

GRAPHIC TALE OF WAR TOLD

PRESIDENT GATES OF AMERICAN COLLEGE IN CONSTANTINOPLE WRITES ABOUT CONDITIONS IN SULTAN'S EMPIRE.

(By Associated Press to Coos Bay Times.)

NEW YORK, Jan. 3.—Scenes in and about Constantinople and conditions resulting from the Balkan war are interestingly described in a letter addressed to the Associated Press by Dr. Caleb F. Gates, president of Robert College at the Turkish capital.

The letter follows: This has been a war of surprises to most people. The Turks themselves were among those most surprised. They had expended some forty-two million pounds upon their army. They supposed that whatever else they had not done they had at least prepared an army, but that army has failed them.

The principal reason seems to be lack of organization. The officers of the army were not in touch with their men. The committee of union and progress had gotten rid of the old officers, who had risen from the ranks and who knew their men, and substituted officers trained in the military schools of Turkey and Europe. Unfortunately these officers have been devoting too much time to politics and too little time to their work with the army. So they did not adequately know their men.

Turkey at the opening of the war strained every nerve to bring her soldiers to the front. They came in by ships which passed down the Bosphorus every day, the soldiers cheering and the bands playing. These soldiers were put into cars and sent to the front, often without their officers. When they arrived at the station where they were to leave the railroad officers were waiting who took them and placed them in their companies. All corn and division formation was lost. It was confusion. These soldiers went to the battle under bad conditions. They needed a month at least to train with their new officers and get to know one another and their leaders.

Then the commissariat failed. It soon became evident to us here in Constantinople that the government was bringing in men much faster than food. They gave money to the soldiers and told them to go and buy food for themselves, but often they could not find food to buy, and many of the soldiers were suffering from hunger before they saw a battle or heard a gun. When fighting actually began all their difficulties were increased. It is painful to contemplate.

Under these conditions the Turkish army ought never to have advanced beyond the line of Lule Burgaz. They should have taken up strong positions there; waited to get all their army together; trained their men and put them into sympathy with their officers. By this time all the world knows the Bulgarian army did not nurse the Turks beyond Lule Burgaz. They waited nearly a week before they made their demonstration to try the strength of the Turkish army at Chataldja. There has never been a pitched battle there and now peace negotiations are going on. The Turk is not driven out of Europe, nor do I believe that he will be now. Constantinople will remain under the Turkish government and a strip of territory the size of which will be determined by negotiations.

While the newspapers have been filled with accounts of the conditions of Constantinople, filled with refugees and soldiers driven back upon the city, and while they have been describing scenes here "only rivalled by the scenes in Dan's Inferno," we have been living in Constantinople in peace and quietness. There has been no bloodshed here and the government has maintained order with great firmness. We should remember that Kiamil Pasha's government took up the work after the committee of union and progress had been turned out, soon after the beginning of the war. The least that we can say about the committee of union and progress is that its name is a misnomer, for the committee stood neither for union nor for progress. Kiamil Pasha's cabinet had a

hard task. They inherited the war, the army was what the committee of union and progress had made it and the country was filled with their appointees in office. There has been no serious disorder in this city during the war. Robert College has not missed one day of lessons. The greatest danger was in provinces. As of old, when any trouble arose in the Roman Empire they cried, "The Christians to the lions!" so in the Turkish Empire the Christians have usually suffered when things went wrong. The Armenian Patriarch and his council have been in great anxiety for their people in Adana, in the Bitlis and Van Region, and in other parts and they had reason to be anxious. We all shared their anxiety and do yet. But there has been no general massacre in the Asiatic provinces. There have been disorders and some lives have been lost, but nothing like what we feared has taken place, and we who know the country are sure that there would have been very serious massacres there had not the government exercised a strong control over the turbulent populations.

This war is saddening to all who love Turkey and the Turks. It has drawn upon our sympathies and has shocked us with its horrors, but there is a bright side which has not appeared in the newspapers, and that is the dignity, strength and wisdom of the government, struggling against tremendous difficulties to keep order and accomplish its task.

There is one other thing I must speak of, though I find it difficult to write about. When things were so constricted that the government could not even feed its soldiers, it was not to be expected that the hospital service and the care of the wounded would be perfect. The hospitals that were organized in Constantinople at the outbreak of the war were well equipped, clean and ready for their work, but when the wounded filled these and they had to provide more, they took barracks which were very dirty, and the people who had charge of them did not know what to do. Much time was lost and many wounded died for lack of care.

There was lack of system in the reception of the wounded at the station when the trains came in from the front, and often they remained many hours without care, without water, suffering severely. But the worst scenes were perhaps at St. Stephano. This station is on the railroad between the Chataldja lines and Constantinople. It became a sort of receiving station for the sick. Cholera prevailed, although I think much what was called cholera was not true cholera.

