Le recueil est dédié à la mémoire des victimes des massacres des Arméniens de Marache à l’occasion du 90e anniversaire de cet événement.
LES MASSACRES DES ARMÉNIENS DE MARACHE EN 1920

(RECUEIL DE DOCUMENTS)

Documents réunis et présentés par
Varoujean Poghosyan

ACADÉMIE NATIONALE DES SCIENCES DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE D'ARMÉNIE
INSTITUT D'HISTOIRE

EREVAN 2010
1920 թ. Մարտինե կորկունային, որոնք գրել են պատմի շուրջ 16000 հայոց։ Օսմանի կուսակցությունը Ռուսաստանի վարչապետության 20-րդ դարի վերջին և 21-րդ դարի սկզբին։ Օսմանի կուսակցության առաջին շարքերում զբաղեցրել էր նախագահ, պատմագիտական միկրոֆիլմ (ոսկիչ նախագահ) մարմարական հայր, Սպրինգսի Մեծության դիվանագրական հայտնիքի վարչապետություն։ Սպրինգսի Մեծության դիվանագրական հայտնիքի վարչապետությունը հայտնի է Քարենության վարչապետության հայտնի կարևոր դիվանագրական հայտնիքի վարչապետություններից մեկը։ Վերնագրի համաձայն, Ռուսաստանի վերականգնման պաշտոնը շտագնալ է Ռուսաստանի վերականգնման պաշտոն։
1. Պ. Շանդարիենի, Օւսյան կոչումներները. Գրականության ծագական
աշխարհագրություններ (1876-1920 pp.), Երևան, 2009, էջ 119-126: Պ. Շանդարի, Սուրբծեղ և Հուսայի 1921 թվականի պաշտպանության մի


3. Պ. Շանդարի, Վ. F. Chalk & K. Jonassohn, The History and Sociology of
Les massacres de Marache de 1920, lors desquels presque 16.000 Arméniens ont péri, sont l’une des étapes imprécisibles du processus du génocide des Arméniens (1894-1922) dans l’Empire ottoman. Ces massacres, organisés et perpétrés par les autorités kamilistes au début de 1920, sont la preuve la plus spectaculaire de la politique anti-arménienne, adoptée par Moustapha Kemal, le chef du mouvement nationaliste, qui est entré dans l’histoire sous le surnom d’Ataturk (le père des Turcs). Résolu à achever l’œuvre sanglante d’Abdülhamid II, le sultan rouge, et celle des Jeunes-Turcs, Moustapha Kemal poursuivait le but d’exterminer les Arméniens rescapés des précédents massacres sur tout le territoire de la Turquie. Or, le processus du génocide des Arméniens à cette époque avait certainement des traits particuliers.

Certs, dès le début, la politique génocidaire perpétrée par différents régimes ottomans à l’égard du peuple arménien avait eu divers moyens de réalisation, à savoir, meurtres collectifs, déportations en masse, conversion forcée, organisation artificielle de la famine dans les villages, etc. Toutefois, il faut prendre en considération qu’après la Première Guerre mondiale il n’avait presque plus d’Arméniens dans l’Empire ottoman et, en premier lieu, dans les six vilayets arméniens, autrement dit, dans la patrie historique appartenant aux Arméniens, occupée par les Turcs au XVIe siècle. C’est la raison principale ayant incité les kamilistes à réaliser cette fameuse politique génocidaire dirigée contre les Arméniens non seulement dans l’Empire ottoman, mais également hors de son territoire. Au début des années 1920, lors de l’invasion par les troupes kamilistes du territoire de la République d’Arménie, ces dernières ont exterminé les Arméniens pacifiques habitant ces régions. R. Safrastyan et H. Ghazaryan, en se référant aux sources turques, ont récemment relevé la ferme volonté des kamilistes de continuer la politique génocidaire du peuple arménien et à la fois leur intention d’écraser l’État arménien indépendant.9

Cependant, ce qui m’intéresse dans ce cas, ce sont les massacres des Arméniens perpétrés par les kamilistes à Marache. Les Arméniens échappés par miracle au génocide des années 1890-1910, se sont dispersés au début des années 1920 dans différents endroits de l’Empire ; un grand nombre s’était concentré en Cilicie. C’est pourquoi c’est cette région qui a attiré l’attention des nationalistes turcs en premier lieu.

Dans le but de la création d’un État national, Moustapha Kemal organisait régulièrement les massacres des minorités chrétiennes (surtout des Arméniens et des Grecs) habitant en Turquie. Irving Louis Horowitz, le grand spécialiste américain du phénomène du génocide, a certainement raison d’affirmer que le génocide est une forme précise d’extermination massive, exigeant l’assentiment de l’État, qui s’en sert pour exalter la solidarité nationale. La politique nationale de Moustapha Kemal en est l’une des meilleures preuves.

Je n’ai pas l’intention d’entrer dans les détails qui sont en relation avec le déroulement des massacres des Arméniens de Marache. Le lecteur en peut recevoir une information complète à travers les pages de ce recueil qui contient des documents tirés des sources authentiques sorties de la plume soit des témoins oculaires, surtout étrangers (américains, belge et d’autres), soit publiés dans les célèbres journaux anglais et français d’après les renseignements reçu de leurs correspondants de l’Empire ottoman.


complètent les unes les autres, en contribuant à la formation d’une notion plus au moins complète des massacres des Arméniens de 1920 à Marache. Citons, entre autres, que certains auteurs prouvent l’existence de l’intentionnalité chez les autorités turques lors de ces massacres, ce qui est l’une des essentielles composantes du phénomène du génocide.


Comme cette circonstance a fait couler beaucoup d’encre dans l’historiographie, j’ai cru convenable de publier dans la troisième partie de ce recueil, des jugements impartiaux, surtout français, avancés par les contemporains de l’événement, dévoilant de manière irréfutable le vrai visage de la politique perfide des milieux gouvernementaux français lors de la crise de Marache. Citons, que certains documents publiés donnent également la possibilité de s’orienter dans les interprétations incompatibles les unes avec les autres des contemporains. Il s’agit surtout de la position du journal français le Temps, dont les publications officieuses avaient eu le but de justifier ou du moins d’argumenter la retraite des troupes françaises.

Par contre, il est hors de doute que les attestations du général Édouard Brémont (en 1920 encore colonel), l’un des acteurs principaux de l’évacuation des troupes françaises de Marache, sont d’un intérêt particulier, car elles ne sont point en faveur de la politique du gouvernement de la IIIe République. Brémont a avoué quelques années plus tard, en 1929, que la responsabilité de l’abandon des Arméniens de Marache incombat au haut commandement des troupes françaises en Syrie : « L’abandon de Marache a été ordonné par le Colonel Normand, qui était venu de Beyrouth prendre le commandement de la colonne après avoir reçu personnellement des instructions du général Gouraud. Il est donc logique de penser que l’évacuation résulte de la volonté de Gouraud, bien que celui-ci se soit couvert, alors qu’elle était déjà accomplie, par un télégramme disant à peu près : « Il est entendu qu’il n’est pas question d’évacuer Marache », alors que les troupes rentraient à Islahié ! »13

À propos de la proclamation de Brémont, H. Nazarianzetz, en vient à la conclusion suivante, que je partage complètement, que le général Brémont attribuait l’abandon de Marache au gouvernement du général Gouraud, mais il serait plus exact d’attribuer cette retraite au gouvernement d’Aristide Briand. En somme, le général Gouraud suivait les instructions que le maître de la diplomatie française ordonnait d’exécuter.14

En présentant ce recueil de documents à la publication, l’auteur de ces lignes préfère laisser les conclusions relatives à la politique nationale de Moustapha Kemal, ainsi qu’à la conduite des milieux gouvernementaux français aux lecteurs impartiaux.

Varoujean Poghosyan

14 Ibid., p. 5.
PREMIÈRE PARTIE

DOCUMENTS DE LA PRESSE EUROPÉENNE
Extract from the article *British Seize Turkish Arsenal*

(From our own correspondent). Constantinople, Feb. 3.

Fighting in Marash (Taurus Mountains) district continues. Nationalists in the interior of Anatolia are indulging in violent anti-French and anti-Armenian propaganda, which may have untoward results.

*Times, 5. II. 1920.*

Extract from the article *1,500 Victims of the Turk*

The following telegram has been received by Mr. Aneurin Williams¹, m[anuscript] p[ropria], from the Rev. Harold Buxton, Chief Agent in Asia Minor of the Lord Mayor’s Fund for the Relief of Armenian Refugees:

Constantinople,
Feb. 11.

"Regret must confirm news of massacre of 1,500 Armenians at end of January near Marash (Cilicia) by Nationalist bands. On February 1 two Americans, James Perry, general secretary, International Y.M.C.A.², Turkey, and Johnson, his colleague, were murdered, believed by some band near Aintab.

Much indignation is aroused among Europeans here, who call for strong hand against these continued outrages”.

The territory from which these occurrences are reported is not in any way under British control.

The number of Armenians massacred is estimated in a Constantinople telegram received by the Armenian National Delegation at 2,000, including civilians murdered at Aintab as well as Marash. “This is a proof,” it is added, “that though the Turkish forces have been worsted by Franco-Armenian regular troops, and driven from the regions of Cilicia above mentioned they are still able and willing to pursue their old methods of treating defenseless Christians”.

*Times, 14. II. 1920.*
7,000 Victims of the Turk. A Reign of Terror

The following news of the position in Cilicia has been received from a trustworthy source: --

The Armenian population of Cilicia is confronted with a terrible crisis. Some 50,000 troops belonging to the forces of Mustapha Kemal, consisting both of Turks and Kurds, have taken advantage of the unprotected condition of the mountain districts of Cilicia to massacre the Armenians at Zeitun, Fundudjak, Furnus, and in the vicinity.

The total number of victims is 7,000. Around Marash the struggle continues, with serious Armenian losses. The Turkish forces have advanced to Baghtche, and are spreading a reign of terror.

The Armenians are resisting stoutly, and will continue to resist the attack, but they lack the necessary means of self-protection. Only immediate assistance can save from total extermination 150,000 souls.

* * *

American Mission Besieged


Much anxiety prevails in French and American circles over the fate of Marash (Cilicia).

A message dated February 1, was received by courier on February 11 from Mr. Wilson, who, with two lady missionaries, represented the American Relief Committee in the Near East at the town of Hadjin. Mr. Wilson reported that the situation was very grave. The French and Armenians were besieged in the American mission buildings, and at least a hundred Christians were being murdered daily in the town and its vicinity. The line of retreat to Aintab was held by bands.

* * *

In Turkish circles it is rumoured to-day that Marash has fallen, but this is not confirmed.

French official circles ascribe the outbreak entirely to the Nationalist organization, which has armed, officered, and raised the insurgents. It is pointed out that the appearance of bands provided with artillery in the Selcefe district is proof of complicity in the movement of Turkish regular forces.

And this at a moment, when Turkey has much to hope from French support of her claim to retain Constantinople.

* * *

Protest to General Gouraud3

(From our correspondent).

Athens, Feb. 10.

Information from Cilicia shows that the massacre of Armenians continues.

The people have sent a protest to General Gouraud (French High Commissioner for Syria). They ask for the formation of an Armenian militia, the abolition of the Turkish police, the right to arm themselves, and the suppression of the Turkish Governor.

The Armenian authorities report that if their complaints are unheeded they will resign.

* * *

Extrait de l'article Les événements de Cilicie

Notre correspondant d'Adana nous écrit le 30 janvier :

Les événements que je vous faisais prévoir dans ma dernière lettre se sont produits. Depuis le 21 janvier, les bandes nationalistes que dirige Moustapha Kemal ont commencé une sorte d'offensive dans la région de
Marache, assaillant nos postes et massacrant les chrétiens. On parle de 1.500 Arméniens massacrés dans les villages. Il semble d'autre part que Kemal se soit assuré la coopération d'un certain nombre d'éléments arabes venus d'Alep.

Temps, 23. II. 1920.

***

16,000 Armenians Killed out of 22,000

(From our own correspondent).
Constantinople, Feb. 23.

A correspondent at Mersina, telegraphing on the 20th, sends me the following information about the Armenian massacres:

"The French troops evacuated Marash on the 10th, leaving the town in possession of Mustapha Kemal's irregulars. They suffered severely from cold, which accounted for a large proportion of the 800 casualties reported. Many men unused to the severity of the climate dropped dead in the snow during the retreat.

No provision was made for the evacuation of the Armenian population of the town. Refugees estimate the number of those massacred at 16,000 out of 22,000 who were left behind, while 1,300 out of 4,000 who escaped died from exposure. The general situation is considered grave by the French authorities, but reinforcements are arriving satisfactorily."

I may add that the Armenian estimate of those massacred appears excessive, but the number is undoubtedly large.

Times, 2. III. 1920.

***

The Marash Outbreak

The British troops at Marash were relieved by a detachment of the "Légion d'Orient". This was a regiment composed mainly of Armenians, which had done good service on the Palestine front. During the occupation of Cilicia a few men belonging to the regiment appear to have killed several Turks, at whose hands they or their kinsfolk had suffered, or believed they had suffered, during the deportations.

But the majority of them were well disciplined enough. The Legion was for the most part disbanded in the course of 1919. A few hundred only remained to complete their term of service. Their behaviour, when they occupied Marash was excellent, and there is no reason to believe that the black troops afterwards sent to this region committed any excesses. But their presence alarmed the Turks of the district, who had guilty consciences, and gave the Nationalist propagandists their chance. Had every French coloured soldier and Armenian Legionary or gendarme been an angel it would have made no difference to the professional fomenters of disturbances.

The actual cause of outbreak at Marash was the hauling down of the Turkish flag over the Government building by the French Military Governor of the town, Captain André. This officer has been criticized by the Armenians as a turcophile and by the Turks as an armenophile, which would suggest that he endeavoured to treat Turks and non-Turks with equal justice (which the Turkish Nationalist would naturally resent). His second in command was roughly handled by a mob, the Turkish gendarmes deserted, and he had to leave the town. He returned with a detachment of coloured troops. Their arrival was resisted.

The Turks, who had in the meantime been reinforced by Nationalist bands, fired the Armenian quarter. The French, joined by some local Armenians, held out in the American mission buildings, from which they shelled the town till they were forced to evacuate the district. Meanwhile the unarmed Armenian population of several villages near Marash was massacred with the usual horrors by Nationalist bands and peasants, whose fanaticism had been aroused.

A Gruesome Incident

A survivor from one of these villages tells the following story:

The Turks drove about 140 Armenians, mostly boys and girls, into a farm house and fired at them through the windows. They then came in and finished their work with axes. A Turk took a baby of four months old
and handed it to his son, a boy of ten, and said, “Now, my son, cut this infidel’s throat and drink the blood and you will become a brave man”. The boy obeyed. I had been wounded and lay under some corpses and so escaped death. In the night I fled to Islahieh.

_Times, 3. III. 1920._

***

**A Visit to Cilicia**

Terrible stories of pillage, murder, and brigandage have been brought back from Cilicia by the Rev. Harold Buxton, who returned to England a week ago. Mr. Buxton went to Cilicia last autumn as the agent of the Lord Mayor’s Armenian Relief Fund. He crossed Asia Minor four times during the winter and was in Adana during recent Armenian massacres. Though he was not an actual witness of the atrocities, he met and heard evidence from Armenians who escaped.

One story of a man who got away by feigning death till nightfall is sufficient to indicate the barbaric nature of the Turk. While this man was in hiding near a lonely part of the road he saw a Turkish leader advancing with his small boy. Seizing a child from the arms of an Armenian mother who was passing, he called upon the little boy to cut its throat with a sharp knife. Having done this, the boy was required to dip his hand into the blood of the murdered child and taste it, to indicate that he was a good and loyal subject of Turkey.

To-day large armed bands of brigands scattered in every direction, murdering and pillaging and endeavouring to wipe out the Christian population of Cilicia.

The disturbances, Mr. Buxton told a London representative of the “Manchester Guardian”, broke out towards the end of November last when the Turks began to realize that the French forces which succeeded the British there were insufficient to exercise any firm discipline. Nationalist bands were organized on a much larger scale, the French flag was torn down at Marash and the Turkish flag erected in its place, telegraph wires were cut, and an atmosphere of general disorder and violence prevailed. Government couriers and posts were attacked and Armenian villages looted.

After the end of January Mr. Buxton was staying in Adana, and there he heard of the massacre of 1,500 Armenians in the villages of Firouz, Fun[du]djak, Zeitun and Kishif. These places were surrounded and the inhabitants captured. In some cases they were put into large houses, the doors were locked, and they were fired at through the windows. Frequently one bullet would pass through fifteen to twenty bodies. After a time the Turks would begrudge what they called the waste of ammunition and would finish their work of slaughter with axes.

_Manchester Guardian, 5. III. 1920._

***

**En Cilicie**

D’autre part, on télégraphie de Londres qu’à la Chambre des communes, le sous-secrétare d’État des affaires étrangères, répondant à une question, a dit :

« On croit savoir que les récents massacres qui ont eu lieu en Cilicie ont été exécutés par des troupes irrégulières, sous l’autorité de Moustapha Kemal ».

_Temps, 13. III. 1920._
DEUXIÈME PARTIE

LES ATTESTATION DES CONTEMPORAINS
Communiqué du Bureau de Presse
& d'Information Arménien
9, rue du Boccador,
Paris

Le massacre des Arméniens de Cilicie
prend des proportions inquiétantes

La Délégation Arménienne à Paris vient de recevoir le télégramme suivant :

Smyrne, 13 février.

« Suivant les rapports urgents et dignes de foi sur la situation en Cilicie, la population arménienne se trouve en face d'une terrible crise. 50.000 Turcs et Kurdes de Mustafa Kemal pacha profitant de la situation sans défense de la Cilicie Montagneuse, ont massacré les Arméniens de Zeytoun, de Fournouze et du voisinage. Les pertes totales sont évaluées à sept mille Arméniens. Les combats continuent autour de Marache. Les pertes sont très sérieuses. L'ennemi a avancé jusqu'à Baktché et menace d'étendre le règne de la terreur. Les Arméniens sont prêts à résister aux attaques, mais il leur manque les moyens nécessaires de défense. Seule une aide immédiate pourrait sauver une population de 150.000 âmes de l’extermination totale ».

(Signé) : Hovnan Vardabed Garabedian,
Archevêque Arménien de Smyrne
Hrant Nikotian,
Président de la Colonie Arménienne de Grèce.
Paris, le 17 février 1920.

Archives Nationals d’Arménie (ANA), fonds 430 (Délégation nationale arménienne), inv. 1, doss. 456, f. 13.
Les massacres de Marache. Une nouvelle confirmation

Le correspondant du « Times » télégaphie de Constantinople :

Constantinople, 23 février.

Un de nos correspondants me télégaphie de Mersine, en date du 20 février, en me donnant les renseignements suivants sur le massacre des Arméniens :

« Les troupes françaises ont évacué Marache le 10 courant en laissant la ville entre les mains des irréguliers de Mustapha Kemal. Les troupes françaises ont souffert terriblement du froid et une grande partie de leurs pertes (dont le nombre est évalué à 800) doit être attribuée au froid. Beaucoup de soldats qui n'étaient pas habitués à la rigueur du climat, sont tombés morts dans la neige durant la retraite.

Aucune mesure de prévoyance n'avait été prise pour l'évacuation de la population arménienne de la ville. Des réfugiés estiment que le nombre de ceux qui ont été massacrés atteint le chiffre de 16.000 sur les 22.000 qui sont restés à Marache tandis que 1.300 sur les 4.000 qui ont réussi à s'enfuir, sont morts de froid. La situation générale est considérée comme grave par les autorités françaises, mais les renforts arrivent d'une manière satisfaisante ».

**

ANA, fonds 430, inv. 1, doss. 456, f. 24.

**

Telegram.


From the Bishop Naroyan to His Excellency Nubar Pasha

I regret to inform you that French troops evacuated Marash in the night. Unfortunately, they did not inform (anyone). On following day

surprised by this sudden retreat, 3.000 Armenians made their first exit and they were massacred. 1.500 others succeeded to reach Islahieh. A great number of them were frozen. Out of 30.000 remaining in town 16.000 were massacred.

Musée de la littérature et de l'art d'Arménie (MLA), fonds 137 (A. Tchobanian), section III, doc. 10444.

**

Sur les événements arrivés à Marache
du 20 janvier au 11 février 1920 de deux témoins oculaires rescapés et arrivés à Alep⁵

Janvier 20. –

Le colonel Querette, commandant des forces françaises à Marache, ayant des propositions à faire aux autorités turques, demande une députation pour les leur communique. Le chef du Secrétariat, le chef de la Comptabilité, le commandant de la gendarmerie, accompagnés aussi de plusieurs notables : Gosabache Zadé Hadji Nadji, Dede Zadé Mohamed, Chichman Zadé et autres, composant cette députation se sont présentés. Le commandant des troupes françaises leur a signifié qu'il voulait prendre en charge les locaux administratifs. Il a de même désigné quatre officiers français pour la direction des affaires. Un délai de 24 heures fut accordé.

Janvier 21. –

À l'expiration du délai les députés turcs reviennent et lui déclare qu'ils ne céderont pas à sa volonté et se tiennent éventuellement prêts à se défendre. Le commandant ordonne aux armes. Émoi violent dans la population entière. Les Turcs poursuivent activement le travail des tranchées sous les yeux des Français. Au signal donné par le commandant de police, Djémil Bey, la fusillade commence et plusieurs chrétiens furent tués. Les Français occupaient la caserne, l'orphelinat allemand (Beyt Chalom), les églises protestante, catholique, latine, Quarante-Martyre, Tachakhan, dépôt de pétrole et autres centres importants.
Janvier 22/24. —

Faibles fusillades, assassins privés. Les Turcs envoient leurs familles hors de la ville ou les places dans des bâtiments et bains publics assez fortifiés. Les Arméniens avertissent les Français de ce qui se fait en signalant le danger grossissant, mais sans avoir une réponse.

Janvier 25/26. —

L’inaction que montrent les Français encourage les Turcs, qui commencent à quitter leurs tranchées et à s’approcher des quartiers chrétiens Caidoul, Etmekdji, Bokas-Kasan, Ajamli, Katounié et Bayazidli, y mettent le feu et canardent les fugitifs. Les habitants du quartier d’Ouloudjami et de la caserne, sommés de se rendre, sont conduits dans des fours à chaux et y sont brûlés vifs. Les Français, simples spectateurs, photographient les incendies. Les Turcs crient aux Arméniens : « Que les Français viennent vous délivrer » et « vous les avez reçus, si bien reçus ». De toutes parts des sanglots et cris se mêlent aux éclats sinistres du feu. Nombre d’Arméniens s’enfuient vers les Français. Quatre cents personnes attirées par ruse dans un khan, y sont mis à mort par les Turcs. Un des témoins accompagne un groupe de 1.200 dont 300 tombent en route. Les survivants arrivent devant l’Église des Quarante-Martys et à leurs cris, en français, « secours aux Arméniens », ils sont repoussés par les mitrailleuses françaises avec l’intention de les pousser vers Islahié ; enfin ils entrent après une heure d’insistance en laissant une cinquantaine de cadavres devant le même poste.

Janvier 27. —

La situation continue de la sorte. Les Français qui avaient mis déjà la main sur les dépôts de céréales de la ville, refusent tout secours aux fugitifs nus et affamés. À grand peine ils donnent une fois 200 grammes de blé cru par personne. Les Turcs versent du pétrole par le moyen d’une pompe à incendie sur l’église arménienne des Quarante-Martys, y jettent des grenades à main et la brûlent. Ils brûlent aussi l’asile de la Croix Rouge arménienne et 600 Arméniennes y réfugiées. La veille, les Arméniens avaient demandé une centaine de soldats français pour encadrer deux cents de leurs jeunes gens et sauver ces malheureux, placés très près de postes français. La réponse du commandant : « Je ne donne de soldats, je m’en f… ». 

 Février 6/7. —


 Février 8/9. —

Un avion français jette des papiers sur trois centres français. Un mouvement extraordinaire se fait parmi eux. Interrogés, ils répondent qu’ils vont rejoindre les nouveaux arrivés à At-Izi pour encercler ensemble l’ennemi. Les Arméniens sollicitent de les accompagner. On refuse en les assurant qu’on reviendra le lendemain les délivrer. Environ 3.000 réfugiés s’éloignent à leur suite quelques minutes après leur départ. Mr. Agop Kerlokian, ancien député, le plus riche et le plus influent de Marache, avait avec un luxe oriental offert une large hospitalité de trois mois aux officiers français. Il fut, lui aussi, abandonné, avec toute sa parenté de 150 personnes, à la fureur de ses ennemis acharnés contre lui.

 Février 10. —

À trois heures post méridien une terrible canonade française réduit en cendres les quartiers. Le Dr. Moustapha, chef des Nationalistes2, vient implorer la paix. Le commandant répond : « Nous nous retirons, le Dr. Wilson et M. Leymann, Américains, tiennent notre place, cessez les massacres, gardez les Arméniens ; peut-être nous reviendrons dans une huitaine ».

 Février 11. —

Février 14. —
Arrivés à Islahié, où les Français, la Croix-Rouge Américaine et l’Union Nationale Arménienned’Adana font parvenir les secours les plus pressants et recueillent les réfugiés.

MLA, fonds 137, section V, doc. 533, ff. 3-6.

***

À Son Excellence
Monsieur Mihran Damadian,
Délégué de la Délégation Arméniennede Paris en Cilicie et Représentant du gouvernement arménien à Adana.

Excellence,

Je me crois en devoir de vous communiquer ce qui suit sur la désastreuse retraite des troupes françaises de Marache.

1. — Permettez-moi tout d’abord de faire remarquer que le second jour après l’entrée des troupes françaises à Marache, au 30 octobre 1919, un soldat de la Légion d’Orient fut tué par une balle turque en plein marché, et le coupable resta impuni.

2. — Quelques semaines après, l’officier de l’Information, M. le sous-lieutenant Ernoult fut attaqué de nuit par quelques Turcs qui ont été mis à la raison, car un d’eux a été tué.

3. — Après l’arrivée de M. le capitaine André, les hostilités s’accentuèrent ; surtout le jour où M. André avait défendu aux Turcs de hisser leur drapeau. Alors une foule de deux mille personnes environ escaladèrent la citadelle et hissèrent leur drapeau. Ni M. le capitaine Fontaine, ni M. André purent réprimer ce troisième attentat à l’Autorité Française. Et si quelques chefs ont été arrêtés, on a dû les relâcher par suite des menaces faites.

4. — Parvenant toujours au but voulu, les Turcs commencèrent bientôt à attaquer les soldats sur les voies de communications entre Marache, Aïntab et Islahié. Les choses prenaient une allure toujours plus dangereuse jusqu’à ce que les voies devinrent presque impraticables.

5. — En cet entre temps, M. Ernoult, comme aussi l’Union Nationale Arménienne et les chefs spirituels des différentes Communautés n’épargnèrent rien de tout ce qui aurait pu améliorer la situation. On s’est maintes fois adressé aux autorités locales comme aussi à celles de Cilicie et on les informait minutieusement de tout ce qui se passait.

6. — Le crime restant toujours impuni, et l’audace turque prenant des mesures de jour en jour plus grandes, les chrétiens de la ville ne purent pas sortir dehors sans être égorgés, ainsi qu’après l’arrivée des troupes françaises jusqu’au mois de janvier on comptait environ 24 assassinés arméniens dont quelques-uns en ville même.

7. — L’arrivée de nouvelles troupes avec M. le Comte Roze des Ordons, la visite de M. le général Quérette n’éteignirent guère la révolte déjà presque fumante. On ne manquait pas à donner de suite aux autorités françaises tous les renseignements qu’on venait d’avoir.

8. — Les symptômes d’une catastrophe imminente se laissaient voir clairement. Une forte organisation avait lieu en ville et aux environs. La milice turque était faite, et générale. Nos rapports réitérés tinrent bien au courant de tout cela les autorités françaises, mais peut-être nous avons quelquefois semblé les déranger. Et notre demande de suppléer à la pénurie des forces françaises fut toujours rejetée, en disant que les forces étaient plus que suffisantes.


10. — Au mois de janvier avec l’arrivée de l’Ex. M. le général Quérette et de quelques troupes, les Turcs se démascèrent.

11. — Le 21 janvier, mercredi à 14 h. 1/4, après l’arrêt de quelques notables employés, envoyés comme délégués à la Place, les hostilités commencèrent par une attaque des gendarmes turcs contre une patrouille française qui circulait au pied de la citadelle, ce que j’ai observé de la terrasse de l’Église Arménocatholique avec M. le lieutenant Latrille, du 412ème, 9ème Cé. Lorsque l’alerte avait été annoncée, de toute une compagnie, nous n’avions dans l’Évêché qu’une quarantaine d’hommes.
12. — Les forces françaises étaient divisées en plusieurs cantonnements, ordinairement dans les églises et khans : Églises Sœur Marie, St Georges, des 40 Martyrs, de St Serge, St Sauveur, Arménienne catholique, l'Église des P.P. Latins, dans le 1er et deuxième temple des Protestants, l'orphelinat Beyt-Chalom, à l'infirmerie et à l'hôpital américain, à la caserne et à la Place.

Voyant que la situation prenait un aspect plutôt menaçant, car les soldats français évitaient toute attaque, les chrétiens furent obligés de s'assembler dans les cantonnements ou bien dans les grandes bâtisses défendues par les Arméniens ; par exemple à l'Église St Sauveur on comptait environ 2.000 Arméniens cath., à l'Église des P.P. Latins 3.700 personnes, au 1er temple protestant environ 1.500, à côté de la maison de Boulgourdjian environ 500, un peu au nord, à l'orphelinat, environ 2.500, à Ste Marie, 1.500 environ, aux 40 Martyrs, un peu plus de deux mille, ainsi de suite, le reste était réfugié aux Collèges américains et à leurs environs, tandis qu'une bonne partie aussi s'abritait sous leur toit, se croyant protégée par les cantonnements voisins.

13. — Au bout d'une dizaine de jours les vivres vinrent presque à manquer aux civils. On y remédia en prenant d'assaut les maisons turques circonvoisines. Dans les derniers jours on se trouvait de beaucoup en meilleure condition qu'aux premiers jours. Le butin servait d'abord aux soldats et le superflu aux civils. Ceux qui avaient quelque chose en fait de denrées ou de bétail l'offraient volontiers aux soldats, par exemple, M. Pemyam APCARIAN, outre le tabac, avait donné une vache et deux veaux ; de l'Église on fournissait très souvent le vin, les poulets, etc. Je veux dire avec cela que les soldats ne souffraient guère de ravitaillement.

14. — D'autant plus que le dimanche 8 février, Monseigneur avait prié le M. le commandant Comeloup, par le lieutenant Lattrille, de vouloir bien envoyer un peu de blé pour les civils. Il lui fut répondu au verse du billet que dès le lendemain on lui envoie des corvées avec quelques soldats français pour fournir aux civils tout le nécessaire en fait de denrées.

15. — Quant à la défense des cantonnements, les civils prenaient une part imminente. Femmes (et des femmes enceintes mêmes), des filles, des enfants, des vieillards, prêlats et prêtres, comme les plus gaillards étaient à l'œuvre nuit et jour. Fallait-il faire un boyau, une barricade, tous et toutes accouraient ; fallait-il éteindre un incendie, sans distinction d'âge et de rang, tout le monde s'y prêtait ; ainsi pour éteindre le feu du cantonnement de la 9ème Cie du 412ème, à l'Église Arménienne catholique, à trois reprises nous donnâmes une vingtaine de blessés parmi lesquels trois prêtres, un Frère.

16. — Les postes les plus avancés, surtout dans les premiers jours où les soldats étaient en petit nombre chez nous au St Sauveur, étaient presque entièrement gardés des civils. Il suffit l'éloge que les officiers en faisaient.

