

Arnold Toynbee har i boken "The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire" på svenska "Den Blå Boken" samlat 152 fristående rapporter från åren 1915-16. Dessa rapporter var skrivna av diplomater och missionärer. Många rapporter härrörde från tyskar, som då var turkarnas allierade. Historikern Toynbee har sammanställt dessa rapporter som tidigare publicerades i USA. Toynbee har källgranskat och sedan publicerat dessa i bokform. Följande kapitlar i boken handlar om assyrierna/kaldéer/syrianer.

THE TREATMENT OF ARMENIANS

in the Ottoman Empire

1915-16

Documents presented to
VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

By Viscount Bryce

With a preface by
VISCOUNT BRYCE

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AZERBAIJAN AND HAKKIARI.

The province of Azerbaijan lies immediately east of Van, across the Persian border, and consists principally of another and still larger inland basin, shut in by mountains which drain towards the central Lake of Urmia.

Though Azerbaijan is nominally a part of Persia, there are practically no Persians among its inhabitants. The majority of them are Shiah Mohammedans, speaking a Turkish dialect ; but the parts west of the Lake, and especially the districts of Urmia and Salmas, are occupied by a Semitic Christian population, variously known as "Nestorians" (from their religion), "Syrians" (from their language) or "Chaldeoans" (from their race). They are descended from the former inhabitants of Mesopotamia, who were pushed into and over the mountains by Arab encroachment. A larger number of them is still left on the Ottoman side of the watershed, in the Hakkiari district round the headwaters of the Greater Zab, and further west, again, near the confluence of the Tigris and the Bohtan. In the two latter districts they are now in a minority as compared with their Kurdish neighbours, and Kurds are also interspersed among the Nestorians in the Urmia basin, especially towards the southern end of the Lake, but also on the west (Tergawar).

When, in the winter of 1914-15, the Turks took the offensive against the Russians on the Caucasian front, they sent a subsidiary army, reinforced by Kurdish tribesmen, into Azerbaijan. The weak Russian forces occupying the province retired northwards at the beginning of January, and the Turco-Kurdish invaders penetrated as far as Tabriz, while the Nestorian villages on the western side of Lake Urmia remained in their possession for nearly five months. The Russians were followed in their retreat by a considerable part of the Christian population, who suffered terrible hardships on their winter journey. Those that remained behind flocked into the town of Urmia, and were subject to all manner of atrocities during the twenty weeks that the Turks and Kurds controlled the place. The Russians completed the re-occupation of Azerbaijan in May, 1915 ; they entered the town of Urmia on the 24th May, five days after their first entry into Van, and freed the people of Salmas and Urmia from their oppressors. But they could not save the communities in the Zab district, who suffered in June the same fate as the Armenians of Bitlis, Moush and Sassoun ; and when the Russians were compelled to evacuate Van again at the end of July, the panic spread from Van to Urmia, and a fresh stream of Nestorian refugees swelled the general exodus of Christians into the Russian Provinces of the Caucasus.

27. URMIA : STATEMENT BY THE REV. WILLIAM A. SHEDD, D.D., OF THE AMERICAN (PRESBYTERIAN) MISSION STATION AT URMIA ; COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

Persia is not in the war, but the war has been in Persia ever since its beginning. Indeed, the military movements of Russia and of Turkey date back several years before its outbreak. The Turks in 1906 occupied a strip of territory along the Persian border extending from a point south-west of Soujboulak to a point west of Khoi. The purpose was no doubt to secure a boundary-line making it more possible to move troops from the Mosul region into Trans-Caucasia, as well as to make it easier to hold the frontier against any Russian attack. In 1911, the Turks evacuated this strip of territory and the whole boundary question was submitted to a mixed commission, on which the British and Russian Governments were represented as well as the Turkish and Persian. When war

began in August, 1914, this commission had completed its work from the Persian Gulf to Salmas. The Russians, in connection with internal disturbances in Persia, occupied with their troops a number of cities in northern Persia. Tabriz was occupied in 1909 ; Urmia and Khoi in 1910. This measure enabled the Russians not only to control Persia, but also to secure the road from their rail-head at Djoulfa to Van through Khoi. When the Great War began, Russia was therefore in occupation.

Disturbances at once began along the border and at the beginning of October, 1914, a determined attack was made on Urmia, ostensibly by Kurds. It was afterwards clear, from statements made by Persians and Turks who were engaged in the attack, that the nucleus of the fighting force was made up of Turkish soldiers and that the attack was under the command of Turkish officers. It was also clear from statements made by Persians friendly with the Turks and unfriendly towards the Russians, that the result of success in this attack would have been the looting of the Christian population, with probable loss of life.

About a month after this attack, war was declared between Russia and Turkey. About the same time the Russians closed the Turkish Consulates at Urmia, Tabriz and Khoi, and expelled the Kurds and other Sunni Moslems from the villages near Urmia. Arms were given at the same time to some of the Christians. The Turks in response expelled several thousand Christians from adjoining regions in Turkey. These refugees were settled in the villages vacated by the Sunni Moslems who had been expelled. Turkish and Kurdish forces gathered along the frontier and especially to the south in the Soujboulak region.

In the latter part of December, two engagements took place ---one 20 miles south of Urmia between Kurdish and Russian soldiers, in which the latter were successful; the other was at Miandoab, at the south end of Lake Urmia, in which the Russian forces, with some Persians, were routed by Turks and Kurds. About the same time Enver Pasha invaded Trans-Caucasia from Armenia at Sarikamysh in the Kars region. This threatened to cut off Russia's communications with Persia, and orders were given for the evacuation of Tabriz, Urmia and Khoi. The evacuation of Urmia took place on the 2nd January, that of Salmas a day or two later, and that of Tabriz on the 5th. Meanwhile, the military situation in Trans-Caucasia had changed with the rout of Enver Pasha's army, and Khoi was not evacuated.

For convenience it may be well to summarise the military events from the 1st January to the 1st June. Tabriz was occupied by the Turks and Kurds, but, about the 1st February, a crushing defeat a few miles north of Tabriz led to its sudden evacuation and to the flight of the Turkish forces back to Miandoab. The American Consul at Tabriz, the Hon. Gordon Paddock, with the very effective co-operation of the German Consul, who had previously been in the American Hospital under the protection of the American Consul, kept the city of Tabriz from loss of life and to a large extent from loss of property. The Turks collected large Kurdish forces from the Soujboulak region and from districts in eastern Turkey; these, together with a smaller force of Turkish regulars, moved through Urmia and Salmas against Khoi, joining Turkish forces from Van under Djevdet Bey. This campaign against Khoi lasted until the 1st March, and was unsuccessful. In March the Russian forces drove the Turks from Salmas and occupied this region. Affairs remained in this condition until April. In April the Van campaign of the Russians, with the aid of Armenian volunteers, began. A Turkish force of approximately 18,000 men with mountain guns under Halil Bey, an uncle of Enver Pasha, reached Urmia on the 16th April. They had

come over the mountain passes from Mosul, having been sent from Constantinople by way of Aleppo to Mosul. Halil Bey was defeated in Salmas, and in May retreated towards Van. The Turkish forces were finally withdrawn from Urmia on the 20th May, and the Russians reoccupied that city on the 24th May. The region of Soujboulak was occupied by the Turks for some months longer, but the campaign in that region has no bearing on the Christian population, since there are no Christians in the region.

The Christian population in this region is partly Armenian and partly Nestorian---or Syrian, as they call themselves. The Armenian element consisted of four or five thousand in Tabriz, ten thousand or more in Salmas, a small number in Khoi, and some six or seven thousand in the Urmia district. The Nestorians, except for less than 2,000 in Salmas, all lived in the Urmia district. Including refugees from Turkey and the Armenians, there were in Urmia , at the beginning of 1915, not far from 35,000 Christians. The Syrians or Nestorians include not only members of the old Nestorian Church but also Protestants, members of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Roman Catholics or Chaldeans, as the last are generally called. In Maragha there is a colony of Armenians numbering some hundreds. Excepting the Christians in Tabriz, Maragha, and the city of Urmia, the last numbering not more than 2,000, all these Christians live in villages, Mohammedans and Christians sometimes sharing a village between them and sometimes living in separate villages. These Mohammedan villagers belong to the Shiah sect but speak the Turkish language.

The evacuation of the Russians put all the Christians in peril. The Salmas Christians (except about 800), most of the Christians of Tabriz, and eight or ten thousand from Urmia fled with the retreating Russians. They left on the shortest notice, without preparation and in the heart of winter. Many perished by the way, mothers dying in childbirth, old men and women and little children falling by the wayside from exhaustion. This fleeing army of refugees, increased in numbers by several thousand from the regions in Turkey between Khoi and Van, passed over the Russian border and scattered in the villages and towns of Trans-Caucasia. Many of them died of disease due to the privations and exposures of flight and life as refugees.

This flight left some 25,000 Christians in Urmia. All of these sought shelter from massacre. On the one hand the Kurds were pouring into the plain, urged on and followed by Turkish officers and troops; on the other hand the Moslem villagers set to work robbing and looting, killing men and women and outraging the women. Several thousand found refuge with friendly Mohammedans. Great credit is due to no small number of Moslems, most of them humble villagers and some men of higher rank, who protected the imperilled Christians. In some cases safety was bought by professing Mohammedanism, but many died as martyrs to the faith. In several places the Christians defended themselves, but the massacring was not confined to these. Villages that deliberately gave up their arms and avoided any conflict suffered as much as those that fought. The mass of the people fled to the city, and all, including the city people, took refuge in the mission compounds. The French Roman Catholic Mission sheltered about 3,000, and the compounds of the American Presbyterian Mission about 17,000. The latter were enlarged by joining up neighbouring yards and so enclosing in one connected compound, with only one gate for entrance and exit, some fifteen to twenty yards. The American flag was placed over the compounds of the American Mission, and here people were safe from massacre. The villages, in the meantime, with three or four exceptions, were a prey to plunder and destruction. Everything movable that possessed the least

value was either carried away or destroyed.

During the months of Turkish occupation there was never a moment of real safety for the Christians. The most unremitting efforts on the part of the missionaries secured comparative safety within the city walls, so that the people were scattered to some extent from the Mission Compound; and a few villages, including two that were not plundered at the beginning, were kept comparatively safe through the efforts of the Persian Governor. Beyond these narrow limits the Christians could not go. This was shown by constant robberies and murders when Christians ventured forth. During this period the Turks were guilty not only of failure to protect the Christians effectively, but also of direct massacres under their orders. One hundred and seventy men thus massacred were buried by the American missionaries, their bodies lying in heaps where they had been shot down and stabbed, tied together and led out to be murdered by Turkish agents. These massacres took place on three different occasions. Once men were seized by Turkish officers in the French Mission and sent out from the Turkish headquarters to be killed ; once there were men seized in a village which was under the protection of Turkish soldiers and had had its safety pledged repeatedly by the highest Turkish officials ; and once there were men from just over the border in Turkey who had been forced to bring telegraph wire down to Urmia and were then taken out and killed. In each of these cases some escaped and crawled out, wounded and bloody, from the heaps of dead and dying, to find refuge with the American missionaries. Besides these, the Armenian soldiers in the Turkish army, previously to the arrival of Halil Bey, were shot. In Urmia, the total losses of this period, from the evacuation of the town by the Russians on the 2nd January until their return on the 24th May, were the murder of over one thousand people---men, women and children; the outraging of hundreds of women and girls of every age---from eight or nine years to old age ; the total robbing of about five-sixths of the Christian population ; and the partial or total destruction of about the same proportion of their houses. Over two hundred girls and women were carried off into captivity, to be forced to embrace Islam and to accept Mohammedan husbands. The Salmas district suffered quite as much as Urmia, excepting that the mass of the people fled with the Russian troops, and consequently the crimes against women were not so numerous. About 800 who remained in Salmas, most of whom were old people, with some of the poorer and younger women, were gathered together by Djevdet Bey before his withdrawal from Salmas and were massacred. This happened early in March. The Salmas villages were left in much the same condition as those of Urmia.

The relief work began before the evacuation. Unsettled conditions had frightened people, and many had brought their goods for safe keeping to the American missionaries. With the evacuation many more brought their property, whatever they could save from the general riot. The protection of those under the American flag and of others in the city and in Mohammedan homes was accomplished only by the most constant vigilance during all those months. It was necessary to feed thousands .of the people, and over ten thousand people were fed for about six months. Many of the girl., and women who were taken captive were found and returned to their homes ; information was secured as to others, which led to their subsequent rescue. Conditions of life were such that it was impossible to prevent epidemics, those that carried off the largest number being typhoid and typhus. Both of these diseases were probably brought by Turkish soldiers cared for in the American Hospital. The total number who died of disease during the period of Turkish occupation was not less than four thousand. Of eighteen adults connected with the American Mission, thirteen had either typhus or typhoid, and three lost their lives. The

French missionaries suffered just as severely, and were in greater peril of violence.

To assign guilt and analyse the causes of this terrible loss of life and property is not an altogether easy task. There is no class of Mohammedans that can be exempted from blame. The villagers joined in the looting and shared in the crimes of violence, and Persians of the higher class acquiesced in the outrages and shared in the plunder. The Kurds were in their natural element. The Turks not only gave occasion for all that happened, but were direct participants in the worst of the crimes. On the other hand, individuals of every class deserve credit. There were many villagers who showed only kindness. The Persian Governor made it possible, by his co-operation, for the American missionaries to do what they did ; the Kurds responded to appeals for mercy and, in some cases, returned captive girls unsolicited and did other humane service. A few individual Turkish officers and a number of their soldiers took strong measures to keep order. One such officer saved the city from loot when riot had already begun. There were various causes ; jealousy of the greater prosperity of the Christian population was one, and political animosity, race hatred and religious fanaticism all had a part. There was also a definite and determined purpose and malice in the conduct of Turkish officials. It is certainly safe to say that a part of this outrage and ruin was directly due to the Turks, and that none of it would have taken place except for them.

The duty of Americans, and especially the missionaries, is not so much to apportion the blame as to repair the damages. The task in Persia is very great, but the opportunities are equally as great. The number of destitute persons has been increased by the influx of forty or fifty thousand refugees from Turkey---Nestorians who lived in the mountain region between Urmia and Van, and who were forced to flee from their homes by the Turks and Kurds. In outlying districts the men have been massacred, and those who have survived are mainly women and children; but from the mountain valleys, where the bulk of these people live, they were able to escape en masse.

28. FIRST EXODUS FROM URMIA, JANUARY, 1915: REPORT DATED 1st MARCH, 1915, FROM THE REVEREND ROBERT M. LABAREE, OF THE AMERICAN MISSION STATION AT TABRIZ, TO THE HON. F. WILLOUGHBY SMITH, U.S. CONSUL AT TIFLIS ; COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

In view of your interest in the welfare of the Persian Christian refugees here in the Caucasus, and your efforts in their behalf, may I submit to you a report on their condition as I have seen it in my journey hither from Tabriz ? Commissioned by the American Presbyterian Mission of West Persia to investigate the affairs of the many thousands who have fled recently from Persia into Russia in order to escape the cruel vengeance of the Kurdish border tribes, I left Tabriz over two weeks ago and have spent the intervening time visiting the various centres where these refugees are congregated. It is hard to estimate exactly the number of these refugees from Persia, for mingled with them are a multitude of fugitives from Turkey. The total number of all these unfortunates in the district of Erivan, where most of them have found refuge, was stated by a good

authority to be seventy thousand. The Persian contingent is pretty consistently estimated at from fifteen to twenty thousand. The refugees from Turkey are almost entirely Armenian, and are being taken care of by the wealthy Armenians of this province through their well organised relief committees. Those from Persia are less fortunate, for a majority of them are Syrian; and, although the Armenians have been very generous to them also, they have no influential friends to speak in their behalf and minister to their needs. It is also safe to say that the fugitives from the Urmia plain are the most sadly in need of assistance, for they had no previous warning of the impending disaster, and most of them have come out without any preparation whatever for their prolonged sojourn in a strange land.

I doubt whether the story of that awful flight can ever adequately be told. Few tales that I have ever heard can compare with it in heart-rending interest. The whole northern section of the Urmia plain learned of the departure of the Russian troops about ten o'clock on the night of Saturday, the 2nd January (1915). By midnight the terrible exodus had begun, and by morning the Christian villages of that district were practically deserted. People left their cattle in the stables and all their household goods in their homes, just as they were, and hurried away to save their lives. If anyone possessed a horse or a donkey or any other beast of burden he was fortunate, and if he happened to have ready cash in his home he was even more so; but, well-to-do as a man may be, cash is not always on hand in the villages, and so many who, according to the standards of the country, were rich, started on their long journey with a mere pittance, and the vast majority of men and women and children were on foot. Before the seven days' hard walking through the slush and mud to the Russian border was accomplished, all encumbrances were cast aside, quilts, extra clothing, and even bread, for it became a question with the poor, tired, struggling crowd which they would carry---their bedding or their babies. Of course, very many of the weaker ones never reached Djoulfa at all, but lay down by the roadside for their last long rest, and those who did reach the Russian border were so haggard and emaciated that their own friends did not recognise them. Almost worse than the weary tramping by day, in the most terrible mud, were the nights in the villages by the way. Every possible shelter was so crowded that there was no room whatever to lie down, and the air became so foul before morning that the occupants were nearly suffocated ; and yet those who could find no shelter and lay out all night in the wet were even more miserable. As one has heard the same sad story repeated a score of times with only a difference in details, one has wondered what human flesh and blood can stand in a great crisis like this. I should like to give two instances that have come under my personal knowledge ; such stories might be multiplied a thousand times.

One old man with two daughters-in-law and six grandchildren started on that fatal night from the village of Karagöz. All were afoot, and the women carried their little ones by turns, while the old man stumbled along as best he could, unable to carry any burden. He at last gave out, lay down by the roadside and died. The two women and their little charges pressed on for a day or two longer, when one of them gave birth to a baby, also by the roadside. The mother tore off her dress, wrapped the baby in the pieces and resumed the weary tramp. Fortunately for them, the two women found their husbands waiting for them in Russian Djoulfa; but, alas, in the new complications arising from the coming of the baby two of the other children were separated from the party and lost. Two days the parents waited in Djoulfa, until a wagon-load of little waifs was brought in by kind-hearted soldiers. They found their two little ones among the number, but so emaciated by their hardships that they died shortly afterwards. People dying and children

being born by the way are commonplaces of this journey; but it is not every one that has had a combination of such misfortunes.

Here, again, is another instance no less sad. The pastor of our Cosi congregation set out, as others did, in the dark, together with his wife, married daughter, and five-year-old granddaughter ; but he became separated from them very soon, so that the women were compelled to make the journey alone. They reached the town of Nahichevan, in Russian territory, with hundreds of others in a wholly exhausted condition. All three of them were sick and were taken to the local hospital, where a few days later the father of the family found them. But shortly afterwards, when the thousands of refugees were cleared out of the town and scattered in the villages, he was forced to leave, and his family have not seen him since. The daughter and grandchild were dismissed from the hospital, and the old mother, rather than remain alone, sick as she was, left also. For five days they stayed with a crowd of others in the railway station, when they were moved on to another village ; and there, the old woman's dysentery having become so bad and the little girl having developed the prevailing scarlet fever, they were taken to the village hospital. I found them there a couple of weeks later, or rather the younger woman and her child ; the mother had passed away two hours before I arrived. I buried the dear old woman, in whose house I have been many times. I gave her a better funeral than most of the other dying refugees ; but it was only a rough coffin with shavings as a pillow for her poor tired head. And then, with a little money put into the hand of the daughter and a promise to do what I could to find her father, I left her, dazed as a woman in a dream, and came away. The father cannot be found, and I fear that he has dropped down in some unknown spot and died.

I have wondered time and time again whether this panic-stricken flight was not some terrible mistake, and whether the people had not better have stayed at home and cast themselves on the mercies of the Kurds and their Moslem neighbours; but as the stories of the sufferings of those who remained behind begin to reach us---stories of bloodshed and forced apostacy, and of women and girls carried off to a life worse than death---I have revised my judgment. Even all this untold misery by the way and in a strange land is better than the fate of those who remained at home.

But I must pass on to report the conditions as they now exist among the refugees. In my effort to get the facts, I have had interviews with the Exarch (the Metropolitan Bishop of Tiflis), the Governor of the Erivan district, the Armenian Bishops of Tabriz (now in Nahichevan) and of Erivan, members of the various relief committees and the village elders, who act as local relief committees, together with a very large number of the refugees themselves in various sections of the province. Whatever one may find to criticise in the administration of relief, one cannot but recognise the tremendous burden that has descended upon the people of this region and the serious problems they have had to face. While one cannot say that there has been an adequate effort to grapple with the difficulties, yet much has been done. The Government officials have given free railway transportation to the interior, and they have wisely had the people scattered among the villages, where they can best be taken care of. The energetic Armenian committees have taken care of their own people, and have been unexpectedly generous to the Syrians who are quartered in their midst. In Tiflis the Syrians themselves have done much for their own race in that city, and have had an efficient committee working in conjunction with the municipal relief committee. But more worthy of praise than any or all of these together are the humble kind-hearted villagers themselves, who have carried

the heaviest end of the burden, taking in the homeless wanderers, giving them shelter and even bedding, and furnishing them with food. Had it not been for this unorganised relief, the misery would have been many times more intense. In one village, of 50 houses, I found 307 refugees ; and in another, of 100 houses, 850 dependents. In the former place all that had been received from outside sources had been 220 roubles, and in the latter the extent of outside relief had been about six pounds per head of poor flour. But the farmers of that section have had a bad year of it, and are themselves feeling the pinch of poverty ; and the burden of all this multitude of destitute people is getting to be almost intolerable. At best, too what has been done by all agencies combined has failed to save the wretched refugees from their sad plight. With often twenty of them in one room, sleeping on the grass, destitute of bed-clothing and having unwholesome-looking bread to eat, their lot is not to be envied. No wonder that after the hardships of the journey scores and hundreds of them have died, pneumonia and enteric troubles and scarlet fever having carried off a multitude. The scarlet fever has been especially virulent, and there was scarcely a house which I visited where from two to five little ones had not been carried out to the cemetery. One could hardly hope to save a man with dysentery on the five kopecks (1 1/4d.) a day given for his support, or with the coarse flour given in other districts. While one cannot but pity all, yet one's especial sympathy goes out to those whom one has seen in their own country living in comfort and, for this country, even in luxury, yet here, in this strange land, dependent on the dole of bread given them.

With such conditions I have not dared to do anything in the way of relief, except to leave here and there small sums for the sick and for those particularly suffering. As long as I have not found anyone that has died or is dying from hunger I did not think it justifiable to expend our little funds in the hopeless task of making men comfortable. More and more am I persuaded that we must reserve our efforts to the time when these people begin to return to their homes. If the way opens for such a return, it must be our first endeavour to restore them to their villages ; for very many of them have their wheat-fields and vineyards, and if these are not looked after this spring, the relief problem of the future becomes many times more serious. But how are these unfortunates to get home ? Some of them had a little money when they came out and some reserve strength; now both funds and physical force are gone, and after the hard journey back they will reach homes plundered of everything, and in many cases burnt. Officials here have declared that there is no question but that the Government will send them back by rail to Djoulfa free of charge ; but, when they are once in Persia, then all relief committees save our own cease to act. It is on this basis that I wish to make my appeal to the American public. In a report which I subjoin, Dr. Shedd, of our Mission in Urmia, gives us a picture of the conditions there among those who, to the number of ten to fifteen thousand, have found shelter in our Mission yards. Up to the 25th January I learn that he has spent over eight hundred pounds sterling in their support ; and he names £3,000 as the minimum of what is needed for the people there. He himself considers this an under-estimate, looking at the problem only from the limited knowledge he had at his command ; and I am sure that it is. Five thousand for those in Urmia and five thousand for those who have fled, seems to me a more reasonable estimate. Ten thousand pounds is a big sum to ask, especially at this time, when so many other portions of the world are stretching out their hands to our country for aid; but most of these have many eloquent tongues to voice their cry, while for this people, that have lived so far away among fanatical Moslem masters, who is there to speak ? I can only hope that this little story of their sufferings may bring some relief, even if it is not the sum asked and so much

needed. I wish I might hope that others would help in this work; but the French Mission has little assistance to give, and the Orthodox Mission, that has made a big bid for the friendship of this people, seems to have completely flattened out. I doubt whether anything can be hoped for from that source, and I am very sure that nothing will be given in a large unsectarian way. And so it appears to me that we of America are the only ones that can be relied upon to come to the assistance of this old historic people, who have now endured the heaviest blow that has fallen upon them for centuries.

