

CROSS IS KEPT FROM ST. SOPHIA CHURCH

Dream of Millions of Christians in Near East Shattered.

SOLDIERS GUARD GATES

Turkish Cabinet Declares Great Mosque Will Be Destroyed Before Given to Allied Powers.

BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.
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CONSTANTINOPLE—Apparently the cross is not coming back to St. Sophia.

That is the most disheartening and important piece of news that could be conveyed to scores of millions of Christians, especially in the near east. Intelligent churchmen and scholars in the incident will be equally astonished.

For centuries all the politics of the near east has clustered more or less closely about this one major ambition of Russia, Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Roumania and the dispersal of Christians in the Ottoman empire. Apparently the nations would one day get Constantinople, and lift again the cross above the mighty dome of the church of St. Sophia, the greatest and most beautiful ecclesiastical structure in the world, the church that incarnates the memories of a united Christendom, when ecumenical councils were held therein, and the church that is the symbol of the glories of old Byzantium, Christian mistress of the world.

"The Great Idea." What was colloquially called "the great idea," as if there were no other great idea, has come into collision with the practical considerations of European politics and has been crumpled up. In the near east the return of the cross to St. Sophia, where now a crescent shines, is the "great idea" that is a popular obsession of Christians from the Adriatic sea to the Black sea. People keep pictures of the church in their homes. Priests of the Greek Orthodox church have for nearly five centuries held that conception before the minds of their people.

Many Legends Believed. All sorts of legends are popularly believed about St. Sophia. One of the commonest is that when the Turks captured the church in 1453 the priests, who were in the midst of a mass, retreated into a crypt below, which was miraculously closed behind them. When the Christians again got Constantinople and St. Sophia, these very same priests will reappear, chanting the mass, and finish the celebration which was interrupted by the advent of the hordes of Mohammed the conqueror.

Another legend, that when the Christian mosaics on the walls of St. Sophia begin to reappear through the overlay of paint and plaster with which the Moslems have covered them up, then the Christians will come to their own in the ancient church and capital of Christendom. Those frescoed are now showing through with clearness. I have seen them, as have thousands of the allied soldiers, because of present conditions, Moslem worshippers do not come in any considerable number to the mosque, so sightseeing is uninterrupted. Ten years ago, during Ramadan, I was driven out of St. Sophia, with threats and reviling, because I was manifestly examining the many evidences on the walls that the Christian decorations of this ancient basilica still abide.

Turks to Blow Up St. Sophia. In points so far distant as Arabia and Petrograd, Athens and Jerusalem, London and Cairo, I have talked with oriental churchmen about this desire so near to their hearts, that the cross should come back to St. Sophia. The metropolitan of Athens gave me a formal invitation to be present at the first Christian service, the high to be held in the restored church. Eminent churchmen the world around have been invited. The pope himself is to be asked to attend. The event now thought to be so near is regarded as the fulfillment of the prayers of countless millions of Christians throughout the centuries.

Alas, it must be recorded that there is no present indication that such a service will ever be seen in St. Sophia by any living person. Moslem fanaticism, in alliance with European politics, is still strong enough to prevent it. Even were it not for recent developments in the plans of Great Britain, the ambition of the Christians would be thwarted by the Turks, who have decided to blow up the building before they will surrender it.

This is not mere surmise. Members of the Turkish cabinet, leaders of the nationalist party in Turkey, "liberals" such as editors of the daily press, are a unit in declaring that this mosque, which has for nearly 500 years been a Moslem shrine of peculiar sanctity because it is regarded as the apex of the conquests of Christendom by their faith, will be utterly destroyed before it can be taken by the powers. Even the most famous

and progressive woman in the Moslem world took unshakably the same position.

Gates Are Guarded. Common report has it that the Mosque of St. Sophia is already mined, awaiting only the match. A unit of ragged, ill-fed Turkish soldiers hold St. Sophia and guard the gates. They have established their camp—a smelly place—inside the walls of the church, in the great corridor. That their machine gun detachments have been especially picked for their religious zeal seemed evident to me when I tried to buy the belt buckle of one poor fellow who really looked starving. His belt was held by a "Gott Mit Uns" German military buckle, which, of course, he could not read, and so could not sense the incongruity of it. He repelled my advances in a surly fashion, and would have no intercourse with foreigners or their representatives. I fear that any attempt of the allies to take over St. Sophia will bring those ancient walls and that peerless dome, erected in the sixth century by Justinian, on the site of an earlier St. Sophia, built in the fourth century by Constantine the Great, crashing to the ground—an irreparable loss to architecture, to religion and to civilization.

Britain Gives in to Moslems. "Practical politics" is as real a foe to the hopes of Christendom with respect to St. Sophia as the dynamite of the Turks. The capture of Constantinople by the allies set all the world to vibrating. Christian bodies in America and Great Britain, including a great gathering of churchmen in London, expressed their gratitude that St. Sophia, the building whose early church councils was held to formulate the creed which Christianity holds today, is again to be returned to the eastern church, which owned it for a thousand years. All the Christians of the near east were thrilled over the fulfillment of their ancient dream and prayer.