Aux premiers jours de février, le commandant de la Halle au blé avait armé quelques Arméniens. Ceux-ci rétablirent la liaison entre les différents cantonnements et la Place. Cependant ils vinrent à être dépouillés de leurs armes, même personnelles, par quelques officiers, par exemple chez nous, par le capitaine Joli. Ce qui ne nous encourageait pas du tout. Nous étant adressés au général Quéreté pour avoir une partie des munitions et fusils turcs qui étaient en dépôt à la caserne, outre à ne nous être pas donnés, ils furent même brûlés au jour de la retraite sans les laisser à ceux qu'on abandonnait dans la ville.

17. — Voyant que les jours se succédaient sans donner du résultat décisif, les Turcs commencèrent à mettre le feu aux quatre coins de la ville, principalement aux environs des cantonnements pour faire dénicher et les soldats et les civils réfugiés. Pour obtenir ce but, ils n'épargnèrent pas mieux leurs demeures. Ainsi au bout de trois semaines de conflit, plus de la moitié de la ville était ravagée par les flammes. Et comme les réfugiés n'avaient presque rien apporté avec eux, avec leur maison tout brûlait.

18. — Les Turcs, fatigués par les longs jours de combat, désespérés de voir une fin châcuneuse, surtout terrifiés par la triple visite d'un avion français et puis par l'arrivée de la forte colonne du colonel Normand, le 7 février, se mirent en fuite jour et nuit. Les femmes et enfants avaient été envoyés déjà dès le début aux villages environnants, quant aux gens armés, ils quittèrent en grande partie la ville après l'arrivée de l'avion, ne laissant là que deux cents à trois cents hommes. En effet, les coups de fusils devenaient rares et les maisons les plus fréquentées par les Turcs étaient trouvées abandonnées quand les civils chrétiens allaient les attaquer.
19. — Le succès était presque entre notre main, preuve en est que le général recevait plusieurs lettres le suppliant d’épargner les faibles et les innocents. Le capitaine André du 412ème, 9ème Cie, à l’État-Major de M. le colonel Tibot, me disait : « qu’à la veille de la retraite les pourparlers avaient déjà commencé par l’intermédiaire du Dr. Moustapha et que, disait-il, la ville se serait rendue dans 24 heures. Le départ nous était annoncé sans savoir où ».

20. — Le 31 janvier, lorsque l’École Arménienne catholique avait pris feu, le capitaine Joli essaya de quitter le cantonnement, mais sur les demandes de Monseigneur l’Évêque et la panique des fidèles, il ne put réaliser son désir pour ce jour.

21. — Dimanche, 8 février, après l’arrivée de la colonne, lorsque les Turcs étaient les plus abattus et que les chrétiens se croyaient déjà au port du salut, voilà que dans la nuit à lundi (8-9-11) un ordre secret arriva et après minuit plusieurs cantonnements sont abandonnés à l’insu absolu de ceux qui les entouraient.

Je me suis rendu compte deux heures après leur départ. Ils avaient abandonné environ 12 blessés dont plusieurs en convalescence, leur infirmier et une sentinelle. Un sergent de la 9ème Cie du 412ème voulant avertir ce dernier fut intimé d’observer le silence le plus absolu. Au 1er temple protestant un volontaire de la Légion d’Orient voulant avertir du départ quelques camarades qui montaient la garde dans les tranchées, fut menacé d’une balle au cas où il ferait un pas en arrière ; et ainsi trois soldats avec un fusil mitrailleur restèrent là et se voyant ainsi abandonnés par leur chef, ils se retirèrent à l’Église St. Sauveur. Un jeune homme de la famille Kherlakian voulant suivre les soldats du 1er temple, fut menacé d’un revolver.

21. [sic] — Les mêmes choses se répètent dans les différents cantonnements ainsi abandonnés. À peine au courant de la situation je l’ai fait connaître à Monseigneur l’Évêque. On décidé d’envoyer quelques civils pour savoir le pourquoi de ce changement brusque. Les deux frères Fetullahian et les deux frères Apkarian se mirent en route, lorsqu’avec la permission de mon évêque moi aussi je les ai accompagné auprès de la colonne du colonel Normand où se réunissaient les soldats.

22. — Nous arrivâmes au camp avec le jour du 9 février, lundi. Après quelques heures j’ai pu obtenir une audience de M. le colonel Normand auquel j’ai exposé les demandes de Mgr. l’Évêque. Il m’a répondu qu’il n’avait pas du tout l’intention d’abandonner la ville mais que bientôt il la bombarderait. Il fut surpris lorsque je lui parlai des conditions favorables où se trouvait la ville. Le retour en ville, de jour, devenait impossible. De nuit, nous nous adressâmes au colonel Normand, la sortie fut interdite. Pourtant il fallait avertir coûte que coûte le gens abandonnés afin qu’ils viennent rejoindre la colonne ; car on était presque sûr de la prochaine retraite. M. Sérop Kherlakian, (si bien vu jadis) s’adressa à M. le capitaine Fontaine qu’il veuille lui faciliter l’entrée en ville avec quelques soldats et il fut repoussé avec des mots et des manières assez vulgaires. Ne perdant pas courage, il s’adressa de nouveau au colonel Normand par l’intermédiaire de M. l’adjoint Malboeuf pour avoir aussi une réponse négative.

23. — Mardi 10 février, désespérant du sort de ceux qui se trouvaient en ville, j’ai voulu savoir celui de ceux qui s’étaient réfugiés auprès de la colonne, c’est-à-dire au cas où la colonne partirait vers Islahié, les civils pourraient-ils suivre les soldats, il m’a répondu ainsi : « M. l’abbé Maldjian ». Én réponse à votre lettre, le colonel Normand vous fait savoir que les mesures seront prises en temps utile, mais il ne peut pas vous affirmer que la colonne partira, ni dans quelle direction. P[ost] [Office]. L’officier adjoint Duval-Arnaud ». Cela me fut communiqué presque au coucher du soleil du 10, lorsque déjà les ordres du départ étaient donnés, et que déjà les préparatifs se faisaient.

24. — Le R.P. Matère Muré, curé latin, s’était adressé au général Quérette, le 9 février, pour savoir le pourquoi du changement. Il reçut la réponse le soir du 10 lorsque déjà il se trouvait dans les bauxaurs hors couvent. Le général lui permit « d’amener avec lui les Pères et ceux de ses paroissiens qu’il jugerait utile et avec un silence absolu » et quand au reste 3.700 personnes ?

25. — Mercredi 11 février, à deux heures du matin, la colonne se mit en marche vers Islahié et 3.200 civils environ les suivaient. À Eloglou le R.P. Muré interrogea le général Quérette sur la retraite et il lui fut répondu qu’il avait été obligé de donner sa soumission. Le lendemain 12, à Belpourar, M. Sérop Kherlakian l’interrogea sur la même chose et il lui fut répondu qu’il avait été obligé d’obéir à un ordre donné.
De 20.000 habitants chrétiens que comptait la ville, 3.200 environ étaient en route, de 4-5 mille ont été tués durant les 21 jours de guerre et le reste fut abandonné à la merci des ennemis avec tant de blessés français et arméniens qui pourtant avaient contribué avec toute leur énergie à l’activité des soldats.

(Signé) : L’abbé Pascal Maldjian Adana, le 28 février 1920.

MLA, fonds 137, section III, doc. 10327. ff. 1-10.

***

Communiqué du Bureau de Presse & d’Information Arménien
9, rue du Boccador,
Paris

La vérité sur les événements tragiques de Marache

Nous recevons d’une source autorisée le rapport suivant sur les événements tragiques de Marache qui ont coûté la vie à plus de 20.000 Arméniens:

L’origine des événements de Marache doit être recherchée, d’après le témoignage du capitaine André, gouverneur français de la ville, dans le fait que ces derniers essayèrent d’amener le drapeau turc de la forteresse de Marache et de hisser à sa place le drapeau français.

Si les mêmes événements ne se sont pas produits à Adana c’est parce que, dès les premiers jours de l’armistice, les troupes françaises qui avaient occupé Adana avaient amené le drapeau turc, tandis que le commandement britannique avait laissé flotter le drapeau turc à Marache jusqu’au 20 novembre de l’année dernière, date à laquelle les troupes britanniques ont été retirées de la ville. Quant le drapeau turc a été amené par les troupes françaises, la population turque de Marache considérant cet acte comme une atteinte portée à son droit, s’est ruée à l’attaque de la forteresse et a insulté le drapeau français en le mettant en pièces. Le capitaine André et le commandant français du détachement de la Légion Arménienne à Marache, forte de 400 hommes, ont jugé plus sage de ne pas recourir à des mesures répressives en attendant des ordres ultérieurs.

L’indulgence montrée en cette occasion par les autorités françaises encouragea grandement la population turque ; la gendarmerie turque de la ville afficha publiquement dès cet incident sa sympathie au mouvement nationaliste et cette attitude encouragea la formation de bandes irrégulières, dans le but avéré de couper les lignes de communications entre Marache et Adana, et de se livrer au pillage et aux massacres. Le haut commandement français, dépêcha à Marache des troupes assez nombreuses sous le commandement du général Querette, dans le but de restaurer la sécurité et de rétablir le prestige français. En même temps que le général Querette, un certain capitaine Morieux arrivait à Marache comme gouverneur de la ville, nommé par l’administrateur en chef de la Cilicie, le colonel Brémont.

À ce moment là les forces françaises de Marache s’élevaient à 6.000 hommes de troupe.

Le capitaine Morieux, pour inaugurer son entrée en fonction a invité chez lui le mutessarif (gouverneur) turc et les notables turcs du pays et leur a déclaré que les établissements gouvernementaux devaient être mis à sa disposition et qu’il devait avoir droit de contrôle sur toutes les transactions du gouvernement. En même temps que le capitaine Morieux tenait ce discours le drapeau français était hissé sur la forteresse. Les notables turcs ayant décliné de donner leur consentement avant d’avoir consulté au préalable la population turque de la ville, le capitaine Morieux les retint comme otages et seul l’adjoint au mutessarif fut autorisé de sortir pour aller communiquer au peuple l’ordre du gouvernement français. Mais à peine ce dernier avait-il rejoint les Turcs en ville qu’un signal était donné et les Turcs attaquaient de tous côtés les Arméniens (21 janvier 1920).

Quoique pris à l’improviste, les Arméniens se défendirent héroiquement, tout en rassemblant la population sans défense dans les bâtiments de l’Eglise Arménienne et du Monastère Latin.

Durant 21 jours les Arméniens défendirent bravoement les femmes et les enfants. Et pendant tout ce temps 6.000 hommes de troupes françaises restèrent en expectative, cantonnés dans leurs baraques situées
sur une colline isolée au nord de la ville. Leur action s’est bornée à bombarder les Turcs de temps à autre.

Les autorités françaises ont insoucusement négligé de garder leurs linges de ravitaillement et de communications et c’est ainsi que les troupes françaises, comme nous l’apprenons, ont été obligées d’abattre leurs mulets pour s’en nourrir.

Le colonel Normand qui est renommé comme turcophile, ayant appris les événements de Marache, s’est mis en route d’Adana avec 1.000 hommes de troupe pour secourir Marache, mais sans s’être suffisamment approvisionné et n’ayant apparemment pas l’intention ferme de délivrer la ville. À son arrivée devant Marache, 8 à 9.000 personnes avaient déjà été tuées, tant du côté arménien que du côté turc, pendant ces trois semaines de combat et les Turcs ont proposé de se rendre, pourvu qu’on leur donnât la promesse que leurs femmes et leurs enfants seraient épargnés. Il paraît cependant que le colonel Normand, sans faire attention à ces propositions de reddition, donna au général Quérétere l’instruction de quitter la ville et de se retirer. Ces faits nous ont été dévoilés par les témoignages du messager turc qui nous déclara en même temps que le général Quérétere avait quitté Marache malgré sa volonté en en jetant toute la responsabilité sur le colonel Normand.

Les Arméniens de Marache n’étaient pas tenus au courant de ces négociations. Au coucher du soleil, les troupes françaises essayèrent d’enfermer les officiers arméniens dans leurs habitations et elles fusillèrent quelques Arméniens qui s’apprêtaient à les suivre. Les Français, sans en avertir personne, mirent le feu à leurs baraques et aux dépôts qu’ils avaient capturés des Turcs. Le jour suivant les Arméniens, apercevant que le drapeau français était remplacé sur la forteresse par le drapeau turc, furent pris de panique et 4.000 personnes qui avaient cherché refuge dans le Monastère Latin tâchèrent de suivre les troupes françaises. Sur ces 4.000 personnes, 1.700 seulement purent atteindre Islahié, le restant ayant été tué ou mort de froid dans une tourmente de neige. Un autre groupe de 2.000 Arméniens essayèrent aussi de s’enfuir mais furent fusillés par les Turcs cachés au coin des rues. Sur ce groupe de 2.000 Arméniens, 27 seulement réussirent à atteindre Adana.

Il est impossible d’évaluer, dans les conditions actuelles, le nombre exact de nos pertes. Suivant des statistiques établies par l’Union Nationale Arménienne en octobre 1919, il y avait à cette époque 24.000 Arméniens à Marache et 5.680 dans son voisinage. Sur ce nombre, 1.900 réfugiés seulement réussirent à atteindre Adana. Quant au sort de ceux qui sont restés à Marache, nous n’en avons aucune information exacte. Le journal « Hakimot-I-Millié », l’organe officiel de Moustapha Kemal pacha, évalue à 1.500 le nombre des Arméniens se trouvant à Marache à l’heure actuelle, tandis que le Val turc d’Adana évalue leur nombre à 8.500. Nous ne sommes en mesure de dire lequel de ces chiffres donnés est exact, mais malheureusement il y a tout lieu de craindre qu’entre 16.000 et 24.000 de nos compatriotes ont été tués ou massacrés pendant les événements de Marache.

Paris, le 24 mars 1920.

ANA, fonds 430, inv. 1., doss. 456, ff. 31-32.

***

Extraits du livre de Br. M. Abadie

Les quatre sièges d’Aïntab (1920-1921)

23 décembre : une compagnie du 412e, allant de Marasch [sic] à Aïntab, rencontre à hauteur de Bazardjik un groupe d’hommes armés.

Palabre sans interprète. Coup de fusil, deux brigands tués, deux prisonniers. La nouvelle de cette affaire cause une recrudescence d’agitation toujours entretenu par les menées nationalistes et la propagande contre les Français.

Le Comité de défense des droits nationaux est particulièrement actif. Les tièdes et les hésitants sont maltraités. Il est recommandé d’attaquer les officiers français isolés, de semer la défiance et la zizanie entre Arméniens et Français, de tuer les Arméniens qui ont contact avec les Français.

En fait, de nombreux meurtres d’Arméniens sont effectués en ville et dans la campagne ; le commandement français ne réussit pas à maintenir l’ordre et le calme. D’autre part, quelques notables turcs, comme Chukri-Bey et Kadri pacha, qui sont soupçonnés de francophilie, sont menacés de mort. Les distributions d’armes et de munitions continuent. Des postes turcs sont placés à côté des postes français.
25 décembre : de nouvelles arrivées d’armes et de munitions (venant de Sivas, Karpout, Malatia) sont signalées à Bazarjik où Kilid-Ali-Bey annonce que 12.000 réguliers sont attendus de Sivas pour marcher sur Marasch. Les tchétiès pillent les villages et racontent les passants. Une active propagande est faite auprès des Kurdes de la région de Bazarjik pour les entraîner à la guerre contre les Français. Le Club unioniste de Marasch a rouvert et entretient l’excitation.


30 décembre : la « Fête du drapeau turc » offre aux Turcs l’occasion de faire de belles manifestations patriotiques destinées à exciter l’esprit national. La journée se passe sans incidents à Aïntab, mais l’agitation persiste à Marasch, où la situation se tend de plus en plus ; les attaques à main armée continuent de plus belle ; trois Arméniens assassinés aux abords de la ville ; beaucoup d’autres disparaissent sans laisser de traces. Les bandes armées se grossissent chaque jour de nouvelles recrues et terrorisent les campagnes. Les lignes télégraphiques sont coupées.

1er janvier 1920 : les chefs Kemalistes de Marasch, encouragés par la tolérance des Français, ont décidé de barrer toutes les routes et de déclara la guerre ouverte. Une campagne de fausses nouvelles continue à maintenir l’agitation ; des comptes rendus inexacts sont envoyés à Moustapha Kemal pacha, au sujet des prétendues menées françaises. Le francophile Chukri-Bey devient hésitant ; car il ne croit plus que les Français montreront l’énergie nécessaire pour châtier les crimes et agir en maîtres.

Marasch se couvre de barricades ; des tranchées et des murs sont construits fébrilement. On s’attend à une explosion prochaine de graves hostilités.

... 8-9 janvier : le bataillon Corneloup (17e régiment de tirailleurs sénégalais), allant d’Islahiéh à Marasch, doit livrer combat, les 7 et 8 janvier, dans la région d’El-Oglou. L’affaire est très chaude ; la colonne perd 7 tués et 21 blessés ; elle arrive à Marasch le 10 janvier.

12 janvier : La colonne Marty (deux compagnies du 18e régiment de tirailleurs algériens, une compagnie de mitrailles, une section d’artillerie de montagne) quitte Aïntab pour Sachsegeuzou, où elle doit rejoindre la colonne Thibault qui se rend à Marasch. Le 13 janvier, la colonne Marty, pendant sa marche d’Araplar à Sachsegeuzou, est attaquée à plusieurs reprises par des bandes de tchétiès et subit des pertes sérieuses.

Une enquête est menée sur place le 14 janvier par le moutassarif d’Aïntab, le commandant de gendarmerie et l’officier de renseignements du cercle, dans le but d’établir les responsabilités et arrêter le conflit entre les soldats et les villageois. Aucun résultat appréciable.

Les colonnes Thibault et Marty réunies arrivent à Marasch, où elles consolident notre situation.

13 janvier : le général commandant les troupes expéditionnaires est forcé d’aller à Marasch essayer de calmer l’agitation et régler de multiples incidents.

20 janvier : ... Télégraphe définitivement coupé. Les émissaires sur Marash ne peuvent plus passer. Le pont de l’Ak-Sou est détruit ; des groupes ennemis armés sont retranchés aux abords.

Lieut-Colonel Br. M. Abadie,


***

Extrait des mémoires de Materne Muré

Le massacre de Maraché (Février 1920)

Vers la moitié de 1919, à Marache et dans nos postes de mission à proximité de cette ville, le nombre des Arméniens s’était élevé à vingt mille ; églises, couvents, écoles nous furent restitués, partout les Pères Franciscains rentrèrent dans leurs paroisses et avec un nouveau zèle ils recommencèrent, au prix de grands sacrifices pécuniers, à remettre sur pied les diverses œuvres d’aide et assistance pour le bien temporel et spirituel de leurs ouailles.

Les Turcs rageaient en voyant le retour dans leurs foyers d’un si grand nombre d’Arméniens. Ils s’aperçurent que leur plan d’extermination totale des chrétiens n’avait pas réussi et voyant en vie ces témoins de leurs abominables crimes, ils furent gênés d’entretenir avec eux de bonnes relations. Les Turcs de ces parages sentirent que leur
cruauté et leur perfidie avaient creusé un abîme infranchissable entre le bourreau et la victime.

Dès le retour des Arméniens dans leur pays natal, des désordres étaient à craindre et en prévision de cette éventualité les Puissances s’étaient réservé le droit d’envoyer des troupes, surtout dans les zones d’où, selon les termes de l’armistice, les forces turques devaient se retirer. Ces zones étaient celles d’Adana, d’Alntab et de Marache. Des forces anglaises d’abord s’installèrent un peu partout et au mois d’octobre 1919 un pacte fut signé en vertu duquel, à l’expiration de ce mois, en Syrie et en Cilicie, les forces anglaises devraient être remplacées par des forces françaises.

Le 30 octobre les Français firent leur entrée à Marache et y furent reçus de la part des chrétiens avec un enthousiasme voisin du délire ; des terrasses de leurs maisons, les Turcs contemplèrent très respectueusement cette manifestation grandiose. Ils n’en étaient certes pas enchantés, mais du moins ils se gardèrent de manifester leur mécontentement. Si les chefs turcs du Comité « Union et Progrès » de Marache n’avaient pas eu le loisir de fomenter dans la foule la haine des Français et des Arméniens, l’occupation si pacifique de Marache aurait été applaudie par la population turque elle-même. Malheureusement les menées kémalistes dirigées par le gouvernement local n’ont pu être entravées, bien qu’elles se manifestassent en plein jour, surtout pendant les mois de décembre 1919 et de janvier 1920, par la distribution continue d’armes et de munitions aux habitants de la ville et des environs, par l’arrivée en ville de quelques mitrailleuses, par le percement de créneaux dans les murs des maisons et enfin par la construction d’une barricade, une semaine avant que la révolte éclatât. Les Turcs crurent que les Français, en voyant ces préparatifs, perdraient patience et que se ruant sur les Turcs, ils se seraient tu en devant les créneaux. Mais les Français n’avaient nulle envie d’attaquer les Turcs et maintes fois ils leur avaient notifié, qu’ils n’étaient pas venus pour faire la guerre, mais pour maintenir la paix, et pour coopérer avec eux au relèvement de leur pays ! Ces mots ont été prononcés par le général Q..., à Marache, le 15 décembre 1919, devant une assemblée de notables turcs.


... Toute communication avec les religieux des villages fut interrompue dès le 25 décembre 1919. Les Pères ont certainement tâché de m’envoyer des lettres, mais aucun courrier ne put arriver à Marache, parce que les Turcs avaient occupé les ponts du Djihan, fleuve distant d’une douzaine de kilomètres de l’ouest de la ville. Tout chrétien qui tenta de passer le fleuve fut tué et jeté à l’eau. Un Turc du nom d’Ahmed, originaire d’Avassur, près de Yenidjékala, nous raconta avoir vu en route des cadavres de chrétiens et avoir causé avec le R. P. Albert Amarisse, qui lui avait offert une récompense de trois livres turques en or pour porter une lettre à Marache ; ce Turc n’accepta pas de peur que la lettre ne tombât dans les mains des bandits postés à l’entrée et à la sortie des ponts du Djihan.

Par quelles angoisses ont dû passer nos malheureux Pères, les longs jours qui précédèrent leur martyre ! Ce martyr coïncide à peu près avec le 21 janvier 1920, jour où la révolte éclata à Marache.

Ce 21 janvier, à midi précis, le commissaire de police tira en l’air cinq coups de revolver dans une rue voisine du couvent. C’était signal convenu. Aussitôt je vois de la fenêtre du couvent un rassemblement se former sur la plate-forme de la citadelle située en face de moi. C’était la bande des insurgés ; ils font, sous le commandement de sergents de la gendarmerie, quelques exercices en brandissant leurs fusils ; puis comme des forcenés ils se lancent en ville pour attaquer les « ghiavours » (dénomination que les Turcs donnent aux chrétiens et qui veut dire fidèle). Toute la population turque de Marache courut aux armes et se mit à faire pleuvoir des milliers de balles sur les maisons chrétiennes. Les premières victimes furent des Français, de pauvres poilus, qui ne soupçonnaient rien étaient allés au marché avec leurs chariots. Six d’entre eux tombèrent frappés par des balles, tirées par des agents de police. Partout les sentinelles françaises étaient en butte à ces balles traitresses ;
plusieurs de ces soldats furent tués, entre autre ceux qui étaient de faction à la porte du couvent et à l’entrée de l’hôpital. Une patrouille française de cinq hommes fut égorgée dans un cimetière turc. Des compagnies de soldats, qui à cause de la révolte inattendue durent à la hâte changer de cantonnement, furent obligés de passer devant les créneaux des maisons turques du quartier Qaia-Cache et plusieurs d’entre eux, parmi lesquels des officiers, trouvèrent la mort. Le dirai-je ? Un pauvre poilu, soldat de liaison au bureau de la poste turque, eut les parties sexuelles coupées et en les lui mettant dans les mains, les Turcs lui dirent : « Voilà ton courrier, va le porter à la Place ! » Le malheureux eut une mort atroce ; il expira six jours plus tard. Ce premier jour de la révolte, quelques chrétiens aussi furent tués, mais la plupart purent se mettre en sûreté en cherchant asile dans les églises, dans les écoles chrétiennes, et partout où les Français avaient leur cantonnement. Ces cantonnements étaient au nombre de douze.

Nous voilà à la tombée de la nuit du 21 janvier. Les forces turques étaient imposantes ; leur plan d’investissement des cantonnements français et des quartiers chrétiens était si bien conçu et si bien appliqué que toute liaison entre les différents cantonnements fut rendue impossible, même entre ceux qui étaient voisins l’un de l’autre.

Les Turcs estimant que toute résistance, soit de la part des Français, soit de la part des Arméniens, n’aurait aucun succès, s’enthérèrent à envoyer le lendemain un ultimatum de quatre conditions au Commandement de la Place. Cet ultimatum impertinent en même temps que ridicule stipulait l’abandon de tout matériel de guerre et de transport entre les mains des Turcs, le libre départ des officiers et l’emprisonnement des soldats français. Ces conditions furent repoussées avec dignité et dès lors les Turcs continuèrent la bataille engagée la veille, une bataille qui sur tout les points de la ville dura jusqu’au matin du 11 février, en tout vingt et un jours, jours d’enfer, jour de destructions, de massacres, jours qui voulraient nous, si les pérécités s’en déroulaient devant vos yeux sur les films d’un cinéma !

Le but des assaillants turcs était l’anéantissement total de tous les chrétiens, y compris les Français. Assurés qu’aucune force de la ville ou du dehors ne pouvait les surprendre, les Turcs commencèrent tout à leur aise à massacrer les chrétiens de tout âge, qui étaient restés dans leurs maisons. Le premier massacre eut lieu au quartier chrétien, dit Chékerdère, situé dans un vallon derrière la citadelle, restée entre les mains des Turcs. Le feu fut mis à l’église arménienne dite Sourd Kevo (Sainte-Gregoire) et à toutes les maisons du quartier. Une compagnie française, qui y cantonna, aidée par des Arméniens courageux, put se réfugier dans un autre quartier. Femmes, enfants, vieillards, obligés de rester, tombèrent sous le coucelas des Turcs et pour éviter la peine d’enterrer les cadavres, ceux-ci les traînèrent et les jetèrent dans un four à chaux en activité.

Les colonnes de fumée et les lueurs sinistres de ce premier incendie donnèrent avis aux Turcs des villages où se trouvaient nos Pères, que la Guerre Sainte avait commencé. C’était le 23 janvier. Eux aussi, donnant libre cours aux sentiments dictés par leurs croyances, se ruèrent sur nos chapelles, nos hospices, sur les chrétiens réunis au pied de l’autel, priant et écoutant les derniers mois de réconfort de leurs pasteurs, nos infortunés confrères ! Trois d’entre eux furent tués à coup de revolver, deux autres brûlés vifs, leurs ouailles périsirent avec eux dans les flammes, qui en peu de temps détruisirent nos missions de Yenidjékalé, de Donghélé, de Moudjouk-derési. Le nombre de tués dans nos villages fut d’environ un millier.

Ainsi prit fin la journée du 23 janvier hors de Marache et bien que personne ne nous eût apporté la douloreuse nouvelle de ce désastre, nous étions pourtant convaincus, vu les menaces antérieures des Turcs, qu’il avait eu lieu et que les mêmes désastres se reproduiraient à Marache, les jours suivants. En effet, le 24 janvier, les Turcs mirent le feu aux quatre coins de la ville pour obliger les chrétiens à sortir de leurs demeures. Dès ce moment jusqu’à la fin de ces jours terribles les incendies continuèrent jour et nuit : tantôt les lames de feu se tournaient vers le nord, tantôt vers le sud, les flammes avançaient toujours, pour détruire ou pour encercler de plus en plus les cantonnements où avec les Français se trouvaient des milliers de chrétiens.

Durant cet incendie les coups de fusils, le claquement des mitraillettes, entrecoupés de coups de canon, ne cessèrent pas un instant de part et d’autre ; car les assiégés, Français et Arméniens, ne manquaient pas de riposter.
Les maisons brûlées à Marache étaient pour la plupart des maisons de chrétiens ; j’estime que toute maison chrétienne a été incendiée ; parmi les constructions d’importance qui furent la proie des flammes, je compte cinq églises arméniennes, trois églises protestantes, une foule de magasins et quelques mosquées. Beaucoup d’enfants et de femmes périrent dans les flammes.

Spectacle terrifiant : des malheureux, encerclés par le feu, couraient affolés sur les toits et puis, les maisons s’effondrèrent, ils disparaissaient dans un gouffre de flammes, de fumée et d’étincelles. La plus effrayante de toutes ces scènes fut l’incendie de l’église arménienne de la Sainte-Vierge (Asdouwats-adzine), plus terrible que celui de l’église protestante, dite la Première, d’où les soldats français et 1.500 chrétiens purent s’enfuir en creusant des boyaux, qui donnaient accès à d’autres maisons chrétiennes. Cette église était située sur une colline, à une petite distance de notre couvent. Là s’étaient réfugiés 50 soldats franco-arméniens et environ 2.000 chrétiens. L’anéantissement de cette église avec ceux qui s’y étaient réfugiés demanda huit jours de travail pénible aux insurgés turcs.

D’une fenêtre du couvent je regardai à maintes reprises, avec mes lunettes, la tragédie qui s’y déroulait. Les premiers jours l’église était entourée de trois côtés par des maisons flambantes, formant un cercle de feu, qui empêchait toute communication avec elle. Du côté est il y avait un quartier turc où les insurgés étaient si nombreux et si fortement retranchés, que tout effort sérieux de la part des Français pour venir en aide à ces malheureux fut rendu difficile. Le presbytère fut d’abord détruit ; le lendemain ce fut le tour de l’école située à côté de l’église.

La dernière nuit je fus stupéfait de voir un immense brasier sur la terrasse de l’église, formée d’une épaisse couche de terre : « Voilà, pensai-je, que les Turcs y ont allumé un bûcher de bois de sapin ». Je m’étais trompé, ce n’était pas du sapin, c’était du pétrole : ils en avaient inondé la couche de terre de la terrasse de manière que le pétrole enflammé pénétrait la terre, puis incendiait les traverses du plafond et dès ce moment tout espoir de salut fut perdu. Les chrétiens qui s’élançaient hord de l’église furent égorgés, ceux qui restèrent, périrent dans les flammes : des 50 soldats et des 2.000 chrétiens, presque personne ne se sauva.

Décrire les péripéties que subit chaque cantonnement et la foule des chrétiens, qui dans leur enceinte se croyaient à l’abri de la mort, est une tâche pénible ; c’est l’histoire d’un long martyre. Je me borne à dire quelques mots sur ce qui se passa dans mon église durant les xing et un jours de siège.

Lorsque la révolte éclata, les garçons et les filles étaient en classe ; ils ne pouvaient plus retourner à la maison. Les chrétiens des quartiers les plus proches de l’église se réfugièrent chez nous et leur nombre s’élève à 3.700. Les soldats français, la plupart des Algériens, étaient 210 hommes. Notre emplacement situé sur un grand rocher, qui domine une grande partie de la ville, était devenu une forteresse inextinguible ; les milliers de balles qui nous furent envoyées chaque jour, s’aplatissaient contre les murs, durs comme le granit et les Turcs, croyant qu’une grande force armée se trouvait chez nous, n’osèrent nous attaquer de près. Ils se contentèrent de tirer du haut des minarets des mosquées sur les soldats et les civils ; quelques-uns furent frappés. Au couvent il n’y avait pas assez de vivres pour nourrir une foule si énorme et la nécessité absolue de s’en procurer se fit sentir. Il fallut ouvrir une brèche dans l’enceinte, que les positions fortifiées des Turcs avaient formée autour de nous. Les soldats, courageusement aidé par les civils, commencèrent à creuser un boyau, du couvent vers la place, qui était à deux kilomètres de distance. Après avoir creusé longtemps, il fallut prendre d’assaut quelques maisons turques, qui dominaient le boyau, parmi lesquelles la célèbre « Maison blanche ». Au prix de sacrifices de quelques vies humaines, une liaison fut enfin créée avec la place, d’où des munitions et un peu de vivres purent être portés au couvent. Presque tous les soldats étaient obligés de sortir du couvent pour la garde et la défense du boyau et ainsi très peu de soldats restèrent chez nous, d’où la vive inquiétude d’être surpris par les Turcs. Gare à nous si les Turcs s’apercevaient que la garnison était si réduite !

