after the events described, when the witnesses' recollection was still fresh and clear.

(ii) The main facts rest upon evidence coming from different and independent sources. When the same fact is stated by witnesses who had no communication with one another, and in many cases did not even speak the same language, the presumption in favour of its truth becomes strong.

¹ Memorandum by the Editor, page XLI.

² Memorandum by the Editor, page XLI.

Take, for instance, the evidence (Section VIII.) regarding the particularly terrible events at Trebizond. We have a statement from the Italian Consul-General (Doc. 73), from the Kavass of the local branch of the Ottoman Bank, a Montenegrin under Italian protection (Doc. 74), and from an Armenian girl whose family lived in the neighbourhood of the Italian Consulate, and who was brought out of Turkey by the Italian Consul-General as his maid-servant. The testimony of these three witnesses exactly tallies, not only as to the public crimes committed in the city before they left it, but also as to their personal relations with one another (for they each mention the others explicitly in their several statements). Yet they were in no touch whatever with one another when their respective testimonies were given. The Consul-General gave his at Rome, in an interview with an Italian journalist; the Kavass gave his in an interview with an Armenian gentleman in Egypt; and the girl hers in Roumania to a compatriot resident in that country. The three statements had certainly never been collated till they came, by different channels, into the hands of the editor of this book. In addition to this, there is a statement from another foreign resident at Trebizond (Doc. 72), which reached us through America.

Or take the case of the convoys of exiles deported from the Vilayet of Erzeroum, and, in particular, from the towns of Erzeroum and Baibourt. We have a second-hand account of their fate in Doc. 2, a despatch from a well-informed source at Constantinople; we have a first-hand account, which completely bears out the former, from a lady who was herself deported in the third convoy of exiles (Doc. 59); we have the narrative of two Danish nurses in the service of the German Red Cross at Erzindjan, who witnessed the passage of the Baibourt exiles through that place (Doc. 62); and finally there are three witnesses from the town of H., several days' journey further along the exiles' route, who refer independently to the arrival of convoys from Erzeroum and the neighbourhood. One of these latter witnesses is a (third) Danish Red Cross nurse (Doc. 64), one a neutral resident at H. of different nationality, and one an Armenian inhabitant of the town.

These are two typical instances in which broad groups of events are independently and consistently recorded, but there are innumerable instances of the same kind in the case of particular occurrences. The hanging of the Armenian Bishop of Baibourt, for example, is mentioned, at second-hand, in Doc. 7 (written at Constantinople) and Doc. 12 (a selection of evidence published in Germany); but it is also witnessed to by the author of Doc. 59, an actual resident at Baibourt who was present there at the time of the murder. Again, the disappearance of the Bishop of Erzeroum on the road to exile is not only recorded in Doc. 11, a memorandum from a competent source at Bukarest, but is confirmed, in Docs. 57 and 76, by testimony obtained from eye-witnesses on the spot after the Russian occupation of Erzeroum had left them free to speak out.

(iii) Facts of the same, or of a very similar, nature occurring in different places, are deposed to by different and independent witnesses. As there is every reason to believe-and indeed it is hardly denied-that the massacres and deportations were carried

out under general orders proceeding from Constantinople, the fact that persons who knew only what was happening in one locality record circumstances there broadly resembling those which occurred in another locality goes to show the general correctness of both sets of accounts.

Thus, the two Danish Red Cross nurses (Doc. 62) state that they twice witnessed the massacre, in cold blood, of gangs of unarmed Armenian soldiers employed on navy work, along the road from Erzindjan to Sivas. In Doc. 7 (written at Constantinople) we find a statement that other gangs of unarmed Armenian soldiers were similarly murdered on the roads between Ourfa and Diyarbekir, and Diyarbekir and Harpout; and the massacre on this latter section of road is confirmed by German lady resident, at the time, at Harpout (Doc. 23).

Again, there is frequent mention of roads being lined, or littered, with the corpses of Armenian exiles who had died of exhaustion or been murdered on the way. If these allusions were merely made in general terms, they might conceivably be explained away as amplifications of some isolated case, or even as rhetorical embellishments of the exiles' story without foundation in fact. But when we find such statements made with regard to particular stretches of road in widely different localities, and often by more than one witness with regard to a given stretch, we are led to infer that this wholesale mortality by the wayside was in very deed a frequent concomitant of the Deportations, and an inevitable consequence of the method on which the general scheme of Deportation was organised from headquarters. We hear in Doc. 7, for instance, of corpses on the road from Malatia to Sivas, on the testimony of a Moslem traveller; we hear of them on the road from Diyarbekir to Ourfa in Doc. 12 (a German cavalry captain), and on the road from Ourfa to Aleppo in Doc. 9 (an Armenian witness), in Doc. 135 (an interned Englishwoman), and also in Doc. 64 (a Danish Red Cross nurse). The latter gives the detail of the corpses being mangled by wild beasts, a detail also mentioned by the German authors of Docs. 12 and 23. Similar testimony from German officers regarding the road between Baghdad and Aleppo is reported independently in Docs. 108 and 121.

