

THE ZORYAN INSTITUTE

AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR RELIEF IN THE NEAR EAST

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

From

To

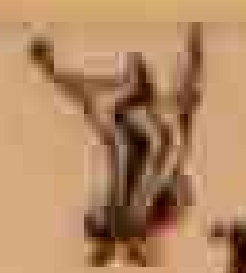
Subject

Marash, Turkey.

Apr. 18, 1920.

Dear Mother,

It must be two weeks since I wrote last, but still my letters are not mailed, & this one won't get off for a long time from the looks of things. But I will write now before I forget everything, as this is my "diary." I haven't written in my diary since the French left as there hasn't been time enough. The last time I wrote I think was just before Snyder & Mr. Lyman started off for Adana. The Muteserref had given permission for them to go, & even asked them to take with them some French prisoners and wounded. They didn't get started till Tuesday morning Apr. 6, as it was necessary to engage camels & pack animals etc. Finally everything was ready & the caravan started - first a lot of Americans who had permission to go to Adana, then the pack animals with Snyder's trunks, etc. then the camels with the wounded. Moroccans and Senegalese soldiers loaded on in big boxes hung on the side of the camels, like a little house on each side. Finally Lyman brought up the rear, but Snyder was missing. He came running along on foot a few minutes later with the news that someone had



2.

stolen his horse at the last minute. We went to the market for a mule, & the rest of the caravan went on. Snyder is delighted now that he didn't get started, for while he was waiting for his mule, the whole caravan came back. The whole crowd had gone thru the city & was just on the road to I slakie when a gendarme rode up & said an order had been issued that they could not go. So Teyman had the embarrassment of parading back thru the city. We don't know even yet why they were called back, & the government officials all pass the buck & say it was a mistake, but just the same have not allowed them to start again. Teyman was certainly sore about it.

From the present looks of things none of us will get out of here for some time to come. I will write what news I have, but won't dare to mail it now. You probably know more about what is happening in this country, anyhow, than I do. I think I wrote about the trip Teyman & Badvalli Abraham made to Zeyton, & the news they brought - how all the villagers had been massacred or had fled to Zeyton. We heard lately that all the villages near Marash had been suffered the same fate. Kishofler, Fundjak, Yenjakale, etc. all massacred & burned. A couple of thousand of Armenians from all the villages had taken refuge in a big church in Acunjele. The bandits came & burned the church, killing all who ran out. So all of them perished. All of these poor villagers had just returned from four years of exile less than 8 months ago, & had come back only to die.



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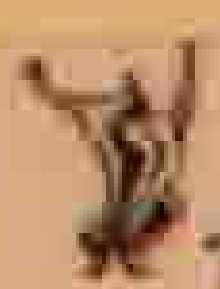
The same day that Lyman & Snyder tried to go to Islatik, the Muteseruf sent word to three Armenian leaders, one a Protestant preacher (Abraham Haroutounian) one a Gregorian priest, & the other a Catholic priest, that they must go immediately to Aintab & try to make peace between the Armenians & Turks there. We knew there was trouble in Aintab, & the three priests naturally were afraid to go, but it was an order, so they started out, attended by 19 soldiers & gendarmes.

A few days ago they returned, & just last night Badvelli Abraham told us the story of his trip. It was a very funny one. The Turks had been told in Aintab that a great peace commission was coming, so they treated the three Armenians as tho they were Lloyd George, Clemenceau & Orlando. The Armenians played their parts with all the seriousness they could command, but at night they could only sit in their room & laugh at each other. The first day they arrived they called a meeting of the high Turkish officials, who all came, and told their troubles to the "great" commissioners, who promised to fix everything up nice.

The Turks were living in one quarter, while the Armenians were in another quarter, well fortified



4/ and armed. The French were with them, & also were fortified in the American college. All the Americans were on the hill in the hospital & mission compounds. Knowing that the "peace conference" had come, there was no firing from either side for two days. On the second day the three Armenians sent for Dr. Merrill & Dr. Shepard & the Armenian leaders to come and have a conference with the Turks, but they refused to obey & sent word to the peace committee to come & see them if they wanted to talk. So the three peace delegates had to cross "No man's land" alone. They got across safely, altho three shots were fired at them. As they were running, one of the priests lost his hat, ~~but~~ and ran back to get it, while the other two beat it for shelter. They met Dr. Merrill & Dr. Shepard, but the Armenian leaders would not come, perhaps because they did not want any information as to their strength to get out. Dr. Merrill agreed to come the next day to a meeting with the Turks to discuss methods of bringing peace. So the following day a sort of agreement was drawn up and agreed to approved by both Turks & the Armenians, for whom Dr. Merrill was spokesman. It was sent to the French commander, who also agreed to the terms. At this meeting Dr. Merrill spoke very strongly to the Turkish leaders, telling them that they had persecuted the Armenians for years without cause, & that now their punishment was at hand unless they repented immediately. (He knew a few things that the Turks did not know, for a French aeroplane had