Pour induire les Turcs en erreur quant à nos forces le capitaine B... prit l’heureuse initiative d’armer une trentaine de jeunes Arméniens qui, postés derrière les créneaux des murs de l’enceinte du jardin du couvent, ne cessèrent de répondre jour et nuit aux coups de fusil des Turcs ; maintes fois les poilus félicitèrent ces braves en observant leur tir exact et apprirent leur courage.
Vu l’incertitude de l’avenir et le peu d’espoir d’être secourus du dehors, de grands travaux de défense s’imposèrent. Devant le couvent on construisit de petits fortins, dans la cour on éleva des remparts, toutes les baies du clocher et les fenêtres du couvent furent fermées par des murs de pierres ou de terre ; les Arméniens concoururent avec élan à toutes ces corvées ; la nuit des escouades devaient sortir du couvent pour aller chercher des pierres, des poutres, des vivres ; pour ramener les morts ou les blessés, que l’action de la journée avait laissés dans les rues. L’abnégation des Arméniens pendant ces rudes travaux fut admirable, même héroïque. Deux soldats furent envoyés le 4 février d’un cantonnement situé loin du couvent à la Place, en plein midi ! Ils devaient passer le pont du vallon dit « Qanle-Derê » (vallon du sang) au pied de la colline où se trouve le couvent. À peine au milieu du pont, une vive fusillade parti des barricades aux deux extrémités du pont les abattit. À la tombée de la nuit le capitaine B... voulut à tout prix, que les cadavres fussent portés au couvent et il ordonna aux Arméniens d’aller les chercher. Plusieurs s’offrirent à exécuter l’ordre donné. Ils demandèrent des armes qui leur furent refusées. Malgré cela quatre d’entre eux sortirent du couvent, arrivèrent au pont et prirent le mort sur les dos. À ce moment les Turcs ayant entendu du bruit, ouvrirent la fusillade. L’un des Arméniens fut blessé mortellement et vint expire au couvent. Ces braves ne méritent-ils pas d’être décorés ?

Les sorties de nuit aux maisons turques et arméniennes, qui à l’approche de l’incendie avaient été évacuées en toute hâte par les habitants, nous procuraient des vivres pour nourrir une communauté de plus de 3.700 personnes. Des poutres à demi-brûlées, que du dehors on apporta au couvent, servirent à faire une soupe de blé dans deux énormes marmites et à chauffer les plaques en tôle pour y cuire du pain en feuilles. Mon très regretté frère le Père Joseph présida chaque jour à la distribution des vivres, qui étaient en quantité suffisante pour ne pas mourir, trop mince pourtant pour s’assurer une longue vie. Des officiers français, animés des sentiments de la plus noble piété à la vue de ces malheureux, avaient la charité de distribuer l’après-midi une poignée de blé cuit aux 300 petits enfants de chez nous, qui n’avaient aucune idée de tout ce qui se passait autour d’eux.

Le 1er février, à la tombée de la nuit, un officier, le lieutenant V..., hissa le drapeau français sur le clocher. Le lendemain, à la nouvelle que le drapeau tricolore était hissé, une étincelle d’espoir ranima la foule de blessés et de malades, qui gisaient les uns contre les autres sur les dalles des trois nefs de l’église. En voyant le drapeau, qui d’ailleurs avait été hissé la même nuit sur tous les endroits où se trouvaient les Français (j’ai compté 15 drapeaux), tout le monde crut que par cet acte solennel Marache était définitivement conquise aux Français.

La raison pour laquelle le drapeau venait d’être hissé, ne fut comprise que sept jours après. La place avait donné cet ordre, parce qu’une colonne de secours sortie d’Adana était en marche vers Marache ; le drapeau devait faire comprendre à la colonne la situation des emplacements français en cas de bombardement. La vue du drapeau consola les chrétiens et fit désespérer les Turcs, qui, se croyant perdus, continuèrent la bataille avec plus de fureur que jamais, pour réduire, selon leur dire, la ville en un four à chaux avant de la laisser aux mains des Français.

Le 7 février, à lamidi précis, la colonne, déjà en vue de la ville depuis le grand matin, arrive, établissant son campement à quatre kilomètres dans la plaine, devant la ville. Une partie de la colonne contourne la ville du sud au nord, passant devant la partie ouest et pouvant communiquer avec la place. Aussitôt commença un petit bombardement, qui fut répété le 8, le 9 et surtout l’après-midi du 10 février pour préparer et pour couvrir la retraite des Français. Les Turcs n’ayant pas le moindre soupçon que les Français allaient se retirer, hissèrent le drapeau blanc pour se rendre. Hélas, on ne peut utiliser la défée des Turcs ; l’ordre d’évacuer la ville dans la nuit du 10 au 11 février était irrévocable ! Le soir du 9 février je vis les officiers français, à table comme d’ordinaire au réfectoire du couvent, dans un état d’âme des plus pénibles. Je compris qu’il y avait quelque chose de très grave ; je me présente aux officiers et les prie de me dire pourquoi ils sont si pensifs. Alors le capitaine B... me dit : « Mon Père, j’ai reçu l’ordre d’évacuer le couvent, mais je vous ordonne de ne rien dire à personne ». Précaution inutile, car plusieurs personnes, en voyant le lendemain les préparatifs que faisaient les soldats français, en conclurent qu’ils hâtaient leur départ.
Je fus assailli de questions auxquelles je répondis évasivement : ce qui ne fit que confirmer la certitude de mes interrogateurs.

L’évacuation de la ville fut une opération très délicate et le secret absolument nécessaire pour la faire réussir sans perte d’hommes.


En partie cela est vrai, malheureusement.

Pour se faire une idée de l’évacuation, il faut connaître les lieux de refuge des chrétiens, qui étaient situés dans ligne droite d’un bout de la ville (le Sud) à l’autre (le Nord), sur un parcours de trois kilomètres. En bas de la ville il y avait l’église arménienne (brûlée) dite « des 40 Martyrs » (Karsoun Manouk) 19. À peine la colonne de délivrance fut-elle arrivée devant la ville, les 2.000 réfugiés se trouvant dans cette église purent sortir de la ville et rester à côté de la colonne. Parmi ces réfugiés était le R. Abbé Pascal (Haroutioun) Moldjian, prêtre arménien-catholique, sorti de son église le 9 février de grand matin, et se rendant au camp pour avoir des nouvelles. Notez bien que par mesure militaire selon la situation d’alors, il était absolument défendu aux civils de rentrer en ville.

Au milieu de la ville, comme dans un triangle, se trouvent l’église arméno-catholique, puis l’américaine dite la Première église (brûlée) et en face d’elle sur une colline l’église des Pères Franciscains ; ces églises sont séparées l’une de l’autre par des quartiers turcs, où les insurgés se trouvaient en grand nombre et qui jusqu’au dernier moment rendirent absolument impossible toute communication entre elles.

L’église américaine en face de nous, prit feu l’après-midi du 9 février et les soldats et les civils qui s’y trouvaient (environ 1.500) purent se retirer par des trous percés auparavant dans les murs ; la plupart se joignirent aux chrétiens à l’église arménienne-catholique. La nouvelle du prochain départ ne fut pas publiée à cette église, où les mesures militaires dont j’ai parlé plus haut, étaient logiquement les mêmes que celles prises pour mon église. On dit que seulement le matin du 11 février les chrétiens y réfugiés s’aperçurent du départ et alors une foule de 2.000 personnes se lança dans les rues pour rejoindre ceux qui déjà étaient en route avec moi. Ce sont les 2.000 dont les Études (page 577) parlent et qui furent presque tous massacrés, non par les bandes turques qu’ils rencontrèrent en route mais par les habitants turcs de Marache, qui coururent après eux en les tuant à coups de haches et de couteaux, quelques-uns même eurent la tête sciée. Les survivants, deux ou trois personnes, parmi lesquelles était M. Serop Kharlakian, nous rejoignirent le même jour et ce dernier me raconta ces particularités navrantes.

À l’église des Pères Franciscains se trouvaient, comme il a été dit plus haut, 3.700 réfugiés. Les chariots qui y furent détruits, les cuisines ambulantes qui y furent rendues inutilisables, les mitraillettes qui y furent démontées, toutes ces actions qui eurent lieu l’après-midi du 10 février, indiquaient clairement ce qu’il m’avait été défendu de dire. Le moment du départ avait été fixé à 6 heures précises du soir. On nous avait invité, le frère Joseph et moi, avec nos domestiques, à nous tenir prêts à la grande porte du couvent ; il nous était promis d’accompagner les militaires qui devaient passer par le boyau. Avec insistance on nous conseilla, même on nous demanda, d’évacuer le couvent. C’était décidé ; le signal du départ fut donné ; vite nous nous jetâmes dans le boyau, pour nous rendre à la place, distante d’une vingtaine de minutes. Mais du côté gauche du boyau il y avait une mosquée, qui à cinquante pas le dominait et qui par respect culturel fut toujours laissée aux mains des insurgés. Bien que nous grimpions dans le plus grand silence, les Turcs de la mosquée durent entendre du bruit et soupçonnaient qu’il y avait du monde dans le boyau, ils ouvrirent, une heure durant, une vive fusillade sur nous. Les balles frappèrent les bords du boyau ; nous nous étions accroupis le plus bas possible et nous priâmes Saint Antoine de nous protéger contre les balles turques.

Ici je demande à ceux qui critiquent d’une façon si amère les mesures prises par les Français, « est-ce que pour assurer la vie des soldats, ils auraient pu agir différemment au moment de l’évacuation ? » Pouvaient-ils permettre aux civils de les accompagner dans les rues de la ville ? Malheur, si lors de la fusillade que nous subîmes dans le boyau, des milliers de civils s’étaient trouvés avec nous ! On comprend que tant de monde n’aurait pu entrer dans un boyau : les civils auraient dû marcher sur la route exposée au feu turc et dans ce cas ni les soldats ni les civils n’auraient pu se sauver. Les Français qui se trouvaient au centre de la ville durent donc penser avant tout à eux-mêmes, puis au sort des
civils, et ils ont agi en conséquence. Lorsque la fusillade dirigée sur le boyau prit fin et nous permit d’en sortir, il était environ 7 heures et demie du soir. Alors le capitaine B... qui était avec nous, voyant que les soldats étaient en sûreté, me permit, suivant les instructions reçues de la place, d’envoyer au couvent un petit billet invitant les chrétiens à nous suivre et à se rassembler à la caserne derrière la place, d’où le départ général était fixé à 10 heures de la nuit. Un très brave guerrier arménien, au service des Français, appelé Haïk, fut chargé du message, qu’il remplit heureusement.

Je regrette infiniment que ce message n’ait pu parvenir à l’église arménio-catholique. L’y faire parvenir était d’une impossibilité absolue, parce qu’il fallait passer le pont sur le fameux vallon dit « Quanle-déré », qui était barricadé aux deux bouts par les Turcs ; prendre une route en évitant le pont était aussi impossible le soir du 10 février, parce qu’à sa droite et à sa gauche les maisons étaient en flammes. Les Français qui étaient à l’église arménio-catholique en sortirent la nuit du 9 au 10 février par une route au bas de la ville.

Au retour de Haïk, je lui demande des nouvelles quant à nos 3.700 réfugiés. Il me dit que parmi eux règne un désordre épouvantable. Avant que mon message arrivât, 250 avaient déjà sauté les murs de l’enceinte du couvent et purent me rejoindre. Lorsqu’à tous fut donnée pleine liberté de s’en aller, beaucoup de femmes et d’enfants se réfugièrent dans les établissements de la mission américaine à côté de la place en prenant une route plus à l’abri des balles turques. La plupart des hommes restèrent au couvent, se défendant pendant deux jours contre les Turcs qui, ayant compris le départ définitif des Français, leur persuadèrent de se rendre. Ils se rendirent ; seulement ceux qui parlaient le français furent mis en prison et s’y trouvent encore. Selon les nouvelles que j’ai eues, très peu de réfugiés qui étaient à l’église des Frères Franciscains, périrent.

Le soir, à 10 heures, nous étions réunis à la caserne, située au nord, un peu hors de la ville, derrière la place et les édifices de la mission américaine. Là aussi une foule de chrétiens avait trouvé un refuge pendant les vingt et un jours et la plupart d’entre eux vouletaient suivre les Français. À 10 heures précises on se mit en route pour rejoindre la colonne qui était au sud devant la ville. Notre route contournait la ville à l’ouest à peu de distance d’elle, en passant par les champs, par les vignes où les pierres, les broussailles nous faisaient troubcher à chaque pas. La multitude de femmes et d’enfants qui me suivaient, au lieu d’observer un silence absolu, ne firent que crier : l’enfant appelait la mère, la mère l’enfant, tandis que notre passage était éclairé par les lueurs de la ville encore en flammes. Les clameurs de la foule pouvaient attirer l’attention et les balles turques.

... Après une marche pénible de deux heures, nous atteignîmes le camp à minuit, dans la nuit du 10 au 11 février ; immédiatement après, le camp fut levé ; la colonne s’ébranla ; elle emmenait avec elle 3.200 réfugiés.

De temps en temps, en pleurant, nous nous arrêtons pour donner un coup d’œil, un dernier adieu à la ville de Marche si terriblement sinistrée ; de loin elle nous saluait par un feu d’artifice des plus splendides, des plus imposants : la grande caserne dont nous venions de sortir était en flammes : on y avait amassé tous les effets et toutes les munitions que l’on ne pouvait pas transporter ; à tout cela on avait joint les poudres et une énorme quantité de cartouches prises à la poudrière turque, qui, à l’approche du feu s’enflammèrent, occasionnant une explosion formidable qui lança vers le ciel des flammes rouges, jaunes et bleutées accompagnées de détonations étourdissantes et dont le fracas se fit sentir à plusieurs kilomètres de la ville. Le matin, de bonne heure, les Turcs, en signe de victoire, hissèrent leur drapeau sur les débris de la caserne : c’était une victoire pour les Turcs ; peu importe la manière dont ils l’ont remportée ! Le coq qui demeure sur place a raison de chanter, en voyant s’en aller l’adversaire mille fois plus fort que lui !

Le 11 février, à 6 heures du soir, nous arrivâmes à El-Aglou, où l’on bivouaquait. Le lendemain, 12 février, le camp fut levé et on arriva le soir à 6 heures, à Bel-Pounar. Ces deux jours de marche furent heureux : du beau temps, des chemins secs, et surtout aucune trace des masses assaillantes dont parlent les Études déjà citées, page 576.

... Le soir du 12 février, je fus empêché par des sentinelles algériennes de me rendre au logis des officiers français où mon cher confrère, le Père Joseph, avait déjà trouvé un charitable accueil. Je dus dormir sur la paille, à la belle étoile. Fatigué d’une marche de trente-six heures, mon sommeil était profond. Un peu après minuit, je fus éveillé par des picotements froids au front. Je lève un peu la tête et je me vois
déjà couvert d'une couche de neige de 15 centimètres d'épaisseur. Je restai tranquille sous ma couverture, étendu par terre, en attendant le signal du départ, qui fut donné à 6 heures du matin. Alors le linceul de neige se déchire en mille endroits : c'était une image de la résurrection des morts au son des trompettes des anges, le jour du dernier jugement. On marche dans la neige qui, chassée par la tempête, ne cesse de nous fouetter le visage. La marche de Bel-Pounar à Islahie, au lieu de cinq heures, dura quatorze heures ; on s'était trompé de route. Se reposer était impossible ; un moment de repos, c'était la mort. Les malheureux qui se reposèrent ne purent plus se remettre sur pieds. Sur toute la route rien que des cadavres : 1.200 Arméniens succombèrent. Les parents jetèrent leurs enfants à côté de la route, ne pouvant plus les porter sur le dos. Les soldats noirs, s'appuyant un moment contre un arbre, y restèrent gelés le fusil en main. À côté de la route, des chevaux morts, des fusils dont les porteurs s'étaient débarrassés, une quantité d'effets que l'on ne pouvait plus porter avec soi ; puis, derrière nous, sur la route jonchée de cadavres et de gens demi-morts, s'avançaient les pièces d'artillerie et un cinquantaine de chariots : ils n'avaient pas le loisir de changer de route, ils durent passer où nous étions passés ! C'était horrible de voir les spectacles navrants qui se déroulaient sous nos yeux sur le parcours de Bel-Pounar à la station de Islahie.

Le massacre de Marache (Février 1920) par le R. P. Materne Muré. Supérieur du couvent et curé de la paroisse des Pères Franciscains de Terre-Sainte à Marache.

Extrait du Flambeau, revue belge des questions politiques et littéraires, 4e année, no 1, janvier 1921, pp. 5-22.

***

Extracts from the Memoirs of M.E. Elliot

Beginning Again at Ararat

Diary of Siege of Marash

January 22, 1920. – This is Thursday, and the trouble began here Tuesday. Since then it has not been safe to leave the protection of our walls. Lieutenant Coumarai was sent out from barracks last night to bring in wounded. He did not find any, but tried to return with eight marooned Algerians. When he reached the hospital with them only three were left; the other five had been killed. He says the streets are full of dead. Miss Blakely and Miss Leidi were in town when the firing began; they have got back as far as the house across the street from us. They were seen at the window once, yesterday. There is a steady storm of bullets down the street between us.

It was a mistake to put up the machine gun here, for naturally the Turks have the hospital covered. We asked to have it removed, and it was taken away over the back wall the first night, but the Turks do not know that. Last night French headquarters sent to us for dressings for their wounded. We had to go into the operating room with a light to get them, and there was a shower of bullets until we got out. I am sure the Turks thought we were the machine gunners.

The French are using all their machine guns and cannon; a constant fusillade. Bullets never cease their whining, and the cannon shots rattle our windows. The Turks have two or three machine guns but no cannon, I understand.

The Turks first tried to get over the mountains. We saw them through our glasses, soldiers advancing in regular formation. They were driven back by French shelling. Now it is the Turks already in Marash who are fighting. They are entrenched in houses all over the city, and it is very difficult for the French to dislodge them.

All day long the French have been shelling the hills. It is terrible and beautiful to see the flash of fire and roll of black smoke against the white mountains. The Turks cannot advance by daylight against such fire, and at night the French have patrols out. The difficulty is in this fighting everywhere in a city of walled courtyards.

We have one hundred and seventy-five persons in our household; patients, employés and visitors who were here when the battle began, with stray ones who have managed to reach us since. The people in the next house made a hole in the compound wall and got through it to us. One poor Armenian came in last night. He and his wife and children lived in a little adobe but beside the house from which the Turks are firing on us. The Turks broke down his door and shot him. They thought they had killed him and went away. He crawled out through the Turkish cemetery to us.
All these people have some one they love, outside. My poor women patients, worrying about their families – Aznive’s mother and little sister are in the city, if they are still alive. Luther, her brother, is here. A boy of sixteen, who looks twenty-one now. He is in our pharmacy, and was here when the fighting began. Aznive is brave as can be, without a thought for herself, but Luther stays in the basement.

Our telephone wires were cut at the beginning of the outbreak and the French have no wireless, so Marash is completely cut off from the rest of the world. Perhaps you have had no news of this, and are not worrying at all, but going about happily as usual; I hope so. America is such a happy place.

January 24. – Last night, was incredible. This morning we looked out at the hills and mountains, amazed that they are still there, unchanged. Such a roaring, and splintering all night through. The firing gets worse steadily.

There are five big fires now – homes of influential Turks. These fires must have their effect, for they are impressive to see. But one cannot account for the Turks. The second morning of this, two of them came to the French barracks under a white flag, and said the Turks wanted to stop fighting. The French heartily agreed, and the bugles blew “Cease firing”. Then the Turks didn’t cease.

The French could only begin firing again. I think there is no one in authority who can stop the Turks, now that they have begun to fight. The trouble began when the French arrested five leading Turks here. This morning two of them asked to be released, saying that they could stop the battle. The French let them go, and they went out into the town. No word has come back from them.*

Sunday morning, Jan[uary] 25. – The French torches have started many more fires in Turkish houses, and a battery shelled the house from which the Turks have been firing on us. Our front yard was so full of smoke that we could not see the compound gate. The shells passed directly over us with a terrific noise. Two shells went through the roof of the Turkish house and one through the wall.

Just after supper last night, Mr. Kerr and Mr. Snyder23 got through to us, with an Algerian soldier. They had come to rescue Miss Blakely and Miss Leid from the house across the street, and to take back to Dr. Wilson supplies for the wounded. He is in the Children’s Hospital and it is filled with wounded French. That hospital and French headquarters are in the same compound, and directly across the street is the college, all protected by high walls. So all those Americans can communicate with each other so nicely. Poor Miss Buckley24 is quite alone in Bethshullum orphanage, far away at the other end of the city. No news has got through from her.

It seemed years before the two men got back with Miss Blakely and Miss Leid. They had to go a long way around, under cover as much as possible. We worked all the time, packing supplies for Dr. Wilson. When they got back Mr. Kerr was very discouraging, saying that a general massacre of Armenians is expected. Mrs. Power25 and I have talked it over, and decided that those two men are mere infants, trying to make things seem as bad as possible.

All night long the skies are red-lighted in every direction by the raging fires, and the cannons roar and the heavens shake. Around our hospital at the other end of Marash everything must be completely burned away. The whole city is overhung with clouds of smoke.

The French are hoping for reinforcements to-day, over the Islahai road. Yesterday they sent out two Armenians disguised as Turks to meet the troops and guide them in.

Monday, January 26. – Every hour produces a new big fire. One by one the French are picking out the Turkish houses and burning them. It fills us with amazement to see the precision with which the French place torch after torch all over the city. This morning we saw scores of Armenians loaded with bedding and household things, running through Turkish fire into one of our orphanages – in a few minutes a large Turkish house was a mass of flames, right among the adobe houses the Armenians had left.

A soldier has just come with a note from Varton, our buyer. He has a number of refugees and soldiers in his house. He sent word that all is well there, and that he is anxious about us; if we need anything we are to send to him.

January 27. – Who would have thought this could continue so long! Last evening we were quite cheered by a visit from Captain Arlabose, the French doctor. The French have cut through walls and made a passage
way to us. He came through that. After he had gone he sent back a present of two huge Senegalese guards and an orderly.

We were just settled for the night when there was a knocking at our gate. I went out to order it opened, and found an Armenian, badly wounded. He reported massacres in his part of the city. While I was dressing his wounds, Mr. Snyder came with a letter from Dr. Wilson; it confirmed the massacres, but tried to be encouraging. The French have sent our Armenians dressed as Turkish gendarmes to Islahai with telegrams to Adana for reinforcements and to Beirut for airplanes. We pray God they may be successful in getting them.

All night, Armenians kept coming in with stories of massacre. Today the guns are silent, except for scattering shots, and I find myself longing for the sound of the artillery. It would keep the Turks from their devil’s work.

Mrs. Power is a trump, and my one comfort here. If she were the dependent kind I don’t think I could stand it. I feel that when I get out of this, if I ever do, I shall never take responsibility again.

I have ordered a tree cut down. We have hardly any wood left. Cooking only two meals a day, for patients and all.

January 28. — How our spirits go up and down! To-day we are all so happy. News came from one of the big churches; there are nearly two thousand Armenians there, safe so far. And I feel they will be. Dr. Artine is with them. There are two big churches, and the Armenians have dug an underground passage between the two, and the French have given them arms, so they have been able to defend themselves. We are all so glad. Their houses have all been burned, but nobody cares about that, with this wonderful news that their dearest are alive.

There is no news yet from Little Mary’s fiancé.

Later: We are getting stragglers from the massacres. It is very terrible. There has been another big massacre at the other side of the city, and we can only pray that some of the men have been able to escape into Miss Buckley’s orphanage.

I wrote that, without thinking what I was saying. At home one thinks of women and children first. That is because we Americans are so blessedly safe all our lives. I did not understand until now the stories of Armenian men saving themselves in massacres and leaving their women behind. We used to think it cowardly. It isn’t; it is an instinct of race-preservation. The Turks always try to kill the men and boys; the women have a chance of living — then their children will be Turks — but the men have none at all. The first thing Armenian women think of is to save the men and boys.

I was wrong to blame Aznive’s brother, to think that he was cowardly. He is not. Aznive told me to-day, “Every time I have a minute I run down to tell him, ‘Luther, remember your mother. Take care of yourself!’”. He is the only man left alive in their family, he is the family. He must not take any risks with his life. Aznive runs about everywhere, but she keeps telling him that he must stay in the basement where it is safe.

We have news to-day of Mr. Solakian. He was just at our gate, coming to betroth Little Mary, when the shooting began. The guards tried to persuade him to come in, but he said he must get back to his family. I don’t know details, but evidently he was caught in the thick of the fighting and had to take refuge in a near-by house. Night before last, Mrs. Solakian came crawling into the Children’s hospital with five stab wounds and three bullet wounds; her two children were stabbed to death. She fell in a ditch and lay in the water for a long time. She was to have another child, and they operated and took the baby. She will probably die. Yesterday some one learned where Pastor Solakian was, and last night Mr. Kerr and Mr. Snyder went to get him. They say he will perhaps lose his mind.

Captain Arlabose came again yesterday morning, and also last night. He is a comfort. He sent more men last night to help guard the houses next us. They are full of refugees — their basements, of course. No one dares go upstairs because of the bullets. These people are added to my family and come to me for everything. A soldier came just now to ask if he might fire on the Turkish house from which the Turks are firing on us. It is fortunate that I am a soldier’s daughter.

January 29. — No change in the situation, and the massacres continue. But last night brought the happiness of news that reinforcements are near; cannon at a distance have been heard by many different persons. The Turks are bolder all the time. Surely it is because they realize that this is the end for them, and are desperate!
We get horrible stories from Armenians who are escaping the massacres. I try to keep them from being repeated, but the basement and compound is full of people, and of course they will talk.

The wife of the photographer who has done all my kodak printing since I have been here came in with one child, the oldest, a little girl about seven. She sits all day, staring. We have given her work to do, but she cannot do it. She had to leave all her other children, one a nursing baby, and come with this one. The Turks had surrounded the quarter, and were to begin the massacre next morning. The Armenians had no weapons. They talked it over, and decided to try to escape. To do it, they had to crawl, one by one, between two Turkish guards, so close that the Turks could have touched them. One of the old Armenian men took control, and chose the ones to go. Only the men, and the women and children who could control themselves and keep quiet, were allowed to go. If one of them made the slightest noise, they would all be lost. So this woman had to choose between dying with her little children, or escaping with just this one and leaving the others. One might say she had better stay and die. But then she could not have saved this one. Her husband was not there, but she had word that he is safe in the church. She will have to face him and tell him what she did.

Fifty-eight Armenians got out; they were crawling out all night, creeping without a sound past the Turkish guards in the dark.

January 30. – We have no further news of anything. The French are only trying to hold out until reinforcements come. They know that they can never subdue the Turks here without help. In the meantime they are burning the city bit by bit. A thousand Armenians are in the American college compound now. They are being fed one meal a day from our supplies. A message has just come asking if I can furnish salt? For a thousand? No.

A poor old woman came in this morning, crawled to our gate. She had two bullet wounds, and every bit of skin was worn from her knees, where she had crawled on them to get to us.

We are straining our ears for the sound of an airplane or big guns on the plain. Will they come? Have the telegrams got through? What does the outside world know about us? Oh, one can’t stop and think.

January 31. – And things much the same. We are a little more crowded by the Turks. I had a distressed note from Varton; they are hard-pressed.

Mrs. Solakian has died. My photographer has been killed.

Last night was the coldest we have had this winter – a biting wind, and everything frozen. To-day is a little warmer and I do hope it will stay so, for the suffering is tenfold in the bitter weather. From now on, there will be many dying of starvation, for this is the tenth day.

Last night our squadron of nine men was keyed up almost to breaking point. Our back door neighbours were doing something, we did not know what. One of our men was killed, a black. To think that he was born in Africa, to die here in a French uniform, protecting us! To-day, we learn that many more Turks got into the clump of houses behind us.

February 1. – Just as day was breaking, one of the night nurses came to say that Varton’s house was on fire. The next thing was that Varton was wounded. We took in more than a hundred refugees from Varton’s house. His wound is not dangerous, a shot in the thigh. We operated; had to lay the flesh open from hip to knee, but he will be all right after a few weeks in bed.

Yesterday two Zeitoun men came through the trench from the French barracks, both with flesh wounds. They are magnificent men, mountaineers, tall, strong and very proud. They told me, while I dressed their wounds, that the men of Zeitoun are fighting again, have been fighting since the Turks attacked the French here. They had no more ammunition, and these two men have come in to get some from the French. They came through the Turkish lines in the night, and were wounded, but got away. They want to go back to-night. Zeitoun can hold out for ever, they say, if only they can have ammunition.

An Armenian woman just came to me, so indignant because she knows some one in the neighbourhood who has a large stock of food and is keeping it. I said, “Do they want us to buy it?”

“Buy it!” she said. “Why should you buy it? Take it by force. Is this a time to buy and sell?” She is feeding fifty people in her house next door.

A time like this brings out characteristics that are usually hidden – selfishness, nobleness, greed, self-restraint, courage. Sometimes, I hate
the whole world when I see some one, in all this strain and danger, doing a mean, petty thing; but always, a little later, some one does something so big and fine that I feel it is worth while to be here. If it is the finish, it is the finish, that's all. One of the girls said something big last night. Something made her think that Mrs. Power and I were leaving, abandoning them all. Mrs. Power said, "We wouldn't do that, Margaret," and she answered so sweetly, "Even a mother leaves her children at a time like this."

A note just came from Dr. Wilson asking if we have a man on the place whom we could send out to Aintab as a messenger with an appeal to Admiral Bristol?

February 2. – Yesterday Dr. Wilson sent his message out by the Zeitoun men who came in day before yesterday. The French sent out another call for help by them, too. We are not told whether they will get the ammunition they came to get for Zeitoun.

The woman who had to abandon her children heard to-day that her husband is dead, killed in fighting. She is alone now, with the one child, but he never knew what she had done.

February 4. – An unusually quiet night. The church is still safe, and the twenty-five hundred Armenians there have food. A messenger got through from them again to-day. We have been unable to get any communication with Miss Buckley in Bethshallum orphanage.

Two weeks this afternoon since this started. The French are gradually gaining ground again, even without reinforcements. If they are able to win before help comes, it will have a more crushing effect on the Turks all over Turkey. ...

February 5. – Very good news yesterday. Captain Fontaine is in the lower part of the city, back from Islahai, and Captain Hervier is back with his airmen from Aintab. Both have wounded men, but none lost.

February 6. – An airplane has appeared overhead.

It flew around and dropped messages. We don't know whether the French found them or not. There is nothing so wonderful as an airplane. The Turks fired on it. We thank God that they have no aircraft guns. It went away, and then a second one came, and the French fired two rockets to indicate their position.

February 7. – More good news. Aznine heard from her mother. A man from the Latin Church (Lieutenant Van Coppanole's fort) got through with a message from her. The Latin Church is not five minutes' walk from here, but this is the first word they have been able to get to us, in three weeks.

... After the airplanes yesterday, two letters came from the Turks, one addressed to the French and one to the Americans. We do not know what the French one contained, but the one to us said that this is not a local movement, but a national one, and that the Turks of Marash could not stop it if they would. In other words, it is Mustapha Kemal's movement.

February 8. – Mrs. Power and I had a laugh over Luther yesterday. He has really proved himself a splendid fellow; I do not know what we should have done without him. He was a pharmacist in the Turkish army, and they kept him in the front lines much of the time, so he thoroughly knows the Turks and their manner of fighting. Yesterday he went out in the compound and called to the house from which the Turks were firing on us – called until the owner came out, mind you, and then said to him, "You are not to fire on the hospital. You know it is not permitted to fire on a hospital. The Director Doctor Madame is very angry about it, and will hold you responsible. The Director says you are to stop firing at once."