(iv) The volume of this concurrent evidence from different quarters is so large as to establish the main facts beyond all question. Errors of detail in some instances may be allowed for. Exaggeration may, in the case of native witnesses, who were more likely to be excited, be also, now and then, allowed for. But the general character of the events stands out, resting on foundations too broad to be shaken, and even details comparatively unimportant in themselves are often remarkably corroborated from different quarters. The fact that the Zeitounli exiles at Sultania were for some time prevented by the local Turkish authorities from receiving relief is attested in Doc. 4 (Constantinople) and Doc. 123 (the town of B. in Cilicia), as well as in Doc. 125 from Konia. The malicious trick by which the exiles from Shar were deflected from a good road to a bad, in order that they might be compelled to abandon their carts, is recorded independently in Docs. 12 and 126.

(v) In particular it is to be noted that many of the most shocking and horrible accounts are those for which there is the most abundant testimony from the most trustworthy neutral witnesses. None of the worst cruelties rest on native evidence alone. If all that class of evidence were entirely struck out, the general effect would be much the same, though some of the minor details would be wanting. One may, indeed, say that an examination of the neutral evidence tends to confirm the native evidence as a whole by showing that there is in it less of exaggeration than might have been expected.

Docs. 7 and 9, for instance, both of which are native reports at second-hand, refer in somewhat rhetorical terms to the corpses of murdered Armenians washed down by the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates. Yet their words are more than justified by many concrete and independent pieces of evidence. The description in Doc. 12 (German material) of how barge-loads of Armenians were drowned in the Tigris below Diyarbekir, renders more fully credible the accounts of how the Armenians of Trebizond were drowned wholesale in the Black Sea. Doc. 12 also contains the statement, from a German employee of the Baghdad Railway, that the Armenian exiles who reached Biredjik were drowned in batches every night in the Euphrates; and similar horrors are reported from almost every section of the Euphrates' course. Docs. 56, 57, 59 and 62 describe how the convoys of exiles from the Vilayet of Erzeroum were cast into the Kara Su (western branch of the Euphrates) at the gorge called Kamakh Boghaz, and were then either shot in the water or left to drown. The author of Doc. 59 was present at such a scene, though she was herself spared, and the information in Docs. 56 and 57 was obtained direct from a lady who was actually cast in, but managed to struggle to the bank and escape. The authors of Doc. 62 received their information from a gendarme who had been attached to a convoy and had himself participated in the massacre. Doc. 24 records the experiences of an Armenian woman deported from Moush, who was driven with her fellow-exiles into the Mourad Su (eastern branch of the Euphrates), but also managed to escape, though the rest were drowned. Doc. 66 describes corpses floating in the river in the neighbourhood of Kiakhta, and Doc. 137 the drowning of exiles in the tributaries of the Euphrates between Harpout and Aleppo. These are evidently instances of a regular practice, and when we find the exiles from Trebizond and Kerasond being disposed of in the same fashion in a comparatively distant part of the Turkish Empire, we are almost compelled to infer that the drowning of the exiles *en masse* was a definite part of the general scheme drawn out by the Young Turk leaders at Constantinople.

Perhaps the most terrible feature of all was the suffering of the women with child, who were made to march with the convoys and gave birth to their babies on the road. This is alluded to in Doc. 12, from a German source, at second-hand, but in Docs. 129 and 137 we have the testimony of neutral witnesses who actually succoured these victims, so far as the extremity of their plight and the brutality of their escort made succour possible. It should be mentioned that in Doc. 68 an Armenian exile testifies to

the kindness of an individual Turkish gendarme to one of her fellow-victims who was in these straits.

(vi) The vast scale of these massacres and the pitiless cruelty with which the deportations were carried out may seem to some readers to throw doubt on the authenticity of the narratives. Can human beings (it may be asked) have perpetrated such crimes on innocent women and children? But a recollection of previous massacres will show that such crimes are part of the long settled and often repeated policy of Turkish rulers. In Chios, nearly a century ago, the Turks slaughtered almost the whole Greek population of the island. In European Turkey in 1876 many thousands of Bulgarians were killed on the suspicion of an intended rising, and the outrages committed on women were, on a smaller scale, as bad as those here recorded. In 1895 and 1896 more than a hundred thousand Armenian Christians were put to death by Abd-ul-Hamid, many thousands of whom died as martyrs to their Christian faith, by abjuring which they could have saved their lives. All these massacres are registered not only in the ordinary press records of current history but in the reports of British diplomatic and consular officials written at the time. They are as certain as anything else that has happened in our day. There is, therefore, no antecedent improbability to be overcome before the accounts here given can be accepted. All that happened in 1915 is in the regular line of Turkish policy. The only differences are in the scale of the present crimes, and in the fact that the lingering sufferings of deportations in which the deaths were as numerous as in the massacres, and fell with special severity upon the women, have in this latest instance been added.

The evidence is cumulative. Each part of it supports the rest because each part is independent of the others. The main facts are the same, and reveal the same plans and intentions at work. Even the varieties are instructive because they show those diversities of temper and feeling which appear in human nature everywhere.