There is one other matter. I have said that we must reserve our help for the time when these people return home; money given them here, unless it be in very large sums, can do no good. You, however, have suggested that £200, given through me to the heads of the Relief Committees of the Caucasus to be used for these Persian refugees, might do more than anything else to quicken their own assistance to this unfortunate people. The reasons you have given for this judgment have seemed to me strong ones, and I have telegraphed to-day to our headquarters, stating the facts. If any such funds are sent, I shall ask you to help me in giving the money in such a manner as shall produce the best results. In the meantime I wish to thank you most cordially for all that you have done to assist me in this good work.

29. AZERBAIJAN, BEHIND THE RUSSIAN FRONT : EXTRACTS FROM A SERIES OF LETTERS BY THE REV. ROBERT M. LABAREE; COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

(a) Letter dated Tabriz, 12th March, 1915 (to Mr. Labaree's mother).

Sad news. The Kurds driven back from Khoi massacred 800 Syrian and Armenian men with cruel torture. This in the plain of Salmas. In Urmia the largest and wealthiest Syrian village, Gulpashan, which had been spared by payments of large sums of money, was given over to plunder by the returning Kurds. The men of the village were all taken out to the cemetery and killed; the women and girls treated barbarously. Sixty men were taken out of the French Mission, where they had taken refuge, and shot. Others have been hanged. The Swiss teacher of the missionaries' children has died of typhoid. I have been asked to go to Urmia, but every way is blocked. Please let Mr. Speer know facts.

(b) Letter dated Tabriz, 13th March, 1915 (to Mr. Speer).

Dr. Shedd's latest communication speaks for itself and reveals a terrible condition of things at Urmia. This condition, I fear, has been rendered even more acute in the two weeks since the letter was written by the defeat of the Turks and Kurds near Salmas. At that time all the remaining Christian refugees in Diliman (the chief town of Salmas) suffered terribly. All the males above twelve years of age were taken to two neighbouring villages, tortured and shot. Their number is estimated at 800. The women were to be made Moslems, but the entrance of the Russians into the town the next day prevented that. I doubt not but that the retreating Kurds will wish to do the same thing as they pass through Urmia. One is perfectly helpless at such a time. The Consuls are acting in

concert, but what can they do ? The only salvation seems to be that the Russian army may advance soon to Urmia, but for military reasons this may be out of the question.

My own visit to Urmia has been stopped for the present by events. There is no possible way of my reaching Urmia, unless the Consul should go and I should accompany him.

(c) Letter dated Diliman, 19th April, 1915 (to the Presbyterian Missions Board, New York).

There seems no more prospect now than when I last wrote of any measures being taken by the Russian authorities to relieve the Urmia situation. If any plans are afoot for the occupation of the city they are not at all in evidence, and I am persuaded that a good many things must happen elsewhere before the local conditions will be materially changed.

Recently a Mr. McGowan, a reporter of the Associated Press, fresh from America, arrived here---all interest over the situation. He was most anxious to reach Urmia, if any way could be found to get in and any assurance be given that he could return. We decided upon a perfectly open policy. With the consent of the Russian officers here, we secured a messenger and sent him directly to the Turkish Consul in Urmia, asking for guards and safe conduct, from a point just beyond the pass to the city, and return. In our letter to the Consul we enclosed an open letter to Will Shedd, asking his advice in the matter. Indirectly we hear that our messenger was put under arrest (lest, I suppose, he should undertake to return), and no answer has been sent to our request ; while, on the other hand, horsemen were despatched to a midway point to escort into the city some Persians who had sent a request very much like our own by the same messenger. It is no use making any more efforts to get inside this chestnut burr, until through God's Providence it opens itself. I am here to render what help I can, and while as yet I have been able to do nothing, yet perhaps it will be given me later to give some little assistance to our poor, tired, beleaguered friends in Urmia. Mr. McGowan has gone back to the Caucasus. It was a pleasure to get sight of an American face and have a fresh whiff from the outside world.

The news that comes to us from across the Turkish border is far from pleasant. The many hundreds (and perhaps some thousands) of Armenians and Syrians in the region of Bashkala have been massacred. The Armenians and Kurds in and about Van have begun to fight. In the mountains Mar Shimun is said to have gathered the independent tribes about him , and they are battling for their lives against great odds. These are the near-by places. What is going on inside Turkey, God only knows.

Yesterday I assembled about fifty Armenians from the neighbourhood of Bashkala in a near-by village for a service. They were all men in the employment of the Russian army when it withdrew from there several months ago. They had to come away with the troops, leaving behind their families and all that they possessed. They feel certain that their wives and children have been massacred or else taken away to a captivity worse than death. When one stands before such an audience, the words that are so easy to speak at other times fail one. Is there, any balm in Gilead for such wounds ? Is there any power to take away from the hearts of these men the sorrow and the rankling spirit of revenge ? May God never put me in a position like that, or else may he give me more grace than I now possess.

When one knows that three-fourths of the Moslems of this district, if not nine-tenths of them, were implicated in the plunder of Christian villages, and that many of them were parties to worse crimes, it is hard to have the same zest for work among them. But now that the way to Urmia seems barred for the present, I am planning to plunge into that work. Just now the Moslems here are so alarmed lest they suffer for what they have done that they are ready to listen to almost anything a Christian may say. It is a pity that in so many cases this willingness has no higher motive.

(d) Letter dated Tabriz, 6th May, 1915 (to the Presbyterian Missions Board, New York).

Just a word to report that I am safe at home. My departure from Salmas was most sudden and exciting. An overwhelming force of Turks and Kurds attacked the place, and in the course of manoeuvres we were nearly caught between the two firing-lines. It is not an experience that often comes to one, nor is it one that one wants repeated. With hundreds of other refugees, now twice plundered, we made our way to Djoulfa, and from there I came here.

30. TABRIZ : LETTER DATED TABRIZ, 17th MARCH, 1915, FROM THE REV. F. N. JESSUP; COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

On the 1st November (1914) Turkey declared a "Djihad," or Holy War, against the Allies, and it was soon evident that she would try to stir up other Moslem nations. In December a small force of Turkish troops crossed into Persia at Soudjboulak, south of Urmia, but we thought nothing of it, knowing that the Russian forces here would be able to cope with them. But on the last day of December it became evident that the Russians were actually about to withdraw from here, and there was a panic among the Armenians and other native Christians. Day and night the poor Armenians fled out of the city towards the Russian border, and out of 750 or more families only about 250 were left, most of these being the poorest people. From the first we were beset by people asking to be allowed to take refuge with us. We had permission to admit those who were connected with us, and, in addition, had to make arrangements to receive all the Europeans who might need protection. It was decided that all the missionaries should come to this compound, where the Memorial School and men's dispensary are located. You can imagine the rush and work of the first days of January---all the school-rooms to be cleared of everything so as to be ready for the crowds of people so anxious to get in, people to be interviewed day and night rules to be made as to who and what were to be admitted, our own houses to be made ready for the advent of the missionary families. For example, my house, in which I had been living alone on Friday, by Saturday night contained five families, consisting of ten adults and seven children ; and whereas up to that time Dr. Vanneman and I had been having our meals alone, now in my dining-room all the Americans ate together, nineteen adults and a number of children! By this time almost all the Europeans had left the city, including the Consuls of the Allied Powers; the banks were closed and the Indo-European telegraph office was shut. The Europeans who were left in

the city came to us for refuge, all except one family of Italians and a few Germans, Austrians and Turkish subjects who thought they would be safe. But even these asked to have a place reserved in case of need, for no one knew what might happen when a horde of undisciplined Kurds entered the city. Not only this, but a number of prominent Mohammedans came to ask protection, and very many more left the city to flee to Teheran, knowing that they might be molested or blackmailed.

On Tuesday, the 5th January, the Russian troops left the city and encamped on its outskirts ; the next day they started north towards Djoulfa, and on Friday, the 8th, the Turks and Kurds entered. For the next three weeks they were in possession of Tabriz. We were cut off from the outside world, without news of what was occurring elsewhere, practically shut up in this compound with the four hundred who had taken refuge with us. We had as our guests Belgians from the Customs and Finance Departments, French Catholic Sisters with forty or fifty of their school-children, two German ladies who had been sick and unable to go with the rest of the German colony, a Russian lady, and two American Seventh Day Adventist missionaries from Maragha, but most of the people were Armenian and Nestorian. As you see, they were of all nationalities and religions, but all lived together in the greatest goodwill, and things moved with a remarkable lack of trouble or friction.

We had planned to observe the regular Week of Prayer with nightly services in our church, but our church had to be abandoned, for almost every Christian from that quarter of the city had fled, and no one dared to stir out of doors after dark. But we were given a greater opportunity. Instead of a week's services attended by fifty or sixty people, we had Evangelistic services in the assembly room of the Memorial School every night for a full four weeks, with a hundred to a hundred and fifty in attendance, and all listening with the most earnest attention. And as we had with us refugee families from Soudjboulak, Maragha and other places, we had a chance to preach the Gospel to those rarely, if ever, reached by the truth. Instead of having to seek a congregation, we had it ready within our gates, and one composed of those whose hearts were softened in the fact of our common danger and life together.

As the time went on, the blackmail and plundering on the part of the Kurds grew worse and people became more anxious. It was indeed a welcome day when the sound of cannon and machine guns was heard to the north, and it appeared that the Russians were returning to deliver the city. This they did on the 30th January, and so well had the campaign been arranged that the fleeing Kurds were cut off from the city after the battle, and so could not loot or kill on their retreat, as many had feared they might. And thus in God's providence the city was relieved, and we and the many lives entrusted to us were kept safe from harm during that trying time.

When the roads were once again open and word reached us from other places, we began to hear of the terrible plight of the Christians of other places, especially Urmia and Salmas. When suddenly and unexpectedly the native Christians of those places heard that the Russian army was immediately to be withdrawn, they knew that their only safety from the cruelties of the approaching Kurds lay in flight. Men, women and little children were obliged to start off at once, in mid-winter, most of them on foot, unable to make preparation or to carry sufficient food, clothing, or bedding, and to flee in terror of their lives through snow and deep mud, wading through streams and toiling over the mountains and across plains covered with almost impassable mire, till at last they might

reach Djoulfa on the Russian frontier, nearly 150 miles away. The story of the horror of that flight will probably never be fully told. From Urmia 17,000 or 18,000 must have fled. When they reached the Salmas plain, their numbers were swelled by thousands of Armenian Christians fleeing thence. Men who went through the experience tell us that the events of those days are indescribable. On the edge of the Salmas plain multitudes could find no lodging and had to sleep in the snow. Some children were carried off by wolves, and many more died before morning. And then the march of those days ! Up before daylight, struggling in the snow and slush and darkness to find and keep to the road through the mountain passes, hurrying on ever, knowing that at the end of the day only those who first arrived could be sure of finding shelter for the next night ; parents becoming separated from each other and from their children in the darkness or in the mass of hurrying people, unable to find them again, but hoping that they might meet at the end of the day; people throwing away the quilts or other necessary bedding they had brought because physically unable to carry them ; the road strewn with abandoned goods; the weak and sick falling by the wayside, many never to rise again; men become as beasts in the common struggle just to live. At night many would arrive long after dark at the appointed stopping-place only to find every caravanserai and lodging so full that they would be forced to spend the night out of doors. Those within fared little better, crowded in so tightly that often they could neither lie nor sit down, but had to remain standing all night in rooms with every door and window shut, and the air so foul that the winter's cold without seemed preferable. And at such stopping-places exhausted mothers and fathers were anxiously going from house to house and group to group, seeking their lost children. The fugitives have many terrible tales to tell. By the time they had reached Khoi their plight was desperate, but beyond Khoi their sufferings were increased by the deep mire through which they had to struggle. One of our Christian workers from Urmia told me that with his own eyes he saw a man go up to his mother, who had sunk exhausted in the mud, and shoot her through the head, rather than leave her to die by degrees or to be killed by wolves. They tell of a family who started from Urmia---an aged father and his two married daughters, each carrying two children, one on her back and the other in her arms. There, in the mire beyond Khoi, the father could no longer go on and had to be left, and one of the women gave birth to a child. She wrapped the new-born babe in a piece of cloth torn from her dress, and taking it in her arms struggled on, but the other two children had to be abandoned like their grandfather. On arriving at Djoulfa these women found their husbands, who had been in Tiflis and had hurried down to meet the fugitives. There for several anxious days they waited, hoping for news of the lost children. The fathers had been away long, and could not be sure of recognizing them, and the mothers were too exhausted to return. At last some soldiers came in with a waggon full of lost children whom they had rescued, and among them were the two little ones. But they had suffered so from exposure that in a few days they both died. The grandfather had perished in the mire.

Mr. Labaree, of our station, left for the Caucasus as soon as the way was open, to find out conditions and see what we could do to help the poor refugees. There are 70,000 or more reported in those regions, not only from Persia, but from Turkey and the border. The Armenians of the Caucasus had organised relief committees, and the Government was also helping. The average grant was about 2d. or 1 1/2d. per adult a day. The villagers among whom those thousands of absolutely destitute strangers were distributed were very kind, but the burden was very heavy for them. Mr. Labaree said that the poor fugitives were in a pitiable state. Sickness had followed the exposure and strain---scarlet fever and other diseases---and in almost every room he visited he heard of four or five

children who had died.

But the condition of those who did not, or could not, flee from the Urmia and Salmas plains has been even worse. In Urmia about 12,000 took refuge in the three compounds belonging to our Mission, while 3,000 more were in the French Catholic Mission. Here most of them have remained since the 1st January, but some have withdrawn to yards adjoining ours, some have been taken out by force and killed by the Turks, and many have died. Urmia has been entirely cut off from us. A few letters and messages they have succeeded in sending through, and from these we have learned something of their condition. At the first arrival of the Kurds and Turks, most of the people remaining in the Christian villages fled to the Mission for protection. Of those who stayed in the villages, many girls and women were carried off by the Mohammedans and many men killed. In those first days of January, about ten thousand were crowded into our compound at Urmia city. In the church there were three thousand, so many that they could not lie down to sleep. At the beginning from ten to twenty-five were dying daily in our city compound, and a little later the mortality increased to from twenty-five to forty a day. At first it was not possible to take the bodies out of the grounds for burial. Later, when they were able to secure some adjoining yards, conditions became a little better. Dr. Packard, hearing that a large Christian village was being attacked by the Kurds, rode out there and, at the risk of his life, made his way to the Kurdish chiefs and then to the village, and persuaded the Kurds to spare the lives of the people on condition of their surrendering their goods. Thus, by his influence with the Kurds, won by many medical services in the past, he was able to save nearly a thousand poor people from massacre and conduct them that night to the city.

All these thousands have had to be fed and cared for. It has meant a daily expenditure of from £50 to £55 sterling for the three tons of bread distributed each day. Some of the wealthy fugitives to Russia left money with the Missionaries on their departure, with permission to borrow it and use it if necessary, and in this way they were able to get on up to the last reports, for we have been unable in any way to reach them or send them money. But it is now nearly a month since we have received authentic news from the Missionaries at Urmia. At that time they reported the situation as very grave. We have heard that a Turkish officer and several men entered our Mission grounds by force, beat Mr. Allen twice because he could not tell them of the whereabouts of some men they sought, and carried off several men to kill them. From the Catholic Mission, in the same way, some forty men were taken and massacred. In a village whose people had from the first been peaceful and had paid a large sum for protection, 51 (others report 85) men were seized, taken outside and butchered, and then the soldiers returned to outrage the women and girls, not even little children being spared.

For three weeks Mr. Labaree has been in Salmas, hoping that a Russian expeditionary force might be sent to rescue the Urmia Christians and that he might be able to go over to help the Missionaries, who must be greatly worn by the strain and by their work. But as yet he has neither been able to go nor to send or receive any word, nor are there any signs of a rescue.

This is the most awful calamity which has befallen the Nestorian people in the ninety years of our mission work among them. About 1,000 had been killed and 2,000 had died of disease or fear up to the middle of March, just in Urmia itself, and the Nestorians here estimate that perhaps as many more died on the flight to Russia or have died since. This

would mean a fifth or a sixth of the 30,000 Nestorians who live on the Urmia plain. Their prosperous villages have all been pillaged and most of them burned, and their churches destroyed. Of the survivors, half are refugees in great want in the Caucasus, the rest remain in Urmia in conditions of peril and fear and need which wring one's heart. Already over £4,000 sterling must have been spent by the Missionaries in Urmia to preserve the lives of those taking refuge with them. As soon as it becomes in the least safe, they must be helped to return to their ruined homes and villages to make a fresh start. Two months ago Mr. Labaree appealed to America for at least £10,000 sterling as the smallest sum required, and as time goes on it becomes evident that more will be needed. Thus far about £2,400 has been received from the American Red Cross and our Board, £30 from our missionaries in Hamadan, and £20 from the English missionaries at Ispahan. Of course we here are trying to help too. These poor distressed Nestorians are the especial charge of our American Presbyterian Church, which has laboured so many years for their good, and there is little hope of help for them in this hour when so many nations are in trouble, except in so far as we help them.

And it is not only the Christians of Urmia that are in great need. Those of the village of Miandoab (Armenians, these), have similarly lost everything. The Kurds still occupy their town., and they are refugees in Maragha and Tabriz. At Maragha the Armenians have suffered greatly, for most of them had to flee, and now they have the burden of all the refugees from Miandoab and other villages. And in Salmas it is worse. All the Christian villages on that plain have been smoked. Most of the Christians fled when the army withdrew in January, but some remained behind and these sought the protection of their Moslem neighbours. But a few days before the return of the Russian army to Salmas, when the Turks saw that they would be compelled to flee, they secured the names of all Christians by a ruse, pretending that all who registered would be protected. Then they gathered all the men into one place and carried them out in companies of about twenty-five, each to be shot down in cold blood. Others were tied with their heads sticking through the rungs of a ladder and decapitated, others hacked to pieces or mutilated before death. In this way practically every Christian man remaining in Salmas was massacred. You can imagine the fate of girls and women. The most detailed report received, signed by a number of men now on the ground, stated that from 712 to 720 men were thus killed in Salmas.

31. URMIA DURING THE TURCO-KURDISH OCCUPATION: DIARY OF A MISSIONARY, EDITED BY MISS MARY SCHAUFFLER PLATT, AND PUBLISHED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

Urmia, Persia, Saturday, 9th January, 1915.

I want to start a letter telling you of the events of the last week, though I cannot tell when it will reach you. As you know, the Russians had taken possession of this part of Persia, and were maintaining order here, so that for the last year conditions were more orderly, peaceful and prosperous than for long years before. They had a consul here who was very capable, and tried to do justice to all.

When war was declared between Russia and Turkey, we knew that this meant war for Urmia, for we are right on the Turkish border, and only a few years ago Turkey tried to

get this section for herself, but failed. We were told by the Russians in authority here that they would hold Urmia against all odds, so the city was fortified by trenches and defences on every side, and several thousand reinforcements came.

On New Year's Day, according to our custom, we received our friends. As many as a hundred and forty of our Moslem and Christian friends, men and women, called "to bless our New Year." On Saturday, the 2nd, like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, we were informed that the whole Russian army was withdrawing; some had gone in the night, the rest would leave immediately. There was a panic at once among the Christian (Syrian and Armenian) population.(45) The Osmanlis, or Turks and Kurds, were but a few miles away, and the Christians were absolutely defenceless.

At once, as soon as the Russians had gone, with large numbers of Syrians and Armenians leaving at the same time, the evil-minded Moslems all over the plain began to plunder the Christian villages. When the people were trying to flee to the missionaries in the city, they were robbed on the roads of everything they had, even of their outer clothing. In some of the villages the Moslem masters placed guards to prevent the people from going themselves or bringing their possessions to the city, saying they would protect them. When they tried to get away, these same guards robbed and stripped them.

The crowds had begun to pour in at our gates on Sunday the city people were taken in by night and many others from near by. On Sunday morning we put up the American flags over the entrances. On Monday morning Dr. Packard, with American and Turkish flags, accompanied by two Syrians, started out to meet the leading Kurdish chief. He arrived at Geogtapa in time to prevent a terrible massacre. The people of Geogtapa who had not fled to the city had gone to our church and the Russian church, both of which are situated on a high hill formed of ashes, a relic of Zoroastrian times. The churchyards are enclosed by high mud walls. All finally went to the Russian church, which was on the highest ground. They barricaded the strong doors, and, when the Kurds attacked, the men defended the fort with their guns and the women crowded like sheep into the church. When Dr. Packard arrived, a lively battle was going on, with little chance for the Christians. He had great difficulty in getting to the chiefs without being shot ; but he finally reached them, and they knew him. Some of these Kurds had spent weeks in our hospital and had been operated upon by Dr. Packard, so they listened to him while he pleaded for the lives of the people inside. After several hours' entreaty, they agreed to let the people go with him if they would give up their guns and ammunition.

I was talking yesterday with Layah, our Bible Woman, who was inside the church. She said that when Dr. Packard first tried to signal to them, they did not know him and kept on firing, but when they recognized him a shout went up: "It's the Hakim Sahib! Thank God! We are saved!" I asked her what the Kurds did when they came out, and she said they stood by and helped them, saying : " Come on ! Come on! Don't be afraid !" In the rush, Layah fell and broke her arm, and is now lying on Miss Lamme's sofa resting.

All Monday the refugees had been coming in, until it seemed that every room and storeroom was full, many of the rooms not lying-down full but sitting-up full. But that night, when Dr. Packard came, he brought over fifteen hundred more with him, and they had to be stowed away. This is Saturday, the sixth day these thousands have been here in our yards, not less than ten thousand---perhaps twelve or fourteen thousand. We have taken several small yards and houses adjoining ours, and the English Mission yard

adjoining the seminary yard is also full. Of course, the two Englishmen of the English Mission had to leave with the Russian army, and with them a large number of prominent Syrians who had been sympathizers with Russia. Here in the city there has been plundering and some destruction of property, but no general disorder---unless it be in the Armenian quarter. The fine brick quarters which were built as barracks for the Russian army I understand have remained intact, because the invaders are afraid to go near them for fear they may be mined.

From the first the Sheikh promised protection to us and our people, and when the Osmanli officers came they immediately took possession of the city, and have tried to keep order and prevent plundering by Moslems. The other day a Moslem, terribly wounded by a Turkish guard while robbing, was brought here for treatment. This is an illustration of our position : Here is a Mussulman thief, plundering Christians, shot by the Osmanli guard, and then brought to us by his friends that we might care for him.

Although we were promised safety for all within our gates there is no certainty. On Wednesday morning I lay in bed a little longer than usual, and about half-past seven suddenly an awful cry of fear and despair went up from thousands of throats, and the crowds rushed toward the church, then swayed back, not knowing whither to fly. From the church, where human beings are packed in like sardines, they began jumping from the windows. My first thought was that the Kurds had broken in through our back gate, which opens into the Moslem quarter, and that the massacre was about to begin ; but the poor, terrified people soon quieted, and before I could get dressed I knew it must have been a false alarm. The poor, hunted creatures think that if they can only hold to the skirts of a missionary they will be safe.

On Thursday, Hannah, the wife of one of our pastors, reached us after great suffering and exposure. They lived in Nazi, and heard the report that the Russians were leaving. They couldn't believe it, but on Sunday afternoon Kurds from the west came and began plundering. The people all fled to a walled village, because they thought they might be safer there and because our preacher there, Kasha Oner (Preacher Abner), had many friends among the Kurds, being a mountaineer. On Monday, a Kurd visited them, pretending that he had been sent by the Turks from the city, telling them they need have no fear, as they would be protected ; but it became evident that he was a spy. Afterwards a band of Kurds came, demanded the guns, and drank tea with the people; then others came and they began robbing and killing. The people gathered together like a flock of frightened sheep, and many were slaughtered. The greater part of them got through the great gateway while the Kurds were plundering, and that night they spent in the mountains without food or shelter and with very little covering. One of our girls, Katie, who had gone home on Friday for her Christmas vacation, was among them. She saw her mother murdered and had to leave her body lying by the gate as they ran. The next morning more than four hundred of them started towards the city, cold, hungry, exhausted; many, having lost their shoes in their flight, had frozen and bleeding feet. Hannah came here, her feet were dressed, and she is lying comfortably on a mattress on Miss Lamme's floor. Her husband and daughter were already here. The rest of the party were taken in at our College compound, two miles west of the city.

