

MOSLEM WORLD AND THE WAR

Where Holy War Falls While Briton Matches Hun Suez, Palestine, Bagdad and Armenia Play Varied Roles

But in vain. The Armenian was massacred, India in Egypt remained loyal. The Arab powerless as disaffected. The times of religious wars were past. The Young Turks and German found they miscalculated.

THE DREAM

Kaiser and Sultan proposed to divide the world. A Mohammedan empire was to be recreated throughout the Middle and Near East. Therefore, the Great Flag of the Prophet was waved everywhere in a Jihad.

ARMENIA'S FUTURE IS HANGING IN BALANCE

Refugees in Russian Territory Die Like Flies After Heroic Defence and Fearful Marches—Living on Eight Cents Per Day.

If this war has produced few dramatic developments on the European battlefields it has undoubtedly shown several tragic turns on the remote Transcaucasian front—tragic at least for the Armenian people, whose existence was shattered from the beginning of this war. Speedy marches of the Russo-Armenian forces into Turkish Armenia, a heroic battle for self-defence followed by a victory of the Armenians of Van and the expulsion of the Turks from that city, a disastrous retreat of the Armenians into Transcaucasia for safety and other events of a similar character have succeeded each other with dramatic rapidity. After over a year of such vicissitudes, about 150,000 refugees, the last remnant of the Armenian population in Turkish Armenia, were quartered within the borders of Russian territory, and some 30,000 Armenians, Nestorians and others now quartered in Persia. The greater part of these Armenian refugees have come from the city and province of Van, the remainder constitute the aggregate of what used to be the Armenian element in the various Armenian provinces of Turkey.

When Russians Retired

At the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War the speedy advance of the Russian army into Armenia and Van saved almost the whole Armenian population of the district. The Armenians of Van and of the province fought a heroic war of self-defence, captured the town from the Turks, and thus saved themselves from the general massacre which the Turks carried out in Armenia and Asia Minor. Though they bravely defended themselves against great odds, the Armenians of Van had to retreat in the rear of the Russian army which the latter retired. This withdrawal of the whole Armenian element of Van was effected under the most adverse circumstances. Only twenty-four hours were given them to quit their homes, and there were very nearly no provisions left. Some 250,000 people, already sorely tried during the previous hard months, had to walk a distance of more than 100 miles into Transcaucasia, and, exhausted by marches and thirst, walking in dust and under the scorching sun, they suffered horribly on their journey. Those who lagged behind were attacked by Kurds; many women and children were hurled into the River Euphrates in order to save themselves from Kurdish brutality; others dropped their children and continued the fruitless march, which lasted some twelve days.

Epidemics and Orphans

Terribly strained and fatigued, these unfortunate Armenians reached Etchmiadzin (where the Catholicos, the head of the Armenian Church, resided), Erivan and other Armenian centres in Transcaucasia, to find few means taken for their reception. Typhus, spotted fever, dysentery, and cholera, in other words, epidemics, broke out in virulent form and literally decimated these homeless and foodless refugees. Some thirty thousand of these refugees died after the journey, despite hurried aid from Russia. Some 20,000 orphans, whose parents have fallen, have already been taken care of in various orphanages and convents. Yet the mass of the Armenian population are crowded into camps under the most unhealthy conditions, deprived of all elementary comforts or daily life, trying to live on less than eight cents a day per head, which is not as relief from the various distribution organizations. The existence of one of the oldest Christian nations in the East, the larger portion of which is being massacred by the Turks, is hanging in the balance.

ARABS ARE ROBBERS

Despise Town-dwellers Whose Power Ends at the Desert

The most picturesque visitors to Bagdad are the Arabs; the Bedouin, with his keen eyes cast from long habit on the horizon, the grave sheikh with his staff, his long grey beard and steadfast gaze, and the urban bound with the black agal. The Bedouin distrust the Turks, and their antipathy is seasoned with contempt. Outside the city they were free as the wind. There was no armed control beyond a gunshot from the walls. The sheikhs of the tribes were subsidized to let the camel post go through to Damascus, and the Turkish Government had no hold on them unless one of their number came into the bazaars of Bagdad for supplies. I made the journey across the desert with an old hajji, who guided himself by the stars. Twelve days on a fast dromedary, riding eighteen hours a day at a stretch with two short halts for meals, and the beast had only one drink between the Euphrates and Damascus. I was held up and robbed a day and a half from Hitt, and owed it to the hajji that I got through alive.—London Mail correspondent.

Bagdad is the one city which is known to every Moslem throughout the world. Mecca, in fact, occupies no greater place in Islamic thought and literature.