The Turkish officials are usually heartless and callous. But here and there we see one of a finer temper, who refuses to carry out the orders given him and is sometimes dismissed for his refusal. The Moslem rabble is usually pitiless. It pillages the houses and robs the persons of the hapless exiles. But now and then there appear pious and compassionate Moslems who try to save the lives or alleviate the miseries of their Christian neighbours. We have a vivid picture of human life, where wickedness in high places deliberately lets loose the passions of racial or religious hatred, as well as the commoner passion of rapacity, yet cannot extinguish those better feelings which show as points of light in the gloom.

It is, however, for the reader to form his own judgment on these documents as he peruses them. They do not, and by the nature of the case cannot, constitute what is called judicial evidence, such as a Court of Justice obtains when it puts witnesses on oath and subjects them to cross-examination. But by far the larger part (almost all, indeed, of what is here published) does constitute historical evidence of the best kind, inasmuch as the statements come from those who saw the events they describe and

recorded them in writing immediately afterwards. They corroborate one another, the narratives given by different observers showing a substantial agreement, which becomes conclusive when we find the salient facts repeated with no more variations in detail than the various opportunities of the independent observers made natural. The gravest facts are those for which the evidence is most complete, and it all tallies fatally with that which twenty years ago established the guilt of Abd-ul-Hamid for the deeds that have made his name infamous. In this case there are, moreover, what was wanting then, admissions which add weight to the testimony here presented, I mean the admissions of the Turkish Government and of their German apologists³. The attempts made to find excuses for wholesale slaughter and for the removal of a whole people from its homes leave no room for doubt as to the slaughter and the removal. The main facts are established by the confession of the criminals themselves. What the evidence here presented does is to show in detail how these things were effected, what cruelties accompanied them, and how inexcusable they were. The disproof of the palliations which the Turks have put forward is as complete as the proof of the atrocities themselves.

In order to test the soundness of my own conclusions as to the value of the evidence, I have submitted it to the judgment of three friends, men for whose opinion everyone who knows them will have the highest respect - a distinguished historian, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher (Vice Chancellor of the University of Sheffield); a distinguished scholar, Mr. Gilbert Murray (Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford); and a distinguished American lawyer of long experience and high authority, Mr. Moorfield Storey, of Boston, Mass. - men accustomed in their respective walks of life to examine and appraise evidence; and I append the letters which convey their several views.

This preface is intended to deal only with the credibility of the evidence here presented, so I will refrain from comment on the facts. A single observation, or rather a single question, may, however, be permitted from one who has closely followed the history of the Turkish East for more than forty years. European travellers have often commended the honesty and the kindness of the Turkish peasantry, and our soldiers have said that they are fair fighters. Against them I have nothing to say, and will even add that I have known individual Turkish officials who impressed me as men of honesty and good-will. But the record of the rulers of Turkey for the last two or three centuries,

³ For instance, the conversation of a German officer reported in Doc. 108, p. 420. For the general attitude of the Turks and Germans towards the treatment of the Armenians, see "Historical Summary," chapter V.

On the 11th January, 1916, Herr von Stumm, Chief of the Political Department of the German Foreign Office, gave the following answer in the Reichstag to a question from Dr. Liebknrecht:

"It is known to the Imperial Chancellor that revolutionary demonstrations, organised by our enemies, have taken place in Armenia, and that they have caused the Turkish Government to expel the Armenian population of certain districts and to allot to them new dwelling-places. An exchange of views about the reaction of these measures upon the population is now taking place. Further information cannot be given."

from the Sultan on his throne down to the district Mutessarif, is, taken as a whole, an almost unbroken record of corruption, of injustice, of an oppression which often rises into hideous cruelty. The Young Turks, when they deposed Abd-ul-Hamid, came forward as the apostles of freedom, promising equal rights and equal treatment to all Ottoman subjects. The facts here recorded show how that promise was kept. Can anyone still continue to hope that the evils of such a government are curable? Or does the evidence contained in this volume furnish the most terrible and convincing proof that it can no longer be permitted to rule over subjects of a different faith?

BRYCE.

Letter from Mr. H. A. L. Fisher.

LETTER FROM MR. H. A. L. FISHER,
VICE-CHANCELLOR OF SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY, TO VISCOUNT BRYCE.

The University,
Sheffield,
August 2nd, 1916.

MY DEAR LORD BRYCE,

The evidence here collected with respect to the sufferings of the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire during the present war will carry conviction wherever and whenever it is studied by honest enquirers. It bears upon the face of it all the marks of credibility. In the first place, the transactions were recorded soon after they took place and while the memory of them was still fresh and poignant. Then the greater part of the story rests upon the word of eye-witnesses, and the remainder upon the evidence of persons who had special opportunities for obtaining correct information. It is true that some of the witnesses are Armenians, whose testimony, if otherwise unconfirmed, might be regarded as liable to be over coloured or distorted, but the Armenian evidence does not stand alone. It is corroborated by reports received from Americans, Danes, Swiss, Germans, Italians and other foreigners. Again, this foreign testimony comes for the most part from men and women whose calling alone entitles them to be heard with respect, that is to say, from witnesses who may fairly be expected to exceed the average level of character and intelligence and to view the transactions which they record with as much detachment as is compatible with human feeling. Indeed, the foreign witnesses who happened to be spectators of the deportation, dispersion, and massacre of the Armenian nation, do not strike me as being, in any one case, blind and indiscriminate haters of the Turk. They are prompt to notice facts which strike them as creditable to individual members of the Moslem community.