Would you believe that the Turk stood there and swore up and down by all the prophets that they never had fired on the hospital and never would fire on it – and the hospital there before his eyes, looking like a colander from their shots?

We were busy until four o'clock this morning; the First Protestant Church was burning. We thought there were hundreds of Armenians in it. We heard later, however, that they had all got over to another safe church.

Then came the great news that reinforcements have reached us at last. Soon we began to hear them. All night the shelling was heavier than ever before. Then there were two more enormous fires, which burned a whole quarter of the city. We doubled our guards around the compound walls and had everything filled with water.
We must be doubly vigilant from now on, for it appears that the Turks will not surrender, but will keep on fighting and doing whatever damage they can.

The reinforcements seem to be working their way up through the city, contrary to the expectations of Captain Arlabose, who thought they would come around the barracks.

He amused us very much last night. He went to French headquarters and was in bad humor when he came back. He said anybody would be a neurasthenic who stayed there long — there were too many officers and no two of them could agree. It was too depressing, he could not stay there. So I said, “You must come here, where we are all so calm and happy.”

“Bien sûr, ici c’est beaucoup plus heureuse,” he answered seriously.

We have taken in fifteen men with frozen feet to-night, and more are coming. The weather is bad.

Our precious airplane has just come and gone again. If only we could reach it with a message. But anyway, it seems a connecting link with the outside world.

February 9. — French reinforcements consist of three battalions, nearly three thousand men, and eight cannon. There is fierce fighting on all sides of us this morning, and we are having the worst snowstorm of the winter. Snow lies thick on everything and fills the air so that nothing can be seen.

News came to me yesterday that Miss Buckley was killed on the first day. We knew that all the Armenian girls in the Rescue Home were killed as soon as the fighting began, but we had not heard this before. I do not believe it; I could not bear to believe it. I have said nothing to Mrs. Power about it.

One of our nurses learned last night that her two little children are killed, and another nurse’s mother was killed with them. The commandant of the machine-gun company has been killed, the only French officer lost so far.

Little Mary’s fiancé has been killed.

Beyond the second house from us is a narrow alley, and the next house is all stone and Turkish. The people in it, however, have been quiet and peaceful. Last night they threw a paper over the wall and it fell in the alleyway. Of course, no one dared go out to pick it up. They came to ask me what to do about it. I told them to call over the wall and tell the person from whom the letter came to write another one. So later two new letters came. One was from a Turk who, we hoped, had protected some Christians. It said that he had had thirty-five women and five men in his house, but that the other Turks had forced him to give them up and had killed them all in the street outside his house. Little Mary’s fiancé was among them. We think he had been trying to get to her here.

The other letter was addressed to Mr. Lyman, a missionary, and asked the Americans to plead with the French for the lives of Turkish women and children.

February 10. — To-day started as usual until Captain Arlabose came. We both saw that he was much distressed. Nothing we could do would cheer him. He went to headquarters and came back looking more miserable than before. He has been trying to eat luncheon with us. He has just told us that the French are going to retreat.

*Flight through Winter Snows*

It was many minutes before we could believe that this was true. But Captain Arlabose’s face convinced us more than his words.

In the hospital no one but ourselves knew the news, and the French were insistent that no one else should know. Mrs. Power and I went immediately to see what the other Americans were going to do. Our heads were swimming. Of course so far as going or staying was concerned, each must decide for himself. Some must stay, and some must go, so that none of the Armenians would be left without the little help we could give them.

The way was more difficult and dangerous if we left, but more horrible, we thought, if we stayed.

The Armenians at headquarters had heard the news before we had, and they were sobbing and screaming. Thousands of them, screaming! They had relied on us, on the promises of the great, powerful Allies. They had come back to Marash, to their wrecked homes and lives, under our protection. Now they were being left to the Turks.
How many times I had said, “Don’t be silly! Can’t you realize that the Allies are here, the Allies have won the war? Haven’t you been told, and told, and told again, that you are safe now? Why do you foolishly imagine things to frighten yourselves? The Allies are here.” It was so hard to think.

Captain Arlabose looked actually happy when I told him that Mrs. Power and I were going with the refugees, and Miss Shultz had decided, too. The rest had not decided. Miss Buckley, if she were still alive, was in Bethshalam and could not be reached. Dr. Artine, with the twenty-five hundred Armenians, was still in the churches. I prayed that the news might reach them, so that they could fight their way out before it was too late. A note came to me from the hospital. They had heard the news; what should they do?

I think that all the rest of my days I shall suddenly hear from time to time that sentence quietly said, sometimes almost in a whisper, “What shall we do now, doctor?” I have stood and stared dumbly for minutes at a time, in absolute despair as to what to say.

When they saw us preparing to leave, the question of many was settled, for they simply picked up their packs and left. In the meantime, hundreds of people were piling in. The compound was a mass of frantic Armenians. Parents came into the wards, picked up their almost dying children, and carried them away. In the midst of this Captain Arlabose was getting all the wounded soldiers out of the place.

He said he would stay with us all night. Mr. Kerr came down, thinking that we were leaving that night and ready to guard the hospital. He brought word that all the Armenians who were leaving should go that night, as the French thought of issuing an order forbidding any one to go with them. So I bundled up our poor nurses, giving them everything nice and warm, and with many assurances and promises that we would overtake them on the road, we started them out into the night. Little Mary was like a sleepwalker; I do not think she saw or heard anything. Big Mary helped her away with an arm around her. Poor little Aznive cried so quietly, and said, “Oh, doctor, I thought I would not mind dying so much, if I could only have died near you.”

We had no sleep that night. Dawn came on an almost empty hospital. Varton was one of the last to go. I had got a donkey for him, had blankets and food packed on it, and sent him off riding, accompanied by all his family; it was impossible for him to walk, with the wound in his thigh. Then we fixed our rolls.

A woman who could not have lived long, a tubercular case, had got up out of bed in the night, taken off her clothing, and sat by the open window. We found her sitting stark upright, frozen stiff. The ground was too solidly frozen; we could not dig a hole in which to bury her.

Captain Arlabose had given us instructions to come to the caserne at six. Miss Dougherty and Dr. Crathern28 in the meantime had decided to come with us. As soon as it was dark, we four women went creeping through the trenches from the college to the caserne, and were welcomed into a warm, filthy room, the walls of which shut out some of the screams of the Armenians. No one had any news of Miss Buckley, and there was still doubt as to whether messengers would be able to reach her or Dr. Artine.

We sat waiting for Lieutenant Van Coppanolle to come; we waited for hours, and he had not yet got through when the order came to start. Captain Arlabose would stay to remove the guards from the empty hospitals after Lieutent Van Coppanolle got back from the Latin Church. With trembling hearts we stumbled out into the darkness. This was at 10.30 [post meridiem], February 10.

It was difficult going as soon as we left the buildings behind us, for the darkness blinded us and we did not follow the road, but went across rough fields, guided by hundreds of other marchers as lost as we were. We were not taking the long road to Aleppo, but were to strike out over the mountains in an attempt to reach Islahai.

We had stumbled along silently up hills and down into valleys for perhaps two hours, when we ran into Lieutenant Van Coppanolle, gay as ever. He had taken a shorter way and his company was ahead. A young Armenian girl was with him, from the Latin Church, and he immediately put her under my wing and took charge of us both. The moon was rising, and by its light we struck straight for the big camp, reaching it in a few minutes.

Such a night! A turquoise sky flooded with moonlight over a white world, and across the snow, stretching as far as the eye could see, a line of camp fires, horses, wagons, camp fires, soldiers, refugees, camp fires,
camels, donkeys, carts, all a mixture and confusion of sound and sight. We sat down to rest by a fire of straw, and got colder and colder. The poor soldiers kept coming with their frozen, wet feet to get a taste of the fire, which was hardly warmer than candlelight. One brought the great relief of news that Miss Buckley was alive, and staying in Marash. We had rested less than three-quarters of an hour when the order came to march. We did not stop again until late the next morning, and by that time we had begun to pass children and some women, dropping in the snow, unable to go on.

It is indescribable, the memory of such things. We stopped, of course, when we came to the fallen, and if there were any hope La Petite (the young Armenian girl) and I worked over them and tried to save them. One little girl I especially remember, one of the most sweetly pretty little girls I have ever seen. She was about four years old. We picked her up and got her on a horse. But I have no hope that any of those who had fallen so soon ever got through.

Just at dawn, who should I recognize but Varton, walking! In the confusion of the night, he said, the donkey had got away from them, carrying all their food and bedding. He insisted that he was all right, but his wife and children were hungry. And there in that desolation of grey dawn on bleak mountains, as he dragged the wounded leg through the snow, he looked at me and said, "The Turks burned my house. If we had got the farm, they could not have burned that, could they? I always wanted a farm."

A few hours later we sat down in a place somewhat sheltered from the wind. It was very cold. Lieutenant Van Coppanolle gave us food, and I could have eaten with relish, though the chicken and bread were so frozen that bits of ice crackled between our teeth when we bit them. But there were three people dying within a few feet of us, and one was a mother with a little boy not more than seven years old, who kept trying to arouse her. He was so weak himself that he could not make much of a sound, but he whispered, "Mamma! Mamma!" tearing her dress open and beating at her breast with his hands. She kept making an effort, half rising and trying to smile at him, and then falling back, while he whispered, "Mamma! Mamma!" frantically. The Lieutenant insisted that I eat, but I could not swallow, and when he was not looking I gave some of the food away and put the rest in my pocket for Varton's family. Two pieces of chicken and a little bread – and hundreds all about us with nothing.

Our line was wholly demoralized; some stopping to rest, others trudging on. As they passed, I kept asking for Dr. Artine. No one had heard of him. This, I thought, is the way Armenian families are broken up. This is the way they tramp the roads of Turkey, asking for news of each other. I am a refugee. This is what it means. If I had been born in Marash instead of in America, all that I know, all that I am, would not keep me now from this; hunger and cold and heartache, refugee camps and lines of refugees, bread lines, dirt, disease. Why should I wish and pray that Dr. Artine escape alive? It would be easier for him to be killed by the Turks.

We rested for half an hour, then on again, with no pause and no more food until we reached El Oghly at three o'clock that afternoon. All the way Lieutenant Van Coppanolle urged me to ride; I could have had a horse or a place in a wagon. But I was not so tired as the soldiers, and very much more fit than any of the thousands of Armenian women and children.

We slept in a mud house that night, after eating a good meal of beef from a cow that the soldiers had picked up on the way. At five in the morning we were on the march again. The weather was warmer, and our spirits lighter. If the weather would be kind for only two days more, we could all reach Islahai safely.

All that day we went forward, in good spirits. From the top of a mountain the sight of that column was one never to be forgotten. Four battalions with their guns, provisions, pack-mules and a train of three hundred camels, and behind that, a stream of refugees going up and down the hills into the far, blue distance. All seemed to be moving in good order; no more were falling by the road. The clear sky was like God's visible blessing.

That night we camped at Bel Pumar. There was a good supper, a roasting fire, and we dropped to sleep with the comforting thought, "Only one more day to Islahai." At five o'clock, in the darkness, Lieutenant Van Coppanolle waked me and said we must start at once; there was a blizzard.
The swirling snow was so thick that we could see only a few feet, and that with difficulty. Four thousand men were trying to get into line, more than five thousand refugees were struggling in the confusion and terror. Screams of horses, shrieks of women who could not find their children, wails of children wallowing in the snow alone, crying of guncarriages, shouts of officers and men, sudden looming up of camels that grunted and bit, all coming out of a swirling whiteness. I thought of my nurses, of Varton and his family, of my patients from the hospital, women with new-born babies, struggling in that madness. Impossible to find anyone, to do anything. We got somehow into the frantic line and started on the long tramp. It lasted fourteen hours.

We had been obliged to start without even a cup of coffee, but both La Petite and I were well wrapped up, and our good comrades were always beside us, caring for us with such tenderness. I knew what heroism is, seeing Lieutenant Van Coppaunelle and La Petite trudging bravely, without complaint. In a very few hours, we were passing the dying all along the way.

The column was quite quiet. There was hardly a sound for hours, except the scream of some one falling. Always, just when endurance broke, they screamed once as they fell. The column went on silently, leaving them there.

Armenian women have a way of carrying their children on their backs, holding the two hands clutched against the mother's breast and the child's weight on the bent back. When children are carried in this way, almost always one sees their little bare feet, side by side. Working with refugees, I see this perhaps a hundred times a day, and never without remembering the road to Islahai. Even now I cannot bear to see children's feet; I cover them up whenever I have time and can reach them.

That morning we passed hundreds of mothers, carrying their children in this way. First a vague darkness in the swirling snow, then the mother's bent body, and the child's little bare feet. I would reach out and tuck them up in a corner of shawl or blanket as I went by. I do not know how many hours we had been walking, when I found the first dead child on its mother's back. I walked beside her, examining it; she trudged on, bent under the weight, doggedly lifting one foot and then the other through the snow, blind and deaf to everything. The child was certainly dead, and she did not know it. I spoke to her, touched her, finally shook her arm violently to arouse her. When she looked up I pointed to the child and said, "Finish." The mother seemed not to understand at first, trudged onward for a few steps, and then let go the child's hands. The body fell, and the mother went on, blind and deaf as before, all her life in that lifting of one foot after the other through the snow.

This was the first one. There were perhaps fifty more after that, always the same. No complaint, no protest, a little time to understand what had happened, and then a dumb letting go of the hands and the weight. Strength was so exhausted in these women who had carried their children so far, that there was no emotion left, simply the last shreds of animal endurance. If I had not spoken to them, they would have carried the dead until they dropped and died in the snow.

In time I, too, was a blind machine moving forward, tucking in no more feet, examining no more children. We had been walking ten hours, and I was probably one of the most fortunate of the thousands of women who followed the French out of Marash. I had more reserve strength on which to draw. Still, there was little of it left in the end. I thought of nothing, cared for nothing, simply struggled onward and tried to keep my balance. It seemed to me that we three were walking on a very narrow ledge between two precipices, and that if I lost my balance and fell we would all go down thousands of feet.

Just in front of us was a cart; one of the women in it had died and the body, caught by the feet, dragged in the snow. I saw it dragging in front of us, for miles; I looked at it dully, and avoided stepping on it. No one thought any more about it than that. If it had been taken out of the cart, there would have been room for some living person, but no one thought of that. Then the cart was not there. I do not know what became of it. We may have gone around it. Nothing existed but that narrow bit of solidity in the white whirl, the solidity on which we tried to keep our balance. Often and often it turned to broken ice and water; we had come to a river, and I was picked up and carried across.

I had felt hands plucking at my shoulder, stiffly fumbling at me and sliding and fumbling; it seemed to me that I had felt them for a long time, when I heard a voice saying, "Doctor! Doctor, what shall I do?" I turned then, and there was Margaret, one of our nurses, just behind me. She
stood there holding out her hands, stiff like dead claws with the cold, and looked at me with wild eyes. Her clothes, wet in the rivers, had frozen, the shawl on her head had blown back and stood out in stiff icy folds.

"Doctor, what shall I do? I'm dying. I can't go on."

"Nonsense!" I said. "Of course you can go on. Come now, I won't hear another word! March!"

We went on, repeating this, I walking carefully on the narrow ledge and she fumbling, trying to get hold of my shoulder. "No, doctor, I can't. Oh, doctor, I'm dying. Oh, doctor, what shall I do?"

"March. You can. You must."

"Oh, doctor..."

After a long time her hands slid down my arm and I stopped to try to pick her up. Lieutenant Van Coppapolle said, "Who is she?"

"One of our nurses."

"Here, get that girl on her feet and bring her through," he said to his orderly. "Give her this to eat." He gave the orderly a piece of chocolate. Then we went on, hearing little querulous complaining behind us. The orderly had got her on her feet, but they could not walk. He had not the strength to hold her up. He could not break the chocolate, and she could not bite it. "I have a piece in her mouth, my lieutenant," he said, "but she can't swallow."

"Get her through, get her through. She's one of the doctor's nurses."...

... It was late in the afternoon of February 13, 1920, that the men and women in this column, silently using their last strength to fight through the blizzard over the mountains, found that they were lost, that they were not on the road to Islahai and did not know where it was.

... We were lost, and now the silence began to be broken by low mumbles of talk – the French officers consulting as to what we should do. The column still staggered on, blindly. After thirteen hours of marching without food or rest, eyes baffled by the whirling snow, feet weighted with the fallen snow, there was nothing left in us but mechanical endurance. We continued to move, as a dead snake moves, because there was still a little life in our muscles that would not let go. The cries of the falling were weaker now, and more huddled body's lay in the snow to be stumbled over. The officers were talking, in a group beside the column.

Lieutenant Van Coppapolle stopped; all our little group stopped. I could still stand alone, La Petite holding to my arm but trying not to lean her weight on it. My nurse went down, and the orderly reeled, leaning over, slapping her, shaking her, helping her in her struggles to get up.

Then Lieutenant Van Coppapolle laughed. The other officers had said there was nothing to do but camp for the night; we were lost, and in the darkness it was impossible to find the road. It was then that the Lieutenant laughed, gaily, as at a delightful joke. We were all right, he said; we might be a little way off the road, but we'd find it again. Allons!

There is no miracle like a brave man's laughter in the midst of death. Our hearts had stopped at that suggestion of camping in the snow. It meant, of course, that thousands of us would lie down and never get up again. But the temptation of it! Just to lie down, and let the snow cover us, and give up all effort for ever. Then Lieutenant Van Coppapolle laughed, not defiantly, not even encouragingly, but with the simple mirth of a gay and serene spirit laughing away an amusing suggestion. Allons!

It was the one thing that could have kept us going. We went on. It was quite dark now, so dark that we could no longer see the snow, could only feel it brushing our faces and weighting our feet. It was so dark that we stepped on the dying, unable to see them.

We had been going on thus blindly in the darkness for perhaps an hour longer, when the Lieutenant himself suggested that we stop. He spoke of it not too seriously, not as though it meant what we all knew it did mean. But he was speaking of it, when we heard a high, long whistle. The whole column – thousands of throats – answered it with a terrible sob. A train whistle! Islahai!

There were some who began trying to run toward it. In the darkness there were screams, groans, calls of those suddenly separated in the mob. The last half-mile was nightmare confusion added to nightmare exhaustion, and in that last half-mile, I think, more people dropped and died than in any of the miles we had toiled over. We came to buildings and lights, a sobbing frantic crowd. Some one found us in it, and said that our company was to go to the barracks on the hill. We came upon a kitchen wagon and greedily drank cups of cold, icy coffee. No warmth yet, but how grateful we were for water and the stimulant of coffee.
Hundreds of the refugees died in Islahai. What it must have been to them, the thousands who poured down on the little station to find no shelter and to be helped by no last heroic efforts of exhausted men, I do not want to try to imagine. We, with the barracks waiting for us, would have died on the hill that led to them, if Lieutenant Van Coppanolle had not been unconquerable. La Petite and I could go no farther. It was a hill to climb, in waist-deep snow.

A riderless, lost horse came out of the darkness, and the Lieutenant and his orderly got us on it. The orderly kept falling, and the Lieutenant could get him up again only with kicks and curses. La Petite and I swayed on the horse’s back; all my last strength went in holding on and in encouraging her to do so. Finally she could keep her balance no longer, and in that last extremity the poor, brave, little thing let go, rather than drag me off with her. These are things you do not forget, when people speak scornfully of the Armenians.

A second later, the orderly, the horse and I went down, rolling in the snow. Lieutenant Van Coppanolle got us the rest of the way by himself, dragging us through the snow, beating the orderly with his fists, falling himself and struggling onward on his knees. So we got to the barracks at last.

I lay on a bunk in the officer’s mess, soldiers rubbing my feet and hands, an officer feeding me hot toddy with a spoon, and saw the French officers coming in. One had gone mad and was raving – fighting, when they carried him away. One fell on his face and lay there until he was picked up. All of them were crippled, with frozen and frost-bitten feet, and in the last stages of exhaustion.

Five thousand Armenians had left Marash, and perhaps a third of them lived to reach Islahai. That was in February, 1920. To understand the lives of these Armenians, remember that the evacuation of Marash was not an isolated calamity interrupting comfort and peace, like the San Francisco fire or the Galveston flood. These people had lived through the massacres and deportations in Turkey during the war; for six years they had been suffering and dying as they suffered and died on the road to Islahai. It was those few months of anxious peace in Marash that was the novelty to them; those few months of patiently beginning again to rebuild ruined houses and broken lives. And the evacuation of Marash was the beginning of the old story again – the beginning of the wanderings and sufferings, which are not ended yet. For those who lived to reach Islahai went on to Smyrna, and Ismid, and the villages of Anatolia that were held by the Greeks, and the power of new Turkey was rising behind them like a hurricane.

... This was the end of that group of the Armenian people who made the Kingdom of Little Armenia. In all Cilicia to-day there is hardly a living Armenian. Marash is a desolate city, burned and depopulated. The Armenian villages are deserted ruins.


***

Extracts from the Diary of YMCA Secretary Crathern Concerning the Siege and War in Marash, January 20 to February 11, 1920

January 21.

On the 21st January Secretary Crathern sent the following telegram to Consul Jackson at Aleppo, Admiral Bristol, of Constantinople:

“American flag fired on repeatedly and the lives of American citizens threatened and imperiled in Marash and Aintab.


These telegrams were O.K’d by General Quérette, of the French Staff, and I was assured by Turkish and French officials at the telegraph office that the telegram would be sent without fail within half-an-hour. After sending this telegram I walked through the city with Mr. Kerr and an interpreter. The bazaars and the shops were all closed and the Turks were getting together in little groups all over the city; only a few Armenians were to be seen in the thoroughfares. About 1 o’clock, while at the dinner table, we heard the crash of guns, and knew that the conflict
that had been threatening so long had now broken out. Before the first shot was fired I found, on reaching the missionary compound, a company of Turkish officials including the mutessarif, a Turkish hodja and other notables. These, I understood from Mr. Lyman, had come to interview me for a purpose, which I did not learn. As I found later that they had been detained by the French officials and placed under arrest. This, I presume, was the cause of the first shot being fired by the Turks. The French commandant had informed us earlier in the day that they had determined to strike and to strike hard.

After the first shot was fired we ran to the front balcony where we had a commanding view of the whole city. There was quite a long cannonading and many of the houses of the city were turned into small forts from which the sound of shooting would issue every few minutes, answered by the machine-guns of the French. The Armenians were very much alarmed and are in fear of their lives. Hundreds of the poor have been caught in one of our compounds where they came to receive old clothes, and will have to stay all night, as it will be unsafe for them to go home. The fighting and firing have been going on all the afternoon and now it is nearly midnight and there is no cessation. A French sentinel guarding the entrance to the American hospital was shot dead and another wounded. Bullets also passed through two of the nurses' rooms and wounded an Armenian girl. What the morning will bring forth we do not know. I fear that the worst is not over.

January 22.

We were awakened this morning by the boom of guns, and saw quite early the flash of exploding shells. The Turks are firing from a number of houses, and as they are using smokeless powder it is impossible to see where the bullets come from. The French soldiers have suffered seriously, and many of them, we hear, are now dead and wounded in the streets, and their companions are unable to render them any assistance until night because of the danger arising from the sharpshooters. The American hospital has again been attacked, and doctors and nurses have had very narrow escapes. The mission buildings have as yet escaped damage, and we do not anticipate any assault, as the Turks are not prepared for aggressive warfare. The French General with his Staff officers was on our balcony this afternoon to sight approaching Turks who were coming over the mountains on their way to the city. The general gave orders for a gun to be fired with sixty-five mm. shells, which soon scattered them in all directions.

January 23.

The battle is still on, but there is no way of getting now into or out of the city. Everything is at a standstill. To-day we have been watching the bombardment of the city by the French. In some sections it is very severe, and created great consternation. It gave many opportunities for looting and pillage, and I fear, massacre. Through our glasses we could see Armenians escaping from their houses and fleeing before the Turks, who were shooting them down like jack-rabbits. Other Turks were hiding in the fields behind rocks, trees and manure heaps, and shooting at those who had escaped the Turks in the city. It was pitiful to see them throw up their hands and scream, while attempting to escape. We watched them fleeing over the hills until they reached our compound, some dropping wounded by the way, and others staggering into the mission grounds with wild eyes and purple faces, telling of an awful massacre just beginning.

January 24.

This is the fourth day of the battle of Marash, and every day becomes more pathetic and tragic as time wears on. This morning we held a consultation and decided to interview the French general to learn the plan of campaign and to lay before him some facts that had come to our knowledge regarding the massacre of the Armenians in the Cuimed quarter of Marash. This was the region from which he had seen the Armenians running for their lives across the fields. In order to be fortified with the actual facts, as coming from mouths of eye-witnesses, we interviewed the people who had escaped this massacre. They told most harrowing stories. One woman saw seven killed before her eyes. Mothers and children taken out of their arms and ripped up with knives. One man said two hundred perished in one street. The shrieks of the tortured we could hear a mile across the ravine, which they had to cross to reach our compound. Others gave similar accounts of awful experiences. We laid
these facts before the General and his Staff, who listened very respectfully, and said the situation was very grave, and that they would take strenuous efforts to cope with it. Wounded soldiers are being brought in to our hospital and several operations have been performed. Yesterday the mutessarif was released from French custody for the purpose of interviewing the leaders and bringing about a cessation of hostilities. He went back to the Government building under the protection of a white flag with an ultimatum from the general that if the Turks did not surrender in twenty-four hours he would bombard the city. To-day the mutessarif telephoned to headquarters that it was impossible for him to prevail with the leaders to cease operations, as he had no control over them, and was even in danger of his own life. At 3 o'clock, when the time of the ultimatum had expired, we heard the sounds of guns, and knew that the bombardment of the city had commenced. The guns were kept busy for two hours. At 5 o'clock the colonel came to the house and said they had decided to burn certain sections of the city from which the Turks were sniping Armenians and soldiers whenever they appeared. At night the city is in total darkness.

Whenever we go from one compound to another we have to creep under the walls in order to escape shot and shell. There is the most intense excitement every minute of the day, and every compound is thronged with frightened refugees who have escaped during the night, and are alarmed lest their people, whom they have left behind, should become the victims of massacre, or fire, or starvation. Women are giving premature birth to children, and women are going crazy with fear. The A.C.R.N.E. are feeding nearly 2,000 orphans and refugees, and with only a few days’ supply of bread the problem is a grave one. To-day we raised the American flag, but no sooner had we raised it to the mast than the salute of a dozen guns sent us scampering to cover. I have just timed by my wrist-watch thirty-three shots in one minute. The machine-guns are picking away like so many giant woodpeckers, and the sharp crack of the rifle is continuous. Last night five Armenian soldiers were sent out by the French disguised as Turkish gendarmes to reach the nearest telegraph station in Islayieh, 75 miles away. Each was the bearer of a long telegram in cipher from the general asking that supplies and reinforcements be sent immediately. Whether they will reach their destination or not we do not know. It is risky business, as the whole country is in a flame of revolt. How soon the issue will be decided it is hard to determine. The capture of the last two caravans of munitions and foodstuffs by bandits between Marash and Aintab make that way of escape or relief impossible. But while the days are exciting the nights are increasingly so. For while the great guns are booming, soldiers are creeping stealthily forth with benzine torches and hand-grenades to set fire to different parts of the city. It is sometimes like Dante’s Inferno. I have had to move my bed back into a safer quarter of the room, as a bullet came through the window into the hallway and nearly passed through the door.

January 25.

The situation here is unique. We are besieged by an invisible army. There are few enemy soldiers in sight, and these are seen only through our glasses, running for cover, or hurrying out of their trenches, or stealing over the mountains in little groups to reach the city. We have not been out of our own compounds for seven days, and even behind our own walls we are not safe against attack. The French have no wireless, no aeroplanes, no telegraph, no armoured cars, and, to make the situation worse, neither food nor ammunition for an extended siege. They have to conserve their supplies, not knowing how long the siege may last or whether the rest of Turkey is in the same state of war or not. They are doing all they can under the circumstances, but with the small force of troops under their command they cannot make any attack on the city with the certainty of making it surrender. Hundreds of Armenians are trying to reach our compounds from many parts of the city, but are failing in the attempt, and the light of the fires that the Turks are making in Armenian quarters render escape impossible, and those who flee from smoke and flames fall victims to the sword or the axe. News came to day that scores of women and children huddled in one house were butchered with knives and hatchets after the men had been taken out and shot. They surrendered on the promise of protection, but were cruelly betrayed. To-day in one of our orphanages a woman was killed while standing in the doorway and others were shot and wounded in the college compound.
January 26.

We are still in the throes of most terrible war that involves not only the armed forces of the opposing armies, but also the unfortunate Armenians who are the victims of the most hellish cruelty imaginable. The crescent moon, the cold-blooded symbol of Moslem fanaticism, is rising tonight on a city in whose streets to-day have been enacted tragedies that ought to stagger humanity, and send a shudder of protest to the Throne of God. I have read much, and heard more, of the atrocities the Armenians have suffered in the past, but I never expected to witness first hand the barbarities that are disgrace to civilization and a stain on the escutcheons of the Great Powers that can permit such a Government to exist. And yet what I have seen and heard during the last two days is but a small part of the horrors that are registered for ever upon the brains of those who have escaped bleeding and wounded, to tell their tale upon the operation table in the hospital, or to babble in an incoherent way from their sick beds of the inferno from which they have escaped. Some of the most revolting stories ever heard have been told us to-day those who have come limping into our compounds from different parts of the city. Little girls, 8 and 10 years old and wrinkled women of 70 years were agonizing with pain from dumb-dum bullet wounds which tore great pieces of flesh from arms and legs, while soldiers had to have limbs amputated or to pay the supreme sacrifice. Children have been brought to the hospital with their brains oozing from jagged holes in the head, and elderly people while sitting in their own homes have received shots which have shattered both mind and body.

January 27.

This morning one of the native's helpers of the A.C.R.N.E. came to tell us of his escape. He had been waiting for several days for a favourable opportunity to flee. It came about 3 o'clock this morning. He tells us that the Turks are killing hundreds of people in the city, and that they are not content with using such weapons as shot and shell, but resort to the brutal use of the axes and knife. At this very moment, there is in our own house a young woman who tells us that with a hundred other persons in a cellar she prayed for five days and nights for help, but no help came. Then the Turks asked them to surrender, promising to give them protection if they would. Being desperate, they threw themselves on the mercy of the enemy. The men were told to come out of the house and her own husband was the first to leave. He was shot immediately in the doorway by one of their own Turkish neighbours whom she knew, and who was a gendarme in the service of the Government. After the men had been taken out, there was a scene of indescribable horror as the Turks came in with axes and knives and began their murderous work. In the general mêlée she with one of her children escaped. On child was killed. Two young women teachers from the college were killed in this way. Another escaped and stood in water and fire eight hours hoping to elude the Turks, but in a fatal moment she ran for her life and was killed by a bullet. The Turks have sent an ultimatum to the French demanding their surrender, or they will attack them tomorrow morning at 4 o'clock. The French hope they will.

January 28.

Rumours are flying wild and fast. This morning the startling news was spread abroad that Captain Fontaine and 700 men coming to the relief of Marash had been killed and only one man escaped. We learn this evening that he is still fighting his way to the city, and that a supply train of wagons was captured in the morning and many of the convoy killed. We had a pitiful case this morning in the hospital. It was the Rev. Solakian's wife, pastor, of the third church. When she reached the hospital, she was suffering and bleeding from three bullet and three dagger or knife wounds, while a child of 18 months had been taken from her breast and slain with a knife, and an older girl killed with an axe. To add to the sorrow of it the woman was pregnant and had a miscarriage as soon as she reached the hospital. The poor woman is lying in a precarious condition and she will not recover. Several new cases came in to-day and we are troubled to find room for them. The crowded compounds are also a grave problem. In one of them we have over a thousand refugees and we can give them but one meal a day, as the food supply is nearly exhausted. Many are poorly clad and many are weak. Several soldiers are going out to-night to try to take into one of the compounds a thousand Armenians who are finding refuge in a church and fear that the Turks will set fire to it.
January 29.