The pitiful tales we hear of murder, of narrow escape through snow and mud, hungry, sick and cold, are numberless.

Monday, 11th January, 1915.

Several families from Degala are camped in our parlour, and the night before last Victoria, one of the women, came to me and said an old woman had just come in who didn't seem able to answer anything she asked her. I found her crouched in a corner of the hall. She said she was so cold. At first she couldn't eat, but after drinking some tea she improved. We had absolutely no place but a stone floor for her ; but we took up a carpet from my bedroom, rolled her up in it in the upper hallway, and she went to sleep. She was the janitress of our church in Barbaroud , fifteen miles to the south. The Kurds did their worst there several days ago, and she had escaped, barefooted, almost naked, and without food. She died a day or two later.

One poor woman, who had both husband and son killed, has gone crazy, and we haven't any place to put her but a dark closet under the stairway. At midnight I was awakened by her pounding on the door. She has a nursing baby. Thank God, to-day they took her to the hospital, where they can care for her a little better than here. (She died two days later.) At the College compound, where the hospital is, they have only about two thousand, and we have perhaps twelve thousand, and every day more are coming. Those who have been hiding with Moslem friends are coming to us day by day, and we haven't any place to put them. We have not been able to take the dead from our yards, so we are burying them in the little yard by the side of the church---twenty-seven so far. Some die every day, and there is no shroud or coffin for them.

Evening.

We have just had a Praise Meeting in the parlour with fifty or sixty who could gather from the halls and rooms near, and we feel more cheerful. We thought if Paul and Silas, with their stripes, could sing praises in prison, so could we.

Wednesday, 13th January.

Since Monday, the 4th, we have been giving out bread. In the morning we sell to those who have money, and in the afternoon give free bread to those who cannot buy, disposing of over four tons of bread a day. Practically all the refugees from the city have their own food, and some from the villages, too. We buy our bread from the bazaar (market), and a very efficient and willing young Syrian has been attending to the weighing and giving out, while groups of other young men have been selling and distributing. The only things we have had for carrying the bread are our clothes-baskets and old tin bath-tubs, and they are doing good service. We have received some gifts of food for the refugees from Moslems. One man gave over six hundred pounds of meat, which we cooked and gave out in one section, but it is very difficult to distribute anything except bread among so large a number. I am speaking only of what we are doing here in this compound, where by far the larger number of refugees are. They are doing similar work in Sardari (the Boys'-School premises) and at the College compound. Mr. McDowell is looking after sanitary conditions and the streams of water flowing through the yards, which furnish the only drinking water for the crowds, and conditions are much improved.

There are hundreds of mountaineers who have no place to go to. Before this affair they were distributed among the villages, and we had established a number of schools especially for them. These people had been driven from their homes by the Kurds early in

the autumn. Many of them seem little better than animals-dirty, lazy, satisfied with any hole to lie in and just enough bread to keep their stomachs comfortable. Of course, they are not all of this sort, but we have several hundred that are. They are chiefly crowded into the church and our large schoolroom. The people who are suffering most are those who have been accustomed to the comforts and decencies of life, who are crowded together like cattle, without sufficient clothing or food.

The day after the flight from Geogtapa we went with a basket of bread to one of the larger rooms of the Press, which was filled with self-respecting people who had the day before been in comfortable circumstances, but who had fled with nothing, or had been robbed of whatever they had tried to bring with them. When they saw the bread for distribution, they began to cry and cover their faces, and we had to drop the bread into their laps---they didn't reach out for it. Of course, we assured them that, under such circumstances, it was no shame to eat the bread of charity.

When the people began to flee, they wanted to deposit their money with us, and our Treasurer accepted it on condition that we could use it without interest and repay it when normal conditions are restored. It is with this money that we have been enabled to buy bread and save these people from starvation.

Children are being born every day. We have managed to give two small rooms to these women, many of whom haven't even a quilt. Children were born even in the crowded church. One of the women who was reporting these cases complained in a very aggrieved tone that some were "even bringing two," as if one wasn't enough to satisfy anybody under existing circumstances.

This is the first day that we have been able to get donkeys to haul away the refuse. I hope we shall soon be able to take the dead to the cemetery.

Thursday, 14th January.

Mr. Allen returned last evening from his journey to the villages of the Nazlu river. Several thousand fled towards Russia ; many have hidden with Moslems, who are now trying to force them to become Mohammedans and to give their girls in marriage to Moslems. In Ada perhaps as many as a hundred were killed, most of them young men. It is told that they were stood up in line, one behind another, by the Kurds, to see how many one bullet would kill. I went down to see the woman in the room under mine who had received word of the killing of her brother in Karadjalu. Everywhere there is wailing and sadness, and her lamentation for her dead brother is the wail of thousands of hearts :--

"Oh, Yerima (Jeremiah), my brother!

The pillar of our house; a father to us all, ah, Yerima, Yerima!

Thou didst comfort us all ! A giant in body and giant in spirit.

Oh, Yerima, my brother, oh, my brother, Yerima, my heart is broken for thee!

My brother! Oh, my brother, thy house is left desolate; thy little ones orphans.

Oh, Yerima, Yerima! thou wert a righteous man, merciful to the poor!

Saturday, 16th January.

Yesterday some Abijalu. people were in, asking for bread, although a week ago they were

among the well-to-do. The same story of robbery, exposure and horror. When a Kurd tried to carry off Shamasha Sayad's daughter, she jumped into the well and stayed there for hours in water up to her chin. Some one said a few days ago, "Blessed are the dead," and I echoed the sentiment.

Monday, 18th January.

In the midst of panic, distress and death, we have had two weddings. Both had been arranged to take place on the Syrian New Year, the 14th January. Dr. Shedd performed the ceremony in both cases. Both brides had their trousseaux ready, but felt these were not proper times for the display of finery, so wore ordinary dresses.

These last few days a number of the city families have returned in fear and trembling to their homes, taking just a very few things with them. This is relieving the overcrowded rooms somewhat, and Miss Schoebel this afternoon is trying to drive the people out into the sunshine long enough to have the rooms swept---or, rather, shovelled. It consumes all one's energies to try to get anyone to do anything. All the responsibility and much of the actual labour has devolved upon the missionaries. Of course, many of our best men fled to Russia, and among those who are left there are few leaders. There are some notable exceptions, though, both here and at the College---e.g., Jacob David, who without missionary assistance has charge of eight hundred and fifty refugees and is doing finely. Another, a young shopkeeper, has had charge of the weighing and distribution of bread, with much of the buying, from the beginning. He has done the work with surprising efficiency and self-devotion. Bands of young men have been ready, day after day, for distributing bread. The nights have been divided into three watches, and groups of men have taken their turns in acting as watchmen. Mr. Nisan, who has charge of the English Mission yard, one night found the watchmen asleep, so the next day they were tied to trees, and a placard placed over them with the inscription: "Unfaithful Watchmen," as a warning to others. Guarding the streams is a very necessary and a very difficult task. Mr. McDowell finds it extremely hard to get anyone among the hundreds of Syrians here who can be trusted to oversee such work, or who can be kept on a job longer than an hour or so at a time.

We are urging some now to return to their homes. Many are so afraid, and we cannot give them assurance of safety. Some Kurds have gone, but many are still about. The people come to the individual missionaries and beg for just one small room for their families, each one with his own special plea. When we tell them the greatest danger for them just now is to remain crowded in such narrow bounds, it makes little or no appeal to them. They are nine-tenths fatalists any way, and think that it all depends upon the "will of Allah." They say: "Let us die by the hand of God and not of the Kurds."

We have been having unusually fine weather; only two bad days, and they were not cold. A Mohammedan was heard to say: "Do you see how God loves these Christians? Who ever saw such weather in the middle of winter?"

Dr. Shedd is the representative of our station before the Government; he and Dr. Packard have had that end of the work, daily pleading before Persian and Osmanli authorities for the Christian population. It was told us that a prominent -Moslem had said: "Dr. Shedd is the best Christian in the city! Just see how he comes every day through the deep mud to plead for those people!"

Wednesday, 20th January.

A few people from the city went to their homes, and our hopes began to rise ; but yesterday and to-day others came in from the Nazlu river and from Tehargousha. Thirty-six dead were carried to the trench in Mart Maryam(46) (St. Mary) churchyard yesterday ; the larger part of them were children.

Lucy, daughter of Kasha (preacher) David of Ardishai, came in yesterday with her baby from Gulpashan, where they had been refugees for some time, living in terror of Kurds by day and night. They also feared the Moslem neighbours and the Turkish guards sent in to protect the village. Her own village was Tehargousha. In terror the people fled to the roofs as the village was surrounded by Kurds, and there was no avenue of escape. The Kurds came up on to the roofs and commanded the people to go down. Lucy, with one Kurd below her on the ladder and two above her, her baby on her back, got down. In the yard she saw her younger sister, Sherin, a pretty girl of about fifteen, being dragged away by a Kurd. She was imploring Lucy to save her, but Lucy was helpless. When she was telling me this with tears and sobs, she said: "Every night, when I try to sleep, I hear her entreaties, 'Oh, Lucy, I'll be your sacrifice. Save me, Lucy !' I called to her, 'Pull your head-kerchief over your face ; don't look into their faces.' She tried to conceal her face, and daubed it with mud, but she has such beautiful dark eyes and rosy cheeks! The Kurds grabbed the young women and girls, peering into their faces, till each one found a pretty one; for himself, then dragged her away. If they had only killed my sister we could say, 'She is dead, like many another---it is finished'; but that she should be in the hands of a Kurd---we cannot bear, it ! " Some of these captives have been recovered, but there is no word of Sherin.

Saturday, 23rd January.

Yesterday we counted three thousand three hundred in the church, and many have gone out, so there must have been four thousand people there these last two weeks. Is it any wonder that children are dying by the score ? Morning and afternoon there are burials ; at other times the bodies are collected and laid in a room near the gate. To-day Mr. McDowell succeeded after long efforts in getting a cart for scavenger work. It came but one day. We have not been able to get even donkeys, except five or six. The scavengers would not come into the yards of Christians for such work, even though Mr. McDowell offered to pay well. We cannot open our back windows, the stench is too dreadful. I suppose the mere mention of such things is quite shocking even to read; but we have been living in such surroundings for nearly three weeks, and see only a little light ahead. We are hoping we can distribute some of the mountain refugees in empty houses here in Mart Maryam, and the Christian quarter.

Many Moslems who pretended to accept food and goods of Christians for safe keeping, are now claiming them as their own. One of our preachers, after having been plundered of practically everything by his Moslem neighbours, was received as a refugee into one of their houses and was fed from his own dishes, of his own food, and put to sleep in his own bed.

Dr. Packard has been gone for several days to the Nazlu villages, to gather together the remnants of the people scattered in Moslem villages, or in hiding, and to see if it be

possible to put them into a few of their own places again. Most of the Kurds have left, but the Syrians are unarmed, and, just as from the beginning, their Moslem neighbours are their greatest enemies. If it isn't a Djihad (Holy War), it is very near it. It must have been planned beforehand, for there has been concerted action, from one end of the plain to the other, though here and there some Moslems have been friendly throughout, have done many kindly deeds and saved many lives.

Later.

Just at this joint we had an interesting diversion. A band of Turkish soldiers came into our yard and said they wanted to search our premises for wounded Russian soldiers. They searched the houses of the Allens, the Müllers, and our house; then the schools and all outside buildings and storehouses, even to the smallest closets. You might have thought they were searching for a lost hair from Osman's beard! I have an idea they thought we were concealing arms or ammunition, though ten days ago we collected all we could find anywhere among the people, and gave them up to the Osmanli commander. As we had nothing hidden, of course we had nothing to fear, though some of the people were scared.

A dozen times a day I pray: "Oh, Lord, how long?" All the first days it seemed as if it must be a horrible dream from which I would awake; but it has become a three weeks' reality, with little hope of a near dawning. It looks as if our long night might stretch out till the dawn of peace in Europe. And for these things who shall answer, if not the Powers of Europe ?

We have read that America has done so much for the sufferers in Europe ; surely they will not be too poor to help this little corner of misery, with its twenty-five or thirty thousand sufferers, and with absolutely no one on earth to look to but the American Mission ! For months we have not been permitted to write of conditions here, and now we are entirely shut off from the world, even from Tabriz. Anything we write "must be in French, just to say we are well." Our last word from Tabriz, the nearest mission station and residence of the American Consul, was written on the 31st December, and this is the 23rd January.

Sunday, 24th. January.

The fourth Sunday, but no Sabbath. To-day nearly all the people were taken out of the church and distributed among the empty houses near the Russian Mission and in the old church. I went with some of the young men who are helping with the distribution of the bread to count the people in each place. In one house there were two hundred and fifty; these are all mountaineers. We give to each one sheet or loaf of bread per day; about ten ounces. Not very extravagant feeding, you see!

Tuesday, 26th January.

On Sunday a Jew brought us word from Usknuk that Kasha David's daughter, Sherin, is there in the house of a Kurd, and that every effort is being made by gifts, persuasion and threats, to make her turn Mohammedan, but that she always answers "You may kill me, but I will never deny my faith." We are making plans to try to get her back. Dr. Packard reported on his return from the Nazlu. villages that in one place practically the whole

population has become Moslem and have given up their church to be a mosque, while some even cursed their former faith. But, of course, such people never had any religion, and changing the name of it is a matter of convenience.

Wednesday, 27th January.

Miss Lamme and I went to-day to the Jewish quarters to look up Syrian refugees there. We found them in large numbers in the Jewish houses, where they had been kept and in some cases fed. Yesterday the French Mission sent away from their yards two hundred and fifty or more persons, who first went to the Governor. He telephoned to Dr. Shedd, and we had to receive them. They were put into Dr. Israel's house in Dilgusha, outside the city walls. All the houses there have been completely plundered; many have been robbed of doors and windows. No one thinks of returning to homes there, but a great many have returned to Mart Maryam.

Later.

Everywhere about the Yards people are basking in the wonderful sunshine, which is more like April than January. The common sight everywhere is the everlasting hunt for vermin, friends and neighbours graciously assisting one another. I suppose it is a vulgar subject to mention, but "we've got 'em," and must go on living in hourly contact with thousands of others who swarm with them.

Friday, 5th February.

We can't complain of the monotony of life, for we never know what will happen next. On Tuesday morning I had a wedding in my room here. The boy and girl were simple villagers. He had gone to Russia and brought back a little money, with some foreign clothes. Then his folks began to look round for a wife for him. He was betrothed several months ago to Anna of Ardishai, and, according to custom, gave her the money to buy her trousseau. For several weeks she had been sewing, until at last the wonderful silk dress, white silk head-kerchief, veil and all the necessaries, were ready. The wedding was fixed for the Syrian New Year; but the Kurds came and carried off wedding clothes and everything else in the house. They all fled here, and were married in the old, dirty garments they were wearing when they ran for their lives, for this was a month ago. In the flight the bride's mother was lost, probably killed, as nothing has been heard of her since. Their only present was a little tea and sugar that I tied up in a kerchief and gave to the bride, that they might invite a few friends to drink tea instead of eating the dinner they had intended giving.

There are a great many people who have been accustomed to good living heretofore, but for months have had no cooked food, so I invited a number of these to dinner on Wednesday. We had a meat stew, bread, cheese, pickles and tea, all they could eat. There were thirty-five for dinner, and twenty for supper. There was enough left over to feed fifty or more poor and sick ones outside. The whole thing cost about four dollars and fed a hundred people. We spread long cloths on the parlour floor and ate with wooden spoons from enamel plates borrowed for the occasion from the school. The matron and school-girls did the cooking and serving.

But for our next-door neighbours the scene quickly changed again from weddings and

dinners to one of terror and flight by night. The house of Dr. ----- adjoins ours, and the roofs are continuous. For several days there had been rumours that their house would be plundered by the Turkish authorities, and they had not dared to undress and go to bed in peace, but on Wednesday they felt more safe and went to bed early. I myself had gone to bed, but not to sleep. Just before eleven o'clock I heard loud knocking on their gate, and then a rapid trampling of feet on the roof over my room. Pretty soon there was quite a commotion in our front yard. I jumped up, and saw in the yard a dozen or more Turkish soldiers, who entered through our front door and went up to the roof through our halls. I dressed as quickly as I could and went to Miss Coan's room on the roof, to find that some of the women from Dr. -----'s family were already there. In a few minutes the rest of the women and children from there climbed the wall or slid from the roof on to our balcony, and I let them in through the window into our parlour. They were crying and frightened nearly to death, but kept quiet. The Turks searched the house, but took nothing, saying they had come to take evil men, not things. They came back through our house again. The orders have been in our yard that the gate should never be opened at night but by one of the gentlemen; so, when they first knocked, the guard came and called Mr. Allen. He let them in and went with them to Dr. -----'s house. In the meantime, a Syrian had aroused Mr. Müller, and when he tried to get out of his front door he found a Turk guarding it. He tried to push out, saying that he was the master of the house, but the Turk struck him and refused to let him pass. When the gang returned from our neighbours', they insisted on searching Mr. Müller's house, even going into the bedroom where Mrs. Müller was in bed and Ruth was sick. Meanwhile a second band came and pounded on our gate, but our guards had run away, and finally one of the men climbed a telephone pole to the roof, got down inside and opened the gate. The officer tied up the Persian guards as a punishment for not opening the gate. Afterwards they went into the Allen house and even asked to have the piano played. It is maddening to have our premises and houses invaded in this way, and by such a lot, but we are helpless, and, for the sake of what we may be able to do for the safety of the people, our gentlemen have to smile and try to turn away their wrath with soft words, even though they are threatened and called liars by the representatives of the invading Government. I don't believe the Mission in the seventy-five years and more of its existence has ever been placed in so difficult and humiliating a position.

Still the ghastly procession of the dead marches on. Between seven and eight hundred have died so far. A great many are able to get plain wooden coffins for their dead now, but the great mass are just dropped into the great trench of rotting humanity. As I stand at my window in the morning I see one after another of the little bodies carried by, wrapped mostly in a ragged piece of patch-work ; and the condition of the living is more pitiful than that of the dead---hungry, ragged, dirty, sick, cold, wet, swarming with vermin---thousands of them ! Not for all the wealth of all the rulers of Europe would I bear for one hour their responsibility for the suffering and misery of this one little corner of the world alone. A helpless, unarmed Christian community turned over to the sword and the passion of Islam !

This morning my attention was called to a girl of twelve, who was too sick to be kept any longer in a room with other people. A young Syrian woman, who was helping with the sick, wanted to put her into that closet under the stairway from which none ever come out alive. I said: "She will die in there." She replied: "Of course she will die, but we shall have to find a place for her until she does." We put her there temporarily until we found a small room where there were only twenty. These we distributed among other crowded

rooms, brought Margareta there, laid her on some matting and covered her with an old carpet. Poor child, she has a sweet face, but life has treated her cruelly.

Dysentery has been bad for a long time, and when the sick get helpless and their condition offensive, it is almost impossible to get anyone to care for them unless they have near relatives. Dysentery and measles have both been epidemic for a long time, and nearly all deaths are directly due to one or both of these diseases.

We had a real respectable funeral in the front yard this afternoon. A good old woman from Degala died, and her pastor had a service for her. This is only the second real funeral service I have seen, though a preacher is always present at the two burials daily, and conducts a service at the cemetery.

Friday, 12th February.

To-day we have begun a new method of giving out bread. We have printed forms, which we fill in and ask the heads of families to sign, promising to pay us later for the bread. All day thousands have been crowding the big tent in the yard, where a number of young men have been filling in and giving out these tickets for bread. The problem is a big one. Undoubtedly some could find bread who are taking it free, but we cannot decide most of the cases. Then we are spending thousands of borrowed money, and as yet no response to our cablegram sent long ago to America ! The numbers asking for bread are increasing daily, but if we should refuse it, hundreds would die of starvation.

Again the yards are wet and muddy from inciting snow. The last two days have been very hard for the thousands without fuel and with very little clothing. One of the verses that helps to keep my faith steady these days is: "He that spared not His own Son."

The death-rate has been considerably reduced ; for two weeks or more it averaged over thirty a day.

Mr. Allen is off on a tour to the villages of the upper Nazlu river, to see what is left there, and to give help or encouragement to anyone who may be left. A while ago when Mr. Allen visited the villages on the Baranduz, one of our Bible Women told him of a certain spot she wished him to visit. She lived in Kurtapa, and as she was about to flee with a bag containing nine tomans (47) of money, the robbers appeared at the door. She quickly threw the bag down beside a broken earthen tub and the thieves did not see it. Mr. Allen went to that village, found the room and the broken tub with the bag of money beside it, and brought the money to its owner.

Last week, the Shahbanda, or Turkish Consul, who is now the chief authority, demanded six thousand tomans of the Syrians. With great trouble this was partly collected and partly borrowed by the help of the Sirdar (Persian Governor), who demanded six hundred more for his share. The Shahbanda promised that, if this were given, the shops and houses of the Syrians in the city would not be disturbed. It remains to be seen how much his word is worth.

To-morrow completes six weeks of this siege and semi-siege condition. We keep on praying, but see no signs of deliverance. We are shut off from the world, and thousands are held in this bondage by a few hundred Osmanli troops and a few wandering Kurds. I

realize now that Persia is dead---or worse ; she has no manhood nor moral character left.

Wednesday, 17th February.

A few days ago the Turkish Consul arrested all the men at the French Mission. After some examination, a hundred were sent away, leaving about sixty-three at the Consulate. A gallows with seven nooses was erected at the "Kurdish Gate" of the city, the one near us, and on Sunday the ropes were put in place. The people here on Sunday were very badly scared. The women of the men under arrest came and wept and besought Dr. Shedd to do something, but he could do nothing. That evening the people gathered in the church for prayer, and continued praying until midnight. Each night since similar meetings have been held. As yet no one has been hanged, but the Turkish Consul is demanding money for their release. The second day after the arrest of these people, a Turkish soldier was sent to us to ask us to send bread for the prisoners, and we have been feeding them ever since. When their women-folk went to see them they were charged two krans (ninepence) admission. It has been reported that the prisoners have been tortured in various ways known to the Turks, in order to extort money from their families.

The Turkish Consul has demanded the ten thousand tomans of English bank money committed to us when the bankers fled. The matter has been referred to our Consul in Tabriz. If it should have to be surrendered, we should be in straits, for that is all we have to buy bread with for these thousands of hungry people. Weeks ago we appealed to America, both to the Red Cross and to our Board, but there is no reply.

It was reported to me that there were refugees here who had stores of flour, meat, butter, etc., and yet were taking bread from us, so yesterday I made an investigation and found small quantities ; but if the whole were sold, it would not amount to twenty dollars, and the owners would be reduced to nothing but dry bread, and, though this might do for a limited time, they cannot "live by bread alone " week after week. Undoubtedly this terrible epidemic of dysentery which has carried off hundreds is due largely to lack of proper food and want of variety of food.

As I made the rounds of our own yards yesterday and visited the people herded together in one of the dark store-rooms of our Persian Girls'-School, it seemed to me that their condition of cold, hunger, filth and sickness was about as miserable as they could get in this world. One great difference that was apparent in all the rooms was the absence of small children, hundreds having died during these last months.

The evangelistic work is now well organized, and everywhere there are at least daily meetings for everyone. The women workers under Miss Lamme visit outside places. Mrs. McDowell, with native women, also visits outside places where there are large numbers of refugees herded together. Mr. McDowell tries to keep the preachers at work, too.

Last week a group of one hundred and fifty or more mountaineers who are staying at Sengar, two or three miles from the city came down with one of Kurdu's men, asking us to feed them. They said that heretofore they had been provided for by Kurdu, a Kurdish chief, for whom they had been working, carrying away for him the plunder he had collected here, and that now he was leaving and we must feed them. We put them off several times, but finally accepted the additional burden. Every one who gets tired of his

job of charity or responsibility throws it upon us. There seems no end, and this is the seventh week.

Thursday, 18th February.

Yesterday afternoon I went out to the College compound for the first time since Christmas. We had to drive under the gallows at the city gate. It creates rather unpleasant feelings to think that perhaps some of our friends may be suspended there.

Our Mission is being treated with more consideration than at first, and we are hoping that perhaps the Turkish Consul has heard from Constantinople, and that our own Government has been exerting influence at Berlin and Constantinople. For weeks we have had no word from the outside world; but we all rest in Jehovah and wait patiently for Him."