I am also impressed with the cumulative effect of the evidence. Whoever speaks, and from whatever quarter in the wide region covered by these reports the voice may proceed, the story is one and the same. There are no discrepancies or contradictions of

importance, but, on the contrary, countless scattered pieces of mutual corroboration. There is no contrariety as to the broad fact that the Armenian population has been uprooted from its homes, dispersed, and, to a large though not exactly calculable extent, exterminated in consequence of general orders issued from Constantinople. It is clear that a catastrophe, conceived upon a scale quite unparalleled in modern history, has been contrived for the Armenian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. It is found that the original responsibility rests with the Ottoman Government at Constantinople, whose policy was actively seconded by the members of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Provinces. And in view of the fact that the representations of the Austrian Ambassador with the Porte were effectual in procuring a partial measure of exemption for the Armenian Catholics, we are led to surmise that the unspeakable horrors which this volume records might have been mitigated, if not wholly checked, had active and energetic remonstrances been from the first moment addressed to the Ottoman Government by the two Powers who had acquired a predominant influence in Constantinople. The evidence, on the contrary, tends to suggest that these two Powers were, in a general way, favourable to the policy of deportation.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT FISHER.

Letter from Professor Gilbert Murray.

LETTER FROM PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY, REGIUS PROFESSOR OF
GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, TO VISCOUNT BRYCE.

DEAR LORD
BRYCE,

82, Woodstock Road,
Oxford,
June 27th, 1916.

I have spent some time studying the documents you are about to publish relative to the deportations and massacres of Armenians in the Turkish Empire during the spring and summer of 1915. I know, of course, how carefully a historian should scrutinize the evidence for events so startling in character, reported to have occurred in regions so far removed from the eyes of civilized Europe. I realize that in times of persecution passions run high, that oriental races tend to use hyperbolic language, and that the victims of oppression cannot be expected to speak with strict fairness of their oppressors. But the evidence of these letters and reports will bear any scrutiny and overpower any scepticism. Their genuineness is established beyond question, though obviously you are right in withholding certain of the names of persons and places. The

statements of the Armenian refugees themselves are fully confirmed by residents of American, Scandinavian and even of German nationality; and the undesigned agreement between so many credible witnesses from widely separate districts puts all the main lines of the story beyond the possibility of doubt.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
GILBERT MURRAY.

Letter from Mr. Moorfield Storey.

LETTER FROM MR. MOORFIELD STOREY,
EX-PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN
BAR ASSOCIATION, TO VISCOUNT BRYCE.

MY DEAR SIR,
735, Exchange
Building, Boston, U.S.,
7th August, 1916.

I have examined considerable portions of the volume which contains the statements regarding the treatment of the Armenians by the Turks, in order to determine the value of these statements as evidence.

I have no doubt that, while there may be inaccuracies of detail, these statements establish without any question the essential facts. It must be borne in mind that in such a case the evidence of eye-witnesses is not easily obtained; the victims, with few exceptions, are dead; the perpetrators will not confess; any casual spectators cannot be reached, and in most cases are either in sympathy with what was done or afraid to speak. There are no tribunals before which witnesses can be summoned and compelled to testify, and a rigid censorship is maintained by the authorities responsible for the crimes, which prevents the truth from coming out freely, and no investigation by impartial persons will be permitted.

Such statements as you print are the best evidence which, in the circumstances, it is possible to obtain. They come from persons holding positions which give weight to their words, and from other persons with no motive to falsify, and it is impossible that such a body of concurring evidence should have been manufactured. Moreover, it is confirmed by evidence from German sources which has with difficulty escaped the rigid censorship maintained by the German authorities - a censorship which is in itself a confession, since there is no reason why the Germans should not give full currency to such evidence unless the authorities felt themselves in some way responsible for what it discloses.

In my opinion, the evidence which you print is as reliable as that upon which rests

our belief in many of the universally admitted facts of history, and I think it establishes beyond any reasonable doubt the deliberate purpose of the Turkish authorities practically to exterminate the Armenians, and their responsibility for the hideous atrocities which have been perpetrated upon that unhappy people.

Yours truly,
MOORFIELD STOREY.

Letter from Four German Missionaries.

LETTER, DATED ALEPPO, 8th OCTOBER, 1915, FROM FOUR MEMBERS OF THE GERMAN MISSIONS STAFF IN TURKEY TO THE IMPERIAL GERMAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT BERLIN.⁴

We think it our duty to draw the attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the fact that our school work will be deprived, for the future, of its moral basis and will lose all authority in the eyes of the natives, if it is really beyond the power of the German Government to mitigate the brutality of the treatment which the exiled women and children of the massacred Armenians are receiving.

In face of the scenes of horror which are being unfolded daily before our eyes in the neighbourhood of our school, our educational activity becomes a mockery of humanity. How can we make our pupils listen to the Tales of the Seven Dwarfs, how can we teach them conjugations and declensions, when, in the compounds next door to our school, death is carrying off their starving compatriots-when there are girls and women and children, practically naked, some lying on the ground, others stretched between the dead or the coffins made ready for them beforehand, and breathing their last breath!