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dropped messages in the college compound telling of the action America & England & France were taking, & of reinforcements coming. The Turks have always looked on Dr. Merrill as their friend, so his speech made them rather angry. That night, the "chetas," or "irregulars," hearing that peace was almost arranged, attacked the Armenian quarter, as they want war. The Armenians are well armed, however, & I think the Turks suffered fairly heavy losses.

The French colonial had also written to the Turkish officials saying that his orders from France were to protect the Armenians & Americans above everything else, & that if the Turks harmed the Armenians he would fight. He said also, "So far I have been using only my machine guns & rifles but if ~~they~~ you forced ~~me~~ to use ~~my~~ cannon I will destroy your city." He told them that the minarets of the mosques were filled with soldiers & that they must get out. The Turks paid no attention to this order, and so the following day while the "peace commission" was holding a meeting two big explosions were heard, & a Turk came running in saying to the Mutessarif, "You are sitting here talking and over



minarets are flying ~~do~~ to the sky. The French had put dynamite under the mosques & blew them up. So war was on in Aintab when the Badvelli & the two priests left, all their nice plans spoiled.

When he returned to Marash he told us that he had news that big French reinforcements were on their way to Aintab from the direction of Haleb, & that England had taken Constantinople, & was sending two armies, one from the Black Sea to Sivas, & the other from Constantinople towards Sivas. With the French at Aintab & Haleb it looks as if Mustapha Kemal & his Cheta army would be chased from all sides into Marash. At least many troops will come there here.

But for the present we are expecting a retreat of Turks from Aintab to Marash. This morning the Turkish governor sent for our auto in order to review his troops outside the city. In order to show him it was still our auto, all of us climbed in too, & went along. We drove 16 miles towards Aintab, passing many armed Turks on their way to Aintab to fight the French & Armenians. We saw two cannon on their way also, & I got a few photos of this funny looking army. I never saw such a hard-boiled looking bunch of men in my life as the Turkish regulars. The bandits & chetas are picturesque & attractive but the soldiers in gray are a wicked, leathery looking lot of men.

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These men will reach Aintab in three days but I suspect they will make the return trip in less than two days, for the latest news is that there is heavy fighting between Misit & Aintab. If it is true that 15,000 French are coming, we may see them coming this way soon. At any rate, the Mutessarif asked yesterday if we could take all the Armenians of Marash into our compounds in a few days if necessary! It looks as if something was up, so I am going to begin tomorrow to fill our bins up with rice & all food stuffs we can get.

There is no chance of Dr. & Mrs. Wilson & Snyder leaving for America now, for which I am glad, as they had planned to go next week, leaving Lyman & Bell & me to run the ranch.

We are still feeding practically all the Armenians in the city. I cut 1300 off the list in the last three days, & expect to cut another 1000 this week if nothing happens. Peter Jernazian, an American citizen (Armenian) is helping with the work & is a dandy. He tends to all the buying & distributing of food, which is a big work.



8. Dr. Bell is interested in farms & in Tennis, so he has started three big gardens which Armenians owned but could not work. One garden belonging to an Armenian was given us, & when we went to take possession found a Turk had it all plowed so we grabbed it & now the Turk wants us to pay him for plowing it. I think he is just out of luck! Bell also had a Tennis court fixed up & we tried it out Saturday afternoon & found it O.K. So we are looking forward to a little recreation now in a while.

We would give anything to get news from home, but an order has been issued forbidding any mail to go or come unless written in Turkish. We hear there is mail for us in Marash, but we can't get it. All papers & magazines are burned by the government, & we can send no mail. I will have a letter written to you in Turkish & Mr. Steele can read it for you. These letters I have written will have to wait.

The letter Dad wrote Feb. 9th reached me O.K. I got no letters between Jan. 1 and Feb. 9, so probably they were lost or else you wrote none in January. I hear America is sending an army to Turkey. Wouldn't it be fine to see a column of dough boys coming along some day! Hope everybody at home is O.K. - especially your arms, Mother. I am feeling fine & not overworking now, but was before. Hope to be able to start home July 15 or Aug. 1 st. if the way is open. Lots of love to all the family, the Adamses, & friends. Jim Stanley.