

[Constantinople]

Wednesday, August 26, 1896

This morning I went to Scutari to see Dr. Riggs who has been sick. He is better but still very weak. On the street I met an Armenian acquaintance who asked me if anything was going on in the city. He said that the revolutionists had warned their friends in Scutari not to go to town today, because there was to be an outbreak. The revolutionists say that they have dynamite bombs and are going to use them. On reaching the Galata bridge all on the steamer were electrified by hearing firing in Galata. The musketry was constant and every now and then a loud explosion of the dynamite could be heard. On the bridge people were standing in crowds and looking in that direction, but nothing could be seen. A huge crowd was assembled at the Galata end of the bridge, and I felt rather inclined to go in that direction to look. My rule in such cases is, however, not to go into danger unless it is clearly duty, so I turned and went to the Bible House instead. In Stamboul a great crowd of Turks of the lowest class seemed to have risen out of the ground and filled the Yeni Jami courtyard, but I saw no signs of lawlessness. At the Bible House all were more or less interested in the Galata affair, and from the Bible House windows we could see that the firing seemed to centre about the Ottoman bank. After a couple of hours of watching we made arrangements for the defense of the place during the night and went home. What had happened was this. About one o'clock a band of about thirty Armenians, of whom the leaders were Russian subjects, suddenly took possession of the Ottoman bank building. They had entered the building, one or two at a time, on pretense of business, and at a given signal, rushed at the door from the inside, barricaded it and began throwing dynamite bombs into the street from the windows. The bank officials and clerks were intimidated by threats of blowing up the whole concern if any resistance was offered, and so the whole force of employees were held prisoners, as it were, by this little band of desperadoes. Troops were brought up on the outside and commenced a fusillade upon the windows of the bank, driven back every now and then by the bombs (of which many failed to explode, and which were all quite small). This was kept up for seven or eight hours. At length, after the object was gained of alarming the whole city and arousing the bad blood of all the soldiers and low class Turks, the revolutionists proposed terms of capitulation and were actually allowed to leave the building in peace under protection of a secretary of the Russian Embassy, it is reported, and were taken to a yacht belonging to Sir Edgar Vincent, the head director of the bank. I cannot hear that a single one of the revolutionists was hurt. They did not expose themselves as their object was to make a noise rather than to kill. They did not attempt to rob the bank. How many soldiers were hurt I do not know. Some say none and some say as many as twenty or thirty. We feel it to be an outrage that the Turks who kill innocent Armenians are not punished. But it is simply infamous that these scoundrels who have plunged the city into blood and rapine should be allowed to go free to renew their labors elsewhere. At the first it was reported that the unpaid soldiery were attacking the bank, for no other explanation suggested itself to the people for the spectacle of soldiers firing into the windows of the bank from every point of vantage. But when the real state of the case became known, Turks began to kill Armenians on sight in the streets. At the Stamboul Custom House, the Kurdish porters attacked and killed a number of Armenian porters and threw them into the sea. Later I saw the police dragging the bodies out for removal. One of the poor wretches was still alive when hauled out of the water on the shore. One of our Armenian neighbors at Roumeli Hissar was in the street back of the custom house in Stamboul when the Kurds were rushing out in pursuit of the fleeing Armenians. He sprang into the shop of a Turk

who hid him. Soon after a Jew also took refuge in the shop and the Turk hid him, but the mob hunted him out. The Jew begged for mercy, explaining that he was an innocent Jew, but the ruffians said that Jew or Christian he was a Giaour, and killed him. They did not find the Armenian, who came home to Hissar nearly dead with fright. As we went down to the bridge, we passed through the Turkish crowds, many of the men armed with ferocious looking bludgeons but none of them seemed to take any notice of us. They evidently have orders not to touch any but Armenians. On the steamer I found Mrs. Barnum, Miss Frazer of Van, and Mrs. Chambers of Erzroom. They had been shopping in Pera and had been caught in the storm. Some of the English gentlemen had escorted them down to the bridge, after some detention at one of the shops in Pera, where they were caught by the panic-stricken closing of the shutters. Mrs. Chambers had her two children with her, and they all had been obliged to pass the dead lying in the streets, to see the soldiers firing at the Armenians, and to see bombs thrown among the soldiers. It was an awful experience for them. Miss Kimball and Miss Huntington were also in Pera at the Legation, and Mr. Terrell very kindly sent them to the bridge with a cavass and had his steam launch take them to Bebek. For this courtesy, Mr. Terrell ought to be thanked. At Hissar all was quiet all night, but you can be sure that I slept with my ear open, and at one time in the evening I heard quite a sharp rattle of musketry, and one or two of the heavy dynamite explosions off in the direction of Pera.