STAGING OF THE JIHAD; EVEN HUNS SENTENCED

The truth is at last out concerning the farcical declaration of the Kaiser's own Holy War. The declaration of Jihad in Constantinople was nothing more nor less than a comedy, writes a neutral correspondent. The Turks have no religious ceremonies, nor any special ritual for such occasions. The Sultan, the Sheik-ul-Islam, the Fuqra Emiri, attired in newly-invented uniforms, walked in processions, with Ministers and Hadjis, with the soldiers and people of the Mosque of Santa Sophia, used for the first time as the cathedral of the Mohammedan world, and there, with prayers and reading of the Koran, the Fetva of Jihad was signed by the Khalif, by the Sheik-ul-Islam and by the Fetva Emiri, and then proclaimed. Next morning dancing dervishes made a procession in the main streets carrying before them the ancient flag of the Sultans of Iconium, given to them by the Khalif. The Turkish papers published inflammatory editorials, and ready-made sensational news of general Mohammedan rising all over the world. They said that the Ameer of Afghanistan was marching with 300,000 soldiers to India, where all the Moslems had enlisted in the Jihad, and were driving the "hateful and tyrannical English out of the sacred lands of India. The Caucasus was of course in revolt, and the Muscovites were evacuating Tiflis. Odessa was in flames. The Arabs of Northern Africa, and Egypt had raised the green flag—the emblem of holy war. At last the time had come.

But with the exception of a few murders in the provinces, committed by a few fanatics against the native Christians, no sign of any religious excitement was shown. Besides, the Turks as well as the Germans found that they had made a mistake. A declaration of Jihad meant war against the Germans, Austrians, native Christians, and all the neutral Christian nations. Consequently by publishing a second Fetva all the faithful were warned against any injury to friendly Christian nations. The distinction destroyed more than half the fervor for the Jihad in the Moslem mind.

HOLY WAR'S FAILURES

Arabs and Even Kurds Disregarded Call—Some Aid Russia

Besides the Turks, there are other Moslem elements—Arabs and Kurds—whom the Germans expected to join the Jihad. The Arabs, who are numerically stronger than any other race in the Ottoman Empire, generally are hostile to the Turks. For years Turkish tribes, one after another, have been annihilated in the deserts of Arabia. During the war Arabian antagonism toward the Government was well understood in Constantinople and it was not without reason that about sixty Arab tribes were hanged in Dairnes, and quite a number in Beirut and other Syrian quarters. Ten thousand Arabian soldiers in the Dardanelles were attacked, disarmed and sent back to Anatolia. If some Arab Sheikhs and Arab tribes have joined the Turkish army operating against the English advance in Mesopotamia it is entirely due to the lavish distribution of Prussian gold and promises of future rewards and compensation.

Another element on which the Turks counted was the Kurdish tribes. The Kurds are entirely nomads, scattered in Eastern and Southern Asia Minor, divided into hundreds of small tribes having no bond of union among themselves, and their whole number is hardly two millions. They are supposed to be Mohammedans, but in fact they are in a very immature stage of life, their religion consisting of a few superstitious ideas, and they are powerful in proportion to their abilities for plunder and brigandage, considered by a Kurd an honorable occupation. In this war the Kurds not only did not respond to the call of the Jihad, but on the contrary, taking advantage of the general confusion and anarchy, began to plunder, kill and devastate everything within their reach, without distinction of race or religion. In some places they joined the Russians; in others, the Turks. There have been Kurds who have taken part for a time with the Russians, then with the Turks, and vice versa.

Cosmopolitan Crowds

My companions in the hotel at Bagdad, writes a globetrotter, were a Greek, a Jew, a Turk, an Armenian, a Levantine, a Bombay Eurasian, and an Italian-Abyssinian half-caste, who told me that he had had French lessons from General Gordon in Khartoum.



BRITAIN'S STAKE IN THE HOME OF MAHOMET

Of all the countries of the Oriental world bordering on the theatre of war, Arabia is the least known and her part in the world-struggle the least distinct. It is generally thought that Arabia does not matter, but evidently Britain's agents and leaders think differently. To most Arabia is just a geographical expression, but from the activities of both Briton and German Powers count Arabia in making their strategic calculations. Yet Arabia is hardly a nation. She has not that unity or driving power which the first Mohammed and the Caliphs and their new faith gave her. The land is one of wild tribes, faithless friends, treacherous foes, but not possessed of the wealth, knowledge or organization which could make their powerful military factors. They are unorganized, like insects. They have no united expeditions of the kind which the Arab expeditions of the past could never be. The British, who have not appreciated the power of the Arab, are to him that the German flag dare not appear on the oceans. But the Arab trader who visits Zanzibar, Madagascar, Bombay or Alexandria knows and is interested. The British fleet would drive him too off the seas if he dared interfere with traffic through the Suez or in the Indian Ocean or tried to stop the oil steamers from the Persian Gulf as they go to supply the British fleet. The result is that Britain has little to fear from Arabia. Aden is a great stronghold and commands a great point on the route to India. It is well garrisoned and from it as a base the British warships can operate to protect the eastern end of the Suez. Britain has other fortifications along the southern coast of Arabia and along the Arabian, as well as on the Persian, shores of the Persian Gulf. The coast is safe and that is all that is essential. But it would be very advantageous if Britain could win the tribes of the interior of the Arabian peninsula so securely to her side that an attack could be launched upon Palestine from the desert. Britain coming upon the Jordan side, the Moslems of old would be more than interested. It would paralyze the Turco-German power in Palestine and would end all the Kaiser's dreams of invading Egypt from across the Suez canal. The reason is that German and Turkey anticipate a sea attack upon Palestine and consequent

SELEUCIA-CTESIPHON

Remarkable Population of These Ancient and Sterile Cities

Seleucia and Ctesiphon, under the Persians, were the jewels of the Tigris Valley, materially and intellectually. The fertile soil of the district yielded crops in profusion, and in the city carpet weavers, gold and silver smiths and armorers were thriving in prosperity. Though Persian in religion, the people were under the influence of the later schools of Greek philosophy. Seleucia and Ctesiphon were built to take the place of Babylon, which latter city fell rapidly into decay after the death of Alexander the Great.