Friday, 19th February.

This has been a snowy day again. The people have been making it a day of fasting and prayer---as if every day were not a fast day!

Saturday, 20th February.

All day negotiations have been going on in regard to the English bank money. When Dr. Shedd and Dr. Packard were called to the Turkish Consulate, they found there the former Urmia Consul, who had fled from here last autumn when war between Russia and Turkey was first declared. He had gone south to Soujboulak. It looks as if he were perhaps fleeing now in this direction, which would mean that the Russians were in Soujboulak ; we have heard this report. It is being reported that the Kurds were making preparations to-day for leaving here. It may be that the Consul's haste to get this money is another evidence that he is expecting to leave soon. He told the gentlemen to-day that he thought that, as Americans, they ought to make a contribution toward the cause of Turkey. They have felt that a compromise on the ten thousand is the best way out, and suggested that he take two thousand; but he refused to take less than five thousand, and promised that he would not take it before to-morrow, so if something does not develop before to-morrow we shall probably be the poorer by that amount. We are hoping that it may be taken without any show of force or violence. Of course, we cannot make any resistance.

To-day we finished going over all the bread tickets, arranging the names according to villages. Then we called in responsible men from each village and went over the lists, to find out those who would be able to help themselves soon, and those who had reported more members of families than they have. I am sorry to say that we found scores who were cheating in various ways, and now we have to get hold of all of them---a big business for some days to come. We are distributing 14,000-15,000 loaves of about ten and a half ounces each day; but there are so many getting more than a loaf each that there are probably not more than eleven thousand persons receiving.

An epidemic of typhoid has broken out at the College among the refugees---twenty-seven cases. To-day, even in the midst of our troubles, the Evangelistic Board met to consider a reorganization of the work. When the people are able to return to the villages,

they will probably have to settle temporarily in a few of the larger ones.

Sunday, 21st February.

To-day there are three or four services in the church. This morning it was packed for a communion service and many were turned away. Another communion service is arranged for this afternoon, and then again next Sunday, to give an opportunity for all communicants,

Tuesday, 23rd February.

Last night one of the most terrible things that has yet happened occurred. In the evening ten or a dozen of the prisoners from the French Mission, taken ten days or more ago by the Turkish Consul, were discharged, and we all felt that probably the rest would soon be set free, as there was no special charge against them. But this morning five men, two of them Moslems, were found hanging from the gallows at the Kurdish Gate, and forty-eight others were shot beyond the Tcharbash Gate. No one has dared to go out yet and get the bodies, though Dr. Shedd has asked permission of the Turkish Consul. For two days we had felt so much more hopeful, but to-day a terrible fear has fallen on the people. There is much silent weeping, but little violent demonstration, though the mothers, wives and families of the murdered men are here. The question in everybody's mind is: "What will the Turks do next ?" Forty or fifty shots were distinctly heard in the night between one and two o'clock, but no one guessed what they meant. We had begun yesterday to take their bread tickets away from a few of the people to try to force them to go to their villages or find money in some way to provide for themselves ; but now they are too frightened to leave and everything is set back again. Two or three days ago the Turks took some things from the French Mission property here, carpets, etc., and we hear that they are plundering more to-day. On Sunday we received a card from Tabriz saying that everything was quiet there, that £1,000 relief had been received, and that Mr. Labaree was going to the Caucasus to relieve the refugees who had fled from Urmia to Russia.

Wednesday, 24th February.

The French missionaries and the nine nuns were very much alarmed for their personal safety. They asked that one of our men should go there and put up an American flag ; but, of course, we could not do that. Yesterday the Turkish Consul sent word that if we wanted the bodies of the three Christians hanging at the gate, we had permission to take them. Mr. McDowell and Mr. Allen went with some Syrians, took down the bodies, and buried them. There has been a little more disorder than usual, and the people are terrified again. I have had to give back many of the bread tickets that we had collected. There are hundreds of people who have fields and vineyards, but who cannot borrow a dollar. These tickets are really promissory notes which they have signed, promising to pay later, but we need cash now, and our bread queue does not decrease---rather, increases. I wonder what a trained Red Cross worker would do with a mob that will not stand in line or stay where you put them ; who, when you go over the case and give the answer, refuse to take it, but stand about and weep briny tears by the hour. They have no sense of honour, don't know how to tell the truth, can't tell the same story twice, and do not know much about anything except that their stomachs are empty. They try to get bread under the names of the dead, and when accused of evading the truth, will declare in the most injured tones: "We wouldn't lie." There is much that would be funny in these

investigations if it did not get monotonous.

Saturday, 27th February.

When Mr. McDowell returned from the burial of those shot on Jewish Hill, he reported that they had found forty bodies and identified all but five or six.

On Wednesday night, a still more horrible deed was committed at Gulpashan. This village and Iriawa had been shielded, partly through the efforts of a German; but on Wednesday night a band of Persian volunteers, arriving from Salmas or beyond, went there, took fifty men, and, according to reports, shot them in the graveyard near by. They then plundered the village, took girls and young women, outraged them, and acted in general as one might expect Satan to do when turned loose.

The horror and sadness of everything has been brought nearer to us by the death of Mlle. Madelaine Perrochet, a young Swiss girl who came with the Coans four months ago to teach the missionary children. She was only twenty-one, so bright, so pretty, that we had all learned to love her dearly. She spoke English well, and, of course, French and German. She died on Thursday, after dinner, and yesterday (Friday) we had the funeral service in Dr. Coan's living room, led by Mr. McDowell. We could not take her out to our little cemetery at Seir, so she was buried in Dr. Coan's garden, just at the right of the entrance to the long grape-arbour. In his prayer Mr. McDowell used the words: "We are not only walking in the valley of the shadow of death, but we are dwelling there in these weeks."

Just now two of the young Syrians who are the chief men in helping with the bread came in and told me that they had received warning secretly that they had better leave here and hide with some friendly Moslems, as the Turkish Consul is going to take out all the young men from our yards and other places in the city and kill them--"wipe them out." I cannot believe that it can be true, but we cannot know. If they enter our yards by force and murder men, then there is no further safety for any of us. As one of these young men said just now: "Let us commit everything into the hands of God, and then wait and be ready for whatever comes."

Typhus is raging at the College. Yesterday there were seventy cases at the College compound, and over a hundred others on diet, with the probability of a large part of them developing typhoid. It is impossible to take care of so many cases or feed them properly under such conditions. At the hospital they are buying all the milk and mesta (matzoun) they can get. Mrs. Cochran has had charge of the feeding there, as well as doing much else, and yesterday she went to bed; to-day there are symptoms of typhoid. Mrs. Coan and Miss Coan took care of Mlle. Perrochet, and the last week or two had the help of a Syrian woman who has had a nurse's course in America, Miss George. She has proved very efficient and a great help and comfort.

Saturday Night.

There was a great deal of anxiety lest something should happen here; but we woke on Sunday morning in safety and saw a rainbow in the northern sky, though there was no rain. The reports of Mr. Allen from Gulpashan were too black to be written. The soldiers sent out by the Consul to protect the villages against Kurds and Moslem looters left

unviolated hardly a woman or girl of those remaining in the village, and a number of girls were carried off. It seemed quite apparent that they understood that the whole business of protecting was to be a farce. When on Sunday morning Mr. Allen returned and wanted to bring people with him, he was not permitted. Those who had been murdered in the cemetery a few nights previously had been buried under a few inches of earth, and when he wanted to have them uncovered to identify them and bury them deeper, he was refused. The soldiers had made them all sit down on the ground and then shot at them. They then looked them over, and any who were found to be breathing were shot the second time. The only reason for all this was that they bore the name of "Christian." What has the Christian world to say ?

Mr. McDowell went to Iriawa and found similar conditions there. We were very glad to see him and Mr. Allen safely back, for they undoubtedly were in jeopardy themselves and were treated insolently by the soldiers.

Mrs. Cochran is better, and we feel now that she will not have typhoid. It is a tremendous relief. Only seven died here in this quarter yesterday. The death list here has passed the thousand mark, and, including the Boys'-School yard and the College, fifteen hundred. All the past week three young men and myself have been kept busy all the morning and into the middle of the afternoon examining bread tickets, hearing pleas, and giving out new tickets as the new refugees have come in. The last several days we have purchased, without counting the College, nearly ten thousand pounds of bread daily.

Friday, 5th March.

Mrs. Cochran has typhoid, but so far in a light form. Mrs. Coan and Miss Coan are taking on her work as best they can, and caring for her too, with the help of the Syrian nurse, Miss George. Dr. Packard has been in bed two or three days, but we do not know if it is typhoid or not. Mr. Allen went to Gulpashan with permission from the Turkish Consul, to bury those who had been murdered. He found fifty bodies. When he came back, a crowd of sixty-four, mostly women and girls, came with him. Our yards and rooms, including the church, are crowded again, but with cleaner people. Most of the mountaineers are out. Two families of mountaineers who are friendly with the Kurds started out yesterday for their homes. It is spring now, and time for ploughing and sowing, and unless the people can soon get to their villages there will be a dearth of wheat and other grain next year. There are repeated reports of the approach of the Russian army, and some Germans here have said that they were soon expecting to go on a journey. If the Turks should have to flee, there is no telling what they might do before going ; but we do not dare to let our hopes of deliverance rise, for it makes the long wait harder.

A few days ago the ex-Turkish Consul sent word that if there were any girls held captive that we wanted to get, he would find them for us. That looks as if there had been a quarrel---or perhaps it is a trick to trip us into being unwise. It takes the wisdom of the serpent as well as the simplicity of the dove!

Saturday, 6th March.

Dr. Packard has developed typhoid. There is only Mrs. Packard to take care of him, and she is far from strong, and there are four lively boys to care for and keep out of mischief and danger. Since Mlle.'s death, it leaves the children's education on the mothers'

shoulders, and Mrs. Packard has been trying to take the bulk of it.

This morning I made out the second month's report of the bread funds which have passed through my hands. So far we have spent approximately £1,500. Over £120 has been collected in sales, which leaves nearly £1,400 debt for us. This does not include College or Boys'-School yard. All of this has been spent on dry bread alone, two hundred and twenty-three and a half tons, all brought in on the backs of carriers. About one hundred and fifty pounds is a man's load. This month we have distributed four and a quarter tons a day.

Evening.

There is considerable fear to-night among the Christians that the Turks may strike a blow before they go. We have twenty-five extra guards of Persian soldiers. All day Moslem villagers have been fleeing to the city in fear of what the Russians may do when they come. We do not know how near they are, for we have no means of communication. It would seem strange to lie down in quiet and peace, knowing that all fear and terror to these poor people were passed.

Sunday, 7th March.

Dr. Packard is very sick with typhoid; yesterday his temperature was 105. He seems quieter to-day. Dr. Pera, former hospital assistant, has promised to take care of him every day from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Mrs. Packard will be night-nurse. Mrs. Cochran seems to be getting along quietly. Thirty cases of typhoid are reported in one of the houses in the suburbs, which a few days ago we filled up with refugees brought from the College compound. They probably brought the germ with them. The only reason it is not raging here is the eternal vigilance of Mr. McDowell in looking after sanitary conditions and the watercourses. He has frequently to appeal to the Governor to get donkeys for carrying off refuse, though he pays well. As the church is full of refugees, two meetings are held daily in the Seminary yard. Kasha Moshi of Geogtapa makes a fine outdoor preacher.

Just now, as I came from dinner, a woman met me, leading a little girl by the hand, and in her most wheedling tones tried to present her to me as a gift, saying she was her great-grandchild. I laughed and said I already had one hundred such gifts. She felt that I was not properly appreciative ! There are scores of people who would like to dump their responsibilities under these conditions. We have had a number of cases of relatives deserting old and helpless women and leaving them for us to care for until they died.

Monday, 8th March.

Yesterday there was general fasting and prayer until noon for Dr. Packard's and Mrs. Cochran's recovery. There is a beginning of what we hope maybe a deep and permanent spiritual awakening. In such times one lives in the presence of eternal realities, and Heaven seems quite near. It is marvellous how the Word of God speaks to us in every condition and experience through which we pass.

Tuesday, 9th March.

On Sunday a Mohammedan orator made a speech in a garden in Dilgusha to a crowd of several thousand people, practically all Moslems. He said that Italy and Persia had joined in the alliance with Germany, Austria and Turkey, and, of course, are in the way of victory. America had taken no part in this war, but is doing good all over the world without regard to race or religion, caring for the sick and wounded, feeding the hungry and befriending the needy. The American missionaries here, he said, have done and are doing this, and everyone should honour them and stand up for them. At this there was great applause.

Last night a body of askars entered the house of Dr. -----, whose yard adjoins ours, and demanded Mar Elia, a Russian Bishop, who has been in hiding these last weeks. They didn't find him, but took about forty pounds' worth of money and jewellery and frightened the people nearly to death. Our watchman called Mr. McDowell and Mr. Allen and they tried to go over to the help of the women. Mr. McDowell climbed the ladder from this side to go over into their yard, but at the top met a gun in the hands of an askar, who demanded his retreat. Mr. McDowell, out of respect for the gun, didn't insist on having his way. That yard is not in our hands and we have no flag there, so, of course, we couldn't do anything. This has scared the people again. This morning one woman brought me some jewellery and papers to keep for her. She had been in America and only returned last spring, and was bewailing her stupidity in returning. She says she is only waiting for a way to open for her to go back, never to return. Hundreds are saying the same thing, and I think there will be a large emigration to America when the way opens. I wouldn't mind emigrating myself for a while !

Friday, 12th March.

We cannot complain of the monotony of life for these last two or three days. It was on Monday night that the Turks tried to get the Bishop, but he escaped over the church roof. The next afternoon they suddenly appeared again, and this time found him hiding on the church roof behind a parapet. He tried to get down an old ladder standing by the wall, but the askar who was at the other end of the roof raised his gun and told him he would shoot if he attempted to run, so he was captured. It is said that he had two thousand tomans in gold and Russian paper money on his person. This, of course, was taken. The most unfortunate incident of that capture was the arrest at the same time of Dr. Lokman. At Mr. McDowell's request, Dr. Lokman (Syrian) had gone over the wall into Dr. -----'s house to find out if there were any typhoid cases there, and was caught by the askars. Our mission at once began to make efforts to secure their release. The Turkish Consul demanded £200 for Dr. Lokman and £2,000 for the Bishop. In the evening he sent word that unless they were immediately redeemed they would be shot at midnight. He ordered the Persian Governor to send eight men to assist at the shooting. In the meantime they had gotten hold of another man or two. When word came about Dr. Lokman there was some hustling to find the money. "Brides" (young married women) were asked to give up the gold pieces from their dowry, and in a short time the £200 was sent. When Dr. Lokman was notified of his release he was sleeping soundly without any realization of the doom hanging over him. When he reached our yards and his family and friends congratulated him, he felt like one raised from the dead. Just as soon as he heard that the others were still in danger, he said: "Well, we must try to do something to release them." He is one of the most prominent Syrians here and influential with the Persian Government. From the first day of these troubles he has been on hand to help in governmental affairs in every way possible. All day yesterday efforts were being made to

get money to redeem the others.

These last two nights our yards have been overflowing with people from the Christian quarter here, and already the Moslems from the villages are crowding into the city for fear of the Russians. As one of our bakers said yesterday: "The city gates cannot let them in fast enough." The city is in a panic for fear of what the Russians will do to the Moslems when they arrive. Heaven grant that they will act in the spirit of Christ and not of Mohammed! Everywhere the Moslems are now anxious to show themselves friends of Christians. David gives expression to my sentiments concerning the wicked in Ps. 59.

The Germans, I understand, have already left, except one of the leaders, and he is ready to go in haste. Yesterday I had to stay in bed with a headache, and it seemed to me that the very air was vibrating with expectation and excitement. Ten thousand times a day the petition arises, " O Lord, deliver us." Ten weeks to-morrow! It seems impossible to hold out much longer. " O Lord, deliver us from the hand of the wicked." Dr. Packard is still quite sick. Mrs. Cochran seems to be getting along slowly. They have so many cases of typhoid at the College that they have put up the big tent in the School yard there for a hospital.

Tuesday, 16th March.

To-day our hearts are heavy and sorrowful. Dr. Packard is very sick indeed, and it seems now as if Miss Coan has typhoid or typhus, whichever this sickness is. Mrs. Cochran appears to be getting along all right. We want Dr. Vanneman from Tabriz, but there seems to be no way to get a message through to him. Dr. Shedd asked the Turkish Consul to help us get a messenger through, but he said he couldn't. The Russians are between Urmia and Tabriz. We have twenty-five or thirty cases of typhoid here in this compound. Mr. McDowell is trying to empty a few rooms to put the sick in, but it is very difficult.

Last night there was great fear again in Mart Maryam lest the new arrivals might devise some new evil for them, and many wanted to crowd into our yard, but every place is full. We are feeding 15,000 persons daily, one loaf each. A note by secret messenger came from Dr. Vanneman a few days ago, saying that they had received £1,200 for relief. This means a great deal, but it will pay only a third of the debt we already have. The Turks still hold Shamasha Lazar and Mar Elia (Bishop) for a big ransom. Our funds are getting low, and Mr. Müller has borrowed some money at 24 per cent. interest. Last week our hopes of deliverance were high, but hope so long deferred makes the heart grow faint. Mr. McDowell was trying to get some sick people out of the big school-room when he saw a tired and weary woman, with a baby in her arms, sitting in one of the seats, and said to her: "Where do you stay?" She said: "Just here." " How long have you been here ? " "Since the beginning (two months)," she replied. "How do you sleep at night ? " "I lay the baby on the desk in front of me, and I have this post at the back to lean against. This is a very good place. Thank you very much."

The men don't dare to go outside our yards for fear of being arrested and held for ransom. One of the Syrian physicians was asked by a missionary to go outside and see some sick. He laughed and said: "I'll go if you will pay the bill."

Thursday, 18th March.

It is such a relief to have Dr. Packard come to himself again, though he is very weak. Miss Coan's fever still continues, and Miss Lamme has gone to the College to help there. This morning Mr. McDowell is down with fever, but we hope it is only malaria. Shamasha Lazar, who has been a prisoner for a week at the Turkish Consulate, was released on payment of one thousand tomans cash on the condition that he finds the other £400 within two days.

If there were a mail or some other way open to Tabriz, we could sell orders on Dr. Vanneman, our Mission Treasurer in Tabriz, but the bankers will not buy such orders now because they can't dispose of them until a way to Tabriz is opened. The day before yesterday we tried to make a bargain with our twenty or more Mohammedan bakers, who are supplying us with about six tons of bread daily, to let us have it on twenty days' credit. They agreed to do it on condition that at the end of ten days we would pay half ; but after they left here they agreed among themselves that they would not deliver bread yesterday, though they didn't tell us. In the morning, when we found that no bread was coming, we sent out and got other bakers to deliver for cash. When our regular bakers found we were buying elsewhere, they came back, and after a long discussion they promised to deliver for twenty days, if we would pay half every five days. So it stands ; we shall see if they stick to their bargain. Fortunately, yesterday we had half a day's supply on hand, and managed to buy enough to finish out. There is a cash famine, and anyone who has any money wants to hold on to it in such uncertain times.

This morning, a little after five, we were aroused by shouts and a commotion near by. The askars with their officers had entered the English mission yard by climbing a ladder from the street over the wall into the yard of a Mr. -----, who is a Syrian, but an English subject. The watchman gave the alarm, and Mr. Müller and Mr. Allen were soon on the spot. Of course they couldn't do anything but reassure the women. Eight or ten men were arrested and taken away, probably to be held for ransom. That property has been connected with ours from the beginning of these troubles, and the American flag has been over the entrance. Mr. Allen said to the officer: "You don't intend to respect the American flag ? " He replied : "The Turkish flag is also there." (It is under the American flag.) This makes one feel doubtful for the safety of our own yards. It is wonderful how quiet these thousands of people can keep while such things are going on. A number of women and girls sleep in the parlour adjoining my room, and I opened the door and told them not to leave the room. They said: "No, we are only dressing" ; but it was evident that they were trembling with fear; and this is the state we have lived in for eleven weeks.

One of the most pitiful objects of humanity that I have ever yet seen came into the room to ask for a ticket---a boy of about twelve or fourteen, wasted to a mummy-like skeleton by hunger and sickness, so weak that he could hardly stand or speak, unbathed for these many months. I asked where he had been staying. He said: "In the school-room."

The Turks have demanded ten thousand suits of shirts and pyjamas for the army. Eight thousand were demanded from the Moslem women, and two thousand from the Christian or Syrian women. As the latter are practically all here with us and in the Christian quarter, it fell upon the missionaries to take the responsibility, so Miss Schoebel took charge. So far fifty-five bolts of calico have been sent; Miss Schoebel gave out the material to responsible women, and they in turn found others to help with the sewing

(mostly by hand) and about eight hundred of the shirts are ready. How would you like to sit down and make clothes for Turks and Kurds who had robbed you, burned your homes, murdered your husbands, brothers, and fathers, dishonoured your women, and carried your girls into captivity?

Saturday, 20th March.

The prisoners taken from the English Mission yards by the Turks were kept about twenty-four hours, examined, and to the great and unexpected joy of everyone were set free without ransom. The Turks said they had heard that a Russian spy was being kept in that yard, and when they found no evidence of this, they set the men free. Another thing may have had something to do with it. The night before last several Turkish soldiers who were sick with typhoid went to the College compound. When informed that there was absolutely no place for them, they returned to the Consulate, which is in the former Russian Mission. The Shahbanda then sent for Dr. Shedd. It was after nightfall and we didn't know why he was sent for, but were fearful lest another blow might be about to fall upon us. But he asked him if we would be willing to care for their sick, a dozen or more, who have typhoid. He was told that there was no room in the hospital or College building adjoining, which are already crowded full of sick, but that we would do what we could. This probably had something to do with the dismissal of the prisoners. For two days no other arrests have been made, and only the Bishop is now a prisoner. The last ransom they asked for him was fifteen thousand tomans. The Shahbanda has said that he is going to take down all the American flags except the one over our main entrance. We have several other properties adjoining ours which are full of refugees, and several of the naturalized citizens have American flags up.

We are happy this morning that all our sick are better. Mr. McDowell was up yesterday and Miss Schoebel has no fever this morning, so it looks as if she had only malaria. Mrs. Cochran is getting along finely ; Dr. Packard we hope has passed the crisis ; Miss Coan seems to be having a light case. Our rooms, hallways, and every place are crowded to the limit again. The men are afraid to stay anywhere else for fear of arrest. The Turks have given out word that several thousand troops are coming, and are demanding houses in Mart Maryam, and those turned out have nowhere else to go.

We are having trouble in getting bread, as the bakers refuse to deliver without cash on the spot. They say the "blue eyes" (Russians) will return, "and then you will not pay us." Mr. Müller will try to-day to get wheat on several months' credit, and we shall use that instead of cash if possible. I am realizing what a wonderful thing money is, and what a dreadful thing it is to be without it, especially under such circumstances. As long as we could pay cash we couldn't stop some of the bakers from bringing more than we wanted. We feel, with so many of our number sick, so many others busy caring for them, the end of our money in sight, and our physical strength almost exhausted, that surely deliverance must be near. Through eleven weeks we have looked for it in vain.

I have just paid a visit to the school dining-room, which is one of our hospital rooms. If there is another spot on this earth of more concentrated human misery, I hope I may never know it. One boy had just died. The mother looked up at me so pitifully, and said: "Lady, he is dead." Another baby was lying on the floor dying, under the influence of khash-khash (opium). The mother has no milk for lack of food, and the baby is dying of starvation. The mother said: "Khanum, I am so sick, what shall I do ? " I could only

reply: "I do not know." Twenty others were lying on the floor, without bedding, in various stages of misery, groaning, weeping and appealing for help. One child was lying on his father's coat with a hard bundle under his head, with the marks of slow starvation upon him. To-morrow he too will probably be gone, and we shall thank God that it is so. They are so many, our strength and our means are so limited, the rooms are so crowded, we can do little for them and death is their best friend. One of our Bible Women is lying here, with her two daughters on one side of her and her sister on the other. Her boy died a few weeks ago. When I spoke to her she tried to raise herself up and tell me about some of the other sick in the room. We have been furnishing matting for the sick to lie on, and using Mr. Sterrett's supply of wood for fires in the sick room ; the rest have had to do without fires except the few who have been able to get wood for their rooms. In one of the typhoid rooms yesterday I noticed a pile of charred wood in the corner and asked about it. They said they had sent to the village and brought in the half-burned beams of their homes for fuel. That was all that was left of their house, except a pile of mud. Others have done the same thing.

