

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

HE would be a rash man who should claim to have mastered the Eastern Question—a question which it is not easy even to define, and of which the future of Turkey is only a part. To throw light on some phases of the latter problem is the writer's object—and this by way of information rather than argument. What he has learned of the subject has been by residence, travel, absorption, and investigation in the land itself, and by reading. The very short time allowed in the preparation of this humble contribution to the subject has necessitated a hasty and partial treatment at the expense of literary form. Some of the material and most of the illustrations are reproduced from articles by the author in the *American Review of Reviews*, by the kind permission of the editor, Dr. Albert Shaw. No pains have been spared to insure accuracy. References to authorities have been given as far as possible, but in regard to much information from most reliable sources names must be withheld.

This book, which appeared early in March, 1895, was prepared primarily to prove the reality and awful character of the first great massacre of Armenians which had taken place in Sassoun seven months

before, but of which no authenticated evidence had up till that time been made public. It was believed that, if the people of Great Britain could be convinced of the condition of Armenia, for which they were largely responsible, such a public opinion would be aroused as would at once lead to vigorous and determined action by that government. It was stated in the Preface: "If such action is *not* taken, the effect of this book, as of all agitation in behalf of the victims of Turkey, will be to draw the fetters deeper." The expectation that England would do her duty has proved to be groundless, but the Turk has lived up to his reputation. Irritated by England's threats, but emboldened by her cowardly and vacillating course, the Sultan, while pretending to reform Armenia, inaugurated there a reign of terror, of which Sassoun was a mere local incident.

THE ARMENIAN CRISIS is retained as a sub-title, because there is still a crisis in the history of that important race; and there will soon be one in Europe if selfishness, jealousy, and duplicity continue to stifle all considerations of humanity, national honor, and—I blush to add it—of Christianity.

In order to protect "British interests," for two-score years, not to say longer, has "Christian" England stood guard at the Sublime Porte, warning all intruders away. With her hand on the door of the Turk's disorderly house, she has complacently informed the world that she in particular—as well as the other Powers—has secured promises, and even guaranties, that all would go well. But all the while, Her Majesty's Ministers, of what-

ever party, have heard the bitter and despairing cry of the poor wretches within, and have done their best to stifle it by carefully suppressing, in their archives, the consular reports which have kept them officially informed of the real situation.¹ And all the while, England's share of the profits of this partnership with "her friend and ally," has been steadily dropping into her overflowing coffers. Was Cyprus nothing? Is Egypt nothing? Is the interest on Turkish bonds, extracted in blood-drops by a pressure that England helps to maintain, nothing? England's Christian statesmen who so jealously protect "British interests," even to the extent of conniving, for "reasons of state," at the outrage and murder of Armenia—whose chief guardianship they insisted on assuming,—would do well to remember that there is a kingdom of God, which has *its* interests, and which for state reasons of its own has swept away mighty empires that defied its laws.

As for France, whose cant at least is not religious, she tattoos her fair figure with "*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*" wherever there is space to write the words, but she evidently confines her motto to herself. It is reported that, at the close of the Berlin

¹ "I am at a loss to know why the reports of consuls ceased to be furnished in or about the year 1881. Why are not consular reports to be made, and being made, why are they not to be printed? If in this respect I am personally, or anyone associated with me is, open to censure, let the facts be brought out; but do not let a particular act at a particular time be confounded with the adoption of the principle of eternal silence about the horrors that prevail in Armenia."—Speech by the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, in House of Commons, May 28, 1889.

Congress in 1878, Prince Bismarck expressed the sentiments of official Germany, by saying that he "would not give one Pomeranian grenadier for the Balkan Peninsula." If so, she would probably sacrifice even less now for Armenia, though she would object, of course, to a division of Turkey without receiving some compensation herself. Austria would gladly extend her protectorate over Macedonia, which would also dispose of that bone of contention between Bulgaria and Greece. Poor Italy finds it hard to swallow what she has already bitten off in Abyssinia, and would be glad of something better.

Holy Russia feels so sure of the Armenian apple, which is bound to fall into her lap when it is ripe, that she does n't even care to shake the branch, lest it might alarm her rivals. She is mistress of the situation, and time is in her favor.

As for Turkey, she has long seen the sword of Damocles over her head, and will bow to the stroke of Fate whenever it falls. She hates and distrusts all the Powers, but, as a last resort, will probably yield to Russia, the nearest and the strongest, in hope of escaping the rest. Nobody expects or is really trying to secure reforms in Turkey, though promises of reform will still be demanded of the Sultan, and will always be ready on demand.