Thursday, Aug. 27.

It is the day for my making up the local news for the Avedaper [an Armenian newspaper] today, and it seemed necessary to go to the Bible House, although I was quite sure that none of the translators or printers would be there. I have had a curious feeling all day exactly like the feeling at the beginning of every battle during the war. It is a profound desire to be somewhere else than in the disagreeable midst of disturbance. I am a coward by nature, I suppose, and am only able to be anything else by the grace of God. At all events, it has been an inexpressible source of strength to be able to ask guidance from on high for all emergencies. Nothing of account occurred on the way to the Bible House. The shops were all closed and the streets occupied by the Turkish mob, and the little patrols of troops. At the Bible House we heard horrible stories of the work of the night in Samati and Hasskeny. Many hundreds must have been killed in the city by the mob. Report says that Hasskeny has been sacked. It is a blessed thing that the ladies are all in a place of safety and none of the schools are yet open. Gedik Pasha and Scutari have not been disturbed so far as we can learn. Shortly after I arrived at the Bible House some Armenians commenced firing from the windows of a khan just at the foot of the hill. Soldiers came and began to fire back. I don't think that the Armenians fired at anything or even looked out of the windows. What they seemed to do was just to crouch on the floor, raise their hands above the sill, and blaze away for general results. It is evident that all they want is to make a noise and excite the Turks. Quite a battle took place right there, and an immense crowd of Turks assembled in the street to watch it. Finally the soldiers drove the crowd away but they assembled again nearer to the Bible House. This brought them opposite the little lane at the bottom of our premises on which one of our smaller gates opens. The crowds, having nothing better to do, discovered a shop in that lane and broke it open to pillage it. Then the police came and drove them off. Upon this the crowd halted right opposite to the Bible House, a horrible ruffianly set, with bludgeons of all descriptions, from the well rounded ax helve to the two-foot-stick of firewood. They could see nothing of the fight at the foot of the hill from their present position, and so they amused themselves with studying the possibilities of the Bible House. At last