Yesterday Rabi Nanou, one of our Bible Women, went out as usual to hold meetings in the places where large numbers of refugees, mostly mountain people, are huddled together. She was stopped in the street by an askar who demanded her long coat. She told him she had been stripped of everything when she first fled from her village, and that the coat had since been given her by one of the missionary ladies. He said, nevertheless, it was not necessary for her, and demanded that she should take it off. Just then another askar came up who had been a guard at our gate. He interfered, saying that he knew her as a deaconess who went out every day to preach to the people, and she was allowed to go on with her coat.

A while ago I took some soft-boiled eggs and several pieces of bread to the sick ones in the dining-room, and to Rabi Surra and her family. They are very grateful for everything. I've no doubt that, if they were properly fed, most of them would be up in a week.

Sunday, 21st March.

Yesterday Mr. McDowell called a meeting of all the native doctors to try to get them to help in the responsibility of caring for the increasing number of typhoid cases. There are a number of doctors who do practically nothing and find excuses when anything is asked of them. It is hard to understand how they can spend hours every day sitting in their rooms or walking up and down the pavement here while they might be doing something to help in the care of the scores of sick people and in the effort Mr. McDowell is making for the preservation of the health of the community. Our assistant physician, Dr. Daniel Werda, is sick with typhoid, and Dr. David, of Soujboulak, who went out to the hospital to help, has been brought home sick. Dr. Pera our former assistant, is at the College compound now, helping with the sick missionaries and a few special cases, and Dr. Joseph Khoshaba has consented to go out there to help. Dr. Theo. Mar Yosep has been our stand-by from the very beginning, and is the only native doctor here in the city yards who has really worked. He has been on hand every day.

Tuesday, 23rd March.

Sunday evening was the beginning of the Persian New Year, Noruz, and as soon as the cannon went off to announce that the New Year had begun there was a great firing of

guns and torpedoes, more than usual. It was kept up for half -an-hour or more, and many of the people were badly frightened, thinking that perhaps a battle was on. We heard the next day that the Shahbanda was scared, not knowing what it was.

The Shallbanda sent forty-eight bolts of muslin for pyjamas, and the women under Miss Schoebel's directions are now sewing on them, having finished eight hundred and fifty shirts.

The smells in our backyards are almost unbearable. I can't open my back window at all. The sun is quite hot and dries things up; it also brings out the awful smells. Last night the Shahbanda gave us permission to send a messenger to Tabriz for Dr. Vanneman. Our sick are all getting along fairly well. Dr. Packard has passed the crisis and each day seems a little bit better. There are about twenty-five Turks in the hospital now.

Thursday, 25th March.

We are trying to send away some of the people by taking back their bread tickets to-day ; but we cannot give them any assurance of safety. They are so crowded here, and there is so much sickness, and money is so scarce, that it seems the lesser of two evils to send some of the people away, even though a few be killed.

Yesterday we gave each of the sixty sick persons in the school dining-room a soft-boiled egg, and in the afternoon tea, which was served by two or three school-girls. Sugar and tea are so expensive, about three times the regular price, that it costs about six shillings just to treat that one room to tea. The big school-room is in just as bad a condition as the dining-room, only with so many more tenants that it seems impracticable to do anything there. I've no doubt that if hundreds of these people were properly fed for a week they would be on their feet, but it is beyond our means and our strength. Just now the voice of Kasha Moushi Douman of Geogtapa comes to me through the open window of the paved school court where he is preaching. Twice a day preaching exercises are held in the school yard, and besides there are a number of preachers and women who go round daily to rooms and other yards for services.

Monday, 29th March.

We have had two or three rainy days, which are very hard for the people. Some of the sick are lying on the balcony with almost no covering or bedding. I saw one of the most awful sights I have yet seen on the school balcony yesterday---a woman stretched out on the bare bricks, half-naked, in the throes of death, the damp cold air blowing over her, friendless, helpless. The whole school-room, aisles, desks, corners, and platform is filled with the most miserable of the starving sick. We made the man who has charge of our tea-stand take the samovars there yesterday, Palm Sunday, and give each of the one hundred and fifty people two large glasses of tea. It costs about twelve shillings, but eight shillings were given me by Syrians. With the thousands of dollars of debt just for dry bread, we don't feel we can borrow money for special food for the sick ones, except in limited quantities for typhoid patients. We need space more than anything else, rooms where we could put the sick on straw mats with at least a quilt over them, a fire and a little food besides dry bread, which many are too sick to eat. It seems dreadful to think of two thousand people dying here in this way, but after twelve weeks of it we cannot but feel glad every time one more of these helpless suffering ones finds rest. Sometimes for

days I seem to be hardened past feeling, and then again the horror of it all sweeps over me. We pray and pray and cry out to God for deliverance, but no help comes. We seem shut off from the rest of the world and left to our fate. Nothing from the outside world for three months ! We hear many reports, but few materialize. We are told that word has come that the Crown Prince has arrived in Tabriz and that Urmia should celebrate, so there has been a great deal of firing of cannon, display of banners, and decoration. We have had our entrance decorated with banners and rugs. There is a great deal of rejoicing among the Persians, who desire to see the Persian Government strong enough to turn out both Turk and Russian.

A few days ago, Mr. Müller managed to borrow a thousand tomans from a merchant in the bazaar. It was counted out in two-kran silver pieces. This he was bringing home on the back of a porter, he walking close behind with a Persian soldier. Suddenly he found himself surrounded by six Kurds, armed to the teeth with guns, cartridge belts, and daggers. Two walked ahead and punched the money-bag to assure themselves that it was really money; the others pressed close behind Mr. Müller as they followed him through the streets. They asked him where he was taking the money, but he walked on in dignified silence, not deigning to answer, though trembling for the safety of the money. They reached our gate in safety, and as he turned in, Mr. Müller thanked the Kurds for their safe escort. They laughed and passed on. Some of the young Syrians who guard the gate report that a few days ago a bunch of Kurds in passing stopped to talk and said: " We came down here to the plain with the intention of killing you all, not one of you would have escaped, but (pointing to the Stars and Stripes over the gate) we don't dare pass under that flag!" Everybody feels that had we not been able to give refuge to the Christians, there would have been few left to tell the tale ; and so even yet we do not dare to force the people out, and they all say: "We would rather die here of hunger and disease than take our chances with the Kurds and Turks. "

Our sick missionaries all seem to be getting along well, and we are very thankful. The typhoid here in the city is usually light, and there are few deaths from it, though many from dysentery. Measles almost disappeared some time ago.

Thursday, 1st April.

Rabi Nannou of Geogtapa, our best Bible Woman, has died of pneumonia, after a few days' illness. For the three months that she has been a refugee here she has been a fearless and faithful worker, going out daily for religious meetings to the houses where the mountaineers have been huddled, looking after the sick, not hesitating to go to any place where she could help. For several years she has supported from her small salary her brother's four orphan children, and has been to them both father and mother. Herself unmarried, she has given her means and love unselfishly to these as if they were her own children. There is no one to fill her place.

We have started to buy wheat on credit, as our cash is very low and we are not able to get more money. We have just bought four hundred bushels from Rabi David of Degala for part of his debt to us. When he was in prison and fined one thousand tomans to save his head, we furnished part of the cash and took his note. He can't pay cash now, so he is paying in wheat, which we will have ground to give to the hungry. What credit we can get for bread is for a few days only. Most of the bakers need the money to carry on their business.

Friday, 2nd April.

Bertha Shedd, ten years old, has been sick with typhoid for several days, and now Miss Lamme is beginning; the latter went out to the hospital about two weeks ago to help there when Miss Coan went down with it. Dr. Packard, Mrs. Cochran, and Miss Coan are getting well. Oraham Badel, our financial agent and general assistant in the City Compound, is very low this morning ---just as I was writing he died, leaving a wife and four little ones.

Several hundred Turkish troops have come into the city, evidently in retreat, as there are wounded among them. It is not evident from which direction they came. Last evening one of the Turkish officers came rushing in here in great distress. He had taken poison by mistake and came in here to be saved. He was given an emetic, and his life was saved. They have heard of germs and are very much afraid of typhoid, and had some corrosive sublimate in a glass for washing hands. This man saw it and, thinking it was wine or whiskey, poured it down his throat. He was terribly scared, and after being relieved of the poison, it was suggested that, as his life had been saved, he should try to save other lives.

Sunday, 4th April.

This journal is fast becoming an obituary. At first the hundreds who died were the poorest and the weakest, but now many from among our best are going. Yesterday Dr. Daniel Werda, Dr. Packard's assistant, died of typhoid. For three days Mrs. McDowell has been in bed with high fever. It is not evident yet that it is typhoid. Last night our cook went to bed with typhoid. Miss Schoebel is now trying to make her comfortable and makes her old mother look after her. All day we have been trying to get something to eat for the hundreds of sick who have nothing for Easter. Easter is the Syrian "Great Feast," and is to them what Christmas is to us. They say: "The Little Feast (Christmas) was black, and now the Great Feast is black too." They had hoped so much that deliverance might come before the feast. We have given eggs and soup to about five hundred sick, and before evening I hope a glass of tea will be given to as many more. To-morrow we plan to give soup to several hundred more that we didn't reach to-day. We don't use relief money for anything but bread, and so have only personal funds for the sick---a very little.

Tuesday, 6th April.

We have dwelt so long in the valley of death with the sick, the starving, the dying, with the unending procession of little bodies sewn up in a piece of cloth, friendless corpses carried out on ladders. with gaping mouths and staring eyes, crude unpainted coffins, coffins covered with black chintz, the never-ceasing wail, and eyes of the mourners that are never dried, hands outstretched for what we cannot give, and now so many of our own number are down. I felt on Sunday as if I ought to get my own burial clothes ready so as to make as little trouble as possible when my turn came, for in these days we all go about our work knowing that any one of us may be the next to go down. And yet I think our friends would be surprised to see how cheerful we have kept, and how many occasions we find for laughing; for ludicrous things do happen. Then, too, after dwelling so intimately with death for three months, he doesn't seem to have so unfriendly an

aspect, and the "Other Side" seems very near and our Pilot close beside us. It is at such times that one finds out just how much faith in the unseen he has, and just how much his religion is worth. I find the Rock on which I can anchor in peace are the words of Christ Himself : "Where I am, there ye may be also." "If any man serve Me let him follow Me, and where I am, there shall also My servant be." That is enough---to be where He is. Recently, as I have read sermons or books written for the trying times of life, I have found them tame and insufficient for the occasion; our own experiences are so much more intense and go so much deeper that nothing but the words of God Himself can reach to the bottom. I have been re-reading Browning's *Prospice*, but it doesn't thrill me as much as it did, for I have something better: "For I know whom I have believed . . ." and "I am persuaded that Death cannot separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Afternoon.

This morning Mrs. McDowell's rose-spots appeared, and now we know that she has typhoid or typhus (it was typhoid). Rabi Ister Alamshah has consented to help in the care of Mrs. McDowell. Miss Schoebel and I were perfectly willing to nurse her, but it would mean throwing our work on some other missionary already loaded up. Mr. McDowell will give up some of his work and help in nursing Mrs. McDowell. There are now six of our number sick, and it is impossible not to feel that someone else will go down in a few days unless it becomes possible to send the crowds away.

Evening.

To-day Miss Lamme's rose-spots appeared, so her case is pronounced typhoid.

Thursday, 3rd June.

Almost two months since I last wrote in my journal. On Sunday, the 11th April, I went to bed with typhoid or typhus, and three days later Miss Schoebel went down with it also. Rabi Elishua, a teacher of the Persian Girls'-School, came to nurse me at once. She kept up for three weeks and saw me through the worst of my sickness ; then she took the disease. Three of the other Seminary teachers in succession came to care for Miss Schoebel, and each one went down with the disease in turn. Miss Bridges, of the American Orphanage, came to help us during the day, and in twelve days went to bed with typhus. She is just getting about again. All the teachers who helped to care for us have recovered, though one of the other teachers died.

We were all surprised to find how competent these untrained, inexperienced girls were as nurses when there were no available missionaries left to nurse us. We were dependent upon them and got along finely without any complications. When the last one went down we knew that she was the last intelligent nurse we should find, and after that we were dependent upon ignorant village women.

A great many things happened during the two months of our illness and convalescence. A very large number of our Syrian friends died. Of our own circle Mrs. McDowell died on the 16th April, and Mrs. Shedd on the 17th May. We can't take in yet what their loss will mean to us when we get to living under normal conditions. Mrs. Müller attended Miss Schoebel and me for two and a half weeks; then she took the fever. Her little boy was

born in a few days, but only lived overnight. This is the fourth grave we have out in Dr. Coan's orchard by the grape-arbour. It hasn't been possible to take them to our cemetery at Seir. This week Mr. Müller went to bed with typhus. His fever has been high. He is the thirteenth out of eighteen missionaries to get the fever, besides two of the children, Bertha Shedd and Ruth Müller. On Monday, Mr. Labaree, with two nurses, Miss Easton of the Tabriz hospital and Miss Burgess, who had reached Tabriz on her way to Urmia, arrived. Mr. Labaree had been trying for weeks to get through, but was unable until the Russian army opened the way. Yesterday, the 5th June, Dr. Lamme arrived and began work last evening. One of the hard things during these five long months was our isolation from the outside world. Of course we know that our friends were thinking of and praying for us, but it is a great help to have the tangible evidence in the shape of these friends and of letters from many others.

On Sunday, the 24th May, the advanced guard of the Russian army entered Urmia, and in the afternoon the commander came to call on our gentlemen. When we learned that the army would not remain, but were ordered to follow the enemy, there was consternation and great fear. And when the army moved on, the Moslems immediately began to annoy and rob the Syrians who had returned to their villages. There was great fear of a Moslem uprising against the Christians, and hundreds fled in the direction of Salmas. Finally the Russians left a small guard of about two hundred men. Three days ago about six thousand Russian troops, with artillery, came in from the south and marched through the city. We watched them from our roof, and it was a goodly sight to us besieged people. We shall try now to empty our yards of refugees. A few days ago there were still about one thousand left in our own yards and in one yard adjoining, which we have been renting for refugees, besides many others in surrounding yards. The stench in our back yard is almost unbearable. I don't know how we can get rid of the smells or disinfect the ground, which must be soaked for two or three feet, as that yard has been used as a latrine for hundreds of people for more than five months.

Yesterday two Red Cross nurses, who have come with the Russian army from Mongolia, asked to be our guests for a few days until the army moved on in the direction of Erzeroum. They say that from there they will go to Jerusalem. When travelling they dress like the Cossacks, but wear their nurses' costumes in the house.

A few days ago a number of prominent Syrians, who had fled when the Russians evacuated Urmia, returned, many of them to broken and badly damaged homes. We had a service of thanksgiving in the church yesterday, the first time for many months, as it had been occupied by refugees. Thousands have lived in such terror and want, it is a wonder that many have not lost their minds. It has seemed sometimes as if our tears were all dried up and our emotions were dead, we have seen and felt so much. I suppose it is nature's way of saving brain and nerve. When I look at these poor wretched creatures and little children like skeletons, I find I still have some feelings left. It is estimated that four thousand people have died from disease, hunger, and exposure, and about a thousand by violence. The suffering can never be told, nor is it ended. Hundreds, yes thousands, are destitute, and even if we empty our yard there is no one left but the missionaries to save them from starvation, and we look to America. In the name of all Christians we have tried to witness for Christianity before this Moslem people. Will the Christians of America pay the bill?

32. URMIA AFTER ITS EVACUATION BY THE TURKS AND KURDS : LETTER DATED URMIA, 20th MAY, 1915, FROM MRS. J. P. COCHRAN TO FRIENDS IN THE UNITED STATES ; COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

It seems almost too good to be true to think that we are going to get in touch once more with the outside world, and may be it is. But, anyway, the Governor says he will send a messenger over to Tabriz to-morrow to carry letters and perhaps he will get through safely.

I have no idea what has leaked through to civilisation since we fell out of the world, but I will give you as much of an account of the last four months and a half as the brief time allowed before the messenger goes will permit.

On New Year's Day we had our usual day of receiving callers in the city; all our Syrian and some Moslem friends called and things seemed fairly safe, though we knew we might be on the edge of war, as there was an army of Turks and Kurds within a day's march of us. They were said to be coming on to fight the Russians, who with a little force of two thousand, perhaps, were strongly entrenched here.

The next morning the Russians rose and left in haste, and many of our Syrian men and others who were known to be their supporters here left with them. Our teaching force here at the College, our newspaper and printing press work, and even our city church work was terribly crippled by the exodus, as it took away some of our best workers.

The Russians' departure was the herald for the Kurds to pounce upon the prey they had so long been held at bay from, and, even before they arrived, the Moslem neighbours in all the surrounding villages flew upon the spoil, killing Syrians, running off with their cattle and household goods and even stripping those who were trying to run away from them of their money, bundles and any clothes they took a fancy to. They also carried off women and tried to force Christians to become Moslems, keeping them safely if they would deny their faith or repeat the sentence which constituted the acceptance of Islam. In some cases they were successful in this, though, of course, many would not and some of them were killed for it.

Then came the rush of the Kurds. They came in hundreds from every Kurdish quarter, sore against the Christians for having joined forces with the Russians, who had armed them and drafted them for military service whether they would or not.

They, being armed, put up a fight and killed a good many Kurds in the battles at some of the villages, though there were a couple of thousand Syrians killed too in the villages, before they escaped to the slender protection offered by six unarmed American men in our mission compound. Our flag was put up, not only on our own property here in the city but on all the adjoining block of Christian property in the city ; doors were made or holes in the walls between all that adjoining property, to bring it under our control, and only our principal big street-gate was allowed to be opened, all others being barricaded. There in the city between ten and fifteen thousand, many thousands of them destitute, congregated and sat huddled in rooms, a hundred in a room or more, sometimes unable to lie down at night on account of the crowding.

We had a good deal of money entrusted to us by the people who had to flee, and as most of it is in silver ten-penny pieces, there being no paper money in circulation here, they could carry away but little, and we took charge of large sums without interest, to be used by us if necessary and repaid when banking was resumed. With this we began to feed the people. It was the system in the city to sell bread until noon, and after that to distribute one of the thin sheets of bread to every one who had nothing to eat and no money to buy anything. This distribution took a force of about twenty or thirty men seven hours to get through.

The city church is in the enclosure under the American flag, and it held three thousand ill-smelling people with their few earthly possessions remaining to them.

Here at the College we had about two thousand, and as we have few buildings the housing was a problem.

We had five hundred in the hospital. Our largest ward has only ten beds in it, and by putting people on the floor between the beds we could get in about twenty, but in two other large wards that we took the bedsteads out of, over a hundred apiece sat huddled together on the floor, without fire or lights, as we could not afford them for them. We had those who were destitute here ; those who had escaped with their cattle and a sack of flour or some bedding or a carpet we put over on the other side of the avenue in the College buildings.

I fed those on the hospital side besides attending to the regular hospital routine, which was heavier on account of the wounded Christians who were being brought in every day.

My own rooms consist of my dining room and sitting room, in one of which I have a couch to sleep on, a kitchen and a little room downstairs for my man.

I reserved one room for myself for living, dining and bedroom combined, and took in seven of the College boys, students from the mountains, who are here all the year round and whom I knew pretty well, to bring their native beds to live in my dining room. Seakhan had the kitchen full of her people and friends, seven or eight of them, and Choban took two families into his room downstairs.

The boys helped me by distributing the bread in the hospital and holding evening prayers in the different rooms in the hospital.

Then we all began to get the typhoid fever. We had some Turkish soldiers in the hospital with it, and the people were ignorant and careless, so we had an epidemic of it. We have seven hundred new-made graves in our compound here at the College, as the result of it.

I have had it and recovered, and am as strong and well as ever, though somewhat thinner, fortunately. I had a Syrian trained nurse, the only one in Urmia, as I was the first missionary to go down with it, being in the most direct contact with it in the hospital (though Dr. Packard went down the day after I did). He also recovered. The little Swiss governess the Coans brought out with them was the first to die of the foreigners, and then followed the death of Mrs. McDowell and, this week, my dear Louise Shedd, my best friend here---a friend of fifteen years' standing from the time we were together in charge

of the seminar . All my boys went down too, and my favourite one died---such a simple, sweet Christian boy. Others of the missionaries who have had it or are having it are Dr. Coan and Elizabeth, Bertha Shedd and Mrs. Müller. Mrs. Müller gave birth to a seven months' baby boy, who lived a day, and then she went on to have typhoid. Besides these there were Miss Lewis, Miss Schoebel, Miss Lamme and Mr. Allen.

In the hospital there was a time when the head physician-assistant, Dr. Daniel (who died of it), the matron, the druggist, all the nurses, the cook and the bake-woman, the steward and the washer-women were all down together, and two hundred and fifty patients to be taken care of. You can imagine, or rather you can't begin to imagine, the disorganisation of the place. Elizabeth Coan took my place at first, and in two weeks was having it. Then Miss Lamme came to take her place and in two weeks she, too, was on her back. The Syrian woman who came next to fill the vacancy is still at it, though I am back at some work, being now safe from infection. My man had it, but my woman has weathered the gale so far, and after three months we have to record to-day that for ten days past not one new case has come down here. One of the boys, Seakhan's mother and two of the men in Choban's room have died of it in my "family."

In the city it was even worse. It is raging in our big compound, though from the first they had from ten to forty deaths a day from cold, privation, illness of one kind and another, and perhaps shock from fright. In another part of the city, where we have a big school building for our Moslem boys'-school, three thousand people were rescued and brought in by Dr. Packard's valiant intervention, when he rode up to the Kurdish chief in the thick of a fight between Kurds and the villagers entrenched in Russian trenches and fighting for their lives, begged the lives of the inhabitants, and after parleying awhile succeeded in buying the souls of the people in exchange for their guns. He rode back to the city with them after the sun had set on a January night, reaching the city about nine o'clock, their homes being robbed and burned behind them by the Kurds.

Turkish rule and Kurdish plundering have reduced the inhabitants to the verge of starvation, and as yet the end is not in sight.

Yesterday the Turks and Kurds arose and departed, and it is supposed that the Russians are about to return. They are only a day's journey distant, having just been successful in a long fight with a Turkish army that came from Constantinople via Mosul, and after a three months' march was cut to pieces by the Russians near Gavilan, a day's journey from here. There were twenty thousand or more of them, well equipped, but the Russians had the advantage of a fortified position, a knowledge of the lie of the land and perhaps superior numbers. We don't know anything definite about that.

We haven't had a word of war news during 1915 so far, and feel as if we were in the bottom of a well as far as seeing what is going on about us is concerned.

No mail has penetrated the veil that hides the world from us, but we have had a telegram from the American Ambassador in Constantinople inquiring for our safety, and have sent telegrams saying we had not been disturbed personally, which is one of the miracles of missions, by the way. Just now things are very tense here; the Moslem Governor is doing well in trying to control things, but the Moslems hate the Christians, so that they are killing some of those who have gone back to their ruined villages to live.

There is no power of description that can overdraw the picture, that is and has been before our eyes constantly, of misery and distress. Instead we have to veil it, for details are too horrible, too revolting to try to convey to people who are not called upon by God to go through it. But whatever the end may be for me, I am sure I can only be thankful God has given me such an unlimited opportunity for service as these past months have been.

If the Russians come back or the Turks stay away, we shall have a mail system established again, if there is such a thing going on across the world nowadays. Since last July we have had little mail on account of the war, but some did leak through till the 1st January (1915), since when we have been like Moses when the light went out.

We are still feeding thousands of people---just enough bread every day to keep life in their bodies---and have saved the Syrian nation but have accumulated thirty or forty thousand dollars (six to eight thousand pounds sterling) of debt, which we don't know where to find money to repay. We only know of six thousand dollars (£1,200 sterling) that were telegraphed as relief two or three months ago. But we hope the Red Cross Society and charitable people in America will send us money.

We haven't even been able to get our money from the Board sent to Tabriz, but even what could be paid on our regular salaries has been paid out of these borrowed funds. However, when things settle down a little we can get at that if there are any of us left by that time.