Out of 2,000 to 3,000 peasant women from the Armenian Plateau who were brought here in good health, only forty or fifty skeletons are left. The prettier ones are the victims of their gaolers' lust; the plain ones succumb to blows, hunger and thirst (they lie by the water's edge, but are not allowed to quench their thirst). The Europeans are forbidden to distribute bread to the starving. Every day more than a hundred corpses are carried out of Aleppo.

All this happens under the eyes of high Turkish officials. There are forty or fifty emaciated phantoms crowded into the compound opposite our school. They are women out of their mind; they have forgotten how to eat; when one offers them bread, they throw it aside with indifference. They only groan and wait for death.

⁴ A copy of this letter was communicated to the Berner Tagwacht by Dr. Forel, a Swiss gentleman, and reproduced in the journal de Geneve, 17th August, 1916. It was signed by four persons - Dr. Gräter (of Swiss nationality), Dr. Niepage (of German nationality), and two others whose names have been withheld by Dr. Forel.-EDITOR.

"See," say the natives: "Taâlim el Alman (the teaching of the Germans)."

The German scutcheon is in danger of being smirched forever in the memory of the Near Eastern peoples. There are natives of Aleppo, more enlightened than the rest, who say: "The Germans do not want these horrors. Perhaps the German nation does not know about them. If it did, how could the German Press, which is attached to the truth, talk about the humanity of the treatment accorded to the Armenians who are guilty of High Treason? Perhaps, too, the German Government has its hands tied by some contract defining the powers of the [German and Turkish] States in regard to one another's affairs?"

No, when it is a question of giving over thousands of women and children to death by starvation, the words "Opportunism" and "definition of powers" lose their meaning. Every civilized human being is "empowered" in this case to interfere, and it is his bounden duty to do so. Our prestige in the East is the thing at stake. There are even Turks and Arabs who have remained human, and who shake their heads in sorrow when they see, in the exile convoys that pass through the town, how the brutal soldiers shower blows on women with child who can march no farther.

We may expect further and still more dreadful hecatombs after the order published by Djemal Pasha. (The engineers of the Baghdad Railway are forbidden, by this order, to photograph the Armenian convoys; any plates they have already used for this must be given up within twenty-four hours, under penalty of prosecution before the Council of War.) It is a proof that the responsible authorities fear the light, but have no intention of putting an end to scenes which are a disgrace to humanity.

We know that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already, from other sources, received detailed descriptions of what is happening here. But as no change has occurred in the system of the deportations, we feel ourselves under a double obligation to make this report, all the more because the fact of our living abroad enables us to see more clearly the immense danger by which the German name is threatened here.

MEMORANDUM BY THE EDITOR.

As far as their contents are concerned, the documents collected in this volume explain themselves, and if any reader wishes for an outline of the events they describe, as a guide to their detail, he will find it in the "Historical Summary" at the end of the book, especially in Section V. In this preliminary memorandum the Editor has simply to state the sources, character and value of the documents, and to explain the system on which they have been edited.

The sources of the documents are very varied. Some of them were communicated to the Editor directly by the writers themselves, or, in the case of private letters, by the persons to whom the letters were addressed. Several of those relating to the distribution of relief in Russian Caucasia have been placed in his hands by the courtesy of the British Foreign Office. Others, again, he owes to the courtesy of individuals, including

Lord Bryce, who has superintended the work throughout, and given most generously of his time and thought towards making it as accurate and complete as possible; several members of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief⁵; the Rev. G. T. Scott, Assistant Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; M. Arshag Tchobanian; Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons; Dr. William Walter Rockwell, of the Union Theological Seminary of New York; the Rev. Stephen Trowbridge, Secretary of the American Red Cross Committee at Cairo; the Rev. I. N. Camp, a missionary in the service of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at present stationed at Cairo; Aneurin Williams, Esq., M.P.; the Rev. Harold Buxton, Treasurer of the Armenian Refugees (Lord Mayor's) Fund; Mr. J. D. Bouchier, correspondent of the London *Times* newspaper in the Balkans; Mrs. D. S. Margoliouth, of Oxford; the Rev. F. N. Heazell, Organising Secretary of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Assyrian Mission; Mr. G. H. Paelian, an American citizen resident in London; Mr. A. S. Safrastian, of Tiflis; and Mr. H. N. Mosditchian, of London. Another source of material has been the Press. Despatches, letters and statements have been reprinted in this volume from the columns of English, American, Swiss, French, Russian, Italian and also German newspapers, and from Armenian journals published at Tiflis, London and New York. The editors of *Ararat*, *Gotchnag* and the *New Armenia* have shown the Editor of this volume every possible kindness, and have courteously presented him with free copies of their current issues.

⁵ AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR ARMENIAN AND SYRIAN RELIEF.

70, Fifth Avenue, New York.

Including work of the Armenian Relief, the Persian War Relief, and the Syrian-Palestine Relief Committees.

James L. Barton. Samuel T. Dutton. Walter H. Mallory.

Chairman. Secretary. Field Secretary.

Charles R. Crane, *Treasurer.*

Arthur J. Brown.

John Moffat.

Edwin M. Bulkley.

John R. Mott.

John B. Calvert.

Frank Mason North.

John D. Crimmins.