someone called out, "There are at least 500 Armenians in this building. I can see one at the window." Soon all the men were gazing up at our windows and every moment growing more and more excited with the thought of what might be behind those great closed doors. We ordered all our men to keep away from the windows, for a stray shot might easily find its way in. Things had commenced to look a little blue for us when suddenly a column of cavalry appeared at the bottom of the hill and charged the crowd, during it clear up the street and out of sight. This was repeated two or three times, for the crowd formed again within half an hour after one of the charges, although several of the Turks were arrested each time and the clubs taken from others. It was evident that some way must be found to communicate with the Legation and get a guard. Finally just after one of the cavalry charges, when the street was clear, Will Bliss [William Dwight Porter Bliss, his brother-in-law] and I sallied forth on this errand. As soon as I got into the street I hailed a Turkish major in command of the cavalry and explained to him that the building is American and asked if he could be sure that the Americans in it would be safe. He was very polite and declared that it was immaterial whether we stay in the building or go, we would have nothing to fear. Providentially, I think, a carriage happened along at that moment, and we got into it and were rapidly driven through the scowling mobs at the bridge. We walked across the bridge, for that is perfectly safe. Just as we reached the other end of the bridge, a band of Armenians appeared on the quay and commenced firing upon the soldiers stationed there. The bullets whistled over our heads or at least somewhere skywards from us. I think that they were all sent off without pretence of aim. A company of soldiers came on the double quick to reinforce those on the quay and soon a regular battle was engaged in which we did not stay to see. The soldiers had bayonets fixed and carried their guns by their sides at a "trail." As they passed me, the bayonet of one of the men came in rather disagreeable proximity to my person, say about six inches off. From the looks of the fellow I judged that his wish that he dared make the space less was about as strong as my satisfaction that he had made it so much. All shops in Galata and Pera were closed and the streets deserted except for the heavy detachments of troops, and few skulking passers. We passed the bank. The fine plate glass windows of the two lower stories were riddled with bullet holes and all the walls were scarred with marks of the fight of yesterday. Mr. Terrell was at the Legation and was very kind. After some delay owing to the great demands on his staff for the protection of Americans, he got the Consul and Mr. Gargiulo started for the Ministry of Police to ask for a guard for the Bible House. I was starting back with Will Bliss when Mr. Terrell protested. "Don't you know," said he, "that these fellows would like to shoot the inside out of you?" "Yes," said I, "but they do not seem in a mood for that kind of work yet." Still, as he seemed to insist we went in the carriage with Mr. Short and Mr. Gargiulo as far as the Stamboul end of the bridge and then took another carriage for the Bible House. But we found the roads leading in that direction all closed by troops and the mob very much more ugly in temper than before. We thought of turning back, since the way seemed closed. Then I thought of all our friends perhaps blockaded in the Bible House and unable to get home. So we had the carriage drive to the Ministry of Police and caught up with the Consul there. He got us a guard and got the men instructed to help us all get to the bridge, and so we went back. Dr. Herrick and Mr. Bowen had tired of waiting for us, and had induced the officer in charge of the troops at the foot of the hill to escort them to the bridge. But after the guard had been posted and instructed in the orders of the Minister of Police, we took Mr. Keizer, Mr. Swan, Mr. Sellar, and one or two of the Armenians that work at the Bible House, and went to the bridge in safety. The rest rode in the carriage, and I walked with the Lieutenant of Police who had come to station the guard. On the way through the mob the officer ordered some of the ruffians to throw down their

clubs. So I asked him why those fellows all carried clubs. He said it was because they are so afraid of the Armenians. "Why should they be afraid of the Armenians?" I asked. "The Armenians do such awful things that they have reason to be afraid." "You do not mean to say," said I, "that this great crowd fears a few Armenians?" "Yes, they are terribly afraid of them." At the bridge, in taking leave of the police lieutenant, I offered him a small bakshish for his trouble, but he utterly refused it, saying that he had only done his duty. But when I told him to give it to his men of the guard, he took it. He was a very nice fellow and, like all those whom we see at the Ministry of Police, perfectly pleasant in his manner.

At Hissar I found Mr. Terrell, who had stopped there on his way to Therapia to see Dr. Washburn, and see if the Hissar colony needs any protection. At his request I called the head policeman of the village and translated for him the inquiry whether he had sufficient force to defend the college and the American houses against attack. The man said that all was quiet and that he needed no more men, and Mr. Terrell went on his way. The question was all that was necessary to put the police on their mettle and to show them that we must be protected. All is quiet in the village and it is delightful to get the rest that that the peaceful surroundings afford. I am as tired tonight as if I had done a solid day's work, whereas I have done nothing but gad about as narrated.

Friday, Aug. 28.

Last night on reaching home I found that a telegram had arrived from Dr. Tracy saying that he and Miss Gage and Miss Willard would arrive by the train today. It was necessary at all hazards to meet them, for otherwise they would try to reach the Bible House. So I decided to go to town by the early boat. But the night had been rather wakeful. A party of Kurds came to the village and examined the houses of the row below us, and the Campbells declare were sharpening their knives while sitting on the gravestones when the police pounced on them and drove them off, arresting the leaders. I had not known just what was going on, but had been up and listening to various curious noises until I was satisfied that the patrols were really watching. So I did not wake up until fifteen minutes before time for the steamer. I missed the direct boat but caught the wayboat by going without breakfast. A great change had come over the city. The mob had dispersed, and the streets were quite clear so that I walked to the Sirkiji depot without incident. Very many shops had been looted, and all the others were closed. Donjian, pastor Avedis' son-in-law, had his shop cleared out, although it is next door to a large police station. Fortunately the fellows could not get into the safes. They carried off what little things they found and smashed the showcases and clocks that they could not carry off. The train was two hours late, being delayed by troop trains bringing soldiers into the city. So with Mr. Bowen and Mr. Montgomery who also came to meet the train, I went to Gedik Pasha to see the fate of the Mission house there. Gedik Pasha was not touched at all, and after a word with the men in the house we went back to the Bible House.