Just now I have regularly one school-boy and often a few others at my table, as they are all hungry with the hunger that comes after typhoid and the College fare is reduced to bread and cheese.

The one who eats with me all the time is a boy from the village Dr. Packard delivered, Geogtapa, and his father was killed and his house burned and goods carried off or destroyed. Their food supplies were left, mostly, as the robbers got their fill and could only destroy the rest. For instance, a cellar had jars of molasses smashed and into that was thrown their flour, and on that pickles by jars-full---the big earthen pointed-bottomed jars that household supplies are all stored in here. Into this pudding were thrown their books, few in number, perhaps, but all the more valued for that. Then this boy, because he belongs to a village where soldier guards have been placed and some degree of safety assured, was told that he must go home. That was a general rule, and when I learned the state of things I told him he could eat with me till things cleared up. Then they have fields and vineyards that can be worked, and he has older brothers in America and Tiflis who will look after him. He is about eighteen, the youngest of the family and the only one left at home. He is only one case out of thousands equally at a loss just now. He has his room at the College and sleeps over there with other students.

I hope you have all been kept in safety during these months and will write to me all about yourselves and the world at large.

33. URMIA : LETTER, DATED URMIA, 25th MAY, 1915, FROM THE REV. Y. M. NISAN TO THE REV. F. N. HEAZELL, ORGANISING SECRETARY OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S ASSYRIAN MISSION.

The day after the departure of our missionaries from Urmi, that is, the 3rd January (1915), the Kurds and Turks, and with them a great number of the Moslems of Urmi, began to raid and kill and to make captives from a large part of the Christian villages.

The majority of the Christians, to the number of about 25,000, took refuge in the courtyards of the Americans and French and in our own premises. Up to the present time there is a large number of the Syrians in our yard; another portion, we do not know how many, fled to Russia with the Russian army. The besieged people here were provided with bread, one portion each per day, by the missionaries; but many have not escaped death. People died from the following causes :---(1) From fear ; (2) from their bad dwelling places ; (3) from cold ; (4) from hunger ; (5) from typhoid fever---the dead up to now from this disease, as far as we can tell, are from 800 to 1,000. Those who died from the slaughter and raiding of villages numbered 6,000. Many died in the houses of their refuge from the causes mentioned above. About 2,000 died of those who fled (to Russia), either on the road or after their arrival there. In our house my daughter Beatrice died from fright, and, 25 days after Beatrice, Mrs. Nisan died from grief at the loss of her daughter ; also Michael, nephew of Khan Audishu, my relative, and to-day his wife, too. Nanajan, my daughter-in-law, and her two sisters are now in bed with typhoid fever.

One day 48 people were seized in the yard of the French Mission. Mar Dinkha, bishop of the Old Church, was one of them. As they were keeping him in prison some days, I tried to buy off Mar Dinkha with the promise of 50 gold pieces, but they asked 100. I was outwitted at that time, for as often as I raised my offer they would advance the price. Then they carried them outside, and when they were bound arm to arm they were all shot.

Once they went to the village of Gulpashan and demanded a sum of money; they took money and carried off everything else as well; 45 men who were on the watch were killed that night.

At the beginning of events, the Turks demanded, in the name of the Persian Government, every kind of weapon for hewing and cutting (instead of knives) ; these were all seized in the name of the Persian Government. Afterwards two Osmanli officers and some soldiers came to the houses and searched for weapons and men in our yards, and so to every room and cupboard. Boxes were opened and examined and the people were in the greatest fear.

One day afterwards they entered the yard and seized Mar Elia, the Russian Bishop and Doctor Lokman. After a long imprisonment the Bishop was ransomed for 6,500 tomans, and the doctor for 2,000 tomans. The Melet Bashi of the French was taken from their yard and afterwards ransomed for 3,000 tomans. Shamasha Lazar, whose house is just by the American gate, was seized and bought off for 4,500 tomans. The enemy had one list of 80 names, written by their own hand, of men who were doomed to be killed, or bought off at a great price.

Audishu Khan fled from our house to the house of a Moslem friend, and remained hidden for two months, but by the rogues of the village and the commander here he was robbed of 27,000 tomans.

One night two Turkish officers with some soldiers descended by means of a ladder into our yard ; they seized Mr. George, our neighbour, and the brother-in-law of Mr. Comin, who was groom in his house; also Jawar, our gatekeeper, and Babu our cook and his son; also Kasha Pilipus, natir kursi of Mar Yohannan, and Asakhan my servant. At that time, because I had two persons very ill, I was watching from the balcony of my house so that they might not enter my rooms. Twice they came beneath the balcony and looked up, and when they saw me they went away. There is no doubt that the angels were watching over us and sent these men away.

At first Jawar's brother and his son were seized, when carrying bread for him (Jawar). After an imprisonment of two nights and one day we got them out by paying 68 tomans for the two of them. A friend of mine worked this for my sake.

The Osmanlis and the Kurds left Urmi two days ago. The Russian army is now a little way from Urmi. To-day we are very confused and fearful; they are saying that the Russian army will return. One part of the Syrians have fled and left Urmi.

One letter previous to this one---I doubt if it has reached you. I shall be glad if you will let me know quickly what is to be my work here in the future, because just now I am like a bird without a nest and without companions. There is no word from Samuel my son, and I do not know where he is.

34. URMIA: NARRATIVE OF DR. JACOB SARGIS, RECORDED IN A DESPATCH, DATED PETROGRAD, 12th FEBRUARY, 1916, FROM THE CORRESPONDENT AT PETROGRAD OF THE AMERICAN "ASSOCIATED PRESS."

Dr. Jacob Sargis, an American Methodist medical missionary, who has arrived in Petrograd after narrowly escaping death at the hands of the Turks and Kurds in Urmia, Persian Armenia, asserts that among the outrages committed against the Christian refugees was the burning to death of an American doctor named Simon, or Shimmun, as he was known there. His identity was not further established, but the story of the outrage, as told by Dr. Sargis, was as follows:

"Dr. Shimmun was in the village of Supurghan when the Turks attacked that place. He was among those who took refuge on a mountain near the lake. He was captured and told that since he had been a good doctor and had helped the wounded, they would not kill him, but that he must accept the Mohammedan faith. He refused, as almost all Christians did. They poured oil on him, and, before applying the torch, they gave him another chance to forsake his religion. Again he refused, and they set his clothes afire. While he was running in agony from the flames, the Turks shot him several times. After he fell to the ground unconscious, they hacked his head off. Mr. Allen, an American

missionary, who went from village to village burying the victims of this butchery, found the body of Shimmun half eaten by dogs.

"The Catholic Mission there took 150 Christians of all sects, and kept them in a small room and tried to save them; but at least 49 of them, among them one Bishop Dinkha, of the Episcopal Mission, were bound together one night, taken to Gagin mountain and there shot down."

Mr. Sargis was born in Persia, but went to America in 1893, and was educated there by the assistance of Dr. W. F. Oldham, former Bishop of India. He is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan and Ohio Medical University, and was for a time resident physician of the Protestant hospital at Columbus, Ohio.

Dr. Sargis was doing relief work in Urmia on the 1st January last year when the Russian army retired from that city, followed by 14,000 refugees from Urmia and a hundred surrounding villages. The hardships and sufferings endured by those refugees were described in Associated Press despatches. There were still left in Urmia and the villages 45,000 persons, chiefly Armenian refugees, when the Turks and Kurds entered. The latter at once began the work of exterminating the Christian population. In one town alone, Gulpashan, in one night, according to Dr. Sargis, 79 men and boys were tied hand to hand, taken to a hill outside the village and shot. Their wives and daughters were distributed among the Turks, Kurds and Persian Mohammedans.

Dr. Sargis' story continues :

"On the second day after the Turkish officers came, they had a good many wounded and sick. As soon as they heard that I was an able physician, they took me, gave me a bodyguard, and put me in charge of Urmia Hospital. That was how I came to learn most of their secrets ; I helped their wounded and sick. One day there were sixty men brought from Bashkala, all well-to-do citizens, some of them noted men of that place. They were used as beasts of burden and forced to carry rolls of barbed wire into Urmia. The next day they were all taken to the Castle of Ismayil (48) and every one was shot or hacked to death.

"About that time Nuri, the governor of Gawar, told me that he had received word from the Turkish commander to kill all the Armenian soldiers in the Turkish army. He said that, for my sake, he would not do it, but that somebody else would. Twenty-nine were killed about fifteen miles from Urmia, at Karmad. We had eight of them in the city, fine fellows, some of them educated in Beirout. They had been disarmed, and one night they took them to the suburbs and shot them. But one of them, named Aslam(49), escaped. He dropped with the others , but was not hit. After the butchers left, he made his way to the Presbyterian mission college. I was notified and asked to take care of him. I kept him until the Russian army came. He joined, and is now fighting with them.

"In the First Turkish corps, commanded by Halil Bey, there were about 400 Armenians. One of them, Gulbenkian, a graduate of Beirout, told me that they were all doomed to be butchered. When they appointed me head physician of the hospital, they gave me plenty of helpers, including seven Christian nurses, six Arabs and one Greek. Gulbenkian told me that if I did not help them they would be killed. An Arab doctor, Bahadin Effendi, was appointed to work under my direction. My Greek nurse warned me that Bahadin had

already killed more than fifty Armenian Christians, and cautioned me to watch him. One night about ten o'clock, Bahadin sent for me, saying that he was sick. Fortunately for me, the Greek and two Armenian nurses went with me. When I reached the hospital, I found that Bahadin was not sick at all. He said to me: 'What business have you to disturb me at this time of the night? Your coming shows that you have some designs upon my life.' I told him that it was a mistake, that I had been told he was sick, and went away. At the bottom of the stairs I was overtaken by an officer, who said that the doctor had not done with me. I protested, but was ordered to go back. So I put my trust in the Lord and went.

"The doctor greeted me with the question. 'Who gave you permission to leave the room?' and continued: 'You are a prisoner, and you will never see the light of to-morrow's sun.' I told him that I was an American citizen, and that I was helping the wounded for the sake of humanity. He cut me off by saying: 'This is wartime. The top of your cap is green. That means that you are a descendant of the prophet, and it will give me pleasure to destroy your life to-night. I must think how I shall kill you. I could throw you out of the window, but that would be too quick. I could shoot you, but that also is too good for you. I shall have to use my sword. You sit down there in that corner, and these Turkish nurses will sing your funeral before I begin to cut you up.'

"The Turks began to sing a droning chant and I had no choice but to sit and listen. My bodyguard, the Greek nurse Theodore and two Armenian soldiers, the latter my servants, stood outside the door, and when they heard the chanting they thought it was all over with me. The Greek, who was a shrewd fellow, told my bodyguard to enter, and, if he saw me, to say that the patients wanted to see the doctor. All of a sudden I saw him enter with a lantern. He saluted the effendi and said: 'The patients want the doctor.' I didn't give Bahadin a chance to say a word. I was up and out and down in the street in about two seconds. When I got to the outpost they yelled from the window to stop me, but they were too late. My bodyguard and the Armenians and the Greek followed close behind me, and I got away. I reached home at midnight. My wife and children thought I was already dead."

Dr. Sargis turned the tables on the Arab doctor by alleging that he was insane, and having him put under guard and on a milk diet, notwithstanding that he was a doctor in Halil Bey's army.

"Soon after the Russians left Urmia a German machinist, Neumann, who came in with the Turks, announced himself as German Consul. By his orders a Christian of the name of Moushi was hanged. Neumann had promised me to release Moushi, but overnight he sold him to the Turks for £50. An Englishman named Jonathan George, well known in Tabriz, a relative of my wife, was whipped on Neumann's orders. In the village of Karadjalu a young Christian with a wife and two children was killed by a Mohammedan. The murderer took the wife and children, promising to protect them; but while crossing a bridge he threw the children into the river. At Ardishai 75 women and girls ran into the sea(50) to escape the Turks. They refused to trust promises of safety if they came out, and were all shot as they stood in the water. Eight thousand five hundred died in the vicinity of Urmia in five months; 1, 500 were killed, and the rest died of cold and hunger.

"During the days of the Turkish occupation it was no unusual sight to see an old woman carrying the body of her daughter or son to a place of burial, digging the grave herself or

with the aid of other women."

35. URMIA: EXTRACTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT (FOR THE YEAR 1915) PRESENTED BY THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT AT URMIA TO THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

A sad case was that of the mother of a girl of twelve who was being taken away to a life of slavery. The mother protested and tried to save her child, who was ruthlessly torn from her. As the daughter was being dragged away the mother made so much trouble for her oppressors, and clung to them so tenaciously, that they stabbed her twelve times before she fell, helpless to save her little girl from her fate. This woman recovered from her wounds. Some people were shot as they ran, and children that they were carrying were killed or wounded with them. In some cases men were lined up so that several could be shot with one bullet, in order not to waste ammunition on them.

At the height of the epidemic not less than two thousand were sick. The mortality reached forty-eight daily, and the fact that four thousand died, besides the one thousand who were killed, will help to make vivid the terrible conditions that prevailed in our crowded premises. All ranks have suffered---preachers, teachers, physicians, etc., as well as the poor---for all had to live in the same unhygienic surroundings.

One of the most terrible things that came to the notice of the Medical Department was the treatment of Syrian women and girls by the Turks, Kurds and local Mohammedans. After the massacre in the village of -----, almost all the women and girls were outraged, and two little girls, aged eight and ten, died in the hands of Moslem villains. A mother said that not a woman or girl above twelve (and some younger) in the village of----- escaped violation. This is the usual report from the villages. One man, who exercised a great deal of authority in the northern part of the Urmia plain, openly boasted of having ruined eleven Christian girls, two of them under seven years of age, and he is now permitted to return to his home in peace and no questions are asked. Several women from eighty to eighty-five years old have suffered with the younger women. One woman who was prominent in the work of the Protestant Church in another village was captured by eighteen men and taken to a solitary place, where they had provided for themselves food and drink. She was released the next day and permitted to drag herself away. Later she came to the city to accuse her outragers, and practically did not get a hearing from the Government.

There is little to relieve the blackness of this picture. The Government gave some assistance in the finding and returning of Christian girls. A few have been brought back by Kurds. In one case eleven girls and young women, who had been taken away from Geogtapa, were sent to me by the chief of the Zarza tribe of Kurds. Several companies have been sent also by the Begzadi Kurds to Targawar. Since the return of the Russians to Urmia some of the Kurds have tried to curry favour by returning prisoners that they have held for months, but quite a number are still held by them, some of them women who have been married to some of the principal servants of the chiefs.

It would not be right to close this report of medical work in Urmia without a word about the native physicians. One of them received a martyr's crown early in January in the village of Khanishan. Four died in the epidemics. One had been a worker for many years in the plain of Gawar, two days' journey to the west of Urmia. One of them was a companion in the attempt to find Karini Agha at the very beginning of the troubles here that resulted in the rescue of the people of Geogtapa. One was the assistant in the hospital. He had been in the hospital since his graduation in 1908, and was a most faithful and efficient man. During the awful first days of fear, murder and rapine, it was his hands that dressed and re-dressed most of the wounded, with the help of medical students. He thought little of himself and wore himself out until he could not eat, keeping on at his work for three days after he began to be ill. His life was given in the noblest self-sacrifice, and many people will remember him with deep affection. The fourth was one of the refugees in our yard who, though he was not very active, frequently prescribed for a number of patients. His wife, who is a graduate in medicine in America, in spite of the death of her husband and two children, kept bravely on with her work, trying to relieve some of the suffering. She had charge of the maternity cases and examined many of the outraged women and girls after they finally reached us.

The most diabolically cold-blooded of all the massacres was the one committed above the village of Ismael Agha's Kala, when some sixty Syrians of Gawar were butchered by the Kurds at the instigation of the Turks. These Christians had been used by the Turks to pack telegraph wire from over the border, and while they were in the city of Urmia they were kept in close confinement, without food or drink. On their return, as they reached the valleys between the Urmia and Baradost plains, they were all stabbed to death, as it was supposed, but here again, as in two former massacres, a few wounded, bloody victims succeeded in making their way to our hospital.

The testimony of the survivors of the massacre at Ismael Agha's Kala is confirmed by the following extract from a letter, dated 8th November, 1915, from the Rev. E. T. Allen of Urmia:

Politically, things are in apparently good order. People are easily frightened and are nervous, but we have good hopes. Yesterday I went to the Kala of Ismael Agha and from there to Kasha, and some men went with me up the road to the place where the Gawar men were murdered by the Turks. It was a gruesome sight---perhaps the worst I have seen at all.

There were seventy-one or two bodies ; we could not tell exactly, because of the conditions. It is about six months since the murder. Some were in fairly good condition---dried, like a mummy. Others were torn to pieces by the wild animals. Some had been daggered in several places, as was evident from the cuts in the skin. The majority of them had been shot. The ground about was littered with empty cartridge-cases. It was a long way off from the Kala, and half-an-hour's walk from the main road into the most rugged gorge I have seen for some time. I suppose the Turks thought no word could get out from there---a secret, solitary, rocky gorge. How those three wounded men succeeded in getting out and reaching the city is more of a marvel than I thought it was at the time. The record of massacre burials now stands as follows :--

At Tcharbash, forty in one grave, among them a bishop. At Gulpashan, fifty-one in one

grave, among them the most innocent persons in the country; and now, above the Kala of Ismael Agha, seventy in one grave, among them leading merchants of Gawar.

These one hundred and sixty-one persons, buried by me, came to their death in the most cruel manner possible, at the hands of regular Turkish troops in company with Kurds under their command.

36. URMIA, SALMAS AND HAKKIARI : STATEMENT(51) BY MR. PAUL SHIMMON(52), PUBLISHED IN THE ARMENIAN JOURNAL "ARARAT," OF LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1915.

Seeing that Ararat is truly a searchlight on all the sufferings of Eastern Christians, a comforter to the broken-hearted and a fighter for their rights, I have felt it my duty and privilege to write just some bare facts of the past and present position of the Syrians in Urmi (Urmia) and Salmas in Persia, and in the Kurdistan mountains south of Van. What I will say of Urmi and Salmas applies equally to the Armenians of the two places, in the latter of which they predominate.

The Russian troops had been in occupation of Azerbaijan, north-western Persia, for a number of years, and their presence meant safety, prosperity and security of person and property both to Christians and Moslems alike. Under the conditions then prevailing, the Kurds had been restrained entirely from their occupation of plunder, and the Turks were deprived of prominence in that part of Persia which they have coveted for years. The Persians also have been restless, and their attitude towards the Christians was somewhat doubtful. On the 2nd January, 1915, it was suddenly known that the Russian army, consulate and all, were leaving Urmi---and not that alone, but it was found later that they were withdrawing from all northern Persia. It came like a thunderbolt, for it had been positively stated all along to the Christian population that the Russian army would under no circumstances withdraw from Urmi. Here, then, in the heart of winter, some 45,000 Christians, from nine to ten days' journey from the nearest railway station to the Russian border, found themselves in a very precarious position. No conveyances, horses, &c., &c., could be had for love or money. Roughly speaking, one-third of the people who happened to know of this withdrawal, through whose villages the army was to pass, left for Russia. The great majority simply left their homes and walked out. Some only heard of the withdrawal during the night, and so could hardly make any provision for the journey. A good number of people from Tergawar and Mergawar, and outlying districts, who were already refugees in Urmi---having been plundered on two or three occasions previously---left with the army. So there was a concourse of over 10,000 people, mostly women and children, walking in the bitter cold, scantily provided, sore-footed, wearied, that had to make their way to the Russian frontier over mountains and along miserable roads and through swamps. Their cries and shrieks as they walked were heart-rending. The people of Salmas had left two or three days earlier and under somewhat better conditions. There was a swamp between Salmas and Khoi where people actually went knee-deep, where oxen and buffaloes died of cold, and where there was no real resting place and provisions could only be procured from a distance of some ten miles. The agonies of the children were inexpressible. Some mothers had two or three children to

take care of, and they dragged one along while they carried the other on their shoulders. Many died on the roadside, many lost their parents, many were left unburied, many were picked up by the Russian cossacks and were taken to the Russian Caucasus to, be there cared for by Armenians and others. Such was their plight when they reached Russia, and in some way or another were provided for in the Syrian and Armenian villages in Erivan and in Tiflis, where they passed their time till the spring, when they again wearied of their lives and returned to Urmi and Salmas in the months of May and June.

About two-thirds of the people who stayed behind at Urmi had the cruellest of fates. No sooner had the Russian forces withdrawn than the roads were closely guarded, and no one was permitted to come in or go out of Urmi for over four months. The Kurds poured in from every quarter, and the Persian Moslems joined hands with them. They engulfed the Christian villages ; plunder, pillage, massacre and rape were the order of the day. Every village paid its share. First they killed the men, then they took the women---those who had not escaped---and carried them away for themselves or forced them to become Moslems, and finally they plundered and burned the villages. In one village 80 were killed, in another 50, in a third 30, and so the thing went on in varying degrees among the 70 odd villages in Urmi. About one thousand people were disposed of in this way. In the meantime all that were able escaped to the city to the American mission quarters, whose premises were soon filled to suffocation, and altogether some 20,000 people or more found shelter in the American and French mission quarters, while some hid themselves among Moslem friends and landlords. These refugees, in their flight, were repeatedly robbed on the way by soldiers and officers sent for their protection, and by civilians as well. Many a woman came terror-stricken, shrieking, and bleeding, and almost naked; and many were forced to become Moslems. Some 150 cases or more of these unfortunate women came under the notice of the American missionaries, who tried to restore them to their own folk. One woman had two sons, four and six years of age, who were thrown into a brook to freeze, while the brute of a mullah set to work to force their mother. She at last escaped and took away the children alive, but they died of exposure the next morning.

Thus in the course of a fortnight all the 45,000 Syrians and Armenians were plundered---not one village escaped. There was no exception. The village of Iriawa was in the keeping of an Armenian---a Turkish subject. He, with twelve other Armenian soldiers, was shot, and the village plundered. Gulpashan was the last to be attacked, when, on the 1st February, 51 of its elders were taken during the night to the graveyard and there murdered most horribly and their brains knocked out. The orgies committed on women and tender girls can be left only to the imagination. I have known the village from childhood and all its inhabitants.

The refugees in the French and American mission yards remained there for over four and a half months, in daily terror and fear of their lives ; the quarters were crowded to suffocation, and no man dared leave the premises. Seeing that a few houses of Christians were left in the city which were not plundered, the dozen or less of Turkish officials, who had control of things, began to fleece the people. They forced them to pay a fine of 6,600 tomans (a toman is about one pound sterling^{53}), on the pretext that the Christian stores, offices and shops in the city would be saved from plunder. But no sooner was this sum extracted through the kindly offices of the American missionaries than they began to put up to auction and dispose of all the shops, offices and stores. Not satisfied with what they had done, they obtained 5,500 tomans as blood money for Mar

Elia, the Syrian Bishop, whom they found in hiding on the roof of a house, and threatened to kill him unless the money was paid. Then, again, such prominent men as Shamasha Lazar, Shamasha Babu and Dr. Isaac Daniel had to pay 3,000, 2,000 and 1,000 tomans respectively to save their lives. Such was the perpetual terror in which the whole community lived.

Soon disease broke out, typhoid played havoc, and over 4,000 died of the epidemic alone. There was scarcely any life left in the remnant of the people when the Russians retook Urmi in May. They were worn out and so emaciated that one could hardly recognise them. It was the first time for months that they were able to crawl out of their filthy winter quarters and to inhale fresh air. The Americans, who had fed these people all through the winter, now gave the men and women spades and sickles to return to their villages, and some flour to start life in their ruined homes. I have seen villages turned to ashes, where not one window door or any woodwork was to be found. Indeed, one day a woman came and said to me: "I have one room out of seven left on the second storey, but what shall I do ? There is not a single ladder in all the village that I can borrow so as to mount to it." What they had left in their "homes," these people found on their return to have been eaten by dogs and cats. They have not sown anything this autumn, nor were they able to do any sowing or cultivating in the spring. Ninety per cent. of them have absolutely nothing left, and they sleep on the bare hard earthen floor, with no bedding or any other protection beyond their ordinary rags. This is their second winter!

The majority of the Salmas Christians had left for Russia by the time the Urmi people reached Salmas. But there were some left who had hidden themselves among kind Moslems here and there. When the Turks took possession of Salmas, they used every means to find out the whereabouts and number of all the Christians that had remained behind, and one night during March last they took some 723 Armenians and Syrians to the fields in Haftevan and mangled and butchered them in a most brutal manner. Three days later the Russians retook Salmas and buried these people in some trenches which they dug for them. The same fate was awaiting the women, and perhaps worse, but the advent of the Russians saved them.