Harry V. Osborne.

Cleveland H. Dodge.

George A. Plimpton.

Charles W. Eliot.

Rt.Rev.P. Rhineland.

William T. Ellis.

Karl Davis Robinson.

James Cardinal Gibbons.

William W. Rockwell.

Rt. Rev. David H. Greer.

George T. Scott.

Norman Hapgood.

Isaac N. Seligman.

Maurice H. Harris.

William Sloane.

William I. Haven.

Edward Lincoln Smith.

Hamilton Holt.

James M. Speers.

Arthur Curtiss James.

Oscar M. Straus.

Frederick Lynch.

Stanley White.

Chas. S. MacFarland.

Talcott Williams.

H. Pereira Mendes.

Stephen S. Wise.

The documents are all rendered here in English, but they reached the Editor's hands in various languages-not only English but French, Italian, German and Armenian. The translations from the French, German and Italian have been made by the Editor with the assistance of his wife. For the translation of documents from the Armenian he is indebted to Mr. Paelian, who has devoted a large part of his scanty leisure to doing the Editor this most valuable service. But for Mr. Paelian's promptness and good will, the work might have been considerably delayed.

The character of the documents varies with the writers. Some of the witnesses are native Armenian or Nestorian inhabitants of the Near East, who were either victims of the atrocities themselves or were intimately connected with others who played a direct part in the scenes described. A majority of the witnesses, however, are foreign residents in the Ottoman Empire or the Persian Province of Azerbaijan, and nearly all these, again, are citizens of neutral countries, either European or American-missionaries, teachers, doctors, Red Cross nurses or officials. A few witnesses (and these are the weightiest of all) are subjects of states allied to Turkey in the present war.

The value of the documents of course depends upon the witnesses' standing and character, and upon the opportunities they possessed of knowing the facts. The Editor is certain in his own mind that all the documents published here are genuine statements of the truth, and he presents them in this assurance. Errors will, doubtless, be here and there discovered, but he believes that any errors there may be have been made in good faith, and that they will prove to touch only points of detail, which do not affect the truth of the whole. At the same time he realises that, considered as legal evidence before a court, the documents differ considerably in probative value. From this legal point of view, they can be tabulated in several classes:-

- (a) Evidence published by the editor of a German journal in Germany, and suppressed by the Imperial German Censorship (Doc. 12). This evidence is, of course, above any suspicion of prejudice against the Turks.
- (b) Documents written by German eye-witnesses of the events they describe (Docs. 18, 23, 91, 145), or by neutral eye-witnesses resident in Turkey in the service of German missionary or philanthropic institutions, or of the German Red Cross (Docs. 62, 64, 117, 142). This evidence is equally above suspicion of partiality against the Turks or in favour of the Armenians.
- (c) Documents written by other neutral eye-witnesses, principally American and Swiss, who have no connection, either public or private, with the Turco-German Alliance or with the Entente, and who are presumably without bias towards either party. Documents of such authorship constitute the bulk of the material in this volume, and practically all of them are written at first hand. There are no apparent grounds for not reposing full confidence in them.
- (d) Documents written by Armenian or Nestorian natives of the regions concerned. This native evidence may be thought to have somewhat less cogency than the rest, as the witnesses have suffered personally from the horrors they describe,

and are open to stronger influences of prejudice and emotion than foreign observers. Errors of detail are more likely to occur here, especially as regards estimates of numbers. The Editor wishes to repeat, however, that, after comparing the different statements of these native witnesses with one another, and with the documents in the three preceding classes, he is convinced of the substantial accuracy of all the evidence, of whatever class, that is presented in this volume.

The total body of evidence is large, as the considerable bulk of the volume shows, and this is the more satisfactory because the Ottoman Government has taken every possible precaution to prevent any knowledge of its proceedings from reaching the outer world. Private postal and telegraphic communications were suspended between Constantinople and the provinces, and between one province and another. There was a stringent censorship of outgoing mails, even the consuls of neutral countries were forbidden to telegraph in cypher, and travellers leaving Turkey were searched and divested of every scrap of paper, whether written upon or blank, in their possession. A quotation from a letter, written by the author of one of our documents^{6*} just after she had safely passed beyond the Ottoman frontier, will give some idea of the severity of this official embargo upon news of every sort:

"As I was coming out from under the hands of the censor, I was asked to write to you, telling you something of the real situation in our part of the world. In my opinion the censorship now is worse than it was in the olden days, for now they have such highly trained men. One of our censors had a five years' training in the New York Post Office. If our letters seem to tell you little, please remember that there are the strictest orders against the censor's passing anything on politics, war or even poverty. Any sentences that even touch on these subjects are either out out or marked or blotted out with ink. A German lady even wrote to a friend of hers in Germany, telling her of poverty in BM. and asking her to send relief funds. She purposely mentioned no causes for this poverty, but only said there was such a condition. The only parts of the letter that reached her friend were the opening and closing sentences. The knife had claimed the rest. So, as Mrs. E. said: 'Please tell our friends in America that when we write about concerts and field meets and such things, that does not show that the country is safe or that work is as usual. We write about that simply because there is nothing else about which we are allowed to write.' "