The fact that Gedik Pasha and Koom Kapoo were not touched though surrounded by Turks on all sides shows that the proceedings of the pillaging and massacring parties were entirely under control of the Government. This control was more evident from the story of the men at the Bible House. They said that after we posted the guard Thursday evening the mob increased and became so threatening that the guards became alarmed and finally ran away. Two of our Croat

doorkeepers also ran away, leaving only the one Croat and the Armenians to hold the fort. The firing and the pillaging continued until a little after eight in the evening. Suddenly it stopped, the crowds dispersed, and not a sound was heard until the morning. The massacre stopped then because the Ambassadors of the Six Powers sent a collective telegram to the Sultan in very strong terms which showed him that they had some spirit left. The authorities then did what they might have done at any time before, they gathered in the looters and left the streets free for decent people. The looters, by the way, were a class of people whom one never sees in the streets. I never in my life saw such fearfully ruffianly fellows as those who made up the crowd in front of the Bible House, and between the Bible House and the bridge on Thursday. Where they all came from is a mystery. Of the decent working Turks none were to be seen. The people on the streets were the very scum of the race. As everything betokened a restoration of order and as I was very tired, I decided to go home at one o'clock. I asked Mr. Montgomery to take a message to Mr. Terrell and then to go to Hasskeny to see what had been the fate of the Gleason house, and the pastor's house there, and then I went off with the party that arrived from Vienna by train. They had heard in Adrianople of the massacre, and were pretty anxious as to the kind of reception which they would meet in the city. So they were delighted to find Dr. Herrick and myself on the platform when the train came in.

At Hissar I was met by a messenger from Miss Prime at Will Bliss' house and went with him to the house. The watchman in charge of Scutari college had sent up for instructions. The Armenian Protestants of the district were in a state of panic and wished to be given asylum in the college premises. But if they were admitted we would not know what to expect from the Turks who would look at the assemblage as treasonable. Miss Powers and Miss Prime had their hats on to go to Scutari and look after affairs. The only Americans there were Dr. Riggs and Mrs. Trowbridge, the first sick and the second harassed with the care of him and the constant demand for sympathy and advice from the frightened people. I told the ladies that whatever happened they should not go to Scutari. Miss Powers was rather rebellious, but finally yielded when I promised to go and stay there instead. I found that there had been nothing in the way of disturbances in Scutari. The people there were in the greatest fear that something would happen that night and came to me with piteous appeal to be allowed in the premises. I did my best to reassure them and promised that if any disturbance took place I would be at the gate and would not reject any who came. I was very glad that I went for the sake of the relief to poor Mrs. Trowbridge. I dined with Mrs. T. and slept in the college building and the night passed quietly. After reaching Scutari I found that I had in my pocket a letter that I had promise to deliver to Mrs. Montgomery telling her that her daughter and Miss Webb are to arrive on the morning train. Having made this botch of affairs there was nothing for me to do but go to the train myself to take care of the newcomers. I forgot to note that before going to Scutari I went to see Mr. Terrell and asked him to have a guard sent to the Scutari college so that we might be relieved from the anxiety of the risk that the buildings should be pillaged. He was very kind and agreed that he would attend to it the first thing in the morning. He disapproved entirely of my going to Scutari as being too risky, but I assured him that should any outbreak occur I was confident that the local police, who know me, would give every protection on application.

Saturday, Aug. 29.