The troubles of Mar Shimun's independent tribes of Tiari, Tkhuma, &c., in Kurdistan, south of Van, began last June. Mar Shimun's seat in the village of Quodshanis was attacked by regular troops and Kurds, destroyed and plundered. Most of the people escaped to Salmas. Mar Shimun at the time was in the interior with the main body of his congregation. A regular Turkish force with artillery and some 30,000 Kurds, &c., marched on the Christians. The forty villages of Berwar, those nearest towards Mosul, were destroyed first, and only some seventeen of them are known to have escaped. The women of many of the others have been forced to become Moslems. For forty days the people defended themselves against superior forces, and that only with flintlocks and antiquated rifles. At last, unable to withstand the onslaught of modern artillery, with which the Turks also bombarded the Church of Mar Sawa, the people withdrew to the interior of the mountains with the Patriarch's family in their centre ; and here they subsisted on herbs and some sheep they had taken with them, while many were daily dying of starvation. Mar Shimun came to Salmas---I had an interview with him there, and he has sent me to speak for him and his---to effect the escape of his people, or at least of as many of them as could be saved. All this happened in the latter part of September, when, according to the telegram received here from H.B.M. Consul Shipley at Tabriz, some 25,000 had already arrived, and with them Mar Shimun, himself as

destitute as the rest, while 10,000 more were to follow. The condition of the remnant, for in all there are over 100,000, is very precarious, but let us hope not hopeless. Assistance can be sent to them through Mar Shimun and through H.B.M. Consul Shipley.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission and the Armenian (Lord Mayor's) Relief Fund have sent £500 and £550 respectively to these people. I understand that the Lord Mayor's Fund is telegraphing a further £500 for the relief of the Christians in Persia for which I for one feel infinitely grateful, as it cannot but assuage some of the terrible suffering that exists.

Let us now survey the whole situation. As over 90 per cent. of the Christians at Urmi are destitute, and the condition of some 10,000 to 15,000 Armenians and Syrians in Salmas is not much better, we have at once some 80,000 people and more who must be assisted, if they are not to starve during the coming winter. In this we are not taking into account the remnant of Mar people or any Armenians that might have found their way to Persia, where the Russians are now in occupation, and where the condition of the Christians will be, so far as personal safety goes, more hopeful. The turn events are taking politically in Persia seems also favourable, but one must never be too confident of the political situation there.

I am delighted to see such a magnificent spirit of response from all corners of the world whence Armenians themselves are coming to the help of their countrymen. We have to cheer each other up in our misfortunes in every way we can, till God in His own way shall solve the problem. And with such noble friends as we have in England, among whom are the Primate, Lord Bryce, and Members of Parliament like Mr. Aneurin Williams and Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and I am sure in America as well-people who would do anything for us-let us be patient and prayerful, hoping for, recompense and release from this tyranny that has had us in its grip ever since Mohammedan rule began in our country.

37. HAKKIARI : FURTHER STATEMENT BY MR. PAUL SHIMMON, PUBLISHED IN THE "CHURCHMAN" NEWSPAPER, AND SUBSEQUENTLY ISSUED AS A PAMPHLET; COMMUNICATED BY MRS. D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, OF OXFORD.

The following is the story of how a Bishop, nay, an Archbishop, at the risk of his own life, saved 35,000 souls---one-third of his flock---from the pursuing Kurds and Turks, and from impending starvation on the heights of the Kurdistan Mountains. He was already in the zone of safety, where he could well have stayed; but he turned back, saying: "I am going back to die with my people." By so doing, he rescued a multitude of his people from almost certain massacre.

It will be remembered that the Assyrians (better known in Church history as the Nestorian or Syrian Christians) dwell on both sides of the Turco-Persian frontier. The bulk of them live in the very inaccessible mountains of Kurdistan, east of Mosul, which is in Mesopotamia, and south of Lake Van; while a goodly number live in the beautiful plains of Urmia and Salmas in northwestern Persia and in the adjacent country districts

bordering on Turkey. Over the former district Mar Shimun, the Patriarch, is the supreme ecclesiastical and civil ruler.

Early last June the Turkish forces with irregular Kurds, under the leadership and direction of the Kaimakam, made an attack on the court of Mar Shimun in Quodshanis---a Turkish governor making an attack on peaceful subjects of the Turkish Empire for the simple reason that they were Christians. Quodshanis is an isolated place. The Patriarch and members of his court were in the interior with the main body of his church, so the people of the village could hardly be expected to make more than a bare resistance. For two days they fought from within the church, but soon their ammunition was exhausted, and the women and children were in a desperate position. At night they set out for the plains of Salmas in Persia, where I saw them in a most pitiable condition. The Patriarchal house, the English mission, and the larger part of the place was plundered and burned. Even the tombs of former Patriarchs were violated.

In the meanwhile a formidable army was being gathered against the independent dwellers in the valleys of Tkhuma, Tiari, Baz, &c. Both Turkish regulars and Kurds, it is said, to the extent of some 30,000, made a combined attack on the people who had kept their independence since Tamerlane and Ghengis Khan had driven them to the craggy mountains, where in some places they have to carry soil on their backs to make artificial fields. For the first time in the life of the people, artillery was brought up to bombard their ancient and venerable churches, while they themselves made a stout resistance with flintlocks and ammunition of their own make.

For forty days they carried on an unequal warfare against tremendous odds, until at last with their families they took refuge on the top of a high mountain in the Tal country. The Patriarchal family took shelter in the famous church of Mar Audishu, and the others who had been able to effect an escape surrounded them, making a big camp. The Turks and Kurds, after having destroyed the Christian villages in the valleys below, carrying away the crops and plundering everything, endeavoured to starve the fugitives out. Near the church mentioned above there is a small fountain gushing from a rock which was hardly enough to supply drinking water, and for washing and bathing they would often steal at nights to the valleys beneath. The people stayed here for nearly three months, never taking off their clothes and always on the lookout for an attack by night. The few sheep that they had taken with them on their flight were almost eaten up now---they had no salt at all, and soon hunger and sickness began to make their ravages. There was no necessity to deport this Christian population. Its mere starvation in the mountains was all that was needed to make an end of the oldest Apostolic Church in existence.

In the meantime Mar Shimun, the Patriarch, with a few brave men, had stolen out by night and made his way to the Russian army operating in Salmas, Persia. He was received with great distinction, but it was found out after many precious weeks of delay that it might not be possible to send any relief for the people in the interior who were not in the line of march. Later on, the Russians sent their army to Van, and then Mar Shimun with a few faithful followers and good rifles---he himself is an excellent shot---set out again for the interior to reach his flock and his brothers and sisters. They soon made ready to take the congregation through the valleys and defiles to the plains of Persia.

The last day of their stay was the saddest of all. On that day Ishaya, a brother of the Patriarch, died of fever. Mar Shimun, hearing of his illness, had come over the day

before. The enemy was then very near, and they could hear the sound of the guns in Tkhuma. Just when the funeral of his brother was to take place, Surma and Romi, his sisters, and Esther, his sister-in-law, were compelled to leave the place, lest they should be caught by the enemy. Mar Shimun, two priests and a few laymen remained behind at this time of danger to bury Ishaya. The burial service was quickly said and the body hastily interred, and Mar Shimun hastened after the fleeing women and children. They were only just in time, for, a few hours after their departure, the Turks arrived and made straight for the church, having heard that the Patriarch's household was there.

I shall not dwell on the horrors of those caught and slain on the way nor on the many beautiful villages ruined and the women taken captive, nor on the thousands of others who have met the same fate. In one district of forty villages, its Bishop said to me, only seventeen had been able to make an escape, and he knew but very little of the fearful fate of the rest. I want only to speak of the living who are anxious to die, but to whom death does not come. They arrived in Persia at places already ruined; they camped out in the plain of Salmas (4,000 feet above sea level) sleeping in the fields with no clothes to cover them at night, clad in the rags which they have worn for many months, without food or shelter. Some assistance has gone to them from America and England. Some quilts were bought to be distributed, one for each family of five persons, to serve as cover in the bitter cold. Some families have as many as ten members, indeed one had twenty-eight. These are the people who have been living on one dollar a month, and to whom flour is served in quantity, barely sufficient to allow each person one small loaf a day and nothing more. I dare say that even their Bishops and other clergy are in not much better condition than their flock.

Assistance, however, can now be sent out to them and will reach them immediately. Urmia and Salmas are now in the zone of safety, where there are many Russian troops, and these have been very kind to the suffering Christians. Money is being sent through the American Consul, the missionaries and the Patriarch, and is at once distributed to the sufferers. The Rev. Y. M. Nisan, who is still alive, although he has lost his wife and daughter, is on the distributing committee. The defeat of the Turks at Erzeroum means peace and safety of life for all Armenia and Persia. In the latter country there are over 80,000 destitute, the majority of them Assyrians, and some Armenians as well. Money is distributed to all without discrimination.

I have purposely avoided saying anything of the horrors that we have suffered at Urmia and the agonies we have passed through, simply because I have felt that the condition of these mountaineers is even more pitiable. I hope Christian people will be moved at once to make an effort to save them from the clutches of starvation. The gallant Patriarch has saved them and brought them out of Turkey, where relief will get to them. I therefore appeal to all my friends and to others who may be so disposed to help rescue this ancient Church.

BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

(a) Extract from a letter, dated 8th November, 1915, from the Rev. E. T. Allen (?).

As you know, the first attack by the combined force of Turks and Kurds was made in June and was partially successful. The people were driven out of their valleys into the high mountains central to Tiari, Tkhoma, Tal and Baz. In this movement not many lives were lost, but many villages were destroyed. The hostile forces were for some reason withdrawn, and for some weeks there was comparative quiet, broken only by spasmodic attacks by local forces. About three weeks ago there was another concerted attack made by the Turks and Kurds on their stronghold in the mountain top, and they were driven out. Between fifteen and twenty thousand, with great difficulty, made their escape, part of their road being held by the Kurds. They came down the Tal and Kon Valleys, followed by the Kurds, and attempted to turn up the Zab to get out by way of Djoulamerk. They found the Kurds in force at the Djoulamerk bridge, and were forced to turn down stream. At the head of Tiari they crossed the Zab and went up into the hills, which they found deserted by the Kurds, who had gone to war. They then made their way round behind Djoulamerk, meeting no hostile force until they reached the ridge between Quodshanis and the Zab. Here again they found a force of Kurds waiting for them. They had quite a sharp fight with them and the Kurds were worsted. From there on they had no more trouble reaching Bashkala in safety, and later coming down to Salmas.

These are the people I found in Salmas. They number, according to my estimate, between fifteen and twenty thousand. Among them are Mar Shimun and his family and all our helpers, with one or two exceptions. (Mar Shimun is the Patriarch of the Nestorian Church.)

With reference to those who were left in the mountains, perhaps a thousand more succeeded in getting through. There are still some thousands shut up there, and their fate is still uncertain. How many were killed in this last attack, I have found no one who could give even an estimate, but undoubtedly the number must be large. This is in reference to those in Salmas. All the facts cannot be given out, but this is their case in brief. The mass of them are without shelter of any kind and also without bedding. They are sleeping on the bare ground without covering. The rains have begun and the winter promises to set in early. What all this means to these thousands who are without shelter, you need not be told.

Since coming down a great many of them have been taken sick with a peculiar form of bowel trouble, such as the mountaineers have been having here. Dr. David Yohannan estimates that there are as many as one thousand cases. The fatality is not as great as might be expected, but there are a great many deaths. One tribe reported forty deaths within a week. I have seen the dead lying on the roadside, and the women carrying their dead, orders to move on giving them little time to die decently or to be buried with respect. I gave no relief while there. Along the road they had gathered up a little grain; the Russians were giving out 1,200 loads, and help was being given on the threshing floor and from door to door. I have been making a complete list, so that when we are ready to begin we shall have them classified and shall be able to handle them. We shall give flour or wheat in weekly allowances. The cost per head will be about five shahis (1d.). I shall refrain from giving as long as I see they can subsist on what they get from other sources.

Bedding is needed as badly as food. There is not much choice between dying from hunger or dying from cold. We shall have to supply several thousand outfits, cost of each about three-and-a-half tomans (12s.). You may rest assured that I shall use the utmost caution in the giving of relief.

There is no further word from those left in the mountains. There is still hope that some of them may succeed in getting through, but undoubtedly many will be lost.

(b) Extract from a letter, of later date, from a missionary.(54)

About 150 or more of the Mutran's(55) people came down. Some of the children were a sight to see for destitution. I had a tableful of women to breakfast with me the next morning, including one of our own pupils who was married into the Mutran's family. They said that 200 Turks had been living off them since a year ago, but that their flocks had been so multiplied that they were able to sustain the burden. At last the Turks began sending twenty men every day with packs on their backs to Mosul, loaded with the spoils of their houses, so they feared their own end or deportation might be near ; they found a chance to escape one day when their guards were a mile or two away, and silently stole away with some of their possessions.

(c) Extract from a letter, of later date, from a missionary.(56)

Some of the refugees in Salmas had flocks and possessions, but all were ravaged by disease, so that even if they had work they could not do it. A boy who was with me found his relatives among the people. One uncle of his had been living in the barracks. He had lost his three children one after the other, and then his wife died and he had no one to care for his affairs but himself. He was so weak he could not do anything---reduced to skin and bone himself---but he got a rope and tried to carry the body of his wife on his back to bury her somewhere. He had not even strength enough to dig her a grave. There the story ended. The boy said the man broke down and could not tell any more, and he did not have the heart to ask what had become of her.

Another of our preachers has lost three of his four children, and the last was very ill when we saw her. His wife had lost her brother and two sisters---one of them a pupil in the Fiske Seminary.

39. REFUGEES FROM HAKKIARI : LETTER, DATED 26th SEPTEMBER/9th OCTOBER, 1915, FROM A RELATIVE OF MAR SHIMUN, THE PATRIARCH; COMMUNICATED BY THE REV. F. N. HEAZELL.

I have not written to you for a long time. I think you will know the reason is that the war with Turkey has stopped the post to Europe. As you know, during past years there have been difficulties between the Turks and ourselves, but now the truth of the matter is made clear. When we saw many Christians of Gawar and Albek killed without reason, we

thought our turn would come. Every kind of warfare commenced, and since then, for months, we have been fighting in the mountains; in the end we were not successful, because the Kurds were helped by the artillery of the Turkish Government. Of course when our cartridges were exhausted we could not stand before the great force of Turkish artillery. Then first of all Tiari was destroyed; we then thought we could flee to the mountains in the hope of victory, but soon the Turks came to the entrance of Tkhoma and our hope was destroyed---either we must deliver ourselves to Turkey and be killed or flee to save ourselves. We did the latter, but even then half the nation was left behind.

Now we are here in Diliman, Salmas; but the larger part of Tiari and Tkhoma is conquered. Up to the present time we have no news of those people; whether they are alive or have been destroyed, we know not.

Many of the refugees who come here are dying of hunger; they have no bedding, and many men just died on the way here. Would you were here to see with your own eyes our state; your sympathy would indeed be aroused. All the houses have been destroyed (also Mar Shimun's house and your Mission house in Quodshanis) and burnt and robbed; we are in rags and hunger and in a strange land. Many of the houses where you have spent the night as a guest have no bedding, the house of Malik Ismail, for instance, and the house of Khiyu.

Of all these the condition of the Tkhumnai is the most miserable; they are quite destitute. If some help is not forthcoming for the nation all hope of survival is at an end, for three parts will die of hunger. Our thanks are due to the Russian Consul, who is taking care to distribute the people among the villages to prevent them dying of cold, for all are under trees and in fields in the open.

In the course of February, Esther and I and her children went down to Malik Ismail's house in Tiari, for we thought it would be safer there. Then we soon moved from Tehumbar to Dadush, a small village of Tiari. When the Turkish army drew near that place we fled to the Church of Mar Audishu of Tal. In each place we were obliged to leave behind some of our clothes and our bedding; many times we were hungry; we made our journeys by night, and Esther's little children would fall asleep on the road. Three months we stayed in Mar Audishu, the whole time the fighting drawing nearer. Our brothers are fighting in Dizan, and there every three or four men are sleeping together for want of quilts at night. We sleep with our clothes on, ready to start when it may be necessary. In Mar Audishu the food was good, but the provision for sleeping and bathing was bad. Soap there was none; water could be had for drinking and cooking only. Sometimes we would go down to one of the Tal villages to wash our clothes and to bathe.

From Quodshanis everything we possessed was carried off and our house destroyed. A few quilts we brought to Dizan ; these we could not bring away with us because we had no mules, for the Kurds had carried them off, and I think they will now remain for our neighbours (the Kurds). Of clothes to wear we had only enough for the road, but not enough for the cold of the winter. When we came here, on the road, we saw some women who had never known want entirely naked; we divided our clothes among them, giving them just enough to prevent them dying of cold. During all these years our state has been, glory to God, that only our souls have been chastened, but finally one thing has befallen us which we can never forget. I recall the last days that I stood in the Church. I had gone down to Dizan because Paulus, my brother, was sick and Ishaya(57)

was ill with fever in Mar Audisbu. It was at the time ---when the guns of the Turks were drawn up before Tkhuma and were moving forward---then it was. he sickened and died. Mar Shimun had arrived there a little before. Romi(58) and Esther(59) and her children, at that very time of great sorrow, when they least wished to leave, had to set out, weeping, with their families. Only Mar Shimun with two priests and a few men remained in the Church for the funeral service, for as quickly as they could they had to place the body of Ishaya in the grave and hasten after their families. Going quickly on foot they arrived at Darawar, where Malik Ismail was. Those little children (God bless them) went on foot, without a servant, accompanied by Romi and Esther. That day, if our .families had delayed in Mar Audishu, they would have been prisoners now in Turkey. The day after they left, the Turkish army entered the Church, for they knew we were there. But, thanks be to God, we had escaped.

Paulus is better, and now our family is with Mar Shimun in Diliman. Up to the present time we have not hired a house, for we do not know where we shall settle down. There is a Church here.

Mr. McDowell came from Urmia to see us and they hope to help this people as much as they can with food and clothing.

Of all the things that were left in our house I am sorrowing most of all for my English books that have gone. Those of our own language are hidden ; I do not know whether they will be safe or not. I only left about forty in Dizan.

40. REFUGEES FROM HAKKIARI : LETTER, DATED DILIMAN, 1st /14th APRIL, 1916, FROM SURMA, THE SISTER OF MAR SHIMUN, TO MRS. D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, OF OXFORD.

I was very glad to get your sweet letter, for which I was longing and looking forward, my dearest friend. I know how you loved Ishaya, and he always asked after you. I wonder if you ever got his letter that he wrote to you in Syriac.

I wrote to you while at Quodshanis (before the war) but got no answer ; I wondered if you might be away from home. I wonder if Mr. Wigram and Mr. Heazell got my letters, written since we came to Diliman; I am afraid you won't get yours, the address was incorrect.

You most kindly asked after Hormizd. I wish we knew his fate, dear boy; we have no news of him since the 20th February (5th March), 1915. I asked Mrs. Wigram if she would be able to tell us something of him by way of Dr. Wigram's letters; we are most anxiously looking forward to the answer.

The hospitals which are endowed by great Russia to help the sick are a great help. Now the people get nursed well, and, of course, the sickness is growing less. But outside the hospitals, although they do get help from Russia (recently some clothes, too), England and America, still their miseries are great, and their living very poor.

I trust and hope you will read the report recently written by Mr. Paul Shimmon. A copy has been sent to Mr. Heazell. It is all quite true, and there you will see our nation's wretchedness. Really, Russia couldn't have done more than she has by helping with

hospitals, money and clothes.

Now the Russian Government wants us all to go up to Bashkala ---the people to be provided with oxen and wheat to be able to plough land for themselves. Of course, Mar Shimun is quite willing to make the people do what they are ordered, and what is best for them. It really is a very good thing, but I am much afraid it won't come to pass, for two reasons---first, the difficulty of finding enough oxen and corn, and, secondly, because it is getting too late for sowing. Soon after Easter Mar Shimun intends to go to Khoi and talk the plan over with General Tchournazoukov.

I wanted very much to go to England, but Mrs. Wigram wrote to me that my friends didn't think it advisable. I don't understand well what you say in your letter about directing to me through Mr. Shipley. If it is anything to help the poor, it is most welcome.

One can't help longing to read the London Times and the Church Times, especially the Bishop of London's sermons. What will be the end ? Is the world being refined ? Who will endure to the last ? We can only pray for mercy. Its will be done. My heart is yearning to hear that "England has conquered " ; pray God it will prove so-although one does feel for all the young men's lives, whether friend or foe, no difference, and for the world's misery.

Last October David and I went down to Urmia and stayed with dear Mr. Nisan. His house seemed to me quite desolate with no Beatrice or her mother, but he was the same, cheering and helping others. His daughter-in-law Nanajan is very nice, and, with her little dear boy, she will be a comfort for his old age. Samuel is still in America; it is rather hard for the young wife. I have twice written to Mr. Nisan to send service books, which he kindly sent. We often wonder what our church would have done if it were not for English printing presses ? Nearly all our church books are gone. Mar Shimun has consecrated little tablets, and nearly every priest in Diliman has one to celebrate on for the people; it is the same in Urmia and Khoi.

You will like to hear that David, Zaya, Paul and Ishaya fought most bravely in Dizan. Twice the Kurds were driven away with twelve killed, and the third time Paul and Zaya alone with four servants fought against the foe and saved the little ammunition they had. I intend to write a report of all that happened (what I saw and heard) in the mountains. But really I can't, as long as I am with ten children playing in the small yard and making as much noise as a herd of the Kurds, poor little kids. I don't think you know that David is father of two boys and four girls, and Romi is mother of three girls and two boys. Are not they old ? The children are as happy as children ought to be, only they are disappointed at not having as many new clothes as they used to have at home, and especially the boys, for they are not going to have any new clothes for Easter as they had theirs at Christmas, and now it is the girls' turn for Easter. The market is another difficulty for them---seeing new toys and sweets (they were free from that in Quodshanis) and with no money to buy them. However, they get used to it, poor dears.

I teach the four boys for two hours a day; they are promising pupils if properly taught. The little girls read their alphabet, too.

Romi and Esther have suffered very much under the circumstances. It was too much for them, although they have gone through it quite bravely, especially Esther, who was with

child all this time, and during the last days of flight was expecting the child every hour. However, God was merciful, and the baby girl was born nearly a fortnight after we arrived in Diliman. She is baptised Helena. I am rather uneasy about Esther. She is very weak, and after Easter she will go to Urmia, both to visit her father's house (the Mutran's brother) and see the doctor.

I can't say it was too much for me ; if it were not for certain reasons I should have been rather enjoying the struggle between the Kurds and Turks and us. Thank God we are very well at present, except for being over anxious for our poor nation's misery. The living here is very hard for us ; we simply have no money for our ordinary necessities, and at times we have people coming to our door who can hardly stand on their feet for hunger ; how could one turn them away ?

However, all the world is suffering, and so must we and our nation.

Would you kindly tell Mr. Heazell that Mar Shimun got the £50 which he sent. I never wrote to him that the Mutran was let free by the Turks and has come to Urmia safely, although quite broken and very weak.

I rather enjoy the plan of going up to Bashkala after we have lost our country and home. It will suit us to turn into nomads, like the Israelites---Mar Shimun for Moses; can't make David into Aaron, he has no beard, so dear old Peter for Aaron, with his white beard; I suppose I must be Miriam, and we must take a tent, too, for celebration, which we will call the "Assyrian Tabernacle" ; and very likely we shall always be having skirmishes with the Canaanites to get to our fathers' land. Wouldn't you like to come and see us, the new Israelites

The houses in Bashkala are all ruined.

Mar Shimun sends his blessing to you and Professor Margoliouth, and we our best regards.