Nearly all our evidence, therefore, comes from residents in Turkey who witnessed, like this lady, the events that occurred in some particular district or districts, and subsequently left Turkey for some other country, where they could record what they had seen without endangering their lives. Yet, even on neutral ground, these witnesses are not beyond the reach of Turkish resentment. Many of them are anxious to take up their work again in Turkey at the earliest opportunity, and nearly all of them still have interests in the country, or fellow-workers, or friends, who are so many gages in the Ottoman Government's hands. That Government is known to have agents in Europe,

⁶ Doc. 121.

and possibly in America as well, whose business it is to inform against anyone who exposes its misdeeds; and the Young Turkish gang, by whom the Ottoman Government is controlled, have no shame and no scruple about wreaking vengeance by any and every means upon accusers whose indictments they are wholly unable to answer before the judgment seat of the civilized world. It is, therefore, absolutely essential to withhold in many cases the names of the witnesses themselves, and of people, or even of places, mentioned in their testimony. In fact, some of the documents have only been communicated to the Editor on this express condition—for instance, the document enclosed with the letter quoted a few lines above. "May I ask you, however," continues this very letter, "not to publish my name or that of any missionary from BM., not even the name of BM. itself or any of the places which I shall mention, as the censorship is so strict and terrible now that the mention of names brings us under suspicion at once. May I instance? Dr. E. and Dr. L. have been under such suspicion or ill-will that they have not been able to get a simple family letter through to members of their family in America for months, and the whole station of AC. is under sufficient suspicion to prevent most of the letters they write to you and Mr. N. from reaching their destination. The reason, we feel quite certain, is a report on Moslem work which was sent to you."

And the same considerations are urged even more emphatically by Miss A., the author of Doc. 137, who is our chief witness for the occurrences at AC. Itself: -

"For the sake of the people left in Turkey, and especially my orphan children, I hope nothing will be published as from me. If any word of it should get into Turkey, it might have very serious consequences for them.

"Although very few magazines or papers were allowed into the interior, yet occasionally we saw one. In the coast towns, pieces are being cut from the papers, and sold at high prices to Turks. I left my post just because I thought my presence there might make it hard for those under my charge; but if anything that I am supposed to have told gets back into Turkey, I fear the whole of my community may have to suffer. I do not think that those outside Turkey fully realise what danger there is, even in letters, to those left in the country. The local authorities seemed to be always on the watch for something to find as a cause of complaint against both missionaries and Armenians.

"The poor refugees that we saw in BF. as we passed through begged us to help them., but, when we got to BJ., the missionaries there said they had been forbidden to give aid. One woman had been taken to the Government Building because she had been found helping some poor families in her own district that she had been visiting for years. There were many sick at BF., and the pastor and others sent post-cards, begging us to send help quickly. One man asked me to lend him some money, saying I could get it back from his brother in America. It was the danger to him that made me hesitate. The money was finally sent, but one feared to think what it might be an excuse for. And so over all the country.

"All the time when people were in great need, the question was in one's mind: 'Will relief endanger their lives?' New rules were constantly being sprung upon us. A person

would write a letter, but before it reached its destination it would be 'against the regulations.'

"All money in banks and all property belonging to the exiles was confiscated by the Government. The people who were deported from AC. did not know it, but when they had used up all that they had taken with them, they would write to us. It was in this way that we found out that they had neither money nor property left; but we were powerless to let them know what the difficulty was, so they would write again and again.

"All the time, we felt we were in a trap. The most courageous Armenians dared not come to see me, nor could I go to their homes. We had to meet at some public building if they wanted to see me about anything.

"No one living in freedom can understand what it feels like to be in Turkey these days."

In face of this, the reader will see for himself that the publication of names, under present circumstances, would often be a grave and perilous breach of trust, and the Editor has, therefore, (though only where absolutely necessary, and without making any change whatever affecting the substance of the documents), substituted arbitrary symbols for the names of persons and places in the text, in the manner shown in the preceding quotation. A complete key to these symbols has been prepared and communicated, in confidence, to the British Foreign Office, Lord Bryce, Dr. Barton, and the Rev. G. T. Scott; and this key will be published as soon as circumstances permit, or, in other words, as soon as the dangers which would threaten the persons referred to have ceased to exist.

The Ottoman Government and its allies, whose good name is almost as seriously compromised as the Ottoman name by the facts, may be expected to make what capital they can out of the precautions imposed by their own treatment of their Christian subjects, and to impugn the genuineness of the documents that have been edited in the way here described. That was the course they adopted in the case of the evidence relating to the conduct of the German Army in Belgium, which was published with the same, equally necessary, reservations. The Editor can best forestall such disingenuous criticism by stating clearly the principles on which this suppression of names has been made:

- (a) Names of persons are not published in this volume unless they have already appeared publicly, in the same connection, in print, or unless the person in question is clearly beyond the reach of Turkish revenge.
- (b) Names of places are published wherever possible. They are only withheld when they would be certain to reveal the identity of persons mentioned in connection with them.
- (c) All names withheld are represented in the text by capital letters of the alphabet or combinations of capital letters. These letters are not the initials of the names in

question, but were assigned in an arbitrary order, as the various documents happened to come into the Editor's hands.