These sick men were taken off the train at St. Stephano in order not to bring contagion into the city, but pains were not taken to see that arrangements were made for caring for them. Sick men, wounded men who were also sick, and dead men lay around upon the ground without shelter. The dead were not buried. Often a sick man was found with his head pillowed upon a dead man. The sick were calling for water. It was a sickening scene and many were afraid to help these sufferers from fear of contagion, and many knew nothing about the sad conditions prevailing there.

The American Red Cross discovered this plague spot through Mr. Hoffman Phillip, first secretary of the American embassy. Mr. Phillip, the Rev. Robert Frew and Dr. Ford, with two Swiss ladies went there and set to work. They buried the dead; they cleaned up the place and disinfected it. They fed the sick and gave them drink. When they went there 150 died in 24 hours. After a week's work there was a day with no deaths. Mrs. Rockhill, wife of the American ambassador, stood back of the workers, bought supplies and forwarded to them, brought the conditions to the notice of the authorities, and stirred them up to do something, and showed great executive ability in dealing with the situation. Three members of the English Red Crescent who were waiting for their unit to get together, went to St. Stephano and organized a tent hospital at the expense of the American Red Cross. And now the Egyptian Red Crescent is organizing a large hospital there. There are now plenty of people ready to do the work, but they did not know of the conditions.

One bright side of this dark picture is the way in which all the communities, foreign and native, are working to relieve suffering and save life.

The American Red Cross is with drawing from its hospital work, be-

cause other agencies are now organized to take up that work and carry it on; but it is turning its attention to the refugees who have fled from their homes in European Turkey. In many cases their houses have been burned. Some will never return to their old homes. They came into Constantinople in carts or on foot. Some had a few household goods with them, others fled in rags. The government wisely sent them on into Asia as fast as it could and is trying to feed them. The ordinary food allowance is one loaf of bread a day for adults, and half a loaf for children. This sounds small, but it preserves life, which is the main thing, now.

Of course this flight entails untold suffering. Husbands have lost sight of their families. Soldiers returning from the war do not know where their wives and children are. Will they ever find them again? There are a great many children in Constantinople who do not know where their parents are. The British Red Cross is trying to provide for them. The Red Cross and the Red Crescent societies of different nations are trying to care for the refugees in building barracks, out near the walls to shelter them. The American Red Cross has turned its attention to the refugees in Asia. It is especially qualified to do this work because it can call upon the American missionaries stationed here and there all over the country to aid in organizing this work of relief.

Already it has found 12,000 refugees at Bursa, where Miss Jillo-son is organizing work; 20,000 at Konieh, where Dr. Willard Post is organizing work. The relief committee at Salonica has 8,000 under its care, and this is only the beginning. The work of relief work is sure to go on widening continually. And it will be a long, long work. We are giving out clothing now and packages of cloth with needles and thread so that the women may make up garments for their families. We must find the refugees in the cities, where they are crowded into huts, or camped in the streets; we must find them in the villages to which they have drifted and where they will soon be forgotten, unless some one hunts them up.

I think that it is a moderate estimate that there will be 200,000 souls to be cared for through this winter, and many of them will need help to set up life in new quarters. I think that many of these refugees will never return to Europe, where they would be under Christian rule, but will help to populate Asiatic Turkey. Turkey has not ceased to exist. Her kingdom will be an Asiatic one and she will need help to organize that.

America is free from the strain of these events, which set the nerves of Europe tingling; she has a bountiful harvest and great prosperity. I am sure that the people of America will give generously to save the lives and relieve the sufferings of these peoples. The American Red Cross Society is receiving and forwarding all donations, but they should be designated to the country in which donors wish them expended, as the Red Cross is carrying on work in the Balkan States also.

TO START ROAD.

Grants Pass City Council Financing Crescent City Road.

The Grants Pass Courier says: Thursday, January 2, marked the first active construction work on the Pacific-Interior railway.

The city council in special session paved the way for immediate construction work, putting the \$200,000 special bond issue on the market, and providing for a cash fund from other sources to pay bills for labor while the bonds are being floated.

The resolution passed by the council authorized the city auditor to advertise the bonds for 15 days, and to ask bids covering an issue to run for 30 years with the privilege of retiring them at the end of 20, and also for the same issue to run 20 years, with the privilege of retirement at the end of five years. The bonds are to bear five per cent interest, and are not to be sold at less than par.

The mayor, who was absent from the special meeting sent a communication in which he said that he anticipated that the bonds would sell at a premium.

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