It is nearly midnight and I have just come in from a service of sorrow. The pastor's wife, of whom I wrote you yesterday, died to-day and was laid to rest in the seminary compound. This afternoon we had a conference of all American workers to decide what to do in case of emergency. We shall all gather in the college compound and await the final issue. What that will be we do not know. Graves are multiplying in our midst and tales of horror come to us nightly from those who escape from house or cellar. The soldiers who went last night to rescue a thousand Armenians were not able to pass the Turkish trenches. Another orphanage was attacked, but the assault was not successful. Several soldiers came down from the mountains to-day with frozen hands and feet, some of which must be amputated.

January 30.

As yet no news of relief from the French authorities. Yesterday was rather quiet from the military point of view. There was only a little cannonading and only a few soldiers killed and wounded. The uncertainty of the situation is a great strain on the nerves of the ladies of our party, but they are brave and cheerful and busy all day ministering to the needs of the unfortunate. Dr. and Mrs. Wilson have moved over to the college compound to live as they think it a little safer there in case of attack. They invited me to go with them, but I feel there is no immediate danger and prefer to wait a few days to watch developments. We have all decided to hang together rather than take our chances on hanging separately.

January 31.

War still holds on and no relief in sight. Men, women, and children, about nine of them, were shot in the college grounds to-day and some of them quite seriously wounded. Fortunately, we have plenty of wheat now, and by keeping the women grinding from sunrise to sunset we can feed the people for quite a while. We are obliged to keep the people under cover as walking in the open is too dangerous, and our hospitals are already full.

February 1.

The weather has been very cold and we have had several cases of severe frost-bite among the soldiers. More children have been shot in the orphanages. The refugees are much alarmed at the success of the Turks. Several houses have been burned in the city. The hospital still continues to attacked.

February 2.

The war is coming a little closer, for to-day a shell fell on the hospital roof and burst in the attic just above the floor where we had a great many patients. The rifle shots have also been a little more personal as one plunged into a wall a few feet ahead of me, and the second hit a tree as I was creeping along a wall to my room. The Turks tried to set the Bartell [Beitel] orphanage on fire to-day, and the French retaliated by burning the would-be incendiaries houses. There was considerable bombarding to-day but many wounded. There is no news of reinforcements and we fear that other cities and towns may be besieged as we are and help may not reach us for some time. Last night we sent a message to the A.C.R.N.E. and to have it telegraphed to Adana and Constantinople. It will probably be seven days before it can reach its destination.

February 3.

I suppose no one in the outside world realizes the seriousness of our situation or surely an aeroplane from Beirut would drop a message of cheer. This is the telegram that we sent to Consul Jackson to Adana and Constantinople:

"Situation in Marash extremely desperate, reign of terror in city since the 21st January, hundreds of men, women, and children massacred daily no power to stop it as French are on the defensive, ammunition and food insufficient. Americans have little hope in case French are overpowered, no assurance of help as large forces of bandits bar all roads. Leave nothing undone to relieve situation as lives of all Christians are seriously threatened, our auto and flag fired on repeatedly 20th January our institutions under fire and many orphans and refugees wounded on American property".
Bullets still continue to enter American buildings. We have all had very narrow escapes. The French horses and mules are slowly starving and they will have to kill them and feed them to the hungry multitudes. The French are living in hope that help will come soon.

February 4.

This has been a tragic day. New stories of fresh massacres reached us the morning. In one case nearly 200 surrendered to the Turks under promise of protection, but nearly all of them were butchered. One man who escaped by stabbing a Turk told this gruesome story. Deep pits were dug, and men tied in bunches of three and led to the edge of it, and then shot and dumped into it dead or alive. One young girl of 19 was shot in the abdomen while getting a bit of wood. No news yet of help but we shall not give up. We are resolved to stay here at all hazards. God help the Armenians if the Americans leave them, and God help us all if the French leave.

February 5.

This morning, Dr. Wilson and Reverend Lyman and I interviewed the French General and his Staff. Word reached us that Turks were encroaching on Armenian homes and might soon attack the hospital. While we were on our way to headquarters the Turkish officials, who were prisoners in the buildings, asked to see us. The general gave permission, and we had an interview with them. They pleaded with us as Americans to persuade the French officers to stop the war. They promised that if they were released that they would do all they could to bring the Turks to terms. The General would not release them. I proposed that they should write a letter to the mutessarif and ask him to persuade the leaders to request a conference. This evening the letter from the Turks came and will be sent as soon as possible to the Turkish Government. The French to-day have decided to kill the horses and mules, as there is no food for them. We had a mule roast to-day and we like it fine. We like it better than horse-meat. A fierce bombardment took place this evening. A perfect hailstorm of bullets rained through our compound. A young woman in the basement of the house was mortally wounded. This has brought the war to our very doors.

February 6.

This is the eighth day of the siege of Marash, and this morning we had a joyful surprise. An aeroplane flew over the city and dropped several messages. Unfortunately the wind was very high and carried the messages into the Turkish part of the city, but we know now that help is near and that we are not forgotten. More victims for the operating table and more graves in the cemetery. This afternoon we had another glimpse of an aeroplane, and the French headquarters sent up signals so that they might know where to land if they wished. Everybody is elated to think that communication with the outside world has again been established. We had an answer to-day from the mutessarif, in reply to our letter which accompanied the communication sent by the Turkish officials. He regretted that he could do nothing without consulting the commander of the forces, but appreciated our interest and thanked us for our kind offer of mediation. I hope help will come before all the Armenians have to pay the awful price of this needless war.

February 7.

At last reinforcements are in sight and are already fighting their way into the city. The guns in the plain are shelling the hills over which the scouts expect to reach the barracks. We heard to-day that all the girls in the rescue home have been killed. There were about eighty of them. To add to the horror of the crime the Turks this afternoon set fire to the building and we had the gruesome necessity to witness the scene without being able to lift a hand to save them. The first church is also on fire.

February 8.

The French troops are in the valley and their guns are shelling the hills, but it may be some days yet before they can encircle the city and close in on the enemy. The wounded continue to come, and new deaths take place daily. This afternoon we spent with the French General and his Staff, in the upper storey of the college building, watching the battle in the plain and the attempt of the French relieving troops to make connection with the soldiers in the barracks. This they did later in the day. In the evening we had a thanksgiving service in the college.
February 9.

General Quérette informed us to-day that he has received orders to evacuate the city at midnight on the 9th. This news caused alarm all through the compounds. Everybody is terribly excited. Women and children are crazed with fear. We have urged him to delay their departure, as the Turks are on the point of surrender. He said his orders were imperative, but he would try to secure a delay of twenty-four hours. If they evacuate the city we are not sure what treatment we will receive at the hands of the Turks. We shall remain, however, at our posts of duty, to do what we can to shield the Armenians and protect American interests. We hope for the best but fear the worst. Our hope is in God. We trust Him where we cannot trace Him, and believe that in some divine way our lives will be spared, but if not, God be with you all until we meet again. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.

February 10.

The French General, in response to our earnest entreaties, has granted a delay of twenty-four hours before leaving the city. We are hoping to bring about an understanding with the Turks that will prevent further massacres. The French took most of their wounded out of the city last night, but left twenty in the emergency hospital. The Armenians in the compounds are frantic and desperate. They are determined to leave the city with the French, as they fear massacre if they remain. The scenes are indescribably pathetic and tragic. Our greatest concern is for Miss Buckley, in Bathsalon Orphanage. We fear the Armenians in other compounds have not been notified of the French withdrawal. We have been fitting out the refugees for the journey, giving them food and clothes to the extent of our supplies. Many of the elder orphan boys and girls will leave with the exiles. Dr. and Mrs. Wilson will remain and all the missionaries. Dr. Elliott, Miss Schultz, Miss Powers and Miss Doherty will leave with the troops. I had decided to stay but as two or three thousand are going without a shepherd Dr. Wilson thinks I had better go to take charge of them and find for them food and shelter at their destination. It is a long hard trek of nearly 75 miles through mountain and plain, and I fear many of them will not be equal to it. It is winter and God help them if the weather should be severe. We are trying to arrange terms of peace, and if the French forces would remain only a few more days in the city I believe the Turks would lift their hands in abject surrender. We have just had an interview with Dr. Moustafa, the leader of the Turkish forces, and he has agreed to call the notables of the city together to-morrow, for the purpose of considering terms of surrender. But the fact is he is unaware of the positive withdrawal of the French troops to-night. The troops and refugees left the city about the hours of 6 and 9. The French General and his Staff left about 10:30. I accompanied them. It was a bitterly cold night. The city was in flames. Guns were booming from the hills covering our retreat. After three or four hours, we arrived at the camp on the plain, and at 2 o'clock on Wednesday morning the long column moved out of Marash on its three days' journey to Islahiye.

February 11.

As the column moved away from the city it was a blaze of splendour. The great barracks just evacuated by the French was on fire, silhouetted against the sky. Through the long moonlight night the column marched until noon, when it reached the village of Euloglou and rested for the remainder of the day.

February 12.

At 6 o'clock a[n]e[m]id[e]m] the column started on its long march to Bell Pounar. The weather was severely cold and many of the weak ones dropped by the wayside to freeze or to starve. At noon, the column rested for two hours and reached Bell Pounar about 5 p[ost] m[eid[e]m] Turkish villages were burnt by the soldiers after the column has passed through. There were very meagre accommodations in the village, and multitudes were encamped in the open to suffer seriously from hunger and exposure.

February 13.

During the night, a snowstorm raged and at 6 o'clock the column prepared to move forward while it was yet dark. The snowstorm increased during the early morning hours to a blizzard and continued all through the long dreary march. From twelve to eighteen hours the
soldiers and civilians plodded their way through the storm and snowdrifts. All along the line the weak and the infirm dropped out from sheer exhaustion. It is estimated that before the column reached Islayieh more than a thousand of the refugees had perished in the snow, besides many of the soldiers. It was a tragic ending of a tragic exodus.

February 14.

We did our best to care the refugees in Islayieh. Many died after reaching their destination. No accommodations were available in the village and very little food. I interviewed the Turkish Governor and the French Commandant, and secured their co-operation in doing something for the refugees. A bakery was secured to furnish bread and a mill to grind flour. I left with the French wounded on the evening train for Adana to confer with Dr. Dodd of the A.C.R.N.E. and Dr. Chambers of American Mission, to see what could be done to help these unfortunates in their distress. Milk and blankets were dispatched immediately and further supplies prepared to meet the urgent necessity of the situation. All the American forces in the city have put themselves at the service of these stranded Armenians. It is hoped that eventually they will be brought to Adana, where the pastors of the city are preparing to receive them and house them in their churches and other institutions in the city. I am now trying to return to my station at Aintab by way of Beirut and Aleppo. Dr. Chambers, who is on his way to Constantinople to plead the cause of the Armenians before the representatives of the Entente Powers, will carry this message with him as a record of the events that transpired in Marash during those crucial weeks.


Extracts from the Memoirs of S.E. Kerr

*The Lions of Marash*

Armenian Christmas

Throughout January the villagers, both Armenian and Turkish, had suffered harassment by the chété who demanded food and animals. Armenian villagers were being killed a few at a time when they ventured outside the protection of the community. By mid-January entire villages were being sacked and the Christians massacred. Don-Kalé, a six-hour journey on foot north of Marash, was one of these villages. Nineteen of the four hundred inhabitants of Don-Kalé came to Marash for marketing, walking together for the sake of mutual protection. Among these was Garabed Akullian, who operated a small grocery store in the village with the help of one of his eleven boys, seventeen-year-old son Daniel. Daniel raised sheep and goats and was bringing some of each to Marash for sale. His father wished to replenish his stock of goods for sale in the village. While they were still in Marash news reached them that on 6 January all of the villagers had been massacred by the chété. Only the nineteen who had come to Marash had survived.

*The Marash Rebellion*

On the morning of 21 January General Quéréte took stock of his position. He was short of ammunition, but he expected that this defect would be corrected when the large convoy which he had just sent to Bel Pounar returned with its wagonloads of supplies. He knew that another convoy already en route from Aintab would almost certainly suffer an attack by Kuluj Ali’s guerillas, for Lieutenant Coularai and Snyder had reported the engagement with the Spahis on the road beyond Pazarjik, but he had not yet learned the convoy’s fate. The time had come, he decided, to break any links existing between the local officials and the guerilla forces outside the city.

The general summoned the officials and leaders of the Muslim community to his headquarters. Before they arrived he assembled his battalion commanders, informed them of the tense situation, and ordered
that all troops be prepared for action immediately after their morning meal. He assigned strategic points which were to be seized, but only after he had given the signal.

At 11:25 a m [meridiem] news of the total destruction of the Aintab convoy reached him. Half an hour later the Turkish notables arrived. One can imagine the general’s mood.

The Turkish representatives included the deputy mutasarrif Jevdet Bey, Chief of Police Arslan Bey, the president of the municipal council Haji Bey, Gendarmerie Commander Ismail Hakki, and the president of the chamber of commerce and several of the Muslim religious leaders. Among the latter were Shishman-oghlu Arif, Kojabash-oghlu Haji Bey, and Rifat Hoja. According to the French intelligence agents, each of these men was involved in agitation against the French. As soon as the group had gathered, General Quérétte sent his messenger to the battalion commanders, giving the signal for seizure of the specified posts.

General Quérétte then charged the Marash officials with complicity in the attacks on the convoys. The Turks admitted no responsibility and blamed these events on outlaws. They consented, however, that the city should pay an indemnity to the French in the form of supplies. The Turks complained again that the French had violated the terms of the Mudros armistice, and that the Armenian troops were taking advantage of their French uniforms to molest the Muslim population. They were angered when the general announced that he would take over the civil administration.

At the close of the conference Quérétte announced that six of the group were to be detained, partly as hostages but also for further discussion of means for reconciliation, and that the others could leave. Those detained included the deputy mutasarrif, the gendarme commander, and the president of the municipality. They were placed under guard in one of the rooms of the seminary, in the central compound of the American Mission.

The Turkish notables had scarcely left the mission premises when the sharp report of rifle fire was heard, followed immediately by firing from every quarter of the city. The insurrection had begun.

That morning I had been reminded that wheat was needed urgently by Ebenezer Orphanage and that for several days our buyers had refused to enter the market place, fearing disorder. I decided to purchase the wheat myself, and set out for the arasa (“grain market”) with Peter Jernazian as interpreter. He was a New York jeweler who had recently returned to the city of his birth for a visit. Dr. Craithem joined us, for he wished to telegraph the American consul in Aleppo, complaining that on the previous day he had been fired on, even while waving the American flag. First we went to the telegraph office, and then through the covered bazaar to the arasa, which we found closed. The city was deserted except for groups of heavily armed Turks who were all headed in one direction. On our return through the bazaar, as we approached the Ulu Jami, or “Great Mosque,” where one path led to the citadel and the other to the American Mission, we noticed that the armed Turkish civilians were taking the steep path to the fortress. Jernazian, better informed than his American companions as to the significance of the silent city and the movement of the armed Muslims, suggested that we get back quickly to our own quarters. We crossed the bridge over the Kanlı Derê, then on to the German Hospital where we greeted the French sentry who guarded the entrance, and up the hill to the American Mission compound, just in time for our noon meal. As we seated ourselves we heard a shot fired in the region of the hospital. Within seconds rifle broke out over the entire city. The siege of Marash, the first major battle in the Turkish War of Independence, had begun.

It was apparent, that the insurrection had been carefully planned. Groups of armed men occupied houses at street intersections and shot down French soldiers on the street and sentries at their posts, making use of loopholes prepared in advance. Anyone seen moving was shot, for it was only the Christians who knew nothing of the plan. In the patrols used for policing the city composed of both Turkish gendarmes and French soldiers, the gendarmes turned suddenly on their French companions and killed them.

The orders given by the general for the seizure of certain strategic positions could not be carried out, for the Turks themselves performed that maneuver only half an hour before the French zero hour.

When the French cannon came into action, shelling certain houses in the city, I photographed the shell bursts and the resulting conflagration.
from the upper balcony of the Wilson house. A quarter of a mile below me was the German Hospital, where Dr. Wilson had been operating since early morning. Mrs. Wilson was concerned for his safety, so Paul Snyder volunteered to run down and bring back a report. He also wanted to borrow a pair of field glasses. A French officer whom he met in the seminary compound expressed the opinion that there was no danger! As Paul proceeded down the hill a soldier sheltered in an adobe hut called to warn him, but Paul did not understand the French and continued toward the hospital. Rather than walk through a plowed field he took the longer route to the rear corner of the hospital compound – a move which undoubtedly saved his life, for he had unknowingly avoided the area covered by Turkish snipers. As Snyder turned the corner and approached the front gate, a sniper fired twice but missed as his target began to move fast. The gate stood open, for the French sentry lay dead in such a position that it could not be closed. Dashing through the opening Paul confronted seven Senegalese soldiers raising their guns against the unexpected visitor.

The hospital had been under fire for an hour. Dr. Elliott and Mrs. Power began moving their patients to the floor for greater protection from the stream of bullets fired from across the street. One of the soldiers stationed at the hospital, ignoring the protests of Dr. Elliott, placed a machine gun on the upper balcony, but the moment he opened fire he was felled by a bullet which passed through his chest without striking a major artery. Snyder waited for darkness before climbing over the rear wall to report to Mrs. Wilson that her husband planned to remain at the hospital in view of the emergency need.

Additional information about the first shots fired in this insurrection came from the head nurse at the hospital, Miss Osanna Maksudian. At midday she left the hospital and had gone only a short distance when she noted a Turkish gendarme escorting four Muslim women to a house. When they were safely inside he turned and fired his rifle into the air three times. Immediately fire replied from every quarter. This story is consistent with that given by Hovsep Der Vartanian, who states that it was the police commissioner himself who gave the signal. Immediately after his return from the conference with General Querette he fired his rifle beside the house of Jeilan-oghloou in Bektoutié Street.

... Lieutenant Colonel Thibault records that after 22 January his ability to take action was very limited, for General Querette himself directed all operations and gave orders directly to the commanders of detachments, bypassing the colonel. Thibault had commanded a regiment at Verdun, while the general had spent the war years in a German prison camp. The strategy adopted by the general required each detachment to enlarge its area of control by expelling the enemy from the houses occupied nearby. The implication in Thibault's comment is that he would have adopted a more aggressive policy had he been given some freedom of action.

Actually the Turks themselves were following the same strategy more successfully than the French. Thibault speaks of "the vigilance and boldness of the rebels, who seemed to be animated by an ardent offensive spirit". They set fire to large sections of the city in order to approach the buildings occupied by the foreign troops. In this process most of the Christians remaining in their homes were massacred. Those who fled to their churches or to schools came under the protection of the French troops quartered in those buildings, and of the few Armenians possessing arms. It has been estimated that approximately three thousand Armenians were killed during the first few days of the battle. Those who survived had gained the security of a church, or the Beitshalom Orphanage, or the American Mission compound. Later we learned of a few isolated groups who defended their homes successfully until the end of the conflict.

From the moment the battle began, communications were cut between the commander and the posts at which his troops were established in various parts of the city. Not a single item of equipment for communication was available. The wireless sets belonging to the 412th Regiment had been retained in Beirut for the security of General Gouraud. Not even carrier pigeons were available. Hence the only means of communication was by courier, and a number of these died performing their duties.

The telegraph wires to Aintab and Adana were cut, but not before General Querette had alerted Colonel Flye Sainte-Marie in Aintab, and the latter had passed his message on to General Dufieux in Adana. Other messages sent by courier failed to reach General Dufieux except
for one received on 12 February when the whole affair was over.

... It was Saint George’s Church, one of the Armenian Apostolic churches which Evliye Efendi had attacked. Fifty soldiers, including twenty Armenian legionnaires, had been quartered there.

... Why did the troops abandon the helpless Armenians to their fate? Were they quartered in the church merely for their comfort, or for the purpose of protecting the community? Other churches were burned under similar circumstances.

From our position in the mission compound we witnessed this conflagration but were ignorant of the fact that Saint George’s had become the funeral pyre of some thousand Armenians. Along with Saint George’s Church went the destruction of the Armenian houses in that area. One resident who surrendered to the Turks and survived, Leah Maraslian, told me of her experiences.

At noon on 21 January Leah, a young widow, left her classroom at the Central School and walked home through the deserted streets. Her thoughts were on her three-year-old son Edward. Two days earlier she had asked him, “Edward, what would you like to have for Christmas?”

“A Daddy and a dog!”

The boy’s father, a student at the Marash Theological Seminary, had been drafted into the labor corps of the Turkish army early in the Great War and marched off to Aintab where he was last seen. One member of that detachment had reported that they were marched to the bank of a river and lined up to be shot. Wounded, he fell, feigning death, and thus escaped.

Leah noted that no shops were open. At home she sat down to lunch with her father, an uncle, her sister Araxie, and Edward. While they were eating, rifle fire broke out all over the city. Several neighbors ran to Leah’s house seeking greater security. The house was in the Rayizitli quarter, which first came under heavy attack by Turkish insurgents led by Evliye Efendi, and within a few days Leah, her family, and her neighbors found themselves encircled. A Turkish neighbor called to them, “Give yourselves up and we will protect you!” They had no arms for defense and therefore no choice but to surrender. The Turks ushered them down the street toward the Ulu Jami. Rounding a corner they found a large group of armed Turks in the area facing the mosque. Suddenly there was firing, and Leah, dazed with disbelief, saw her companions falling.

“Are they going to kill us?” cried little Edward. Leah recalls no fear, only shock and disbelief. A gendarme pushed her toward the gate of the mosque, urging, “Get inside — quickly!”

Leah, her father, uncle, sister, and son were among the few who got inside and survived the chéte fire. Later, under escort of gendarmes, they were transferred to the municipal prison at the konak, there to remain for the duration of the siege. Each day a few more were pushed through the prison door until the bare, windowless room could hold no more. In this way approximately one hundred Armenians were saved by the local government, while others were slaughtered or burned to death in their houses. Estimates of the number killed in this manner vary from two to four thousand.

Those sheltered in the prison slept on the cold concrete floor without bedding or cover. They were offered one meal each day but had no utensils with which to eat. The food was dumped into their hands or laps. An old Turkish guard in compassion offered Leah some onion shells for use as dishes. For two days she ate nothing, having seen mouse droppings in the food. Twice guards came to take away several of the younger women. A corner of the prison yard represented the toilet “facilities.” The less one ate, the fewer the visits to this loath-some corner. Leah lost forty pounds.

“Do you know what hunger is?” she asked me. “It is when you want to grab a crust of bread from your dying child!”

No change of clothing, no opportunity to bathe, and lice multiplied. Edward developed a fever and died.

Why had the Turks protected this small group? Was it out of compassion on the part of a few? Later the mutasarrif claimed that the insurgents had taken things into their own hands and that the government was powerless to stop the fighting and the massacres but saved as many as possible.

As the bands of irregular fighters continued their mopping-up operations, the Armenian families realized that this was a time for collective security and made preparations to move to one of the churches in their quarter, Saint Stephen’s, or the Church of Asdvadsadzin. Saint
George's was already in ashes. Neighbors cut holes in their garden walls and dug trenches in order to move freely from house to house without exposure. Abandoning their household possessions, they crept under cover of darkness to one of the churches, or to a neighborhood stronghold such as the house of Dr. Khatcher.

Each of the churches, and in fact every home, was surrounded by a high wall built of mud bricks. Our orphanages, too, were located within walled compounds, hence each of these became a place of refuge. Since Beitshalom Boys' Orphanage was located on a hill dominating the eastern quarters of the city, the French commander had quartered three sections of machine-gunners there— in all some eighty soldiers of the 412th Regiment. When the fighting ended three weeks later, survivors of the Christian population were found in only four such compounds. All others had been killed or had fled to Islahiye.

The story of Marash battle thus becomes the separate stories of the various strongholds as told by individual survivors. With rare exceptions, those who remained to defend their homes did not live to recount their experiences.

*Koulaghi Kourtlo and Sheker Deré*

From Saint Stephen's Church on 20 January a procession of mourners went to the cemetery carrying on a bier the body of an Armenian legionnaire who had been killed by a sniper firing from the minaret of a mosque. The Turkish authorities had made no move to find the culprit, nor did the French commander take any steps to force an investigation. This caused great resentment among the Armenians, who felt that the Turks were testing the ability of the French to punish such an incident.

On his return from the cemetery Khatcig Der Vartanian, who had been one of the pall bearers, deposited the wooden framework on which the body had been carried in the courtyard of Saint Stephen's Church, not knowing that it would soon serve for the escape of his sister Makrouhi—bride of a few months—and his mother. Aware of the tension in the city, Khatcig urged his sister to move to his home near the Church of the Forty Sainted Youths where a large detachment of Senegalese troops was quartered and where her brother Yervant served as interpreter to the commander, Major Corneloup. Disregarding his advice, Makrouhi was busy the next morning assisting her mother-in-law in the preparation of a feast for her relatives and those of her husband, Arsen Der Ohannesian, when shortly after the noon hour the unusual quiet of the quarter was shattered by a fusillade of gun fire. People caught in the streets were screaming and running for shelter, many to the nearby Church of Saint Stephen. Arsen took his bride and his mother across to the church compound without stopping to carry food or bedding. That evening hundreds of Armenians from the Bektoutiyé Quarter came to the church. They barricaded the doors and stretched out to sleep on the floor, using the church carpets for mattresses. Only a few steps away there was food in abundance, the banquet prepared for the family gathering, but no one dared move outside the door.

A week passed. The Turks had begun a systematic campaign to clear the quarter of Armenians, burning their homes and killing the inhabitants. Finally they set fire to a group of houses close to the church, and a few survivors escaped to Saint Stephan's. They were shocked and exhausted but cried to those already in the church, "Run! Run! They will burn you alive if you stay here!"

This created a panic among the five or six hundred refugees. It had become dark. The great door was opened and many ran into the yard, but to open the main gate would be suicide, for across the street snipers were waiting in the Turkish reformatory. Could they climb the high wall and escape into the side street?

While the crowd milled about, Arsen noticed the bier last used to carry the dead legionnaire to the cemetery. It could serve as a ladder, with the crossbars for steps! Placing it against the wall, he directed his mother and wife to remove their shoes so they would make no noise when they dropped over the wall to the stone paved street. Some twenty-five other refugees followed, each one helping to boost the one ahead over the wall. Outside the Turks were busy carrying water to save their own houses from burning. In small groups the Armenians slipped quietly down the alley to the street leading to the Church of the Forty Sainted Youths.

Arsen discovered that his mother was missing and did not know whether she had gone ahead or had been left behind. Reaching the foot of
the citadel and Cutthroat Lane, they decided to take shelter in the house of Arsen’s cousins – Der Sahag’s house. They climbed a wall in the rear and entered the house, finding only a small boy and his grandfather who was unable either to walk or talk because of a stroke. The others had fled to the Franciscan Monastery. For a week Arsen, Makrouhi, and six others hid in the basement, going to the kitchen for food only at night. An Armenian neighbor kept watch over them, as well as over his own household, and finally persuaded them to join his family for better protection and comfort. There, too, was an Algerian soldier caught away from his base on 21 January.

At midnight a daring young Armenian came to them from the Franciscan Monastery for his sister, knowing her to be there. As they left together for the monastery, the others decided to risk the journey, for it was even more dangerous to stay. Shortly after they set out in the darkness the one armed man in the party accidentally discharged his rifle. All over the neighborhood Turks began shooting – their technique for scaring off would-be aggressors. Some of the group turned back and were never seen again. Makrouhi hung on to her husband’s arm and ran on, passing a mill and the body of its Armenian owner in the street which runs along the Kanli Derê. They climbed the forty or fifty steps up the steep slope to the high-walled monastery, perched like a castle on the ridge, and approached the main entrance with its barricade. Would the defenders shoot, assuming them to be enemies? “Armen! Armen!” they shouted to identify themselves as Armenians, and a French soldier called back for them to approach and enter. Only three of the group had reached the monastery: Makrouhi, Arsem and the son of Der Sahag’s neighbour. In the monastery they found Der Sahag’s family, who had gone there on the first day of fighting. Father Joseph assigned them to a room on the second floor, already occupied by twenty-five others*.

These who remained at Saint Stephen’s – said to be about five hundred – died in the flames as the church was burned on the following day. Makrouhi’s sister Nevart had fled with her two children to Saint Sarkis Church in the Kumbet Quarter when fighting began. A number of the men who took refuge there were armed, and under the leadership of Sarkis Ghadeyan resisted the attacks of Turkish insurgents for some time. As the forces opposing them grew in number they decided to abandon the church and move to the nearby orphanage, Beitshalom, where eighty French soldiers were quartered. The move was made successfully at night. In the orphanage Nevart found her brother Hovsep among the three thousand Armenians who had sought refuge there. Finding Saint Sarkis without defenders, the Turks looted and burned it.

Safe in the monastery, Makrouhi knew nothing of what had happened to the other members of her large family. At that time her mother-in-law, two sisters, and two brothers were among those who had taken refuge in the Church of the Forty Sainted Youths. Her brother Hovsep, a teacher, had gone to his classes at Beitshalom Orphanage and was unable to return to his wife and three sons. In his history of these events he states that he never saw them again*.

... Also members of Saint Stephen’s Church were the Chorbajians. Boghos, one of five brothers, lived with his wife and even children in the Divanli Quarter close to the home of Abraham Hoja Berberian. Of these only the eldest son, Karemkin, survived, for he was not at home when the siege began. Hovsep, son of Baghdasar, who lived near the Belediyê (“Municipal Building”) relates his experiences. At the outbreak of hostilities he was in the home of an uncle at Boghaz Kesaz and remained there for eight days, helping in the defense. When it became clear that greater security was to be found in the Franciscan Monastery with its garrison of French troops, some of those in the Chorbajan residence agreed to attempt to reach that haven. Since success depended upon moving quickly and silently at night, it was decided that the elderly and the very young should remain in the residence. At nine p[ost] m[eridiem] fifteen of them set out by way of the Turkish cemetery and reached the Monastery safely**. Two weeks later Hovsep was to witness an episode of historic importance.

S.E. Kerr, op. cit., pp. 86, 95-103, 120-123.
Excerpts from *A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* by Abraham H. Hartunian

The year 1920 was a most terrible and blood-stained year – the year of the last massacre of Marash.

... In the first days of January the French forces were increasing day by day and occupied the various centers of the city. Three hundred French soldiers were stationed on my church campus. We found them very hungry and right away went from house to house to gather food and feed them all.

The French were preparing to quell an approaching rebellion, and the Turks were preparing to start one. What should the Armenians do? Certainly they would side with their liberators! So they in turn were preparing too, under the protection of the French, to fight against the general enemy.

On Friday, January 16, the Turkish aghas and religions leaders called a meeting and invited the Armenian aghas and religious heads, myself included, to consider the present delicate situation and if possible find a way out of the crisis. We went to this meeting, held in Ooloo Jami, and were treated very kindly indeed. Even tea had been prepared in our honor. But soon the mind of our hosts was revealed: “We request you Armenians to unite with us, your Turkish fellow-countrymen, and to fight with us against the French, force them out of the city, and then to live with us in eternal brotherhood.”

Would that we had accepted this request! It would have been a much wiser course than the one we took. At least we would have lived! But could the Armenian have held a position contrary to that of his emancipators? And could he have united with one who had always been his murderer? Thinking that if we accepted this course of action we ourselves would wound our savior-army, we refused, and the meeting dispersed.

The governor, Atah Bey, had by now organized the Turkish populace in every way, made all his preparations, and was getting ready to withdraw from the city. With perfect cunning and artful politeness, he called on all the Armenian leaders to say farewell. On Saturday, January 17, he left the city, having appointed in his stead the *tabrirat müdür*, the secretary of the city, a notorious man from Kilis named Mohammed Bey.