41. THE NESTORIANS OF THE BOHTAN DISTRICT(60) : LETTER, DATED SALMAS, 6th MARCH, 1916, FROM THE REV. E. W. McDOWELL, OF THE URMIA MISSION STATION, REPORTING INFORMATION BROUGHT BY A YOUNG MAN (WITH WHOM MR. McDOWELL WAS PREVIOUSLY ACQUAINTED) WHO HAD ESCAPED THE MASSACRE; COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

There was a general massacre in the Bohtan region, and our helpers, preachers, teachers and Bible-Women, with their families, fell victims to it among the rest. The man who brought the word is known to me personally. This young man tells the story of how, by order of the Government, the Kurds and Turkish soldiers put the Christians of all those villages, including Djeziré, to the sword. Among those slain were Kasha (Pastor) Mattai, pastor of the church in Hassan ; Kasha Elia, one of our oldest and most honoured pastors, recently working as an evangelist ; Kasha Sargis, superannuated; Muallin

Mousa, pastor of our church in Djeziré, and his sixteen-year-old son Philip. There are three preachers not heard from, and one of them is probably killed, as his village, Monsoria, was put to the sword; another, Rabi Ishak, is possibly alive, as there is a report that his village had been preserved by the influence of a Kurdish agha. It is to be feared, however, that this agha would not be able to protect them for long, as from every source comes the word that the Government threatened such friendly Kurds with punishment if they did not obey orders. The third man is reported as having fled to Mosul. Whether he reached there or not is not known. The women and children who escaped death were carried away captive. Among these were the families of the above mentioned brethren. The wife and two daughters of Muallin Mousa, the daughters of Kasha Elia, and Rabi Hatoun, our Bible-Woman, were all schoolgirls in Urmia or Mardin. Kasha Mattai was killed by Kurds in the mountain while fleeing. Kasha Elia and Kasha Sargis, with other men of the village of Shakh, were killed by Turkish soldiers who had been stationed in their village by the Government.

The three villages of Hassan, Shakh and Monsoria were Protestant, and it is to be feared that they were wiped out, as were all the other Christian villages of the plain. Many of the women of Monsoria threw themselves into the river (Tigris) to avoid falling into the hands of the Kurds. Mar Yohannan and Mar Akha were still safe at the time my informant fled. The terrible feature about it was that, after the first slaughter, there were Kurds who tried to save some of the Christians alive, but the Government would not permit it. My informant had found refuge with an agha and was working for him, when a messenger from the Government came with orders to the Kurds to complete the work or be punished. Word was brought to my informant in the field, and he with a few others fled to the mountain and made their way to Van, and so came here. The villagers of Attil, where we had work also, all escaped to Van. Their Kurdish agha, who was a warm friend of our preacher and of our work, gave them warning that he would not be able to protect them, as the massacre was being pressed by the Government. It was their pastor who fled to Mosul. His way would take him to Djeziré and Monsoria, the home of his wife. They may have been killed there. There is no word about them.

This terrible calamity grieves me more than I can tell you. And more than those who died, the fate of those carried off into captivity weighs upon me. I think of them so often--Sarah, Hatoun, Priskilla and little Nellie and others, young girls whom I knew in the home almost like my own children. What is their condition? This word of my informant is confirmed by a woman of Djeziré, who made her escape also to Van and thence hither. She tells us that Sarah and her two daughters were released and were last seen on the plain beyond Djeziré, wandering in a destitute condition.

42. SECOND EXODUS FROM URMIA : LETTER DATED TABRIZ, 20th AUGUST, 1915, FROM MR. RUGO A. MÜLLER (TREASURER OF THE AMERICAN MISSION STATION AT URMIA); COMMUNICATED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

On Thursday, the 5th August, the rumour spread that the Russian troops were again to

be withdrawn from Urmia. This very naturally frightened the entire Christian population, and on Thursday evening all Christians, except those already on the road and those physically unable to be on the road, were in the streets of the city and on the roads leading northward from the city, waiting for the departure of the foot-soldiers, with whom they intended to leave. Knowing the probable fate of any who might stay behind, we were, of course, not ready to discourage the people from going. Still, we had no official word of the anticipated evacuation, and were, therefore, perplexed as to our own duty. The breaking up of a good proportion of our missionary work, the removal of the bulk of the relief work to a different place, and the uncertainty of America's future position all contributed to indicate that a portion at least of the Station should move in case of an evacuation. On Friday morning we learned that the foot-soldiers had left, and one of our men, on visiting the Russian Consul, was told that all who were going should be off by 2 p.m. that day. The Station felt that its force should be reduced to the minimum, and that at least all women and children should leave. Very hasty preparations were made. Mr. McDowell, Mr. Labaree and Dr. Packard volunteered to stay in Urmia, and all the rest were to leave. When we got on the road, however, we found that Mrs. Packard and her children and Miss Burgess were not of the party. Mrs. Packard had decided to brave the Station vote and stay by her husband, and Miss Burgess stayed to be with Mrs. Packard and to assist the medical work. The fugitive party, therefore, consisted of Dr. Shedd and his two daughters, Mr. and Mrs. Allen with their two sons and one daughter, Dr. and Mrs. Coan, Mrs. Cochran, Miss Lewis, Miss Lamme, Miss Schoebel, and Mrs. Müller and myself with our daughter. We went in carriages, using some donkeys and horses bought the last two hours before our departure.

At the end of our second day's journey we reached a village Kudchi, where we found perhaps 20,000 or 30,000 Syrian refugees, whose further flight had been arrested by the Russian commanding officer with the good news that a decisive victory had made the evacuation of Urmia unnecessary. All were told to go back. Unless the missionaries would return, however, the natives were unwilling to trust themselves alone. Nothing was left but for some to return, especially since this was requested by the officer in command of the troops there. Dr. Shedd and his daughters, Mrs. Cochran and Dr. and Mrs. Coan consequently turned back.

This gave the crowd heart and they, too, went back. But the tables were soon turned again, and before the foot-sore crowd reached the city they were again turned back with the word that there was fighting with the Kurds on Mount Seir. The missionaries had reached the city and were there during the fighting on Mount Seir. It seemed advisable for them to leave again, as conditions were very uncertain, in spite of the fact that the Russian Consul with a number of Cossacks had stayed by his post during all this time. They, that is Dr. Shedd and his two daughters, and Dr. and Mrs. Coan, left for the second time on Friday the 13th August. This time Mrs. Cochran stayed behind.

Meanwhile, those of us who had continued on our journey from Kudchi arrived in Tabriz on Friday the 13th August, after a journey free from mishaps, but nevertheless wearing for us who were still typhoid and typhus convalescents. Every one in the party with the exception of Mrs. Allen and the Allen children had recently had the fever.

43. SECOND EXODUS FROM URMIA : NARRATIVE OF A NESTORIAN VICTIM, THE WIFE OF THE REV. DAVID JACOB, OF URMIA, PUBLISHED IN THE ARMENIAN JOURNAL "ARARAT" OF LONDON, JANUARY, 1916.

As a native of Urmia and myself a refugee who has fallen into great trouble, I am writing a few short details about my unfortunate nation. For centuries as Christians we have been crushed by the enemies that surround us. Our best looking girls have been forced to deny their creed; our men have been killed, our homes plundered, and our property has been robbed.

In all these troubles we lived under the Persian Government, and obeyed their rules ; we have never been untrue to them, or disobedient. For the past seventy years the only help we have had has come through the English and American Missions that have been in Urmia. When the Russians arrived at Urmia it was a delight to us, we thought our rights would be more clearly established ; of course, things were much better than before ; all the country was safer than it ever had been. This was like a dream for a few years ; all of a sudden, when this terrible war began, we felt almost certain that it would harm us, although we never dreamed that it would bring us under such a curse.

In the cold January, when even the beasts do not wish to go out from their caves, the people were left homeless, bleeding, impoverished and starving. This all happened when the Russian forces withdrew from Urmia ; very many left their beloved and comfortable homes, and started with them on an endless journey, which caused the death of many dear souls from cold and hunger. The rest of the Christians crowded into the American Mission compounds, with nothing left; here they were fed on a morsel of bread which came through the kindness of the Missionaries. There is a great deal to tell of the misery of the people during the last winter; it was a life too wretched for humanity. Those that were used to comfortable beds now slept on the bare ground. For five months of captivity we lived expecting death every minute, surrounded by sick people who needed help ; our little children died of measles ; our young and strong ones could not stand the terrible epidemics of typhoid and typhus, while the elderly people could not live such a hard life ; they died in the first weeks, of dysentery. Now the villages were plundered and mostly burned, a good many people killed, and our little girls and women wickedly tortured (very many even now have not been found; they were mercilessly carried into captivity); through all this long time of anxiety and expectation, during which our time was given to weeping, we prayed that God would once more save us by sending the Russians to our rescue.

It was a great relief when we heard that the Russians, for their own interests, were coming to Urmia once more. After their coming the people were at liberty, and were able to go out into the country once more. For three months they tried to live in the villages, though a very poor and wretched life it was, with everything gone and most of the buildings burned. In these hard times we were thankful to the American Missionaries and the Russian Consul who helped us in settling down. Although at this time we did not do any evil to our enemies who had treated us so unkindly, we heard them say that if once more the Russian army should leave Urmia, no Christian would be safe.

On the 4th August the peasants crowded into the city of Urmia ; they had heard

indirectly about the armies leaving. It was a sight that could not be described. The sick, helpless little children were terrified. All night and the next day the road that led towards the Russian border was full of refugees, although the Consul assured us that he would not leave without warning us ; but the fear was so great that nothing could keep us back.

In the first invasion of Urmia(61) some of those that dwelt inside the city gates were in more security than the villagers, although they were fined a great deal and suffered many hardships and losses of property, and there had been deaths in almost every home; but this second attack meant that we must leave all and flee. On Friday morning, with sober face and heavy heart, I left my dear home. I am grateful to God that until now my home had not been robbed, so that it was very hard for me to leave its comfort and start out into the world with no hope of returning again. With many other comrades in the same plight, we began our dreadful journey. For two families we had a little cart in which we put a few necessary coverings, a little bread, and my three little children. It was very hard for us to leave our property, but life is dearer than all the riches of the world.

On the way we met all classes of people, the rich and poor were reduced to the same level; very few had carriages, because our neighbours would not hire us any, some had horses and donkeys, but the majority had to walk with great bundles on their backs. We were quite unused to such a hard journey; some sat on the roadside and wept from sore feet; it was hard to walk in shoes, and without shoes the sun burned them until the blood came; dear, innocent children died on the way; it broke the parents' hearts to part with them; old and feeble men and women were left behind; little unlucky babies were born in the sight of the passers-by; everyone was in need of help, but no help could be found. We were like the Israelites scattered in the desert, only they had Moses to conduct them to Canaan, while we had no one.

The first night we were so tired and exhausted that we stopped in a place that had very little water, a dry, dusty place ; our bed was the ground, our pillow a stone, the sky our quilt. The little excited children cried all night ; large crowds of people were coming all night ; while some rested and went on, others from behind took their place. The next day we were so tired and hopeless that we wished we had died at home and had not started on such an endless and aimless pilgrimage.

It broke my heart when I met a little girl; her feet were sore and she could walk no further. She cried, "Oh mother! Oh, God!" The mother had a heavy load and could not carry the child, the father was killed, they had no friends. I carried the little girl on my back for about half-a-mile, but could not any further. It was too heart-breaking. Why should innocent children suffer so ?

Our next stop was a better place; it had splendid, cool water, and shade; but the people were so many that bread was scarce, starvation was upon us. A great many were sick by this time and could not move. This was a Moslem town ; they did not like to have us there, but they could not turn us out on account of the Russian soldiers being near. There were Christian villages on our way, but by this time. they had all been destroyed. Here we stopped a few days. We heard that the Cossacks had not left Urmia entirely; they had moved their headquarters a few miles, so that we had hope that we would not lose all. From here some of us went to Tabriz, which is a larger city, and a little safer than other places. Now we are a nation scattered like the flock without a shepherd, some living here

and some there, a miserable existence. Some have gone back to Urmia; most of them have found all their crops gone. If we had not left Urmia this second time, our condition would not be so hard as it is now, the places near the city having mostly been kept safe by the kindness of the Russian Consul, who did not leave Urmia; but in the more distant places the crops and vineyards have all been destroyed. We are more than grateful to the Americans, who have ransomed our lives from death by the money that has been spent for us the last winter. We hope and pray for the victory of the Allies, that through their kindness the rest of us might live. So far one-third of our nation has perished, and even we who survive are so broken by the strain we have suffered that sometimes we are hopeless. Now we are facing a winter of famine and wretchedness, homes without bedding and clothes. Of course nobody can supply all our needs. In addition to our own trouble, our countrymen from Turkey are taking refuge in the Urmia district, and their condition is worse than ours.

44. URMIA DISTRICT : REPORT ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF, COVERING THE PERIOD 1st JUNE TO 31st DECEMBER, 1915 ; COMMUNICATED BY THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR ARMENIAN AND SYRIAN RELIEF.

At the beginning of June, 1915, when the people emerged from our premises emaciated from sickness and malnutrition and crushed by the blow that had fallen upon them, they were confronted by a seemingly hopeless situation. Practically all their household furnishings and food supplies had been plundered; the same was true of their domestic animals, on which they depended in large measure for their subsistence. Their houses were without any doors and windows, and probably a full third of them had been demolished. They were in terror about going back to their villages; they feared their Moslem neighbours, who had despoiled them of their property, outraged their wives and daughters, and killed many of their relatives; they feared, too, lest the Russian troops might again withdraw and leave them to the mercy of their enemies ; and they were anxious lest the missionaries who had sheltered them for the previous months might forget them when they were out of sight. Everything tended to make them cling to our Mission compounds or their vicinity. To permit them to do this was of course out of the question. Our efforts, however, to scatter them to their village homes formed one of the most pitiful phases of our relief work. The people had to go, but as long as they received their bread from our yards they would not; and so we had no choice but to cut off the food supply, after giving each family sufficient flour to support them a week. At the same time, with the help of the newly arrived Russian Consul, pressure was brought to bear upon the landlords of the Christian villages to support their tenants until harvest. Some of these could not, because they themselves had been plundered ; others would not, in spite of Consular pressure ; and others promised to give the needed assistance, but delayed it from day to day with all the ingenuity of excuse for which the Orient is notorious. The result was that our yards were thronged daily with hundreds of people clamouring for food. To give way would have nullified all our efforts to get the people on to their own feet; and only when it was absolutely clear that nothing could be gotten from the landlords of any one village did we assume any degree of support for the people of the village. Little by little progress was made, and although the villagers were

wretchedly miserable, the approaching harvest made subsistence by their own effort possible, and virtually all food distribution ceased for a period of three months.

There was another form of relief, however, that was imperative. In the vast majority of villages there was not a spade to use in repairing their houses, in ridding their vineyards of weeds or in burying their dead, and there was not a scythe or sickle with which to reap their harvest. The best and surest way to help the people was to give them these implements, and so for upwards of a month we virtually subsidised all the blacksmiths of the city in our endeavour to get these instruments in time for the harvest. When we closed this department of our relief work, we had distributed 2,661 scythes and sickles and 1,129 spades at a cost of 18,909.90 krans. (The exchange value of a silver kran is approximately 4 1/2d.)

By the beginning of August the situation was considerably more hopeful. The people with Consular help had succeeded in collecting a good deal of their plundered property, including bedding, household utensils and a few cattle ; the harvest was good, although the acreage was below the average, and the promise of the vineyards was excellent. Then fell another blow, what seemed an inexplicable Providence. Events in another section of the war necessitated orders for a sudden withdrawal of the Russian troops, and the evacuation was actually carried out with the exception of a small force which remained with the Consul on the hills outside the city. With the going of their protectors the whole Christian population of the plain, with the exception of some 200 sick and aged who again took refuge in the Mission yards, fled, some only to the northern edge of the plain, but many to Salmas and Khoi and even Djoulfa. Fortunately it was summer time, but even so the misery was intense, and cholera and want and hardship claimed many victims in those few weeks. Worse still, much that the people had reclaimed of their stolen property and gathered from their fields was taken once more by their Moslem neighbours ; and so, after nearly a month of miserable hardship and uncertainty, the poor Syrians and Armenians returned to their twice plundered homes. Very little relief, however, was given during the next few weeks ; for from the fields and vineyards much could still be secured in the way of food.

At this time we calculated that about 10,000 to 15,000 of the Christian inhabitants would have to be supported during the winter months, and we were making our plans accordingly, when a new and overwhelming burden descended upon us. For months the Syrians of Kurdistan had been holding their own in their mountain fastnesses, hoping for succour from the Russians. When this failed and their enemies increased on every hand, they had to flee---many, many perishing in the attempt. Some 30,000 of them arrived at last in Salmas and the neighbourhood in almost absolute destitution. A few succeeded in bringing a part of their sheep, but most came with nothing, half-naked, and without any means of livelihood. This army of wretchedness was halted by the authorities on the plain of Salmas and on the hills surrounding it, until their location should be determined upon. Mr. McDowell of our Relief Committee, who has had years of experience among these people, left at once for Salmas and grappled with the serious problem of their immediate relief. But for the assistance given by our Committee there, hundreds of them would have perished from hunger. As, it was, cholera, typhoid and pneumonia did their worst among a people wasted by hardship, unprotected from the cold and without shelter. Shortly the streams of suffering humanity began to pour across the pass that separates the Salmas from the Urmia plain, and to scatter themselves in the villages of this section. A few weeks before we had been wondering how the inhabitants of the plain would find

shelter for themselves in their half-ruined villages; but from the accompanying statistical report(62) it will be seen that they have made room for nearly 16,000 refugees from other districts. For example, the village of Geogtapa has doubled its population, having received as many of these guests as it had inhabitants of its own.

About the middle of October we began to take steps in preparation for our winter relief work. The first thing was to buy up all supplies of wheat that we could secure while the price was low---the lowest for years, for the purchasers were few and the owners anxious to turn their crops into cash before any more untoward events might transpire. The wheat thus secured was stored in different parts of the plain accessible as distributing centres. The doing of this required quite a force of reliable men, who could act as wheat buyers and weighers.

The next step was to get accurate lists of the actually destitute in every village. This was no easy task, for many felt themselves entitled to assistance who were not wholly destitute, and to discover who were really in want, among the hundreds of poverty-stricken, plundered inhabitants of each village, required both tact and firmness. The task was made doubly hard by the constant stream of new arrivals from Salmas. On the basis of these lists tickets were issued for bedding and for food---the two most crying needs.

For bedding it was decided to issue large wool quilts, large enough to cover several persons. These we found could be made for three or three and a half tomans (12s.) per quilt. Under the efficient direction of Miss Lewis, and later of Miss Lamme, a quilt factory was started, which in time employed over a hundred needy women in carding wool and sewing the quilts. This factory during its three months' existence consumed over 84,000 yards of calico, 35,000 pounds of wool, and some 1,500 pounds of cotton, and expended over 18,000 tomans ; it taxed the resources of the dry goods merchants to supply our demand and it quite exhausted the wool supplies of the city. Our plan was to give only one quilt to four persons, families of over four to receive two or more according to the number of members ; but after the issue of tickets we found that we could not possibly supply the need, and so regretfully we had to limit our giving to one quilt to a family. The inadequacy of this relief was seen when we began to distribute to the families of mountaineers ; for with them all the brothers and their wives and children form one family, and it was not uncommon to have families of over 20, one being as high as 35. But in spite of their inadequacy, the 5,510 quilts issued have saved the lives of many, for literally thousands were facing the rigours of winter without any bedding whatever.

Our wheat distribution, too, had to be of the most economical nature. We issued what was supposed to be a two months' supply at one time, giving a Russian pood and a half per capita for this period, that is, about 50 pounds. To the widows and orphans and to the new comers from the mountains we gave flour instead of wheat, the actual cost of this assistance in food at current prices being two and a half shahis per day to a person, or between a half-penny and three-farthings. But even with this small gratuity, the total amount given of wheat and flour was 4,000 poods, or about 140,000 pounds, costing about the same as the quilts, that is, about 18,000 tomans.

With these small gifts to individuals amounting in the aggregate to large figures, and with the similar work that has been done in Salmas and Khoi, and even for the district of Albek, our funds have been exhausted, and we are waiting now to see what the generosity of America will do about it. Had it not been for this generosity, many would

have died of hunger and cold the last two months, for, apart from what our Committee has done, very little has reached the people from any other source. We are grateful indeed to acknowledge the receipt of considerable sums from his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Syrian refugees from the mountains, but still the largest part has come and must come from America. We shall have to look to our friends in America for their continued aid, if this unfortunate people, the victims of Mohammedan hate, are to be kept this winter and established in their homes once more.

45. AZERBAIJAN : STATEMENT, DATED TIFLIS, 22nd FEBRUARY, 1916, BY MR. M. PHILIPS PRICE, WAR CORRESPONDENT FOR VARIOUS BRITISH AND AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS ON THE CAUCASIAN FRONT ; COMMUNICATED TO ANEURIN WILLIAMS, ESQ., M.P., AND PUBLISHED IN THE ARMENIAN JOURNAL "ARARAT," OF LONDON, MARCH, 1916.

In the October of last year I came to Diliman on the plain of Salmas in north-west Persia. I had been in Urmia during September and had seen the condition of the Assyrians (mostly Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) in the low country round that lake. The American missionaries of Urmia were doing a great deal, and on the whole the condition of the country was not so very bad. There was housing accommodation and a good deal of corn, and it seemed as if the Americans would keep the situation in hand. But in Salmas there was a very different state of affairs. At the end of September, 25,000 mountain Nestorians from the Tkhuma, Baz and Tiari regions, who had been fighting with the Kurds all summer and had had to flee for lack of ammunition, came pouring into the plain led by their Patriarch, Mar Shimun, and began to plant themselves down in the orchards and gardens round the villages. All the villages of the plain were already occupied, and, as the winter was just setting in, their condition without housing, food and clothing was desperate. I sent a message to Mr. Shipley, the British Consul at Tabriz, telling him of the situation, and he telegraphed to the Archbishop of Canterbury for financial assistance. Meanwhile relief committees were organised under the Russian Consul Akimovitch, the Armenian Bishop Nerses, who lent funds from the Armenians of the Caucasus, and an American Missionary from Urmia, Mr. McDowell, with funds from America, and they began to organise relief during November and December. The method adopted was to distribute to all the refugees, Armenian, and Assyrians alike, a daily allowance of 10 kopecks a day, since increased to 15 kopecks, and to distribute warm quilts and coats from materials purchased in the bazaars of Diliman and Khoi. Some medical detachments of the Russian Red Cross and Soyus Gorodof were sent with medical aid to combat typhus and dysentery, which was beginning to and still is taking many in toll of the refugees. As regards the. medical side of the relief, I am inclined to doubt the possibility of making effective provision under the circumstances. There are not sufficient skilled doctors, and it is impossible to get drugs through from the Caucasus in sufficient quantity to do much good.

I did not observe on my return to Salmas after a journey to Van in November any real improvement in the health of the refugees. Every day a hundred or more Assyrians and Armenians were dying in the villages round Diliman, and the same thing is going on now.

It seems to me (and these friends of mine, who have also been there and have seen the conditions, agree with me), that it is impossible under the circumstances to combat the disease by medical assistance. The hardy mountaineers from the headwaters of the Great Zab and Tigris can best be helped by giving them the means to resist disease. Once disease has hold of them, no half measures of medical relief can help. I am therefore strongly of opinion that, if more relief is sent, it should take the form of money, which should go to increase the daily allowances of the refugees, enabling them to buy for themselves, from the Persians of Diliman, food and clothing, which alone will enable them to resist disease.

The position is now as follows. When I left Diliman for Van at the end of October, I saw in the regions round Bashkalé another 5,000 or 6,000 Assyrian and a sprinkling of Armenians living in caves of the rocks or in the open, and feeding on raw grains of wheat, which they were picking from the ruined corn-fields. On my return in January most of these were in Salmas, and so I think about 30,000 Assyrian and Armenian refugees are now there---that is, after deducting 15 per cent. as loss from disease in the last three months. The Russian and American relief organisations which are working there of course stand in need of more money to carry on their work effectively. In order to save the refugees from starving, doles of money must be given out to them till next harvest at least. I should certainly think that the Americans, whose committee is centred in Tabriz, under the American Consul there, are doing the best work with the means at their disposal. With the Russian organisation there is more delay and greater leakage. Relief is being given impartially by the Americans to Assyrians and Armenians of all denominations. This cannot always be guaranteed for the Russian organisation.

I would therefore strongly appeal for further help for the distressed refugees of this ancient Assyrian Church, together with their brethren of the Armenian Gregorian, Catholic and Protestant faiths, and should suggest that it be sent to the British Consul at Tabriz to distribute with the American missionaries in the form of increased daily allowances for food and clothing.