

SAW ARMENIANS GO STARVING TO EXILE

Story of a Journey Through
Turkey as Told to the
Board of Missions.

WOMEN TIED TO DONKEYS

"The Slow Massacre of a Race," a
Victim Calls It—Babies
Thrown Into Rivers.

The story of a journey through Turkey, from a port on the Mediterranean to Constantinople, is told in the January bulletin of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions by a member of the party who recently arrived in this country. The trustworthiness of the narrator is vouched for by the board.

The journey to Constantinople began on a Monday morning, a few weeks ago. The first stop was a little village where the party had to remain three hours. While there the travelers went to the home of a young Armenian woman, the wife of an Armenian physician who had a year before gone to the front as a member of the Medical Corps of the Turkish Army. The fact that her husband was at the front for Turkey and ministering to Turkish wounded and sick did not save this young woman and her two little children from exportation by the Turkish authorities. While the travelers were in this woman's home the Turks came, ordered her and the children to leave, and then plundered the house.

"It was one of the saddest hours I ever lived through," says the person who tells this story, "and we knew that in hundreds of other homes in that very town the same heartrending scenes might be witnessed. The courage of that little woman who knew she must take her two babies and face starvation and death with them! Her smile was like a beacon in that mud village, where hundreds were doomed. Her husband was far away, ministering to those who were sending her and her babies to destruction.

"It is the slow massacre of our entire race," said one woman. "It is worse than massacre," replied a man.

"The town crier went through all the streets of the village, crying out that any one who helped the Armenians in any way, gave them food, money, or anything, would be beaten and cast into prison. To help them we could do nothing; we were powerless to save their lives.

"Already the Turks had taken the American school and church, and after a procession through the streets had consecrated the church into a mosque and made the school a Turkish school. They had taken down the cross and put up the crescent. Some weeks before they had exiled the faithful Armenian pastor, who for a great many years had toiled there, as he said, 'to make a little oasis in the desert.'

"Hardly had we left the town when we began to meet one train after another, crowded, jammed with these poor people being carried away to some spot where no food could be obtained. At every station we stopped we came side by side with one of these trains. It was made up of cattle cars, and the faces of little children were looking out from behind the tiny, barred windows of each car. The side doors

were open, and one could plainly see old men and old women, young mothers with tiny babies, men, women, and children all huddled together—human beings treated worse than cattle are treated.

"About 8 o'clock that evening we came to a station where stood one of these trains. The Armenians told us that they had been in the station for three days, with no food. They said the Turks forbade their buying food. At the end of each train was a car of Turkish soldiers, ready to drive the poor people on when they reached the desert, or to whatever place they were being taken.

"They told us that twenty babies had been thrown into a river as a train crossed, thrown by the mothers themselves, who could not bear to hear their little ones crying for food when there was no food to give them. One woman gave birth to twins in one of those crowded cars, and crossing a river she threw both her babies and then herself into the water. Those who could not pay to ride in these cattle cars were forced to walk. All along the road, as our train passed, we saw them walking slowly and sadly along, driven from their homes like sheep to the slaughter.

"A German officer was on the train with us, and I asked him if Germany had anything to do with this exile, for I thought it was the most brutal thing that had ever happened. He said, 'You can't object to exiling a race; it's only the way the Turks are doing it which is bad.' He said he had just come from the interior himself and had seen the most terrible sights he ever saw in his life. Hundreds of people were walking over the mountains, driven by soldiers. Many were dead and dying by the roadside. Old women and little children too feeble to walk were strapped to the sides of donkeys. Babies lay dead in the road. Human life was thrown away everywhere.

"Another man on the train said that in one train he was in the mothers begged him to take their children, to save them from such a death. He said that an Armenian, a leading business man in ———, told him that he would rather kill his four daughters with his own hand than see the Turks take them from him. This Armenian was made to leave his home, his business and all he had, and started off with his family to walk to whatever place the Turks desired to exile him.

"When we reached a station near Constantinople we met a long train of Armenians that had just been exiled. Some of our party talked with one of the native teachers from the American school. Among other things, he said that an old man was walking the street when the order came to leave. The old man was deaf and did not understand. Because he made no move to leave the soldiers shot him down in the street.

"On every train we met we heard the heartrending cries of little children."

BAZIN IN THE TRENCHES.

Novelist Sees in French Soldiers'
Letters Material for Romance.

René Bazin, the French novelist, has been visiting the trenches. The soldiers who made the deepest impression upon his mind and sympathies were the middle-aged territorials, who, he says, on the authority of their officers, are ideal fighters in holding their positions—far better than the younger men, who are too rash and impulsive for such duty.

From a passage in a recent article which he contributed to the *Echo de*

Paris it may be conjectured that a novel on the war comparable to "The Nun" will be the result of his days at the front.

"When the sector is quiet," he says, "the territorial has hours of liberty. He writes a great deal. He writes to make up for all the past, when he never composed a letter except, perhaps, at the first of the year; he writes for the future, when, he promises himself, he will let the pen lie untouched in the groove of the little inkstand on the mantelpiece. One of the men said to me: 'I hear they have put a letter-box in the railway station of my village. What will be the use of it after the war? A place for sparrows to build in?'

"Many of these letters contain only chronicles of days that are uneventful, and are made up of customary expressions of friendship or love, banal if made public, but precious to those who wait for them and will have their commentary on every word as they sit at night around the lamp. I know young country women who get letters from their husbands every day. The war has proved itself a continuation school to no one more than to these territorials. Sometimes convention is swept away, and it is race that speaks, and the hidden faith, and all the soul that probably never before so revealed itself. Here is one of these letters which I have been permitted to see. For a year it lay in the pocket of the territorial, who had written it as a sort of last will and testament; then the man was killed, and it came into the hands of his widow. Read it, and tell me if you would not like to have had for your neighbor and friend the man who could write this:

"My Beloved: My heart is very full as I write these lines, and if you ever read them it will mean that I shall have died doing my duty. Before I go, I ask you always to train our children in honor and teach them to remember me, for I shall have gone to my death thinking of them and you. Tell them I died on the field of honor, and that I ask of them the same sacrifice on the day when France shall have need of their arms and their hearts. Keep the certificate of good conduct that I had on leaving the regiment, and later make them understand that their father had in his heart the wish to live simply for them and for you, whom I have always loved so well.

"Now, I do not want you to pass the rest of your life in mourning for a dead man. On the contrary, if you meet, as times goes on, a good fellow, industrious and capable of giving you loyal help in rearing our children, well, unite your life with his, and never speak to him of me, for, if he loves you, it will displease him to feel the shadow of a dead man hovering around him. * * *

"My beloved, this is the end, I love you, and always shall, even for eternity. Farewell! I will wait for you in Heaven. Your Jean who adored you (Ton Jean qui t'adorait.)"

"I wish that the young novelists who have seen the war would bring themselves to see that there are beautiful romances among the lowliest, that all hearts are capable of greatness, if only the idea of sacrifice has been instilled into them, and that this is the corrective for all inequalities."