On Sunday, January 18, all our churches were crowded. Although we were threatened with war, yet when we considered that there were six thousand French troops in the city, that cannons were entrenched on every side, that six hundred brave Armenian volunteers protected us, we were encouraged and happy. Next day, the Armenian Christmas day, was celebrated as never before.

On Tuesday, January 20, the French general peremptorily ordered the Turkish government to dismiss all officials and to hand over to him all the government buildings with all their departments. The Turkish officials did not reply. On Wednesday morning the general had the representative of the governor of the city and four other Turkish officials of the first rank arrested. After questioning them, he imprisoned them. The representative, however, promising to persuade and prepare the Turks for uncompromising obedience, was soon set free. The other four remained locked up. The kindling wood had been arranged and was ready. Only a spark was necessary to start the blaze – and behold, the French general had supplied that spark!

At one o’clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, January 21, 1920, the firing began. The city of Marash was now a battlefield. The Turks had taken the offensive and unexpectedly opened fire on the French and the Armenians indiscriminately. French soldiers and Armenian men, women, and children were in the streets and, unable to reach their houses or military centers, fell where they were. In a short time the streets were littered with corpses.

There were seven safe military centers in Marash: (1) the American girls’ college; (2) the German (Bethshallum) orphanage; (3) the German hospital; (4) the Armenian Catholic Church; (5) the Latin monastery; (6) the Gregorian Church of Forty Children (*Karaoosn Manooog*); (7) the First Armenian Evangelical Church (my own church). Almost half of the Armenians, about ten thousand, managed to take refuge in these centers; the rest had been left in their houses or in a number of unprotected church buildings. The Armenians from the Armenian quarters, about twenty-five hundred in number, were in their church building, the Church of the Holy Virgin, without any protection whatever.
The Turks were battling madly, attacking, shooting, massacring, sparing no one. The French from the very beginning assumed the defensive. They would open fire here and there, without at all harming the Turks, only preventing their advance upon them.

This very morning a few hundred Armenian volunteers had left Marash to go to Adana. We did not then know why. But my sincere belief is that they were sent away by the French to appease the Turks. The Turks of the city especially hated these Armenian volunteers and many times had appealed to the French to get rid of them. The truth is that the French betrayed the volunteers to the savagery of the Turks. Attacked by overwhelming numbers of çete holding the roads, they were murdered horribly, except for a few who escaped and reached Adana.

The Armenians in the surrounding villages, all but the Zeytoontis, were that same day annihilated by the mobs. The Turks had sworn their greatest oath not to spare a single Armenian, not even suckling babes. Children were ripped open before their parents, their hearts taken out and stuffed down their mothers’ throats. Mothers were crucified naked to doors, and before their very eyes their small ones were fixed to the floor with swords and left writhing. The fight was between the French and the Turks, but it was the Armenians who were being killed.

All these horrid messages reached the French general. But he, drunk with wine, would curse vainly, would deceive us, and would use the time for his own advantage. Recalling his words that in three hours he could quell the rebellion, we waited anxiously. But the day ended without his taking one decisive step. Mustafa Kemal’s men – Kuluj Ali and the Cherkess Arslan – were already in the city directing the rebellion and massacre. Their purpose was to break the French power and to annihilate the Armenians relying on that power. And the French defended only themselves, not at all concerned about defeating the Turks, unoccupied even with the thought of the safety of the Armenians.

In the buildings on my church compound were three hundred French soldiers and about two hundred fugitive neighbors. Since we were now in the very heart of the battle, the officer in our center dispersed his troops here and there for protection, not so much of the Armenians as of his own soldiers.

Night pressed on. We heard the firing of guns unceasingly, the shouts of the attackers, screamings and wailings. Above this turmoil there came suddenly the terrible supplication of an Armenian woman who had been left in the street and in the dark had come to the door to find safety. As she entered she was shot by the French soldiers, who thought her an enemy.

During the evening the French officer began to talk secretly to his men. He was figuring out a plan in his mind. What was this plan? To take his soldiers, slip out of the place, and join the soldiers in the Armenian Catholic Church, another stronghold, because our center was dangerous and the other one was safe. Chivalrous France thus leaves the weak behind to be massacred! She flees to save herself!

We could not have prevented the French from abandoning us, but Providence took a hand. As the soldiers were leaving, the Turks, who now had manned every nook and cranny and were prepared to shoot in any direction, instantly, saw them and opened immediate fire. A few soldiers were shot, and the officer, convinced that escape was impossible, returned to the building abashed and distributed his troops to their former places. All night the shooting continued. We had no rest or sleep.

On Thursday, January 22, the officer called me to him, and we walked around the campus to ascertain the dangerous spots and to observe the surrounding houses so that the soldiers might be arranged accordingly. As we were making these investigations, it happened that in one room I was standing before a window. The officer was a little distance from me, to one side. An Armenian young man was standing behind me. The officer, with the foresight of a soldier, sensed danger, and taking my hand drew me a few steps toward him, away from the window, saying, “It is dangerous to stand there.” Hardly had I changed my place when an enemy gun was fired. The bullet found its mark, and the young man behind me fell wounded to the floor.

That day, that night, and the next day passed in the same way. Neither the soldiers nor the people had anything to eat, but I brought out the great supply of provisions stored up in my house for the winter, and all were fed day by day.

On the night of January 23, to the firing, the thundering of the cannons, the din of battle, a more calamitous evil was added – fire! The
Turks had begun to set Armenian houses and buildings on fire. Even Turkish buildings were being burned if it seemed possible thus to spread the blaze to the Armenian quarters or one of the military centers. The flames rose everywhere; the city glowed beneath their light. From every side, bullets were incessantly whistling like hail, and no one knew when he might be hit. Every moment there was danger of a fierce attack on any center where the Armenians had gathered. The fire horrified us. It was impossible to withstand it. I do not know a battle on a field or in the air, but I do know that a battle in a city is a hellish thing!

In the other centers the situation was the same or even worse. But no horrors can ever parallel the experience of the Armenians in the Armenian quarters and in their houses. These were tortured without respite and without pity and then slaughtered. A well-known and supposedly good-hearted Turk, Murad Bey, was in the Great Mosque, Ooloo Jami, where the murderers were at work. Some Armenian women and children, watching the slaughter and awaiting their turn, pleaded, “Please tell them to shoot us and not cut our throats with the knife!” and our kind Turk answered, “Don’t be afraid. The knives have been sharpened well and you will not suffer much.”

The city’s greatest Hoca was there too, Dayi Zade Hoca, and the Turks turned to him saying, “Hoca, shall we slaughter the small children too? Does the Koran give us permission?” “Yes,” he answered, “slaughter them too. The Koran permits. We must kill the offspring of the scorpions, too, that they may not grow and sting us.”

Let me not forget to say that Ooloo Jami was very near the Church of Forty Children, around which four thousand French soldiers had encamped.

There was an Armenian section near out church, called Kooyoojak, where many families, not having an opportunity to escape to any center, had remained and during these five days defended themselves. The Turks now resorted to burning them out. But because they could not get near an Armenian house, beginning a few houses beyond they set fire to Turkish houses, and the flames spread into the Armenian section. The whole section was soon aflame. What great wealth was there, all of it turned to ashes! About a thousand Armenians, under cover of night, holding their children’s hands, fled noiselessly, crawling on the ground; some reached our center and some the German orphanage.

By Sunday night, January 25, our buildings and campus were overcrowded. There was almost no place to sit down; there was no place to sleep. There was nothing with which to cover oneself. There was little left to eat. The children cried. The mothers were heartbroken. The men were pale. It was a hellish sight!

Some tried to escape to the Catholic church not far from us, but the Turkish bullets prevented them, after a few had been shot. A mother with three of her children tried to escape. One of the children was shot and fell to the ground. She returned to our building with the other two while her wounded daughter, stretched out on the road, began to cry, “Mother, I am shot and am dying. Why do you leave me here?”

Our houses and possessions were no longer ours. My family and I huddled together in one corner of a room – like all the rest. Oh, how unbearable it was to see this, my poor nation’s new and heavier burden, to see my wife and children trembling, awaiting their doom.

On Monday, January 26, the officer, alarmed by the fire of the previous night, thought that a few Turkish houses near the church might soon be occupied by the çete. He therefore determined to burn them to prevent that danger. This was perhaps the only wise thing our French officer did. But unfortunately, as the flames from those houses rose, sparks blown by the wind reached the wooden bell tower of my church and set it on fire. With our own hands we had seriously endangered ourselves. How could we put this fire out? The Turks saw what had happened and now directed their bullets at the bell tower. Thus, unable to climb up the tower, we decided to cut it down by sawing its four pillars from the bottom and tumbling it over into the yard with ropes. Quickly the whole structure came crashing to the ground and the fire was put out.

The officer comforted me, saying, “Don’t worry. We will rebuild that tower for you. And this time in stone! And more magnificent!” Alas! Not only did the French not rebuild my bell tower but they reduced my church and all the buildings on my campus to ashes!

Tuesday, January 27, was the fatal day for the Church of the Holy Virgin. As I have mentioned, twenty-five hundred Armenians had taken protection there and with a few light arms had defended themselves these
few days. The Turks were working systematically and one by one removing the enemy forces from their midst. Already all the Armenians who had stayed in their houses and sections had been annihilated. The Kooyoojak quarter had been burned to the ground, and today this church was surrounded by thousands of savage, bloodthirsty Turks. While bullets hailed against the building incessantly to prevent the escape of anyone, they brought kerosene in large cans and sprayed it on the walls on every side with pumps. Pieces of sackcloth, soaked in kerosene and lighted, were thrown on the building. Flaming rags on the end of long poles were raised toward the roof. The Armenians inside were panic stricken. They shouted, screamed for help. They waved flags in every direction. But there was no help. The French general viewed this scene through his field glasses and kept silent. A few steps away, nearly four thousand French troops were watching. The handful of Armenian volunteers left in the city pleaded with their commander to be allowed to save their counymen for whom they had come far distances. But they were ordered, at the gunpoint, to stay where they were and not to intervene.

The mournful supplication of the Armenians now rose to heaven, and God's angels too did not come to their aid.

The building caught fire. The flames roared upward. All the people were consumed, and in a few hours one could see there only a smoking heap of silent ashes. Twenty-five hundred persons had been destroyed — to the glory of the French, and to the heartbreak and horror of the remnant Armenians.

For the rest of the week the same monstrous deeds were repeated. The continuous sound of gunfire had terrified us. We were not just walking toward death; we dwelt in death. Death had besieged us, and no matter where we turned, it threatened to strangle us. The fire, the sword, the bullets clawed at us. To these terrors were added hunger, thirst, filth, sleeplessness, and disease.

The Turks had blocked the water running to the church fountain. Its flow had been like teardrops, but at length it began to bleed: the blood of slaughtered Armenians trickled from its spout.

The French soldiers were still safe in their places. The Turks had no fear of them because they knew the French would not attack them. It was the Armenians who everywhere, every time, in every way, were forfeiting their buildings, churches, schools, houses! And what use was it to keep them? Not one Armenian would be left to live in them.

Now the time had come for the Turks to attack the military centers, take the French soldiers prisoners, and kill the remaining Armenians. On Saturday night, January 31, they concentrated on the Catholic church. Under a rain of bullets the school building of the church was set on fire. It went up in a sudden blaze, the flames lighting the whole city. There were about three thousand Armenians in the church and about five hundred French soldiers. The Armenians manifested great courage. At the risk of their lives they tried to save at least the church building and the other large buildings on the campus. A number of them were shot. But they kept on bravely and succeeded in limiting the fire to the building where it had started.

... Monday, February 2, was a day of panic in our center. I was with my family in a corner of the school building adjacent to the church. There were many other families with us. Suddenly we saw smoke. The building had been set on fire with kerosene-soaked rags wrapped around long poles and set aflame. Our young men immediately set themselves to try to extinguish the blaze, but it had been set from the outside and to go outside was impossible because of the barrage of bullets. The only possibility was to dig a hole in the wall from inside and put the fire out in some way through it. But as preparations were being made for this endeavor, we were ordered to leave the building and go into the church because the fire was spreading. With many others, my wife and I, holding the children's hands, entered the church. All the people had crowded in there, while the brave young men were trying to contain the fire. The Turkish gunfire became suddenly fiercer. From every side there was a storm of bullets, hand grenades, and shells. Death's gaping mouth seemed ready to swallow us all at once. At this point the French soldiers received orders from their officer to be prepared to escape. Their bags were on their shoulders, their guns in their hands, and they were ready to flee. And we, what were we going to do? Who told you, friend, that the French soldiers came here to protect you? You are an Armenian, and your lot is to be massacred!

My children began to cry, sensing that the hour of death had come. I abandoned all hope, convinced that we would all now perish. Weeping,
I gathered my wife and children close and said to them, "This is the last hour. We are all going to die. But in a little while we will be together in heaven."

Oh, now I knew the shattering of the spirit, the lacerations of the heart, the insufferable anguish of those parents who with their children had passed such hours as this, and who then perished.

When we saw that the fire had not yet been put out and that the attack was growing more intense, in desperation we ran out of the church to an empty Turkish house near by. A bullet whistled through the air just an inch from my eldest daughter Helena’s head, but we reached the house and hurried to the cellar to await our dark fate. Our veins had been drained of blood! The color of our cheeks had gone! We were like those who have come out of the grave. We were living death’s-heads.

And then came the good news! The fire had been put out! Stealthily we returned to our nest, this time occupying a place on the first floor of the school building in the middle of the campus. And there we rested.

During the twenty-three days that the battle lasted there were hard and heartbreaking tasks: finding food for about a thousand people, providing them with water to drink, removing the garbage and rubbish and preventing the spread of disease. The dead had to be hurried, the wounded treated, and those who had lost loved ones consoled. I myself was in need of consolation and encouragement; how could I console and encourage others? But the God of comfort helped me and comforted me and used me to help and comfort others. Within the bounds of possibility I kept order among the people to assure a semblance of calm. I made a list of all the people, family by family, and once a day some kind of food – or at least something that looked like food – was prepared in large caldrons and distributed to the people, just enough to keep them alive. The grown-ups bore it patiently but the children were always crying. They wanted more food than we were able to give them. If the battle had gone on longer than twenty-three days, the people would have died of hunger, if not from other causes.

Across the street from our compound was a building in which about one hundred girls were living under the supposed protection of the Near East Relief – girls who had been recently rescued by the English from the Turkish harems. Now they were abandoned in that building with their housemother, Mrs. Gohar Shanlian. The only man there was the doorman. Since the fighting had begun without warning, no arrangement had been made for these girls. How many times I had told our French officer, “Those girls are in danger. Let us bring them to our compound during the night.” But the officer paid no attention to me and left the girls to their sad fate. Their building was attacked on Thursday, February 5. Their housemother and doorman were shot, and all of them were taken out of the city and given as payment to the Turkish soldiers, who raped them cruelly and then massacred them.

On Friday, February 6, the seventeenth day of the battle, a French airplane flew over the city dropping notes to the military centers. New French forces were coming; the freedom of the city was assured. Freedom! But for whom? Assurance! But for whom? Who was thinking of these questions now? Was there any need for such niceties Freedom and assurance for all! For the French and for the Armenians!

Woe, deceived Armenian! Ever deceived and ever wronged! There was freedom, but not for us. Freedom for the French! But for us new shedding of blood, new burning in the fire! We were once again to be sacrificed for someone else’s freedom! Nevertheless, this day we were happy, ignorant of the fact that the command to retreat had been given and that the French were preparing to flee.

Again the Turks tried to set our building on fire. But as the long pole with its flaming rags was raised toward our roof, a French soldier took aim, and the man holding the pole rolled on the ground wounded. The rest of the Turks ran away. Bravo!

That night the French soldiers left our center and were replaced by about one hundred Armenian volunteers under the command of a few French officers. Airplanes and new forces and arms had by now reached the city. But they had not come to punish the Turk, to save the Christian; they had come to save their own soldiers besieged by the Turks, to take them away and abandon the remnant of Armenians to the massacring hordes. Long live French diplomacy!

Saturday, February 7, was reminiscent of Saturday, August 7, 1915, when hell’s harbingers ran through the streets ordering all men seventeen years old and above to gather outside the city for deportation! This was the day my parsonage and magnificent church were turned to ashes, the
day all my possessions were consumed by flames, the day my library, my books, my sermons, my labors of twenty years were destroyed.

The Turks were ready to challenge even the new French forces - of course to our bitter destruction! They had determined at any price to set my buildings on fire today, and because no other way was possible, they would burn a tall Turkish structure near by, so that the flames from there might reach us. I knew that this Turkish building would cause us trouble. How many times I had begged the officer to burn it on a day when there was no wind. But he never heeded me. Now, with a north wind blowing, the flames gradually advanced to the parsonage. It was impossible to stop them, though the brave Armenian young men did everything they could. I prayed continually that at least the church might be spared, but my prayer did not find acceptance in heaven.

We all withdrew to the two buildings situated in the middle of the campus and watched the burning of my parsonage and then of my church.

Night came on. The people were betrayed to more hardships. There was no room to sit down. Sleep was out of the question. There was nothing to eat. The French had with them a number of mules which they slaughtered, and we chewed on this tough flesh, almost raw and unsalted.

Next day, physically, mentally, and spiritually almost overcome, we regarded the sad scene of the destruction of the fire. Our condition was now more perilous since the enemy could easily attack. No wall or ramparts had been left.

We had felt somewhat encouraged by the presence of the few French officers and the Armenian volunteers, but this very night there were hushed whisperings among the latter. All of them were afoot. They were making their preparations.

Utterly exhausted in every way, the people slept where they could, in cramped discomfort. I too slept. The Armenian volunteers were our protectors.

Suddenly, near midnight, someone shook me and whispered to me to follow him. I went out on the campus to see that all the Armenian quarters of the city were aflame. All about was the terrible conflagration. And more terrible than this: there were neither Armenian volunteers nor French officers! Betraying us to the sword of our murderers, they had quietly stolen away. My God! What cursed days we pass through one by one! What now? It would not do for me to merely bewail this calamity, to show despair and drive others to despair! I would do my very best even under heaven's curse itself!

I called together a number of the Armenian young people, each of whom had a gun. Stationing themselves here and there, they fired their guns intermittently, so that the Turks might think the French were still with us.

Monday, February 9, was one of those days which the imagination cannot comprehend. If the Turks had been aware that the French forces were withdrawing and our center had already been abandoned to its fate, our annihilation would have been the work of one hour. But because the French cannons, both in the city and outside, had begun to bombard the centers where the Turks were thought to have gathered, our enemies retreated to safe places. Thinking they were now really being attacked by the French, they had no time to pursue their attack on us. For the moment we were safe. Moreover, from somewhere had come encouraging words (I do not know who had falsely planted the seeds) "All the military strength is being centralized for a united and powerful attack to crush the Turks once and for all!"

Accustomed as we were to being duped, in truth it was good that we were deceived now. At least the heaviness of our day was lightened by this deception. For once the successive thunder of the bombardment and the omnipresent whizzing-rumble of machine-gun fire sounded pleasing to our ears.

... It was Tuesday, February 10, the day of Samaria's plenty and luxury! The Armenians from the other centers who had survived, learning that the city was now evacuated by the Turks, rushed out from their imprisonment and began to help themselves to everything they could carry out of the empty Turkish houses. They soon reached out center with the news, and our people too ran for booty. In a few hours our two buildings were filled with food, clothes, house furnishings, etc. I was displeased by all this. I did not move from my place. Although the cannons were roaring and the Turkish attacks had ceased, nevertheless, my heart was not satisfied. I had no inner assurance of safety. I did not like this conduct of my people. But I could not have prevented it.
The whole day passed in this way. At nightfall, as if to avenge the deeds of the Turks, the Armenians set mosques and Turkish houses on fire and killed a few Turks they found here and there. Again the Armenians were joyous and were congratulating each other. Even those who had lost their parents, children, husbands, were smiling, and the woe of fifteen thousand dead compatriots was quickly forgotten. Why, in the Latin monastery a band was playing, giving us the good news of Armenia’s freedom! One would think these people were trying to say in their own simple way, “If the losses we have sustained have brought the defeat of the Turks and the freedom of the Armenians, it is good!” Would that at least this had been so!

At midnight it was snowing heavily and the earth was thickly covered. The air was bitter cold and windy. The cannons still roared. The machine guns rattled. Suddenly there was a towering blaze and a crepitation, and then terrific explosions. The great Turkish barracks where the French troops had encamped was afame!

This was enough to explain everything. The French forces were withdrawing and they themselves had set the barracks with all its contents on fire. I realized the situation immediately, but what was there to do? It was impossible to go out from our center and join the soldiers. I trembled. I waited. Death and annihilation were now both imminent and imminent for us!

Those Armenians who were near the soldiers and who had learned that they were withdrawing went with them. In all nearly three thousand men, women, children attached themselves to the French and left the city, on foot, in the blizzard! All this time the cannons outside the city kept up their bombardment, to prevent any Turkish attack. But later we learned that these bombs were all shot into the hills without causing any damage to anyone or anything.

Wednesday, February 11, was the birthday of my little boy, Vartan. He was five years old. I had nothing to give him. I kissed him as he slept that morning and shed two teardrops on his head. It was very probable that this was the last day for all of us.

The richest and most influential family of the city, the Kherlakians, and some others came together to think what should be done in the present critical situation. These people had shown much respect and given great honors to the French and were especially hated by the Turks! Could not the French at least, in gratitude, have informed them of the withdrawal, instead of leaving them thus to their savage enemies?

They were now asking, baffled, “What shall we do?” Some suggested running after the troops and joining them. I myself did not consider this wise, saying, “The troops have been gone for some time. It will be impossible to catch up with them. By now the Turks are aware of the situation and will massacre all of us on the way.”

Already we knew the fugitive Turks were returning, group after group. I suggested our staying here. But was it safe? No! Just as dangerous. However, here at least we would be protected from the snow and the wind, and from the exhaustion of the journey. The others did not agree with me, and so they set out immediately. Alas! What I had feared came to pass. These fleeing hundreds of Armenians were attacked and murdered. Only a few, wounded, half-dead, horrified, found their way back to us.

Since our center was in great danger, I thought it best to go to the other center near by, the Catholic church, and join whoever was there. Although this was a perilous undertaking, we had to attempt it. Leaving all the booty behind and holding the children’s hands, we slipped along secret trenches, in and out of dark corners, through holes, and reached out destination.

Now we were about five thousand, from moment to moment awaiting attack. That night we took down the French flag which was still waving over the building and hoisted a Turkish flag. There was a French flag over the building of our center also. In the darkness I went back there with a few friends, and we took down the French flag and returned safely.

It was Thursday, February 12, the twenty-third day of the battle. Today the verdict would be pronounced for our destruction or our rebirth. We were all hungry. My children were crying for food. There was nothing to eat here but an abundance in the center we had left. I was foolishly daring enough to take my niece Yester, a girl of twenty-five, back with me to our former center. There we cooked some pilaf and, putting it in a pan, started back. Hardly had we taken three steps out when this former center was occupied by the Turks. If we had remained there a few more minutes, both of us would have been killed. When we reached
the Catholic church, we saw that already it was being surrounded by the čete and basibozuk. We were the last ones to enter, and the door was locked. I placed the food before my children without telling them anything about the urgency of the situation. They began to eat happily.

Now the remaining two buildings of our former center were set on fire, and the flames rose toward heaven. Preparations were being made to burn all of us too. Guns were trained on the building from every side to prevent any escape. Kerosene was being sprinkled on the walls. The poles were ready with soaked rags aflame on their tips. Loved ones embraced and kissed each other in tears. One more minute and the flames would devour us! All hope was gone. Some were praying to God with uplifted arms, either for freedom or for faith to die in the faith!

At this ghastly moment salvation came to us. A voice outside shouted, "Open the door!"

I ran to the door. "Who is it?"
"We!" answered someone.

It was the voice of saving angels – the American missionary, Mr. Lyman, and one of the Near East officials, Dr. Wilson. I flung open the door. White flags in their hands! Gendarmes with them! We gathered them in. When the mob outside saw these people, it abandoned its murderous plan. The Armenians, condemned to death, began to smile.

These brave souls, seeing that the French had treacherously withdrawn and that the remainder of the Armenians were betrayed, had had daring enough to go out into the streets and to appeal to the čete-a-bed, Kuluj Ali, to Arslan Bey, and to the Turkish aghas. Their intercession was fruitful, and the Turks agreed to spare us on condition that we hand over our guns and promise obedience. Five persons were chosen, among them myself, and under the protection of gendarmes, we went to present ourselves to the čete-a-bed. After twenty-three days of war and imprisonment, this was my first walk in the streets. But oh! What a horrible scene! Corpses, large and small, corpses of men, women, children, soldiers, littered the snow-covered ground. Even carcasses of animals were scattered all over. The snow was red. Another Armenian section was in flames. Armed Turks prowled everywhere like bloodthirsty wolves.

... What happened to the Armenians who fled with the French? For four or five days about three thousand men, women, and children walked and walked, hungry and thirsty, through deep snows, in the cold and wind. The old, the children, the weak, the exhausted dropped and were left buried in the snow. They froze and slept the sleep of death. The rest, after a thousand and one sufferings, reached Adana. On the way, more than half of the three thousand were lost. Of those who got to Adana, many were taken into the hospitals to have their frozen hands and feet amputated.


***

Extrait des mémoires de Monseigneur Jean Nasslian

Les événements de Marache

Pour le Diocèse de Marache, je possède, entre autres, trois exposés très sérieux et très dignes de foi : le premier de l’Archevêque, Mgr. Arpiarian, qui a eu une part prépondérante dans les événements de Marache, le second de l’Abbé Pascal Malidjian, et le troisième de Mr. Raphaël Kherlakian, délégué à la censure de la Presse à Constantinople, et nommé ensuite par le Haut-Commissariat Français au poste d’adjoint et de conseiller auprès du commandement français du cercle d’Antab dont relevaient Marache et Ourfa. De par leur position, ces trois hommes sont tous indiqués pour nous donner des renseignements précis et exacts et méritent ainsi toute notre confiance.

Ces exposés, tout en rapportant les mêmes événements, envisagent la situation sous des aspects différents : les uns au point de vue ecclésiastique et historique, l’autre plutôt au point de vue politique et militaire. Ainsi les trois rapports se complètent, et sans crainte de me répéter, je les citerai entièrement pour donner une idée aussi exacte que possible de la situation à Marache.
Stéphano Yalinkatian ont été brûlés vifs dans le couvent.


Ainsi tout ce qui avait nom chrétien dans les villages, disparut complètement vers le 5ème ou 6ème jour de l’insurrection.

Sur 20,000 Arméniens de la ville 7,000 furent massacrés ; le reste qui se trouvait dans les secteurs français fut sauvé. Dans l’enceinte de l’Évêché, de la cathédrale et de l’école, il y avait un secteur français, tous ceux qui y étaient réfugiés, catholiques, protestants et arméniens non-unis qui étaient près de 4,000 et qui comptaient l’intérieur de nos bâtiments précités furent sauvés, grâce à la vaillance des 23 soldats français de notre secteur. Nous avons tâché de nourrir toute cette foule, autant qu’il était possible, par nos provisions d’hiver ; même des Turcs, hommes, femmes, enfants, qui s’étaient réfugiés chez nous, ont été nourris et protégés.

Pendant ce temps, les bandits à toute heure du jour et de la nuit faisaient assaut contre notre évêché, la cathédrale et l’école : chambres, corridors, escaliers, cours, tout était exposé aux balles des assaillants qui essayèrent à maintes reprises de mettre le feu dans notre secteur, nous avons maîtrisé l’incendie, mais les Turcs lançant force balles parvinrent à incendier notre école de garçons. Pendant que nous tâchions d’éteindre le feu, deux de nos prêtres avec un frère laïc, ainsi que plusieurs des fidèles furent blessés ; tous grâce à Dieu purent guérir, excepté notre cher frère Garabed Kezkenian, âgé de 66 ans qui mourut des suites d’une grave blessure au pied. Notre Évêché a fait une grande perte en sa personne, car depuis près de 50 ans ce bon frère l’avait servi avec un zèle inlassable.

L’incendie de l’école des garçons allait gagner nos trois autres édifices, l'Évêché, la cathédrale et la nouvelle maison de nos religieuses qui servait aussi d’école pour nos filles, le tout situé autour d’une cour et presque adjacent l’un à l’autre, était exposé à être dévoré par les flammes : alors c’eut été grand malheur pour nous, car nous aurions été tout à fait à découvert devant les balles des assaillants ; mais heureusement, la divine Providence par un éclatant miracle nous en a préservé, car lorsque le feu s’empara de l’école des garçons, le vent ayant tout d’un coup changé de direction, le feu l’a suivi et nous en avons été sauvés.
L’incendie en ville continua jusqu’au 7 février. On s’attendait toujours à ce qu’on vint au secours du côté d’Islahié, ce jour là même une forte colonne de 4.000 hommes arriva ; on se croyait sauvé.

3. État précaire et de terreur des chrétiens abandonnés

Après la retraite des Français, laissés à nous-mêmes, nous avons dû soutenir les assauts de près d’un millier de bandits qui, croyant qu’il y avait encore des soldats français chez nous, n’ont pas osé franchir notre seuil, mais ont continué leurs attaques de loin.

Le lendemain 12 février, pendant que les balles des assaillants continuaient à siffler de plus belle, voilà qu’un missionnaire américain M. Luman, avec le docteur américain Wilson s’étaient rendus chez les chefs des insurgés Ali Khaled Bey et Arslan Bey et les avaient priés de rendre le calme à la ville. Ils en reçurent dans ce but l’ordre de leur amener les chefs spirituels des diverses communautés de la ville ; précédés de la bannière blanche et escortés de plusieurs bandits, ils vinrent donc nous appeler vers les 2 heures de l’après midi à l’Évêché où s’étaient déjà réfugiés les chefs spirituels des deux autres communautés protestante et grégorienne.

Alors, nous, les 3 chefs spirituels, accompagnés des susdits missionnaires et escortés des bandits, nous nous sommes rendus auprès des susdits chefs des insurgés. Arslan Bey nous a tenu un discours en disant que le Gouvernement n’avait jusque là pas de part dans l’insurrection, qu’eux les Nationalistes, avaient soutenu leur cause, et que maintenant qu’ils l’avaient gagnée par la retraite et la défaite des Français, leur action était terminée, et qu’ils nous remettaient entre les mains du gouvernement et en montrant le locum-tenens du gouvernement il nous a dit : « Vous devez désormais écouter » ; nous avons pris congé d’eux et nous sommes rentrés à l’Évêché, escortés des bandits. Dans une pareille situation, il nous était naturellement impossible de faire aucune observation sur tant de milliers de victimes arméniennes, femmes, enfants, hommes sans armes que se trouvaient sans défense loin des secteurs français. Les chemins sur notre parcours étaient jonchés des cadavres des chrétiens, femmes, enfants, hommes, soldats français, écoliers et écolières des écoles maternelles qui avaient encore à leur cou

le petit sac de livres scolaires. Quoique plusieurs de ces cadavres y fussent depuis plus de 3 semaines, grâce au froid excessif et à la neige, ils ne s’étaient pas encore putréfiés.

Comme le feu continuait encore de la part des bandits, nous avons fait crier par portes et fenêtres que Heledj Ali Bey avait fait la paix, qu’on devait cesser le feu. Les assaillants ont encore continué à tirer pendant quelque temps mais à la fin ils ont cessé.

Le Gouvernement a envoyé des hommes pour nous demander les armes. Nous avons rendu tout ce que nous avons pu trouver ; les quelques fusils que certains des réfugiés avaient achetés de leur propre argent pour leur défense, et les quelques autres armes et munitions que le détachement français avait oubliées, tout a été rendu ; et quoiqu’il n’en restât plus, cependant maintes fois on est venu nous demander d’autres armes ; malgré que nous ayions dit qu’il n’y en avait plus, ils ont à plusieurs reprises opéré des perquisitions minutieuses et ils n’ont rien trouvé.