- (d) The name of a place is always represented by the same symbol throughout the volume, *e.g.*, "X." stands for the same place, whether it occurs in Section I. or Section XI.
- (e) In the case of the names of people the same symbol only stands for the same person within a single section, *e.g.*, "Miss A." stands for the same person, in whatever document it occurs in Section XVII.; but in the documents of Section XI. "Miss A." represents someone different.

The Editor wishes to state, once more, that these documents in which names are represented by symbols are not a whit less valid, as evidence, than the documents in which no such substitutions have had to be made. If the reader desires confirmation of this, the Editor would refer him to the gentlemen mentioned above, who have been placed in possession of the confidential key.

There are other documents, however, where the names have, on similar grounds, been withheld from the Editor himself, either by the authors of the documents or by those through whose hands the Editor obtained them, or where the ultimate source of the testimony is for some reason obscure. The Editor has been careful to indicate these cases as conspicuously as possible. Where there is any name, either of a place or of a person, unknown to him in the text, he has represented it by a blank (-----). Where the name of the author of the document is unknown to him, he has stated this in a footnote to the title by which the document is headed⁷.

The Editor is, of course, aware that these documents which he only possesses in a defective form cannot be presented as evidence in the strict sense by himself, and can plausibly be repudiated by the parties whose crimes they describe. He is the more content to admit this legal objection to them because they merely confirm what is established by the other evidence independently of them. They constitute no more than twenty two out of the 150 documents in the whole collection, and, if they are passed over, the picture presented by the far larger mass of documents that cannot be impugned remains perfectly precise and complete. The Editor has chosen to publish them, in their natural order, with the rest, because he has no more doubt about their genuineness than about the genuineness of the others-and with good reason, for, out of the twenty-two documents in question, not less than eleven have been communicated to him by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief citizens of high standing in a neutral country and gentlemen of unimpeachable good faith. He repeats, however, that these Twenty-two documents are in no way essential to the presentation of the case as a whole.

The documents are arranged in groups, in a geographical order, which is adjusted

⁷ In other words, wherever the title of a document is given without such a footnote, that means that the Editor is in possession of the author's name, even if the name is not published but represented by a symbol (*e.g.*, "Dr. L."), or by such periphrases as "A foreign resident," &c.

as far as possible to the general chronological order in which the different regions were affected by the Ottoman Government's scheme. The first group or section contains documents that do not confine themselves to any one region, but give general descriptions of events occurring throughout the Ottoman Empire. These documents are for the most part earlier in date than those relating to particular districts, and are therefore placed at the beginning. The second section opens the geographical series with the documents relating to Van, the northeastern most province of the Ottoman Empire in the direction of the Caucasus and Azerbaijan. The third section deals with Bitlis, the province adjoining Van on the west, which suffered next in order; the fourth with Azerbaijan, the Persian province on the eastern side of Van, which suffered during the Turkish offensive in the winter of 1914-5; the fifth with Russian Trans-Caucasia, where the refugees from Van and Azerbaijan sought refuge in August, 1915. The succeeding sections follow one another in geographical order from east to west, beginning with Erzeroum, the border province adjoining Van on the north-west along the Russo-Turkish frontier. Erzeroum constitutes the sixth section, Mamouret-ul-Aziz the seventh, Trebizond the eighth, Sivas the ninth, Kaisaria the tenth, the town of X. the eleventh, Angora the twelfth, Constantinople and the adjacent districts the thirteenth. From this point the sections run in reverse order from north-west to south-east, following the track of the Baghdad Railway. The fourteenth section deals with places along this route between (but excluding) Adapazar and Aleppo; the fifteenth deals with Cilicia, the region through which the Baghdad Railway passes half-way along its course, and this is the only case in which the chronological and geographical arrangements seriously conflict, for the Cilicians were the first to suffer - they were already being deported twelve days before fighting broke out at Van. The sixteenth section is Jibal Mousa, a group of villages adjoining Cilicia on the south; the seventeenth the Armenian colonies at Ourfa and AC., two cities on the Mesopotamian fringe; the eighteenth Aleppo, upon which nearly all the convoys of exiles converged; and the nineteenth Damascus and Der-el-Zor, the two districts where the greater part of the survivors were finally deposited. A twentieth section has also been added for documents received while the volume was in the press.

Wherever a date is given without further indication, it may be assumed to be in "New Style." where two alternative dates are given (e.g., 26th September /9th October), the first is "Old Style" and the second "New." Dates are never given in "Old Style" alone. Where sums of money are given in Turkish or Persian units, the English equivalent is usually added in brackets. Sums given in dollars have always been translated into English pounds sterling.

The names of places have not been spelt on any consistent system, there being no recognized system in general use. The Editor has merely endeavoured to standardise the spelling of each particular name wherever it occurs.

An index of all places referred to by name in the documents that are in the Editor's possession, whether the name has been withheld in the text or not, has been compiled

for him most accurately by Miss Margaret Toynbee, to whom he is grateful for this important addition to the usefulness of the book. This index is printed at the end of the volume. The map which accompanies it has been compiled by the Editor himself from various sources, chiefly from Kiepert's excellent sheets of Asia Minor, in the Map Room of the Royal Geographical Society, where he has received most kind and valuable assistance from the staff.