What is the real underlying difficulty in Turkey? Is it a conflict of race, or religion? Primarily it is neither, though both of these elements seriously complicate the case at present. *In one word, it is misgovernment.* Do not be deceived by this rather mild word, and dismiss the subject with the reflec-

tion that "there is misgovernment everywhere." Misgovernment, as it exists in Turkey, is a system breeding corruption and death. It is a disease, hereditary, chronic, penetrating the whole body politic and fastened on its very vitals. No creed is exempt; every race is attacked by it.

I have seen the crushing and—what is worse—demoralizing conditions from which all the races in Turkey suffer under Moslem misrule. I know how rapidly these fine races would advance along every line, were these conditions changed. I know the grand possibilities of the Armenians as a people, physically, intellectually, and morally. The only wonder is that a people of so great ability, energy, and spirit have so long submitted. But when one sees, as I have been compelled to, during years of residence both in Constantinople and the interior, how the fetters have been forged on every limb, and how the movement of a finger even brings down immediate and terrible vengeance, the wonder arises why these wretches are so foolhardy as to undertake revolution. The fact is they are not engaged in any such enterprise. Individual agitators there are, but even their object is only to force the civilized world to give attention to the despairing cry of their race, which even God does not seem, to them, to hear.

If the Armenians are to be left as they are, it is a pity that Europe ever mentioned them in the Treaty of Berlin or subsequently; and to intrust reforms in their behalf to those who have devoted three months' time to killing and robbing them is simply to abandon the Armenians to destruction and to put the

seal of Europe to the bloody work. The only way to reform Turkey, as history has so often shown, is by forcible foreign intervention—not the threat of it, but the intervention itself.

The position and power of Russia give her a unique call to the work. Should she enter on it at once the whole civilized world would approve her course. Russia should have as free a hand in Armenia as England has insisted on having in Egypt. By frankly admitting this, England would gain in the respect and sympathy of the world and strengthen her own position.

During a conversation with Mr. Gladstone in his home at Easter, 1895, I asked him if he shared the horror expressed by some, of opening the Eastern Question. Quick as a flash he replied, "The only way to *close* it is to open it." If in this fair, honest, and determined spirit the statesmen of Europe should come together, it would not take long to dispose of the so-called "Sick Man." The fact is he is already dead, and the only way to dispose of him is by burying him out of sight. He is too far decomposed to hold together and must, therefore, be buried piecemeal. No "joint action" will succeed. Each of the European undertakers should dispose of a part, be paid proportionately out of the estate, and administer the remainder as permanent guardians in the interests of the "Sick Man's" various children, thus happily orphaned.

I preach no crusade; none is needed. But it is high time for the conscience of the civilized world to assert itself—not simply the "non-Conformist

conscience," but the Established, the Orthodox, the Catholic, the Agnostic, and the Infidel conscience, in fact the human conscience—against this crime upon humanity. If this conscience is once aroused, I care not what parties are in power, or how the game stands on the diplomatic chessboard, the rule of the Turk will be ended, and one more blot will be wiped out from the annals of the world.

The policy of the United States Government in this world crisis has been one of impotence as far as the cause of humanity is concerned, contemptible from the standpoint of national honor, and suicidal as regards American interests.

While not lifting so much as a finger to shield tens of thousands of helpless women and children from murder and outrage, President Cleveland, by his gallant thundering about a few miles of swamps in Venezuela, at once threw into hopeless confusion the calculations of European statesmen in regard to the Armenians, and removed all pressure in their behalf. Meanwhile, thirteen respected and law-abiding United States citizens were actually bombarded by the Sultan's troops, and had their houses plundered and burned. Though four months have passed, no indemnity has been secured, and it is not probable that any official will be punished for this insult to America.

Emboldened by such timid and tardy action by this country, the Porte has now assumed the aggressive and audaciously accuses the American residents of sedition and murder. The object of this

charge is simply to secure their expulsion from the country.