Pendant une quinzaine de jours on nous fit défense absolue de sortir en ville, pendant ce temps les Turcs dévalisèrent toutes les maisons chrétiennes, et tuèrent tous ceux des Arméniens qui s’y étaient encore cachés, brûlèrent des centaines de maisons des chrétiens rien que pour le bon plaisir de brûler. Presque chaque jour ils pénétraient et dévalisaient une grande partie des effets de ceux des chrétiens qui se trouvaient réfugiés dans les divers secteurs, prétendant que ces effets leur appartenaient.

Lorsqu’on nous permit de circuler en ville, les injures pleuvraient de toutes parts, les corvées furent imposées de force, de telle sorte que les chrétiens étaient forcés aux plus abjects services.

Le Gouvernement lui-même a fait construire par corvées dans l’intérieur du Sérial deux bâtisses l’une pour la gendarmerie et l’autre pour le poste de la Direction de police. Les plus belles pierres de ces bâtisses étaient apportées des maisons incendiées des notables chrétiens. On démolissait les murs les plus solides pour en prendre les meilleures pierres ; le reste était emporté dans les maisons turques sans aucune observations de la part du Gouvernement. Outre les pierres, les autres matériaux et les travaux gratis, on nous demandait de l’argent pour payer les ingénieurs, les menuisiers et maîtres-maçons de telle sorte que ce
pauvre peuple qui n’avait absolument rien, ni vêtements, ni couvertures, ni maison et qui manquait même du pain quotidien, a été obligé dans sa noire misère à payer de grandes sommes pour la construction de ces deux bâtisses. Ils ont encore été forcés de réparer la caserne militaire incendiée ; nous n’avions rien payé pour cette bâtisse mais nous avons été obligés de fournir des habits aux soldats. Les pierres pour cette réparation ont été apportées des sépultures du cimetière chrétien qui n’est plus maintenant qu’un champ.

Pour émouvoir la pitié du Gouvernement envers les chrétiens, nous avons présenté une supplique en le priant de donner les ordres nécessaires pour qu’on n’opprime pas tant ces pauvres. Le Gouvernement a passé notre supplique à la direction de police qui a appelé les trois chefs spirituels ; (j’avais envoyé mon vicaire à ma place), il les a tous les trois accueillis avec injures et colmés d’outrages, et il s’est tellement emporté qu’il a donné un coup de poing si fort à la figure du ministre protestant qu’il l’a blessé au sang. Ces pauvres après avoir reçu ces outrages, ont été heureux d’être laissés libres. Le Gouvernement qui en a eu connaissance ne lui a fait aucune observation.

Pendant que nous attendions que le calme parfait se rétablisse, on fit disparaître plusieurs jeunes gens chrétiens, on emprisonna plusieurs des fils des Kherlakians et des principaux des Arméniens comme coupables dans l’affaire de l’insurrection. Après plusieurs mois d’emprisonnement le tribunal les déclara exempt ; mais sur les menaces des Nationalistes ils ont été envoyés avec leurs procès-verbaux à Césarée où presque un an après, à l’entente française avec Ankara, ils ont été libérés.

Extraits du récit de l’abbé Pascal Maldjian

Le 21 janvier 1920, le mercredi de cette même semaine vers midi, les Turcs attaquèrent les Arméniens et la guerre sanguinaire commença.


La présence de la colonne militaire ranimait même les blessés arméniens. C’était (nous les croyions hélâs...[sic]) une fête, avec musique, chants, embrassements. Pendant toutes ces trois semaines, j’avais cédé ma chambre au capitaine Joly et je n’avais pas pu enlever mes souliers, ni ma souteante de mon dos. Je ne savais (alors) pour quelle raison le capitaine, la nuit du 11 février 1920, me dit : « Pascal, j’ai pitié de toi, tu es fatigué, occupe ta chambre cette nuit et repose-toi ». Ce que j’ai fait, ayant tant besoin de repos et rassuré par la situation créée par la présence de la colonne militaire. Vers les 3 heures du matin du 12 février, on me réveille en hâte. « Que faites-vous donc ? Nous sommes abandonnés, ruinés par les Français ». Je leur réponds : « C’est ridicule ». Je visite toute la garnison...[sic] outre notre groupe de volontaires, il ne restait que quelques blessés français. C’est incroyable, impossible...[sic]. Ils doivent avoir un plan secret pour entourer les ennemis entre deux feux.
Sur leurs tables, l’argenterie, la vaisselle, sont abandonnées avec quelques munitions par-ci, par-là. Je réveille notre Évêque, les notables, on discute de la situation jusqu’à cinq heures. Nous sommes presque tous d’accord avec notre Évêque pour penser que c’est un plan de combat final... [sic]. En doutant de cela, je m’unis à trois autres arméniens catholiques, armés jusqu’aux dents. Avec la permission et la bénédiction de mon Évêque, nous prenons le chemin entre eau, incendie et fusillade pour rejoindre la colonne dans les champs, à 8 kms. de la ville. Nous y arrivons ; je retrouve le capitaine Joly, je lui reproche son manque de parole. J’écris une lettre au commandant de la colonne pour m’informer de leur plan, pour en aviser ensuite à tout prix l’Évêché. J’ai encore sa réponse écrite par son secrétaire, sur une page de carnet. Réponse évasive... [sic]. Nous essayons d’envoyer des émissaires qui sont sujets à la fusillade des Sénégalais.

Vers 5 heures de l’après-midi, le commandant donne l’ordre que soient enrôlés comme soldats ceux qui ont pu se réfugier à leur camp (au nombre de 3,000 à 4,000) et qu’ils se disposent à la grande retraite vers Adana, à deux heures du matin de 13 février 1920. L’heure lugubre sonne. La neige est tombée toute la nuit et il en tombe encore... [sic]. Les soldats, les bêtes de somme, les pauvres réfugiés, le cœur et le corps sanglants, s’acheminent comme moi, vers el Oghlloo et puis vers Adana... [sic]. Il fallait s’ouvrir un chemin inconnu dans la neige, qui atteignait déjà trois pieds de hauteur, à laquelle s’ajoutait à chaque moment une tempête de neige jamais vue dans ces parages. On marcha pendant trois jours, n’ayant pour toute nourriture et boisson que de la neige. On montait les montagnes, on les descendait pour les remonter et les redescendre car on perdait l’orientation : nouvel Israël qui cherchait la Terre Promise de la Cilicie. Devenir fou n’était que la moindre desangoisses mortelles. Nous allions affamés, fatigués, sans sommeil depuis 3-4 semaines, navrés dans le cœur d’avoir quitté la ville natale en flammes et à la merci des Turcs qui y retournaient triomphants, après avoir vu s’en éloigner le fameux régiment du « 412 », le désespoir dans l’âme parce que nous ne savions quel destin nous attendait à chaque pas. On marchait... [sic] tant que les jambes pouvaient nous trainer... [sic]. On marchait pour ne pas mourir de froid... [sic] on marchait pour ne pas devenir la proie des loups, et des Turcs... [sic] on marchait pour apercevoir une lumière, pour entendre le sifflet d’un train... [sic].

Lorsque je me trouvais sur le point de céder à la fatigue et mourant de sommeil, je me rappelle... [sic] être tombé las, demi-mort, contre ma volonté, comme tant de centaines de soldats sénégalais et algériens qui embrassant leur fusil et s’appuyant contre un arbre ou contre un rocher restaient là, sentinelles éternelles de ce passage de la nouvelle Mer Rouge du sang arménien... [sic]. Oh ! jamais l’orateur le plus érudit, le poète le plus sublime ne pourraient vous narrer la scène de ces victimes de la traversée de cette mer, ou plutôt de cet océan de neige. À chaque mètre, on voyait une femme, une mère avec son bébé à son sein, un homme âgé, un blessé, dormant sur les côtés du sentier ouvert par les poitrines de ceux qui pouvaient encore marcher. Je tombe, dis-je, comme tant d’autres pour ce sommeil éternel, lorsque je sens quelqu’un me frapper la joue pour me réveiller de ce sommeil fatal... [sic] je regarde... [sic] c’est un volontaire arménien qui m’avait prêté sa tente, sa couverture et des journaux « Hairénik » comme matelas à mon arrivée de Marache au camp de la colonne. Il me gronde tendrement, il me soulève, il m’aide à reprendre la marche forcée... [sic]. Il ouvre son sac, il me dit en secret : « c’est défendu de disposer de ce seul pain sans permission – car c’est notre dernière ration – mais prends-le, mange-le... [sic]. Il était aussi dur et blanc que la neige que nous piétinions. Quel pain. Pain de vie, dirais-je presque. Je le ronge, petit à petit, autant pour m’en nourrir que pour oublier, si c’était possible, la longueur du trajet tragique... [sic].

Vers la fin de la troisième journée – à 10 heures – ciel ! j’entends ce sifflet du train... [sic]. J’arrive avec tous ceux qui avaient survécu à cette marche de mort – à la première petite ville chrétienne occupée par des Français où il y a une station de train pour Adana.

Extraits de l’exposé de M. Rapahael Kherlakian

1. Situation politique et militaire dans les secteurs d’Aintab de Marache

Les troupes françaises faisant la relève des Anglais avaient occupé la plus grande partie de la Cilicie. Mais sous menace de mort, les Kemalistes levaient des bandes d’attaque et de massacre qui, en Cilicie,
se rassemblaient à Goksune, Albistan, Azizié, Char, Hadjine, et Sis, qui apparaissaient à Erzeroum, Smyrne, Marache, Ourfa, Aïntab, Killis, Adana, et qui disparaissaient pour se reformer ailleurs; aussi l'inquiétude était-elle générale en Turquie. Dès le mois de septembre 1919, en maintes occasions, des razzias étaient opérées par ces bandes de "tchéttés" sur les détachements français et sur les Arméniens; les Chérifis à leur tour appuyaient le mouvement nationaliste contre la France et les Arméniens.

Depuis octobre 1919, Kemal envoyait continuellement des armes aux musulmans de Marache et les rapports qui parvenaient au Cercle du Commandant français d’Aïntab, dont relevait ce district, prenaient une note de plus en plus alarmante. C’est pourquoi le général Brémond, administrateur en chef de la Cilicie, avait décidé d’installer à Marache un gouverneur militaire français chargé de contrôler l’activité du gouvernement local turc et nomma à cet effet le capitaine André qui arriva le 24 novembre. Les Turcs avaient, de temps inimméorial, l’habitude de hisser le drapeau turc sur la forteresse de la ville tous les vendredis, comme emblème de leur foi musulmane. Le capitaine André le fit enlever et remplacer par le drapeau français, d’où émeute des musulmans qui montent à l’assaut de la forteresse, arrachent les couleurs françaises et hissent de nouveau leur drapeau. Devant l’explosion de la colère musulmane, le capitaine André prend peur et s’enfuit de Marache pour venir demander du secours au colonel Flye Sainte-Marie, à Aïntab. Ce secours lui fut refusé. Depuis lors, les Turcs s’enhardirent davantage et s’armèrent à outrance; l’étoile de Moustapha Kemal grandissait et prenait aux yeux des musulmans de Cilicie et d’Anatolie un éclat plus impressionnant... [sic] et c’est à la suite de cet événement qu’il transféra de l’Arménie turque son Quartier Général à Ankara et déclara la guerre aux Arméniens et aux étrangers.

À Bazardjik, plaine qui relie la province de Marache à celle d’Aïntab, 800 tchéttés dirigés par Kilidj Ali prenaient les routes des crêtes. Par ailleurs, l’activité nationaliste se renforça également à Ourfa où 2.000 fusils et des millions de cartouches étaient distribués aux musulmans par Ali Saib, ancien massacreur d’Arméniens et délégué de Kemal.

4. Bataille de Marache

Le lendemain [le 21 janvier] à midi et quart les premières balles turques de mon quartier crépitaient sur ma maison; c’était la bataille de Marache qui avait commencé.

Je ne m’étendrais pas sur les horreurs que vécut Marache du 21 janvier au 9 février, jour de l’évacuation. Le premier jour même de l’insurrection, les six positions françaises étaient coupées par les Turcs; chaque secteur agissait à sa guise et subissait de multiples assauts de jour et de nuit, en même temps que les Turcs mettaient le feu aux quartiers chrétiens. Ceux qui tombaient dans leurs mains étaient massacrés sur place sans répit; ceux qui vivaient dans les secteurs français s’y réfugiaient et c’est ainsi que l’église franciscaine, l’église arménienne catholique, l’orphelinat allemand, tenus par les Français, abritaient chacun des milliers d’enfants, de femmes et d’hommes qu’il fallait nourrir, les chrétiens n’ayant rien pu emporter de chez eux.

Dans chaque quartier de Marache, il y avait de 3 à 5 mosquées avec minarets construits en pierres des plus solides avec des meurtrières percées tous les deux mètres le long de la hauteur qui dominait les rues et l’intérieur des maisons chrétiennes; les Arméniens sous les balles tirées de ces meurtrières tombaient dans leurs chambres, dans leurs cours pourtant fermées de murs de clôture. Mgr. Arpiarian lui-même était visé d’une de ces meurtrières au moment de se lever de son lit, de bon matin, par miracle, la balle passa un peu au dessus de sa tête et s’enfonça dans le mur sans l’atteindre. Et il y avait au moins 60 minarets dans toute la ville... [sic]. Bref, sur tous les points les Turcs avaient la direction et la liberté du mouvement. Les chrétiens n’avaient, en tout et pour tout, qu’une quarantaine de fusils leur appartenant; ils supplièrent les Français de les laisser s’emparer des mosquées afin de pouvoir rétablir les communications entre les secteurs français. Leur demande fut rejetée, sous prétexte que ces mosquées et minarets étaient des établissements religieux – dont les Turcs se servaient pourtant bien adroitement –. Un volontaire arménien, au péril de sa vie, accepta de porter au général un message que je lui adressai, le priant instamment d’agir avec plus de vigueur. Ma lettre lui parvint et il se décida à tirer deux coups de canon sur l’un des multiples minarets, dont l’extrémité seule croula, le reste
continuant à servir de paravent aux combattants turcs... [sic] et entre temps les massacres continuaient de plus belle : un millier d’hommes, de femmes et d’enfants avaient été traînés à la grande mosquée appelée « Oulou-Djami » et là, Bayizadé, l’imam, assisté des bandes, leur coupaient la tête ; l’Église arménienne de la Sainte Vierge avait été cernée et tous les Arméniens des maisons et des quartiers d’alentour s’y étaient réfugiés en se retirant pas à pas sous la garde d’une quinzaine de volontaires armés. Ils y résistaient depuis trois jours aux assauts perpétuels des musulmans, qui parvinrent à arrêter de pétrole l’Église et y mirent le feu. De tous les points de la ville, on entendait les cris déchirants des femmes, des enfants, qui y brûlaient. Le vent transportait dans toutes les directions de la ville les flammes et les voix des sinistres appelant au secours. À 250 mètres plus loin, à vol d’oiseau il y avait les forces du Commandant Cornéloup : les volontaires de la Légion arménienne qui étaient sous ses ordres l’avaient supplié de les laisser partir au secours de l’Église en feu : ils essuyèrent un refus net et c’est ainsi que des milliers d’innocents moururent dans les atroces souffrances du feu, à deux pas et sous le nez des Français.

Plusieurs fois par jour et la nuit, au milieu du bruit assourdissant des balles turques, se détachait dans l’air un éclat avec un bruit sec, dont l’écho ressemblait au cri de chacal : c’était toujours le signal de l’attaque générale sur tous les secteurs ; alors, la ville entière était dans un vacarme d’enfer.

Le quartier où nous habitions ayant brûlé, deux mille Arméniens nous avaient suivi la nuit pour rejoindre la maison de mon beau-père située sur une hauteur, dénommée « Boulgardjoular » qui est devenue célèbre par sa résistance héroïque : une maison de trois étages, avec une petite cour fermée... [sic] 2 000 Arméniens ont vécu là, à l’étage inférieur pendant près d’un mois ! On n’osait même pas pour une minute, monter aux étages supérieurs pour en apporter des provisions, même la nuit, tellement était intense la fusillade des Turcs : 4 Arméniens tombèrent sous les balles, la tête fracassée, pour avoir osé monter aux étages supérieurs, parmi lesquels ma tante... [sic]. Quelques jours après, la maison était à sec et il n’y avait plus rien pour nourrir la population... [sic] les derniers chats, le dernier cheval avaient été mangés ; et le vent glacial, et la neige faisaient aussi des victimes ; la dysenterie avait commencé. Plusieurs assauts de milliers de « tchétié » sur cette maison furent repoussés par 10 Arméniens armés, les seuls combattants commandés par Sétrak, mon cousin. Des soldats français installés à côté, à l’église protestante, ne comprenant rien à ce genre de guerre, tombaient sans même pouvoir tirer une balle... [sic] que de pauvres jeunes gens, parmi eux, gravement blessés furent soignés dans leurs derniers moments par ma pauvre femme qui remplacait leur maman de France : plusieurs moururent de la gangrène, car il n’y avait ni médecin, ni médicament.

Cependant, le 8 février, les « tchétié » découragés par l’arrivée sur la plaine de Marache de la colonne Normand, avaient évacué plusieurs quartiers et pris la fuite dans la direction d’Albistan... [sic]. Nos Arméniens purent ainsi calmement envahir ces quartiers et leurs maisons inhabitées où les Turcs, en fuyant, avaient laissé toutes leurs provisions d’hiver, à 2 heures de l’après-midi. Par des tranchées qui nous mettaient en relations avec l’Église arménienne-catholique, j’allai voir, en compagnie de mon oncle Agop Effendi, le député et son fils Joseph Kerlakian, Monseigneur Arpiarian, notre Archevêque qui nous avait conviés à une conférence sur la situation. Il était entouré de quelques uns de ses prêtres ; l’un de ces derniers avait émis l’éventualité d’une évacuation française et, à notre insu, en avait fait courir le bruit. L’Archevêque n’osait formuler ce soupçon, mais nous suggérait bien qu’il était immensément inquiet et angoissé en lui-même. Nous répondîmes qu’une pareille action ne pourrait jamais venir des Français, que c’était même une absurdité que d’y penser et une insulte pour l’honneur français, d’autant que les Turcs activaient leur propre évacuation de la ville, et nous ajoutâmes que ce matin un hoda turc aveugle que les nôtres avaient saisi, nous avait confié sous serment sur Allah et Mahomet que les Turcs évacueraient la ville depuis trois jours, que les bandes de « tchétié » partaient également à Albistan et autres localités éloignées, qu’ils revenaient beaucoup plus tard avec des forces plus nombreuses.

5. Retraite des troupes françaises

Dans la nuit du 8 au 9 février, par un froid et un vent sibériens, nous vimes que la grande caserne turque, dépôt d’armes et de munitions, située près du quartier général français et occupée par les troupes
françaises, était incendiée, sûrement par les autorités militaires françaises... [sic]. Nos dix volontaires arméniens vinrent nous dire que cela présageait pour nous le plus grand des malheurs ; notre abandon par les Français et leur retraite de Marache ! Dans cette anxiété mortelle nous attendimes... [sic]. Les détachements français qui tenaient le temple protestant, près de notre maison, nous dirent qu’ils avaient reçu l’ordre de rejoindre la colonne Normand, en vue de faire un mouvement d’encerclement entier de la ville et de ne laisser échapper aucun « ichté » et ils nous prièrent de tenir nos positions sous le couvert du drapeau français. Nous crûmes à leur parole, mais pour notre malheur, car nous aurions pu facilement rejoindre cette plaine de Marache. Nous attendions avec anxiété les premières lueurs du matin qui nous montrèrent que la colonne Normand avec les troupes françaises de Marache s’était déplacée et qu’elle s’était mise en route dans la direction d’Adana ! Nous apprenions en même temps que les détachements français se trouvant à l’Église arménienne catholique, avaient informé notre Archevêque de l’évacuation définitive sous le sceau du secret et l’avaient prié de les accompagner. Le digne prêlat avait refusé, préférant mourir à la tête de ses ouaillées*. L’évacuation de l’église avait eu lieu pendant que tout le monde dormait... [sic] bientôt l’alarme était donnée, quelques Arméniens au péril de leur vie s’enfuirent de l’Église et purent rejoindre les Français. Même chose au secteur de l’orphelinat allemand. Quant aux Arméniens de l’Église latine, une partie put rejoindre les Français et la plupart d’entre eux (environ 2.000) moururent la nuit suivante le long des routes, sous la bise glaciale et la tourmente de neige ; exténués, ils s’étendaient sur la couche de neige pour ne plus se réveiller... [sic].

Revenons à la ville. Le soleil s’était levé, radieux. Nous suivions des yeux cette colonne Normand et les troupes de Quérette continuant au loin leur marche vers Islahie... [sic]. Nous tîmes conseil. Que faire ? Rester, c’était se vouer au massacre, partir dans un coup désespéré avec des femmes et des enfants, et sans armes, c’était aussi la mort... [sic]. Déjà, nous distinguions sur toutes les crêtes entourant l’immense ville, les milliers et des milliers de « ichtés » qui revenaient et affluaient vers la ville, ayant constaté le départ des Français.

Une partie des milliers d’Arméniens qui se trouvaient dans la maison de mon beau-père et au temple protestant, dans un coup de désespoir, partirent pour rejoindre coûte que coûte les Français ; 800 mètres plus loin, ils étaient exterminés. Parmi eux, se trouvaient mon oncle Agop, le député, sa femme et sa fille. Une deuxième tentative eut le même sort, seules quelques personnes, purent faire retour en arrière, ayant constaté que toutes les issues étaient déjà prises par les Turcs.

Nous barricadâmes et continuâmes la lutte sous le drapeau français jusqu’au soir du 9. Nous n’avions plus que quelques cartouches. Nous décidâmes d’abandonner notre position et de nous joindre aux Arméniens qui se trouvaient à l’Église catholique, autour de notre Archevêque... [sic]. Là, nous passâmes une nuit abominable, les assauts des Turcs pour s’emparer de l’église ou pour l’incendier étaient continus... [sic] et 15 hommes seulement défendaient ce secteur, parce qu’il n’y avait que 15 fusils. Et cela dura quarante huit heures... [sic]. Les Turcs nous criaient de nous rendre. Dans toute la ville, les Arméniens ne disposaient que de 40 fusils et le peu de munitions qu’ils avaient touchait à sa fin. Ils résistèrent dans tous les secteurs avec la dernière vigueur. Au plus fort d’une de ces luttes, nous vîmes arriver à la cathédrale arménienne catholique deux parlementaires porteurs de drapeaux blancs ; c’était le docteur Wilson, président de la Croix Rouge américaine, et Mister Lyman, chef de la Mission protestante américaine, qui s’entremettaient pour la cessation du combat. Les Turcs réclamaient la reddition de nos armes qu’ils croyaient innombrables et nous proposaient en retour la vie sauve. Nous tîmes conseil sous la présidence de notre Archevêque, assisté des chefs des deux autres communautés arméniennes ; nous n’avions plus de cartouches, nous étions coupés de tout ; continuer la lutte dans ces conditions, c’était vouer tout le peuple au massacre ; se livrer, nous offrait peut être une chance de salut. C’est ce dernier parti, préconisé par l’Archevêque, que nous avons choisi. L’ordre de cesser le feu fut donné dans les trois secteurs. Les « ichtés » occupèrent immédiatement les portes de ces établissements et ne laissèrent entrer ni sortir personne. Deux heures après, on ouvrait les portes. Nous rendîmes les armes, et les drapeaux français sous lesquels, à la place des Français, nous avions combattu jusqu’au bout, furent descendus par les Turcs, piétinés et jetés aux water-closets.

Sur les 30.000 Arméniens qui habitaient avant ces événements Marache et les villages voisins, 20.000 moururent massacrés pendant les
événements ou gelés le long des routes durant la retraite. Il ne restait plus en ville que 10.000 Arméniens, prisonniers et esclaves des Turcs !... [sic].

Après la reddition des Arméniens, des perquisitions d’armes furent opérées dans les trois secteurs arméniens, car les Turcs ne comprenaient point comment nous avions pu résister avec 40 fusils pendant deux jours contre des assauts terribles menés par des milliers et des milliers de **ichéts** : ils durent à la fin se convaincre de la réalité ; mais cela ne les empêcha point de refaire encore des fouilles et plusieurs fois par la suite.

Le peuple arménien était dans une grande misère. On n’avait pas de quoi manger et il était interdit, au début, aux musulmans de ravitailler les Arméniens. Mais l’intérêt personnel devenant plus fort, ils commencèrent à vendre un peu de pain au poids de l’or, au prix de bijoux de grande valeur... [sic]. Des rues, ils nous montraient du pain et criaient : « Crevez de faim, sales chrétiens! » La ville entière fêta pendant 10 jours sa « victoire » sur les Français et les fanfares circulaient dans les rues avec des milliers de drapeaux, promenant sur le bout d’un pieu la tête d’Agop Kherlakian député arménien catholique, qu’ils avaient coupée, et criaient : « Gloire à notre prophète ! mort aux chrétiens ! »


**TROISIÈRE PARTIE**

**L’OPINION PUBLIC SUR LES MASSACRES DE MARACHE**
The Massacres in Cilicia

In the House of Lords yesterday,

Lord Stanmore, in reply to Viscount Bryce, said the Government had received no information on the position in Armenia and in Cilicia other than that reported to the High Commissioner at Constantinople by Mr. Harold Brison, who left Adana on February 4. According to this report the inhabitants of seven Armenian villages in the neighborhood of Adana were massacred, the victims being estimated at about 1,500. The two American relief workers, Messrs. Johnstone and Perry, were also stated to have been murdered between Aintab and Killis.

Later communications have appeared in the press relating to further massacres and disturbances in this district. His Majesty’s Government was in communication with the French Government and with his Majesty’s representative in Constantinople. With regard to these reports the Peace Conference at the present moment were actively engaged on the question, and the Armenian and Greek populations of the Turkish Empire might be sure that promises made to them would be redeemed, but it was impossible to report from day to day the progress of these discussions.

Viscount Bryce said he had received further information showing that the slaughter which had taken place was even greater than he had believed to be the case. It described the state of panic which existed over the country owing to the presence of these bands as being of the gravest nature, showing that the case was one of extreme urgency.


Extrait de l’article Les événements de Cilicie

Notre correspondant d’Adana nous écrit le 30 janvier :

Ce qui complique la tâche de nos troupes, c’est le froid terrible qui sévit dans la région montagneuse de Marache. En bien des endroits, on a
de la neige jusqu’au cou. Le ravitaillement, sur des pistes souvent impraticables, se heurte à de formidables difficultés. Et cependant nos forces de Marache doivent d’urgence être ravitaillées en vivres, et surtout en munitions. Ce n’est que par un tour de force qu’on y parviendra.

Temps, 23. II. 1920.

***

La lettre d’A. Tchobaïan à M. L. Barthou42

Délégation Nationale Arménienne

Monsieur le Président43

Je vous envoie copie d’une dépêche que notre Délégation a reçue hier d’Alexandrie. Elle nous est adressée par une personne sérieuse, Mme Essayan, une femme de lettres de grand talent, qui a fait ses études à Paris, et une admiratrice fervente de la France. Elle doit avoir reçu ses renseignements des gens venus de Cilicie en Égypte. La situation est donc très grave. Marache étant évacuée par les forces françaises, il fallait du reste s’attendre à un désastre. Il y avait environ 40.000 Arméniens à Marache, pour la plupart les survivants des massacres et des déportations qui étaient venus s’y réfugier ; en plein hiver, un grand nombre de ces malheureux n’ont pu s’échapper et ont été massacrés par les bandes de Mustafha Kemal qui sont entrés dans la ville ainsi que par les habitants turcs de Marache. Depuis des mois, la Délégation arménienne, ici, et les autorités arméniennes en Cilicie prévoyaient le désastre, demandaient qu’on désarme les Turcs (qui s’armaient ouvertement) et qu’on donne des armes aux populations arméniennes pour qu’elles puissent se défendre en cas d’agression ; on n’a pas accédé à ces demandes, en disant : « Désarmer les Turcs c’est difficile, armer les Arméniens, c’est dangereux ». Ainsi nos pauvres réfugiés n’ont eu aucun moyen de défense quand les massacreurs sont arrivés. Si Marache est menacée, Adana peut l’être demain, et à Adana il y a une masse de réfugiés arméniens. Et dans une certaine presse de Paris, la campagne de chaleureuse amitié continue pour les Turcs « nationalistes » qui font la guerre aux troupes françaises et massacrent les Arméniens. J’attire votre haute attention sur cette grave situation.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, l’assurance de mon profond respect.

A. Chobanian

MLA, fonds 137, section V, doc. 74.

***

Les événements de Cilicie

Notre correspondant de Beyrouth télégraphie :

On reçoit ici des détails complémentaires sur les événements qui ont eu lieu ces jours derniers dans la région de Marache. C’est en raison des difficultés du ravitaillement que le commandement français décida il y a quinze jours, d’évacuer Marache. Ces difficultés n’étaient pas seulement dues à l’insuffisance des routes, mais au froid exceptionnellement rigoureux qui sévit actuellement en Cilicie, au point qu’à Adana même on a enregistré ces temps derniers jusqu’à 6 degrés de froid. De là des accumulations de neige dans les défilés qui rendaient le pays impraticable.

C’est entre le 8 et le 14 que s’est effectué le retour des troupes stationnées à Marache. Les autorités militaires françaises ont également assuré l’exode vers Islahié d’un nombre considérable d’Arméniens de tout âge et de tout sexe qui avaient quitté les villages de la région de Marache pour fuir les bandes turques. De trois à cinq mille réfugiés paraissent avoir ainsi atteint Islahié sous la protection des troupes françaises.

Temps, 3. III. 1920.
Extract from the article *After the Armistice*

(From a correspondent).

**French Preoccupation**

The French Government, preoccupied with its desire to get the British off the scene, appear hardly to have concerned themselves with the situation that would arise, when Allenby and his troops had withdrawn; but Mustapha Kemal, the Turkish Nationalist commander at Sivas, was organizing his forces and biding his time. The British withdrawal duly took place in the last weeks of 1919, and Mustapha has now taken advantage of the military opportunity offered him by the Allies moral disunion. He has driven the French outposts from the positions they had taken over from the British in the fringe of the hill country round Marash, and has exterminated those Armenian highlanders who had survived deportation and had reoccupied their villages in the Cilician hills in reliance on the Allied detachments posted in these advanced positions.

Witnesses just arrived in England from Cilicia report that the Nationalists are reviving all the methods of 1915, and that unless their advance is checked immediately the 150,000 unarmed Armenians – men, women, and children – concentrated, under the aegis of the Allies, on the Cilician plain, are also in danger of extermination. Mr. Lloyd George made light of the news from Cilicia in his speech last Thursday in the House of Commons, but what do the Supreme Council intend to do? To leave Cilicia to Ottoman sovereignty and their protégés there to the Turkish knife? Public opinion should make it clear to them during these critical days that it will not tolerate such a decision, for that would indeed be the crowning infamy of Europe towards Armenia.

The jealousies and cupidity’s of the European Powers were responsible before the war for the horrors of 1895-7 and of 1909; the consequence of these passions – the war itself – was responsible for the still greater horrors of 1915; and new, sixteen months after the war is over, thousands of Armenians are exposed again to anguish and death by unworthy jealousies between the victorious Allies. Is this third phase to end like the other, or will Europe at last retrieve, if that is possible, in some slight measure her betrayals of Armenia in the past?

To allow Turks to massacre Armenians in territory formally under European occupation is a more shocking disgrace than any which our Governments have incurred in regard to Armenia in the past. If they do not stop this massacre and so order the peace-settlement that its repetition shall be impossible, then the Supreme Council are “the abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not”.


**Armenians Burned Alive**

On other occasions the Armenians would be shut up in houses, flames would be started, and the people left to burn alive. Their cries could be heard for miles, and they shrieked for help which did not come.