This morning the city is quite itself again. Many of the shops are opened and the Armenians are beginning to appear on the streets again. It is a great relief to have a breathing spell, although it is confidently rumored that the Armenian revolutionists are to make an outbreak on Monday, the anniversary of the sultan's accession. I went to meet Misses Webb and Montgomery at the train and found that the word had reached the family in spite of my negligence. So they were all there at the station before me and there was a joyful scene when the train came in for the ladies had been told at Philippopolis that 7,000 people had been killed in Cons'ple. All the trouble seems to be over for the moment and we can now count up the losses, first sending a telegram to Boston for the reassurance of our friends. The affair as a whole is the crowning infamy of the infamous reign of Abdul Hamid. For 36 hours the lowest rabble have been allowed to wreak their hate on the Armenians in all parts of the city without hindrance. Of course the folly of the revolutionists was the excuse. But the men who made the outbreak were in general allowed to escape, and the cowardly assassination of near 5,000 unarmed and defenseless people who feared the revolutionists more than the Turks do was a crime which throws into the shade entirely any folly or crime of the anarchist Armenians whom the Turkish troops could have disposed of in an hour without shedding a drop of innocent blood. The revolutionists, besides the bank party which was let off scot free, had two other central parties, one at Samatia, where they sent out their dynamite bombs from the Armenian school, and the other in the Fanar in the Golden Horn, where they had entered a Greek house very much as they entered the bank, and where they were all destroyed together with about a hundred Greeks on Wednesday night by cannon balls from the Turkish ironclads. The scene of this part of the tragedy was the next house to the one in which Mr. Stefanides, Greek teacher at Robert College, was that night. He had a narrow escape. The work of the mob was first to pay off old scores of private grudge or business rivalry. The Kurdish hamals, at the custom house, at the railway stations, at the khans in Stamboul and Galata, killed off all the Armenian hamals in order to get their business. When we brought the friends from the railway station, we had the knowledge that the men whom we employed to carry the trunks had beaten out the brains of their Armenian associates only a few hours before. The Turkish newsboys killed all of the Armenian newsboys, the Laz boatmen stabbed and threw into the sea all of the Armenian boatmen on the Golden Horn; the Persian and Turkish tobacconists butchered the Armenian tobacconists who had been their rivals in trade and appropriated their goods. Wednesday and Thursday nights hell was let loose in every Armenian quarter of the city except Koom Kapoo and Gedik Pasha. All Armenian houses in Hasskeny, in Salma Tomruk in Balat and in Bamatia have been sacked and the greater part of the men killed with many women and children. Today I have seen family after family walking the streets weeping, barefoot, bareheaded men, women and children alike dressed only in their night garments with some dressing gown or old shawl thrown over them, these being all that is left to them of their property, and they left to seek some shelter where they can hide their shame of abject poverty and seek a beggar's crust. The men who did these things were not men but devils. They stripped the houses and in every case destroyed with axes pianos, tables, bookcases, chairs and other property that they could not carry away. They were not content to kill with clubs, they cut to pieces with knives. I have come across more than one large stone with a bloody point that told the story of its use to crush some wretch's skull. There was no pity, no conscience, no thought of anything but glee in the festival of gratified hate and bloodthirsty passion for gore. The massacres heretofore have been far away from the sight of civilization. Now every foreigner in this city, except the correspondent of the New York Herald, who will not see, has certain knowledge of what the Turk is, and of what the chief of the Turks is in his inmost heart, for

everyone is satisfied that this horror was ordered and directed by the man of whom the papers say that by the blessing of God upon his beneficent reign he has been able to put down the Armenian insurrection in the city, and to give his people the blessings of peace. I know of but one man more to be execrated of the whole world, and that is the newly elected Patriarch Bartolomeos. For he, after saying to the Sultan on his appointment that if he could win the imperial favor it would be to him the greatest joy and highest honor to which he could aspire in this world or the next, sits down in the midst of the blood of these thousands of his people, and writes to thank the Sultan for his great mercy in dealing with the Armenian nation notwithstanding the crimes of the revolutionists. I have nothing more to say of these horrors. There are no words left in which to describe them. I feel like a sneak for being here, protected by my flag, while these poor wretches have been butchered for looking longingly at the freedom which those have who have flags of their own. But our turn will come next unless God opens the eyes of Europe to see that the gangrene of this Ottoman power must be removed or it will bring ruin upon all nations that have to do with supporting it and giving to it the arms and money wherewith to destroy the people of Christ. As to our own circle, we have no lives lost, but Miss Gleason and Mrs. Seelye have lost all their property. The house was emptied entirely and their servant, our old Garabed, was killed. Pastor Assadoorian's house was also stripped of everything including the trousseau of the new bride. The family were providentially away on a visit and their servant hid himself in a cellar and the ruffians could not find him to kill him.

