

January 10, 1920

THE INDEPENDENT

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The Independent

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A Message from the British Nation to the American People



Brown & Dawson

Constantinople, a city of more than a million population—looking across the Golden Horn from Pera to Stamboul

To Undo a Century of Turkish Rule

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FOR eight hundred years the Turk has proved himself, in the words of Gladstone, "the one great anti-human specimen of humanity"; as Cardinal Newman described him, "the anti-Christ among the races of men." The history of the Turkish empire in Europe and Asia alike is one long record of wickedness and destruction. It is the story of a barbarian power holding in its brute clutch countries that were once the most fruitful and beautiful regions of the earth, oppressing and torturing its Christian subjects in recurring gusts of cruelty down the centuries. Beneath the blight of Pashadom civilization disappears; fertile territories that for thousands of years had supported a teeming human life become desolate. Only a perpetual harvest of human suffering bears witness to the character of Turkish culture.

It is a humiliating and saddening thought that the European peoples have for so long tolerated the presence of this iniquity, and it would be unprofitable to recall the long history of European jealousies which resulted in the maintenance of Ottoman dominion to this day. I cannot think without regret of the fact that

even at the commencement of the present war, the Western Allies in a moment of extreme difficulty gave the Turkish Empire an offer of security, on condition of neutrality in the Great War, nor can I do otherwise than rejoice to think that the Turk refused that last offer of political salvation.

If the history of the Turk, prior to 1914, had been free from all the record of cruelties with which it is filled, the story of the last few years would alone make it impossible for any self-respecting and Christian people to tolerate the continuance of Turkish misrule and oppression over millions of our fellow Christians. The Turk utilized the opportunity of the Great War to commit the most deliberate and cold blooded massacres of inoffensive human beings which history records.

First of all, they disarmed the Armenian population, and then issued orders to the local governors for their wholesale massacre. For months the killing proceeded. Armenians were collected in barns and burnt to death; Armenian men, women and children were driven into the desert to die; Armenians were taken in shiploads to sea, and there drowned like dogs; Armenians were

led in batches to the shambles to be killed by the knife. The whole Armenian population was seized. The younger women were sold by auction or taken by the officials for their harems.

Nearly a million men, women and children perished in that sickening massacre by the order of the Turkish Government. What the actual number may be of Turkish subjects murdered since 1914 by order of the Turkish Government it is impossible to say; it is certain nearly a million Armenians were put to death, and perhaps double this number, under circumstances of appalling cruelty and horror.

It ought not to be possible for any decent minded man to suggest as a solution of that Turkish problem, which still remains to be solved by the Great Powers who now hold in their hands the future destinies of Europe, that the Ottoman Empire should, under any terms, be permitted to govern the miserable survivors of its recent massacres; but, if the Allies cannot find among themselves powers able and willing to become responsible for the good government of Turkish lands for some considerable period of time, the maintenance of Turkish rule, no doubt with an elaborate pretense of safeguards and assurances, may yet be the impotent conclusion of the matter.

At present the Allied powers stand committed to a more righteous solution. When a few months ago Damad Ferid Pasha, the Turkish Grand Vizier, appeared before the Council of the Allied Powers of Versailles and modestly claimed on behalf of his master the restoration of the Turkish Empire, he met with a round and categorical refusal; the Council replied in polite and diplomatic terms, that the Turk "has no capacity to rule over alien races. The experiment has been tried too long and too often for there to be the least doubt."

By the Covenant of the League of Nations, accepted by the Allied Conference on April 28, 1919, the Allied Powers laid down in definite terms the method by which they proposed to deal with the peoples formerly the subjects of Turkish misrule. Clause 22 of the Covenant reads as follows:

To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them, and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and de-

velopment of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who, by reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

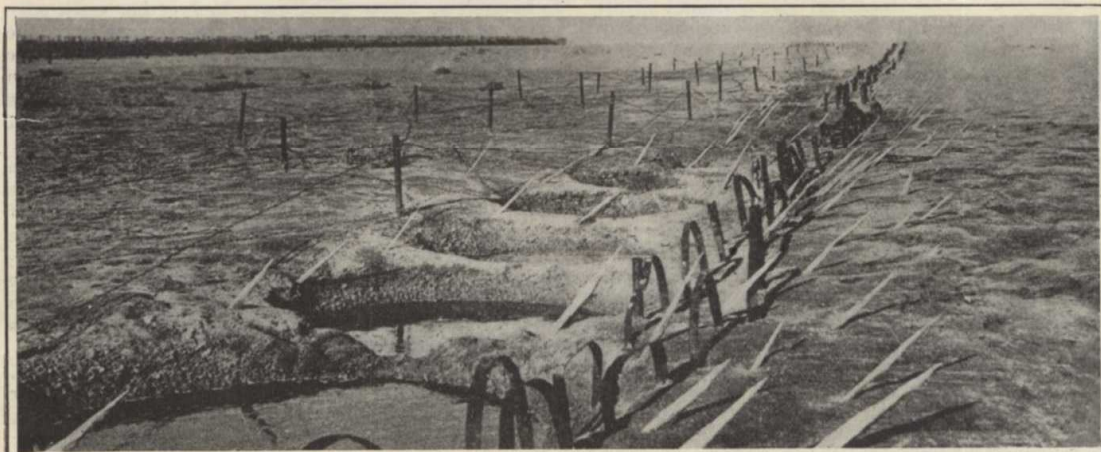
The character of the Mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions, and other similar circumstances.

Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.

The meaning of the clause is plain. It is intended that the Armenians and other subject races shall become self-governing nationalities. The Turkish Empire is not to be divided up as spoils to the conquerors but to be divided among the various races of which it is composed. The Covenant recognizes the fact that hundreds of years of Turkish rule have not left those nationalities in a condition, either political or economic, which would make it either safe, or possible to bestow on them at once, the burdens and responsibilities of self-government.

It is proposed that they shall be given, for as many years as may be found necessary, administrative advice and assistance in the difficult task of building up new states which may in due course find a place among the brotherhood of civilized people.

The task of the Mandatory Powers will not be an easy one; for centuries these races have been deprived of all political freedom. They have had no experience of the machinery of humane and civilized government. They have been to a large extent deprived of the benefits of education, as it is understood in Western Europe. Their financial position will be one of extreme difficulty for years to come. On the other hand, the potential resources of the Ottoman Empire are almost unlimited. There is a great field for a profitable expenditure of capital in the construction of highways, railroads and harbors, in the reclamation of lands once fertile, that have now for centuries lain untilled. There



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A bit of Turkish barbarism used on the battlefield in Palestine against the British forces. Sharpened stakes were stuck in the ground at an angle and behind them steel hoops were fastened upright. Behind the hoops were ditches, more sharp stakes and barbed wire



Press Illustrating

This street urchin of Saloniki can still smile in spite of the tragedies he has lived thru



Wide World

Refugees from Turkish cruelty. The children in the desert were found wandering like animals, half starved, after a Turkish massacre of Armenians, and were brought back to Syria

are rich alluvial plains which only require modern methods of irrigation to be transformed into some of the best wheat fields in the world. There are vast undeveloped oil fields. There are excellent prospects for the cultivation of cotton.

In less than two years of war, the British occupation of Lower Mesopotamia has demonstrated how rapidly a wilderness can be reclaimed. Thousands of men have repaired the crumbling banks of the Euphrates, and for the first time for centuries Lower Mesopotamia has been kept free from floods. Lands, which had been uncultivated for centuries, have been turned into wheat fields, vegetable gardens, dairy farms, and poultry farms to provide for the needs of the British forces in Mesopotamia. English and German engineers have long been awake to the vast industrial possibilities of the Ottoman Empire.

The Mandatory Powers, which are to be entrusted with this supreme opportunity, will need to be possessed of the most complete disinterestedness and singleness of purpose if they are worthy to play the part of trustees for their less civilized, or less educated, brethren.

What powers are willing, and can be trusted, to render this great service to humanity? We may rule out at once the smaller peoples. Neither Greece nor Bulgaria are likely to commend themselves for a task of this magnitude. Among the greater powers of Europe, the selection is not without difficulties which in some cases would probably prove insurmountable. It is useless to ignore the fact that the position of a Mandatory Power, exercising the influence and enjoying the commercial opportunities which are inseparable from its office, is one which must arouse jealousy and suspicion in Europe, whose diplomatic history has been one long story of jealousies and suspicions for the last hundred years. During the whole of that time, every great power in Europe has been constantly exercised as to the future of the Turkish Empire. It has been the chessboard of contending ambitions, the breeding ground of bitter rivalries. It is not easy for a European power to forget all the prejudices which have motivated European diplomacy for so long; and to readily acquiesce in the new conception which the Covenant of the League of Nations embodies.



Central News

A refugee of South Kurdistan who was saved from starvation when the British Army came

It would be difficult for any European government to view with equanimity the presence at Constantinople of a power whose presence there at any time in the last hundred years would have been regarded as a diplomatic disaster, if not an immediate cause for war.

And apart from the difficulties which arise out of the century-old prejudices of European diplomacy there is a further difficulty to be considered. The trusteeship of the whole derelict Empire of Turkey would be a task almost beyond the strength of any European power. It will need the services of many competent and trained administrators and officials. A considerable military force will be necessary to maintain order in districts where disorder has for centuries been a normally recurrent condition. Engineers, scientists, medical missions, educational missions will all be needed to guide the new states into the paths of social and political stability and financial prosperity. Vast sums of money will be needed as well as a small army of administrators and teachers.

So far as Syria and Mesopotamia are concerned it seems likely that France and Great Britain respectively will delimit spheres of activity and become responsible for the trusteeship of these districts. Misunderstandings have already arisen, but these will be composed.

The two outstanding problems are the future of Constantinople and Armenia. The case of the Armenians is the most urgent. A few years ago the remnant of that unhappy people sent to the Parliament of Great Britain and of France and to the United States an S. O. S. call, which set forth the plain facts of the matter.

What are the Allies going to do about it?

What will the United States do about it?

The Armenians have themselves expressed a strong desire for the help and assistance of the United States.

If the United States can undertake the work it will lift a load of anxiety and care not from the hearts of the unhappy Armenian people alone, but from the hearts of thousands of men and women in this country who feel keenly the impotence of Europe in face of the long drawn out agony of a Christian people.

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