Since the fall of Marash on February 10, Mr. Buxton believed 16,000 Armenians, most of them women and children had been put to death. During the massacres a certain number of the men who were only superficially wounded feigned death and afterwards, under cover of darkness, escaped to the hills, but many of those who thus got away are believed to have perished since from cold and hunger.

With regard to the general situation in Asia Minor, Mr. Buxton believed that two circumstances were mainly responsible. First of all, there was the unfortunate prolongation of the armistice, which had made the Turks more and more restless, and then instead of occupying effectively the provinces of Asia Minor we had poured our troops and money into Russia and allowed the Turkish troops to go away into the hills carrying with them all their munitions and supplies. If, instead of embarking on a great war in Russia, we had retained more troops in Turkey, the present situation, he thought, would never have arisen.

A new feature about the situation was that the attacks were not only upon the native Christians but also upon Europeans. In illustration, Mr. Buxton described how an Armenian orphanage at Bardezag was
besieged. The orphanage was in the charge of an English lady and run in co-operation with the Americans. Last January a body of men attacked the building and bullets were fired in at the windows. It was only by great fortune that a British guard happened to be there and that the attack was beaten off.


***

**Extrait de l'article de Paul Louis**

*L'intervention armée en Orient ?*

Au débarquement britannique devant le palais du sultan correspondrait une expédition française en Cilicie.

Les motifs qu'on allègue en faveur de telles mesures sont nombreux, mais assez peu clairs. On fait valoir que les nationalistes turcs sont redevenus les maîtres à Stamboul, où une nouvelle crise ministérielle vient d'éclater, que le chef du mouvement panturc, Mustapha Kemal, a pris en Anatolie une position prépondérante et redoutable, et que des milliers d'Arméniens ont été massacrés à Marache.

Peut-être tous les faits signalés sont-ils exacts. Mais alors, on se demande comment la diplomatie française a pu nouer des rapports intimes avec le nationalisme turc, à Constantinople comme à Sivas, qui est le quartier général de Mustapha Kemal, et pourquoi en certains bourgs de Cilicie, les chefs de secteurs français ont adopté des allures hostiles aux Arméniens. L'équivoque et l'obscurité règnent.

En fait, les sentiments qui subsistent entre les impérialistes français et anglais, auxquels on pourrait ajouter les expansionnistes grecs et italiens, ne seraient-ils pas à la base de cette crise ? C'est le passé qui se réveille. Les tueries d'Arméniens ont recommencé chaque fois que les grandes puissances se disputaient la mainmise sur l'Empire ottoman. Si Mustapha Kemal se croit tout permis, c'est qu'il voit les annexionnismes aux prises. Si les chancelleries préparent des débarquements, c'est pour s'assurer des hypothèses. Le monde n'a pas changé et la diplomatie ne modifie point ses méthodes.

*Humanité, 7. III. 1920.*

***

**Extract from the article The Hand of Murder is Passing over Armenia. Three-Fourth of the Population already Dead. Force the Peace Conference to Save the Remainder**

To-day there comes to Britain the ghastly cry of tens of thousands of men, women and children in deadly danger. These survivors of Turkish massacre and torment look to you, and to you alone. They are imploring you to save them from the condemned cell. Will you turn deaf ears? To-day is the opportunity. At this very moment the issue trembles in the balance at the Peace Conference. Will you reject this agonized plea of the innocent for reprieve from sentence of death? Shall England put on the Black Cap and condemn the remnant of a once prosperous race to death by torture?

*Murders Still Continue*

Only a few days ago Marash horror became known. ... A few weeks ago 30,000 people lived at Marash; to-day only 8,000 remains. The rest have been murdered by the Turks, as hundreds of thousands of
their fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians have been murdered before them. Is this to go on? Will you pass by on the other side while a nation is being cruelly and barbarously stamped out of existence?

**Turkish Policy of Extermination**

Turkish policy towards the Armenians has always been a policy of slaughter. The Turks have always acted on the sinister maxim of Abdul-Hamid: "The way to get rid of the Armenian question is to get ride of the Armenians". The history of Turkish rule over Christians in Europe has ever been a history of continuous oppression and almost continuous outrage and massacre. The Powers protested from time to time, but they protested ineffectually. Diplomatic and financial intrigue in Europe proved stronger than the appeals of humanity and justice. Are they to prove stronger to-day?

*Daily Herald, 10. III. 1920.*

***

**Extract from the article French Prestige Injured**

(From our own correspondent).

Constantinople, April 16.

There is a general impression that the local French authorities are left in the dark as to the intentions of the home government, and are consequently unwilling to adopt a more active policy. The abandonment of Marash and its population was ordered, I learn from a reliable informant, at the moment when the Turks, demoralized by over 3,000 casualties, had began to retire. It has greatly injured French prestige, both among the Christian population, which is beginning to believe the scaremongers, who inform them that French propose to retire from the country and leave them to their fate, and still more among the Nationalists, who continue to make capital out of their victory.

*Times, 20. IV. 1920.*
Extrait de l'article d'É. Brémond
*La Cilicie en 1919-1920*

La perte de Marache était un coup terrible pour notre prestige.

*Revue des études arménienes, 1921, t. premier, fascicule 3, p. 341.*

---

L'avis du général Brémond à propos de la retraite des troupes françaises

L'abandon de Marache a été ordonné par le Colonel Normand, qui était venu de Beyrouth prendre le commandement de la colonne après avoir reçu personnellement des instructions du général Gouraud. Il est donc logique de penser que l'évacuation résulte de la volonté de Gouraud, bien que celui-ci se soit couvert, alors qu'elle était déjà accomplie, par un télégramme disant à peu près : « Il est entendu qu'il n'est pas question d'évacuer Marache », alors que les troupes rentraient à Islahié !

*La lettre du général Brémond ancien gouverneur de la Cilicie au sujet de « L'Éternelle victime de la diplomatie européenne », Marseille, 1929, pp. 1-2.*

---

Extrait de la préface d'É. Brémond publiée dans le livre de Paul de Véou *La passion de la Cilicie*

Le cuivre et le coton sont partis sous le gouvernement du général Gouraud, marqué par une douloureuse série de désastres, au Nord, à l'Est, et au Sud, par les honteuses évacuations de la région d'Ouffa, de la Cilicie et des approches de la frontière de Palestine. Car, hélas ! la France n'a jamais été représentée au Levant comme il aurait fallu... Même aux pires heures de notre histoire, il n'y a pas eu de faute plus grave, grosse de conséquences plus lourdes.

É. Brémond. Préface //
Paul de Véou, La passion de la Cilicie 1919-1922, Paris, 1937, p. II.

---

Extrait du livre de M. Paillerès
*Le kemalisme devant les alliés*

Le drame de Marache est une des pages les plus tristes de notre histoire. On n'en connaîtra peut-être jamais tous les dessous, et cela vaut mieux pour l'honneur national... [sic] Il est certain que tout ne fut pas tenté pour sauver les chrétiens qui imploraient notre secours à genoux.


---

Extrait du livre de Br. M. Abadie
*Les quatre sièges d'Aintab (1920-1921)*

...11 février : Chahim-Bey, qui s'intitule « commandant des forces nationales de la route de Killis », écrit au commandant du cercle. Sa lettre dit, entre autres choses :

« Le soulèvement de Marasch [sic] a été provoqué par le général Quérétte, qui, par ses ruses et ses finesse, a semé la discorde entre Turcs et Arméniens... [sic]. Les Français se sont montrés incapables d'assurer l'ordre et d'empêcher les assassinats des quatre Américains le 1er février :
Maintenant, l'ordre est rétabli sur la route Aintab-Killis, et lui, Chahim-bey, sous sa responsabilité, affirme que toute personne, à l'exception de troupes françaises, peut voyager sans danger... [sic] ».

(II est superflu de souligner l'insolence de cette lettre).

Lieu-Colonel Br. M. Abadie,

---

Extract from the article of H.A. Gibbons

During the war one of the telling indictments against Germany was her friendship for and alliance with Turkey when the Armenians were being massacred. Germany was held responsible for the massacres
on the ground that she could have stopped them had she used her influence with her ally. This was true; but is it not equally true now that France must bear the opprobrium and in a measure the responsibility, of the Armenian and Greek massacres of 1920 and 1921? A French general negotiated with the Nationalists in Cilicia without stipulating that the massacres should cease. French diplomats have negotiated with the Angora Government of Khemal Pasha, conniving at the massacres of Armenians and Greeks. The sole thought of the Germans during the war was to use the Turks and not run any risk of offending them by protesting against the massacres. This is exactly what the French are doing now”.


***

Extract from the Memoirs of M.E. Elliot

Beginning Again at Ararat

Perhaps I dwell too long upon these personal experiences. Personal experience is the only window through which we see the world, and if I share the window with others, it is to show the same view beyond. The things I felt and saw, multiplied by thousands, made up the experiences of the column that crawled from Bell Punar toward Islahai when the French evacuated Marash. This was something, a very tiny fractional part, of the price the Armenians of Turkey paid, and are still paying, for the mistakes and quarrels of the Allies since 1918. Statistics are mathematics, and political discussion is an academic thing. But the men and women and children who lived through the massacres at Marash and walked to Islahai are flesh and blood. And what they saw and suffered then they are still seeing and suffering, in other forms, in other places.

... What were the statesmen of England and France doing at that hour? Comfortable men, men who had eaten, men who had roofs under which to sleep, men whose wives and children were safe and warm – they sat playing the great game of international politics on the chessboard of the world, while the world bled lives and sweated anguish at every move.

It is simple enough to blame the Turk for the sufferings of Armenians. Seeing what the Turk does, one hates him. But what is the Turk? A man who thinks first of his own profit, a nation that fights for its own interests as it sees them. Yes; the Turk is a barbarian; he still does crudely with bayonets and massacres what the civilized nations have learned to do with secret agreements and treaties signed at council tables. The Turk is a barbarian; in seven hundred years he has learned nothing from the civilization of Christian Europe. But what are the lessons that Christian Europe has set him to learn?

Seven hundred years ago the Crusaders took Jerusalem in the name of Christ, and looted it of gold and silver and rugs and women, while their horses' legs were drenched to the knees in blood. After seven centuries, General Allenby re-takes Jerusalem. All that the Allies do it to cut up living Turkey on a map, and then to quarrel over loot of oil-wells, and railway routes, and new territory until the Turk rises and drenches Asia Minor with the blood of their soldiers and their helpless tools and dupes, the Armenians. There may have been blood-stains on the rugs the Christian knights carried home to France and England. To-day, the blood is on the Turks' bayonet; blood-stains are invisible on the signed pieces of paper, safe and clean in Downing Street or on the Quai d'Orsay.

Beginning Again at Ararat, pp. 126-127.

***

Extract from A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide
by Abraham H. Hartunian

What about the French forces? Did they perchance fear the Turks? Never! They had six thousand troops, guns, cannons, and ammunition. Everything had been in perfect readiness. Had they wished to take an active part, the Turks would have been quickly crushed. Why did the French do nothing? I do not know. I am not a European diplomat. But as an Armenian and a simple lover of my nation, and as a man of religion, I believe the French Army came to Turkey to camouflage the annihilation of the Armenians by the Turks. Having performed that duty faithfully, having finished its work well, it went away.
... The Turks were apparently completely convinced that the French were serious and would strike, ruin, avenge. They began to tremble and grow pale. All their houses were immediately vacated, and the women and children were sent in groups to the surrounding villages. The unarmed men too departed. The fighters hurriedly withdrew to their secret centers. Ah, let the French troops play at formality and bluff! Yet this one step had daunted the vehemence of the Turk. His morale was broken by a straw. The Frenchman was victorious in retreat. The Turk was defeated in fear. This in itself is perfect evidence that even on the first day France could have crushed the Turk, if this had been her purpose. But the Frenchman was toying with the Turk while the latter mercilessly harassed the Armenian, to the great amusement of the Frenchman! If France had desired, even today she could have occupied the whole city and meted out just punishment. But the Turk was dearly loved by the Frenchman.

Neither to Laugh nor To Weep, p. 140, 145.

14 Le capitaine Morbieux a remplacé le capitaine André au début de 1920 en fonction du gouverneur français de Marache.


16 Téchés, bandes civiles composées des brigands professionnels qui rançonnaient les villages et des villagesois.


* Quelques détails sur la mort de nos confrères ont été racontés par un Turc, dont le nom nous est connu ; je les ai appris à Alep, le 19 août 1920. (Ici et plus loin les commentaires marqués par des astérisques appartenaient aux auteurs).

* Pourtant deux soldats franco-arméniens, dits Kamavor (mot arménien qui signifie volontaire), étaient sortis et sous les balles turques, ils se rendirent au plus proche cantonnement français pour implorer du secours. Ces braves, après avoir rempli leur mission, retournèrent à l'église et périrent avec leurs compatriotes.

18 Il s'agit de la colonne du colonel Normand, arrivée d'Islahié en aide à la garnison française de Marache.

19 Une traduction erronée : on ne peut que traduire le nom de l'église citée comme Karasoun nahatak.


21 Blackley Ellen, patronne du Collège des filles de Marache.

22 Leid Inez, missionnaire américaine à Marache.

* They were never heard of again.

23 Snyder Paul, membre de Near East Relief.

24 Buckley Frances, infirmière de l'American Red Cross, patronne de Bethshallum orphanage.

25 Power Mabel, infirmière de Near East Relief.

26 Mr. Solakian, pasteur de la 3e église évangélique de Marache.

27 Il s'agit de l'arrivée de la colonne du colonel Normand.

28 Crathern C.F.H., secrétaire de Young Mens' Christian Association à Marache. Voir ses souvenirs sur les massacres de Marache dans ce recueil (pp. 77-90).

29 L'auteur fait allusion au violent tremblement de terre suivi d'un incendie qui a ravagé San Francisco en 1906.

30 Ville littorale aux États-Unis (Texas), dont l'une des parties a été détruite le 9 septembre 1900 par un épouvantable cyclone.


32 *American Committee for Relief in the Near East* (plus tard, Near East Relief).

33 Kerr Stanly Eliphiston? (?-1976), officier dans le corps sanitaire de l'armée des États-Unis, il a fait son service d'abord à Alep et, à partir de l'automne de 1919, à Marache, où il a été chargé de participer aux opérations de Near East Relief. Il y travaillait comme un officier médical et sanitaire. Même après la retraite des Français, il est demeuré à Marache, avec quelques-uns de ses collègues américains, dans le but d'aider les Arméniens. Kerr a publié ses mémoires, *The Lyons of Marash*, en 1973 aux États-Unis en utilisant les souvenirs d'autres témoins oculaires, ainsi que la littérature historique.
Interview with Mr. Daniel Akullian, 12 May 1968, in Loudonville, New York.

34 Spahi, cavalier de l’armée française appartenant à un corps créé en 1834 en Algérie, avec un recrutement en principe autochtone.


36 Thibault, Historique du 412e régiment d’infanterie, pp. 239-240.


39 Ibid.

40 Haroutune Der Ghazarian, “Giligean Namagani. Giligean Tepkere Garewor Vawerkrowhti Me” [Mail from Cilicia: the Cilician events, an important Document], Bahag (Boston), 5 June 1920, pp. 2-3; 6 June 1920, p. 3; also reprinted in Krikor H. Kaloustian, ed., Marash, pp. 813-15.

41 Sainte-Marie Flye, commandant des troupes françaises à Aintab.

42 Dufieux Julien Claude-Marie (1873-1959), homme militaire français, général, commandant de la 156e division au Levant en 1919-1922.

43 Paul du Veou, La passion de la Cilicie, p. 126.

44 Voir à ce propos les souvenirs de M. Murè.

45 Résidence désignant le palais du gouverneur.

46 Interview with (Mrs.) Leah Asbed (née Maraslian), 16 September 1969, Bedford, Massachusetts.

47 Sourp Asdvadsadzin, or “Holy Mother of God,” is known to scholars as the Church of the Pancreator. Herafter it will be designated the Church of Asdvadsadzin.

48 From an unpublished manuscript by (Mrs.) Makrouhi Der Ohannesian (nee Der Vartanian); also an interview with Mrs Der Ohannesian, 19 June 1970, in Albany, New York.


50 An interview with Mr. Joseph (Hovsep) Chorbajian, March 1970 and April 1972, in New York City.

51 Hartunian Abraham (1872-1938), homme religieux arménien, pasteur et leader de la 1ère Église arménienne évangélique de Marache. Échappé par miracle à l’extermination, il est parti pour les États-Unis avec sa famille après les massacres, où il a rédigé ses mémoires en langue arménienne. Or, en 1938, il a demandé à Hartunian, son fils, de les traduire en anglais, ce que ce dernier a fait. Elles ont été publiées en 1968 à Boston.


53 Mgr Arpiarian ne parle pas de ce secret confié à lui par les Français.

54 Original rédigé de sa main.


57 Lloyd George David (1863-1945), homme d’État anglais, Premier ministre de l’Angleterre de 1916 à 1922.

58 Millenard Alexandre (1859-1943), homme d’État français, Président de la République Française de 1920 à 1924.

59 Séropian Mouchég (?-1951), homme religieux arménien, l’un des fondateurs du Parti Ramghavar, archevêque d’Adana en 1920, auteur de nombreux livres sur la Question arménienne.

60 Deschanel Paul Louis Eugène (1855-1922), homme d’État français, Président de la Chambre des députés en 1898-1902, 1912-1920, Président de la République Française de février à septembre 1920.

61 Il s’agit de l’article de Herbert Adams Gibbons (1880-1934), juriste américain, publié dans le Century Magazine en octobre 1921, dont une citation est insérée dans le livre de George Horton The Blight of Asia. Comme le journal américain ne nous est point disponible, nous le citons...
d'après le livre de G. Horton, diplomate américain, ayant travaillé trente ans comme consul et consul général des États-Unis au Proche Orient.
50 Le 9 décembre 1917.
51 Il s'agit de la rue de Londres où se trouve le Ministère des relations extérieures de l'Angleterre.
52 Nom donné au Ministère des relations extérieures de la France, situé sur le quai d'Orsay, à Paris.

Index des noms

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Berberian A. – 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abadie, lieutenant-colonel – 41, 43, 145, 150</td>
<td>Beylerian A. – 12, 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdul-Hamid II (Abdhülhamid II) – 10, 142</td>
<td>Blakely – 57-59, 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed – 45</td>
<td>Boghos – 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akullian D. – 91, 152</td>
<td>Boulghourjian – 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akullian G. – 91</td>
<td>Brémond É., colonel – 9, 13, 39, 126, 143-144, 149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfredo Dolleny, frères – 119</td>
<td>Briand A. – 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Khaled, bey – 120</td>
<td>Brislon H. – 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Saïd – 126</td>
<td>Bristol, admiral – 64, 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allenby E. – 12, 138, 147, 153</td>
<td>Bryce, viscount – 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amarissa (Amarisse) A. – 45, 119</td>
<td>Buckley – 59-60, 64, 66, 68-70, 88, 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>André, capitaine – 21, 32, 36, 38-39, 126, 143, 150</td>
<td>Buxton H. – 17, 22-23, 139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apcarian P. – 34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apkarian, frères – 36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Araxie – 96</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlabose, capitaine – 59, 61, 66-69</td>
<td>Chahim, bey – 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armen – 100</td>
<td>Chalk F. – 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold, major – 77</td>
<td>Chambers, Dr. – 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arslan, bey – 92, 116, 120</td>
<td>Cherkess Arslan – 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artine, Dr. – 60, 68-69, 71</td>
<td>Chichman Zadé – 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asbed L. voir Maraslian L.</td>
<td>Chorbajian J. (H.) – 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atah, bey – 102</td>
<td>Chorbajians – 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atatürk voir Moustafa Kemal</td>
<td>Christ – 147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aznive – 58, 61, 65, 68</td>
<td>Chukri, bey – 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corneloup, commandant – 34, 42, 99, 128, 149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Cosaparian P.G. – 149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghdasar – 101</td>
<td>Counarai, lieutenant – 56, 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balint J. – 7</td>
<td>Crathern C.F.H. – 11, 69, 77, 93, 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barthou L. – 136, 153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayizadé, imam – 128</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dadrian V. – 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Damadian M. – 32, 143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dante A. – 81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Daye Zade Hoca – 106
Dede Zade Mohamed – 29
Der Ghazarian H. – 152
Der Ohannesian A. – 99-100
Der Ohannesian M. voir Der Vartanian M.
Der Sahag – 100
Der Vartanian H. – 94
Der Vartanian K. – 98
Der Vartanian M. – 152
Deschanel P. – 143, 153
Djémil, bey – 29
Dodd, Dr. – 90
Doherty – 88
Dolleny A., frère – 119
Dougherty – 69
Dufieux, général – 95, 123, 152
Duval-Arnaudet – 37

E
Edward – 96-97
Elliot M.E. – 11, 56, 77, 88, 94, 146, 150
Epinière, colonel – 123
Ernoult, sous-lieutenant – 32-33
Essayan Z. – 136
Evliyé – 96

F
Fetullahian, frères – 36
Fontaine, capitaine – 32, 37, 64, 83
Francesco de Vittorio – 119
Franciscains, pères – 43, 52-54, 56, 118

G
Garabedian H. – 27
Ghadeyan S. – 100
Ghazaryan H. – 10
Gibbons H.A. – 140, 153
Gosabache Zade Hadji Nadji – 29
Gouraud H., général – 13, 19, 95, 144, 149

H
Haik – 54
Haji, bey – 92
Hartunian A.H. – 102, 117, 147, 153
Hartunyan V. – 117, 153
Heledj Ali, bey – 121
Helena – 110
Hervier, capitaine – 64
Horowitz I.L. – 6
Horton G. – 146, 153-154
Hovsep – 101

I
Ismail Hakki – 92

J
Jackson, consul – 77, 85
Jeilan-oghloou – 94
Jernazian – 93
Jevdet, bey – 92
Johnson (Johnstone) – 17, 135
Joli, capitaine – 35-36
Jonassohn K. – 7
Joseph, père – 50, 53, 55, 100

K
Kadri, pacha – 41
Kaloustian K.H. – 150-153
Karekin – 101
Kerlakian (Kerlokan, Kerlakian) A. – 31, 129, 132
Kerlakian J. – 129
Kerr S.E. – 11, 58-59, 61, 68, 77, 90-91, 101, 151
Kezkenian G. – 119
Kharlakian (Kherlakian) S. – 37-38, 53
Khatcher, Dr. – 98
Kherlakian R. – 117, 125
Kherlakians – 36, 122
Kilidij Ali, bey – 42, 126
Kojabash-oghloou Haji bey – 92
Kulij Ali – 91, 104, 116

L
La Petite – 70, 72, 75-76
Latrille, lieutenant – 33-34
Lei – 57-59, 151
Leymann – 31
Lloyd George D. – 138, 141, 153
Louis P. – 140-141
Luman (Lyman) – 67, 78, 86, 116, 120, 131
Luther – 58, 61, 65

M
Madame, doctor – 65
Mahomet – 129
Makrouhi – 98-101
Maksudian O. – 94
Malboeuf – 37
Maldjian (Moldjeian) P., abbé – 37-38, 52, 117, 122, 149
Malian F. – 149
Maraslian L. – 96, 152
Margaret – 64, 73
Marty – 43
Mary, Big – 68
Mary, Little – 60-61, 66-68
Millerand A. – 141, 153
Mohammed, bey – 103
Morbieux, capitaine – 39, 150
Moustafa (Moustapha), Dr. – 31, 36, 89, 149
Murad, bey – 106
Muré M. – 11, 37, 43, 56, 150, 152

N
Naslian J. – 117, 132, 153
Nazariantz – 13
Nevar – 100-101
Nikotian H. – 27
Normand, colonel – 13, 31, 35-37, 40, 129-130, 144, 149-151
Nubar, pasha – 28

P
Paillerès M. – 145
Perry J. – 17, 135
Power M. – 59-60, 64-68, 88, 94, 151

Q
Quérétte, général – 29, 33, 35, 37, 39-40, 77, 88, 91-92, 94-95, 118, 130, 145

R
Renaud – 150
Rifat – 92
Roze des Ordoncs – 33, 149
Rue L. – 151
Index des lieux

A
Adana – 19, 22, 32, 38-41, 44, 51, 60, 85, 90, 95, 104, 117, 123-126, 130, 134-137, 143, 153
Afrique – 149
Ak-Sou – 43
Albany – 90, 152
Albistan – 126, 129
Alep (Aleppo) – 20, 29, 69, 77, 90, 93, 149-151
Alexandrie – 136
Algérie – 152
America – 58, 71
Anatolia (Anatolie) – 17, 77, 126, 140
Angleterre (England) – 12, 22, 138, 141, 146-147, 152-154
Ankara (Ankara) – 122, 126, 146
Arabie – 149
Araplpar – 42
Ararat – 56, 77, 146-147, 151
Arménie (Arménie) – 135, 138-139, 141, 150
Asie – 153
Asie Minor – 17, 22, 139, 147
At-Izi – 31
Athens – 19
Avassour – 45
Azizié – 126

B
Baghtche (Baktché) – 18, 27

Bardezag – 139
Basses-Pyrénées – 153
Bazardjik (Bazarduk) – 41-42, 126
Bedford – 152
Beirut (Beyrouth) – 13, 60, 85, 90, 95, 132, 137, 144, 149, 153
Belgique – 150
Bell Pounar (Bel-Pounar, Belpounar) – 37, 55-56, 89, 91
Boston – 117, 152-153
Brittan – 141

C
Caire – 150
Césarée – 122
Chicago – 77
Champigny – 153
Char – 126
Cilicia (Cilicie) – 9, 11-12, 17-20, 22-23, 27, 32-33, 39, 44, 77, 124-126, 135-137, 138, 140, 141, 143-145, 146, 150, 152
Cilician hills – 138
Cilician plain – 138
Cilicie Montagneuse – 27
Constantinople – 17-20, 28, 77, 85, 90, 117, 135, 140-142, 145

D
Dardanelles – 149
Djihan – 45
Donghéle (Don-Kalé) – 47, 91, 118

E
Edinburgh – 77
Égypte – 136, 149, 153
El-Aglou voir El-Oglou
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>City/Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El-Oglou (Eloglou, el Oghloo)</td>
<td>37, 43, 55, 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empire Ottoman (Turkish Empire)</td>
<td>10-12, 135, 140, 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erevan</td>
<td>10, 12, 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erzéroum</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>État-Unis</td>
<td>150-151, 153-154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>138, 142, 147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>105, 126, 129, 136, 144-149, 151-153, 154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundudjak</td>
<td>18, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furnus (Firmouz, Fournouze)</td>
<td>18, 23, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galveston</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germanicea voir Marache</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>145-146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goksuene</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grèce</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadjin (Hadjine)</td>
<td>18, 126, 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hédjaz</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islahié (Islahieh, Islahai)</td>
<td>13, 22, 29-33, 37, 40, 42, 56, 59-60, 64, 69, 71-72, 74-77, 89, 98, 120, 130, 137, 144, 146, 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ismid</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israël</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
<td>147, 152-153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara-Beyekli</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karpout</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kars</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killis (Killis)</td>
<td>103, 126, 135, 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kishif</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levant</td>
<td>149, 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liban</td>
<td>149, 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Armenia</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (Londres)</td>
<td>6-7, 11-12, 22-23, 77, 154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loudonville</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malatia</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marseille</td>
<td>9, 13, 144, 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachussetts</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mersina (Mersine)</td>
<td>20, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscou</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moudjouk-déréssi (Moudjouk-Déressi)</td>
<td>47, 118-119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moudros (Mudros)</td>
<td>12, 92, 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Haven</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>77, 92, 146, 150, 152-153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near East</td>
<td>18, 90, 110, 116, 150-151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orient</td>
<td>140-141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osmanie</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ourfa</td>
<td>117, 126, 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>20, 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>27-28, 32, 38, 41, 43, 136, 145, 150, 154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pazarjik</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proche Orient</td>
<td>132, 150, 154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qaïa-Cache</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qanle-dère</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>République d’Arménie</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>République Française</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sachsegezu</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samaria</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>76, 151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selefeke</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sis</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sivas</td>
<td>42, 138, 140-141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyrne</td>
<td>27, 126, 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamboul</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrie</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taurus Montains</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toulouse</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcaucasie</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trébizond</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey (Turquie)</td>
<td>17, 19, 22, 64, 71, 76-77, 81, 139, 145-147, 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verdun</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienne</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yale</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yenidjékalé (Yénidjé-Kalé)</td>
<td>45, 47, 118-119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeitoun (Zeitun, Zeytoun)</td>
<td>18, 23, 27, 63-64, 150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Varoujean Poghosyan Avant-propos (en arménien) ......................... 5
Varoujean Poghosyan Avant-propos (en français) .......................... 10

Première partie
Documents de la presse européenne
Extract from the article British Seize Turkish Arsenal .................. 17
Extract from the article 1.500 Victims of the Turk ...................... 17
7,000 Victims of the Turk. A Reign of Terror ............................ 18
American Mission Besieged .................................................. 18
Protest to General Gouraud .................................................. 19
Extrait de l’article Les événements de Cilicie ............................ 19
16,000 Armenians Killed out of 22,000 .................................... 20
The Marash Outbreak ......................................................... 20
A Visit to Cilicia .................................................................. 22
En Cilicie ............................................................................. 23

Deuxième partie
Les attestations des contemporains
Le massacre des Arméniens de Cilicie prend des proportions inquiétantes .................. 27
Les massacres de Marache. Une nouvelle confirmation .................. 28
Telegram from the bishop Naroyan to Nubar Pasha .................... 28
Sur les événements arrivés à Marache ....................................... 29
Lettre de l’abbé Pascal Maldjian à M. Mihran Damadian ............ 32
La vérité sur les événements tragiques de Marache ..................... 38
Extraits du livre de Br. M. Abadie Les quatre sièges d’Aintab .... 41
Extraits des mémoires de Materne Muré Le massacre de Marache ... 43
Extraits from the Memoirs of M.E. Elliot
   Beginning Again at Ararat ................................................. 56
Extrats from the Diary of YMCA Secretary Crathern ................... 77
Extrats from the Memoirs of S.E. Kerr The Lions of Marash ...... 91

Troisième partie
L’opinion public sur les massacres de Marache
The Massacres in Cilicia ...................................................... 135
Extrait de l’article Les événements de Cilicie ........................... 135
La lettre d’A. Tchobanian à M. L. Barthou ............................... 136
Les événements de Cilicie ...................................................... 137
Extrait from the article After the Armistice ............................ 138
Armenians Burned Alive ...................................................... 139
Extrait de l’article de Paul Louis L’intervention
   armée en Orient ? ............................................................ 140
Extrait de l’article de Paul Louis Les préparatifs de
   la nouvelle guerre d’Orient .............................................. 141
Extrait from the article The Hand of Murder
   is passing over Armenia .................................................... 141
Extrait from the article French Prestige Injured ....................... 142
Extrait de la Protestation de Mgr. Mouchégh Séropian ............... 143
Extrait de l’article d’É. Brémond La Cilicie en 1919-1920 ......... 144
L’avis du général É. Brémond à propos de la retraite des
   troupes françaises ......................................................... 144
Extrait de la préface d’É. Brémond publiée dans le livre de
   Paul de Véou ................................................................ 144
Extrait du livre de M. Paillarès Le Kemalisme devant les allies .... 145
Extrait du livre de Br. M. Abadie Les quatre sièges d’Aintab .... 145
Extrait from the article of H.A. Gibbons ................................. 145
Extrait from the Memoirs of M.E. Elliot Beginning
   Again at Ararat ............................................................ 146
Extract from A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide
   by Abraham H. Hartunian .............................................. 147
Notes ............................................................................ 149
Index des noms ................................................................ 155
Index des lieux ................................................................ 159

162

Extracts from A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide by Abraham H. Hartunian .................................................. 102
Extracts des mémoires de Monseigneur Jean Naslian ............... 117

163