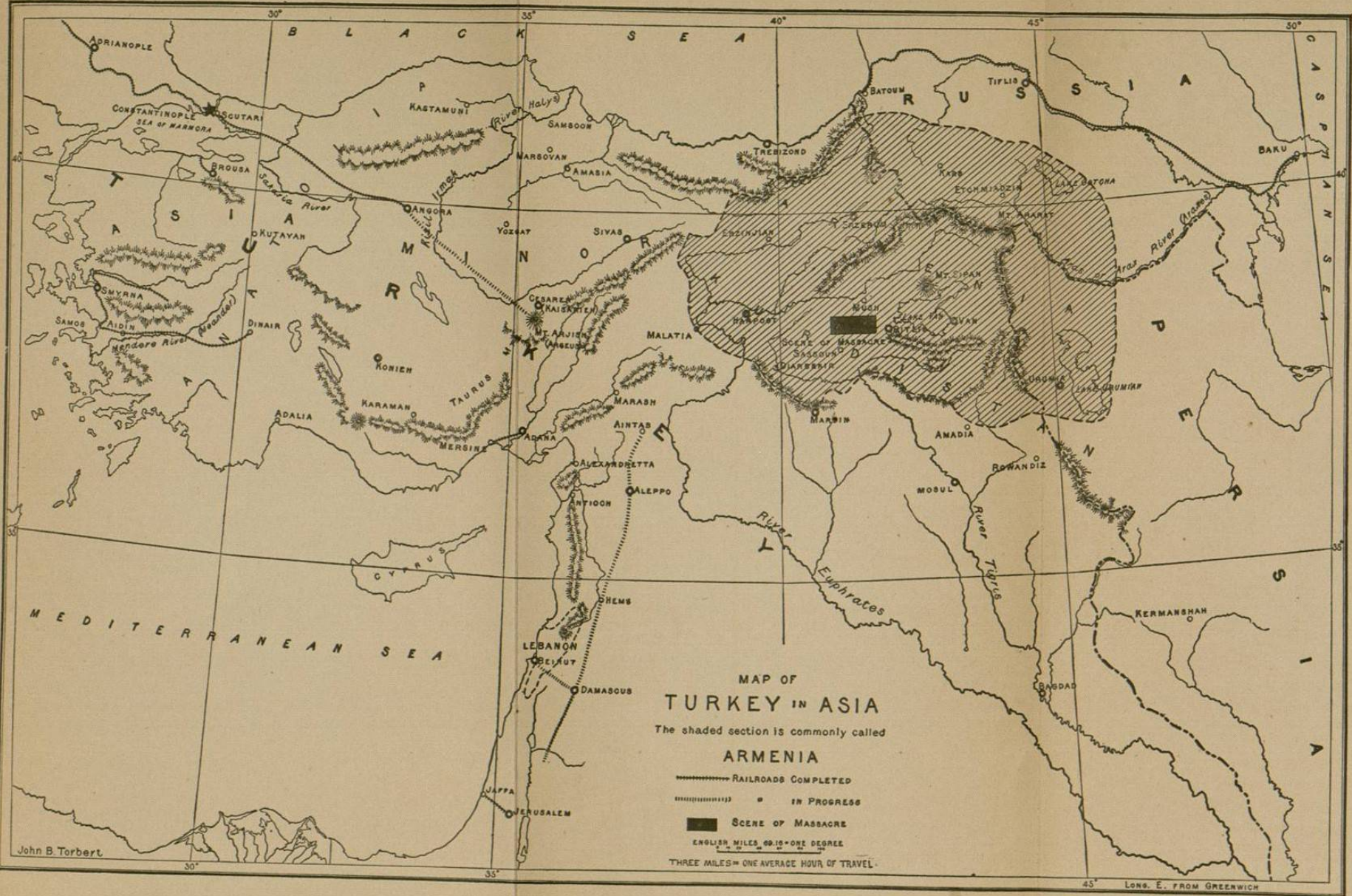
In this policy of getting rid of the Americans, the Turks are ably seconded by the Russian Ambassador and by the American Minister at Constantinople, though from different motives. Turkey seeks the expulsion of the Americans because she knows that, as spiritual and educational leaders, they are a mighty influence in the development of her Christian subjects whom she wishes to retain as helpless serfs. Russia expects soon to inherit the land and would like to have it cleared of what she considers religious weeds and political brambles. The United States Minister professes to be haunted by the future ghosts of American citizens, whom, for the very purpose of terrifying him, the Turks threaten to murder. These citizens, both men and women, have bravely and cheerfully stood at their posts while the storm of death has raged around them; and now that it is passed, it is ridiculous to suppose that Turkey cannot continue to protect them. Just as soon, however, as the Sultan is convinced that it would be *safe* to have them massacred under the cloak of "a fanatical mob" that event is likely to occur.

The jeopardy to American life and interests arises from the undignified and half-hearted way in which they are being "defended." A reversal of this policy would safeguard not simply the persons and property of American citizens, but, what is more, our national honor. It would, at the same time, indirectly, greatly advance the cause of humanity and civilization in that unfortunate land.

Reader, your voice and help are needed.

"He's true to God who's true to man; wherever wrong is done
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us; and they are slaves most base
Whose love of right is for themselves, and not for all their race."

—LOWELL.



MAP OF
TURKEY IN ASIA
 The shaded section is commonly called
ARMENIA

——— RAILROADS COMPLETED
 - - - - - IN PROGRESS
 ■ SCENE OF MASSACRE
 ENGLISH MILES 69.16 = ONE DEGREE
 THREE MILES = ONE AVERAGE HOUR OF TRAVEL

John B. Torbert