MOTORS IN THE DESERT

Incidents of War in Desert of Mesopotamia

A British officer taking part in the Mesopotamia campaign, writing to relatives, says: "At Nasiriyah, they've been having lots of fun. Some platoon in the outpost line is selected almost nightly for attacks, and bullets fit into the remotest corners of the camp. We have had a certain large and fairly powerful tribe, led by a celebrated cut-throat of the name of 'Jamie' (at least that is exactly how his name is pronounced), and they are responsible for these little excitements. We went out two or three days ago and burned a couple of their villages, but haven't yet heard whether this has had a salutary effect or not. They did rather an amusing thing one night. They got into the slaughter house, where there were about 300 sheep, in the dead of night, cut their tails off and got away with the tails without anybody knowing anything about it till the next morning. After that the entrance to the slaughter house was mined and a couple of nights later, when I suppose they were trying the same game on again, they exploded the mine, and I burned eight of them. Since then they left their slaughter house alone.



THE NEW CRUCIFIXION

Jerusalem, Sinai and the Mount of Olives were sacred into Turkish drift areas under German control, and at Golgotha (Calvary) rifle butts were erected where the Moslem host might learn to shoot the Christian.—Norman Lindsay, in Sydney Bulletin.

SUEZ CANAL IS VITAL TO EGYPT AND INDIA

Beaconsfield's Great Stock-buying Coup Has Great Effect on Present War—Why Germany Stirs up the Islamic World—Why Egypt is Loyal

Apart from its fascinating contrasts of ancient and modern, Sphinx and motor truck, Soudanese and Londoner, Mohammedan and Christian and everything else, Egypt rivets inevitably the attention of every military man in the world and of every British patriot. For Egypt is the base of operations for the defence of the Suez Canal, as well as the base of recuperation for the other Mediterranean and Oriental campaigns. The canal is the vital thing in the Anglo-Indian empire. Writers call it the vein of this empire. Without the control of the canal England and India are separated, the head from the body. As the body needs the head, so India needs the British Isles.

Britain's Strong Hold

But not all the advantages are with the attackers. The reason for this is that Egypt is near and wealthy. It furnishes a great supply of food, being a great growing country. The British officials have control of the administration, of all the sources of the land, its railways, and its buildings and harbors and roads. It has a great native army at hand. It has a population which depends upon the wisardry of the English engineer, Wilcocks, for its life-giving supply of water. The Sphinx has fascinated the Hun and lures him on. But the Hun must arouse the fellahen, the farmer of the Nile valley, from his contentment with his satisfaction over the regulation of the bank by the Assuan dam, from his lack of religious enthusiasm for the cause of Kut and Constantinople, if he is to disturb British control of Egypt, of the Suez canal, of India.

Turco-German Holy War One of History's Jokes

Day of its Declaration Was Testing Time of a Great Plan That Proved a Fiasco—Years of Plotting.

The fact that the Turks put their lot in the balance with the Germans was due chiefly to two main causes. First of all, the Turks having their military instructions from German officers, and some of the Turkish officers, as for instance, the present War Minister, Enver Pasha, having himself resided for a time in Germany they were acquainted with the German military conditions and had formed a firm belief in the strength of the German army and their preparedness for the cause of Islam.

COMING OF THE KAISER

Chief Hun's Visit to Damascus and Ancient East

Thirteen years before the war when we entered Damascus, writes an Englishman, we found the old city turning in its sleep after an Imperial visit. We saw painted on the facades of the houses what I should have recognized, if I had been wise, as "the writing on the wall," the mark of the beast, the beginning of all this coil of the finger pointing to Bagdad. Horizontal stripes of red, black and white, the brand of the Hohenzollerns, Wilhelm, the friend of Abdul, had visited the oldest city in the world. The Sultan was literally perhaps, figuratively certainly, to be clasped in a tight and, as after events may prove, a suffocating embrace. Not a dwelling was spared, not even the house of Ananias or the house where St. Paul was laid down in the basket; and the little mountain train that takes one on to Lebanon and the sea, were on every carriage the same, the house of Ananias or the house where St. Paul was laid down in the basket; and the Sun was inscribed the legend, "Imperator Germanorum visitavit."

A Declining Population

The present population of the Beersheva, of which Ctesiphon is the center, is no more than 1,500,000, Bagdad included. It is said to have once been 10,000,000, but the decrease has in no way affected the strategic importance of the district.