The Greeks, who, since the Russian church has been wrecked by the bolsheviks, expect to be given control of the shrine, prepared a flag 40 feet long by more than 20 feet wide, to fly over the church. When they were not permitted to erect it they displayed the flag in Pera, near the Greek embassy, and thence of their national came to gaze reverently upon it.

Others than Christians were interested. The Moslem world was agitated at the prospect of losing this symbol of their ancient conquering right. So the Moslems of India began to petition the British government that this shrine should not be taken from Islam, predicting serious unrest among the masses of Mohammedans should St. Sophia be lost. So strong was this pressure that Mr. Montague gave assurance in parliament that there was no intention of altering the character of the sacred places of Islam. Since France has identified herself with the cause of the Latins, who are naturally not eager to see their rivals, the Greeks, achieve such a notable ecclesiastical triumph as the restoration of St. Sophia, with all its reminders of Byzantine glories, it is altogether reasonable to suppose that Great Britain will be supported in her promise to the Indian Moslems.

Of course, there will be a howl—an international howl, wherein the church of England will vie in vigor with the Greek church—when once the Christians of the world realize that they have been "betrayed" to the Moslems by the politicians. Hitherto, however, public men have found the church people, while often useful, generally negligible. Barring a complete overturn of governments in Europe, there is no likelihood of the cross coming back to St. Sophia in this generation.

20,000 IN JAP SCHOOLS

Hawaii Has 160 Alien Language Schools That Flourish.

HONOLULU, T. H., Oct. 25.—(Special.)—There are 20,000 pupils in Japanese schools in the territory of Hawaii, according to figures made public by the superintendent of public instruction here.

There are 60 Japanese language schools. Of these six are of high school grade, three in Honolulu and three in Hilo. In addition there are 13 primary grade schools in Honolulu. Attending these schools are 20,301 pupils and 436 teachers. There were 42,136 pupils attending public schools here in 1918. In other words, approximately half of the public school children attend Japanese language schools as well. Almost 100 of the Japanese schools are independent. The remainder receive their support from the various Japanese churches.



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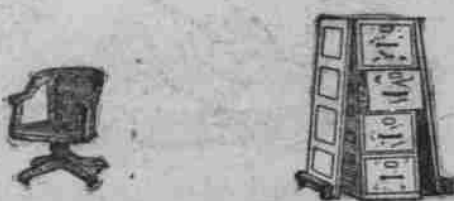
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SUGAR PRICE HERE IS FIXED AT 11-1-2 CENTS

Federal Board Holds Profit to 1½ Cents a Pound.

FREIGHT CHARGES ADDED

Jobbers and Dealers Charging More Than Specified Rate Run Risk of Forfeiting Supply.

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 25.—The price of sugar in Portland and the northwest should be 11½ cents a pound to consumers, plus the freight charges from San Francisco, the local committee of the federal sugar equalization board announced here today.

One and one-half cents a pound was a "fair and reasonable" margin of profit for the retailer and he should not be permitted to charge more, the committee said. The price would vary throughout the northwest because of the difference in freight rates, both by water and rail, to the various towns and cities. The jobber may add the freight rate to his bill to the retailer and the retailer may charge one and a half cents a pound additional.

Jobbers and dealers charging more than the rate specified by the equalization board were in danger of losing their sugar supply, the committee said. Announcement today that the retail price of sugar in Portland should be 11½ cents plus the freight charges, which would bring the figure up another half cent, confuses the Portland situation. A letter received by Food Administrator Newell from Ralph P. Merritt, coast representative of the sugar equalization board, said that 11½ cents should include freight charges and the federal fair price committee Friday night discussed the prosecution of persons who exceeded this amount. Both Mr. Newell and Thomas G. Farrell, chairman of the fair price committee, were out of the city yesterday and it was impossible to learn whether a later message had been sent from San Francisco revising the price.

TWO SUGAR CARGOES ARRIVE

Adequate Supply for Household Needs for Several Days Assured.

With the arrival of two more cargoes of sugar, the city once more has an adequate supply for household needs for several days.

The steamer *Rose City*, which docked Friday morning and sailed again at noon yesterday, brought a total of 250,000 pounds of sugar, 150,000 pounds of which was consigned to Portland and the remainder to points beyond this city.

The steam schooner *Delany Matthews* arrived in port Friday night and discharged a little more than 600,000 pounds of sugar yesterday at the Couch-street dock, according to her operators, the Parr-McCormick Steamship company. Three other vessels of the Parr-McCormick fleet, the *Williamette*, *Johan Poulsen* and *E. H. Meyer*, all steam schooners, are scheduled to leave San Francisco for Portland this month, and it is thought that all will bring at least part cargoes of sugar. The *Williamette* will leave San Francisco tomorrow, the *Poulsen* October 29 and the *Meyer* October 31.

The recommendation made by the fair price committee that restaurants and grills remove sugar bowls from the table and have waiters supply the sweets by request probably will be complied with throughout the city. H. W. Kent, secretary of the Portland Caneers' association, said yesterday that in his opinion proprietors of these establishments will be willing to follow out this scheme, as their supply is very low.

Mr. Kent called attention to a remark made by a member of the fair price committee who criticized a man for taking four lumps of sugar in his coffee.

"Four lumps," said Mr. Kent, "contain the same amount of sweetening as one and one-third teaspoonsful of sugar, and a person would hardly be censured for taking that amount to a cup."

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