

DEBT OF CIVILIZATION TO ARMENIA

HORRORS THAT ARE TURKEY

Convincing Revelations of the Terrors of Massacre in the Land of the Sultan Made by a Bryn Mawr Girl

The earliest national Christian church in the world was organized by the Armenians after Gregory the Illuminator converted the Armenian King, Tiridates III, to Christianity in the year 285. The Persians attempted to extirpate the Armenian Christians, but failed. When the Mohammedans conquered that part of the world they in turn attacked the Christians and they have continued to persecute them for a thousand years. The massacres that have taken place since the present war began are the most extensive and horrible in the whole history of this faithful people. Renunciation of their faith would bring them immunity, but with a devotion that should cause every Christian in the western world to blush with shame they have clung to the belief of their fathers and have been true to the God of their ancestors. The civilized powers, after the massacres of 1895 and 1896, induced the Turkish Sultan to sign his name to a piece of paper agreeing to protect his Christian Armenian subjects. But it was only a scrap of paper. Thousands of Armenians were massacred in 1909, only eight years ago.



MRS. GIBBONS
and the baby born during an
Armenian massacre.

But Turkey is so far away that massacre there touches us little more than massacre a thousand years ago. It has remained for a Bryn Mawr graduate to bring home to America what it all means. Mrs. Helen Davenport Gibbons went to Tarsus with her husband, Herbert Adams Gibbons, in 1908, to spend a year teaching in St. Paul's College. She wrote letters to her mother, telling her of her experiences. They have been put into a book, beginning with the display of interest which a young American bride feels in the far-off strange land—the scenery, the customs of the people, the management of a missionary college, the camels, the pottery and all the delightful things that appeal to the romance in one. Then suggestions of trouble begin to creep in. The students act "Hamlet" with its king-murdering scene and the officials present who never heard of Shakespeare think it is a political play prepared to stir up the people to slay the Sultan. She goes driving next day and stones are thrown at her. Her husband goes to Adana and a massacre begins there before he can get back home. The massacre starts in Tarsus. The missionary compound is filled with nearly 5600 refugees. Armenian women, fleeing in terror to the college, are taken

with labor pains in the street and are brought in with their new-born babies. Mrs. Gibbons herself is about to become a mother, and her own baby is born before order is restored. She makes us understand what massacre means to an American girl who escapes with her life and thus helps us to understand what it must mean to the women of the country to whom worse things than death happen at the hands of the Kurds if they do not find a place of safety. No one can read what she has written without feeling that the Christian owes a debt to the Armenians which it has not even begun to pay.

THE RED RUGS OF TARSUS. By Helen Davenport Gibbons. \$1.25. New York: The Century Company.