Monday, Aug. 31.

Yesterday morning we learned that there was another outbreak of revolutionists Saturday night with the throwing of bombs &c. in Galata near the bank. This has caused general distrust and almost despair for it is evident that the revolutionary party has not yet been dispersed, and that they have no pity for the stricken people. My old Kurd, Mustapha, went to town and returned with word that things are as bad as ever there. A frightened German who lives in Bebek came to the college for refuge saying that the Turkish revolutionists have appeared and have taken out the sacred flag and have come to the Sultan's palace in procession. Others say that the fanatical Turks of the village are deliberating some outbreak here. All these things are poor aids to quiet Sundays. So my Sunday, at least, was not very edifying. At noon Miss Powers came up from Scutari with a petition for me to go there for the night for the people were all in the most terrible fear and seemed unwilling to accept the decision that they must not enter the college premises except in case of actual attack by the Turks. This is serious. It is entirely possible that the revolutionists might get in there on some pretext and then make the place a fort for attack upon the government. So I decided to go over there. Just before I started Mr. Terrell came in his launch to the foot of the college hill and sent for Dr. Washburn and me. He said that the desperation of the revolutionists is clear, that they are going to push matters until the Moslems get so mad as to begin to massacre Europeans as well as natives, that today would be a time for special attacks, that they would try to kill the sultan and as the Sultan was determined to have his illuminations proceed in spite of everything, that they would give him an illumination by firing into the city, so that the day could not pass without horrible bloodshed. Hence he wished to say to us that if we wished a steamer to take our families away to some Christian country for a time, he would charter a steamer for the purpose. Of course we were duly grateful to him but did not take up with his offer. The offer was in fact a mere piece of needless ornament since if we wished to go away, we can go on any of the steamers without chartering a special one. I found

the city and Scutari quiet when I went down and passed a quiet night at the college there. This morning I found that a guard had been placed at the gate during the night and went to see the commander of the district about it. He said that he had received about midnight a telegram from the city saying that Mr. Terrell had telegraphed to have a guard sent to protect the college in Scutari. He then explained to me his arrangements for protection which were good and his hopes and his fears as to the safety of Scutari. Altogether I was quite pleased with the man, and with his sensible way of treating the situation.

In town I found all quiet but a terrible fear among all the people. I forgot to say that in the morning a young woman came up to me who declared that she knew the plans of the revolutionists and that a new outbreak was to take place about the middle of the afternoon, which would exceed anything yet seen in violence. She therefore begged to be allowed to move into the college premises. I gave the usual answer, that people may not come merely for fear but that if there is a real massacre commenced in Scutari they will all be received at the college. "Yes," she said, "after we are all killed you will open the gates for us." This feeling that the day is to see some fearful crime was abroad in Stamboul and Pera, and all the shops were closed. No crowds were allowed to collect, and the troops patrolled the streets in heavy forces. But nothing happened and the night was perfectly quiet.

Tuesday, Sept. 1.

The Turks issued a proclamation yesterday informing the people that on the occasion of the anniversary of the Sultan's accession a salute would be fired at noon, and no one must be frightened at the sound. No fireworks would be allowed because the sound of fireworks resembles the sound of shots and bombs, and no one would be allowed to appear on the street after sunset. So the illuminations were merely the lanterns along the shore of the Bosphorus, with no one to go to see them. Many horrible details of the massacre are coming in all the time. Perhaps Isabel will remember the shop by the Hissar scala on the bridge where an Armenian kept pure water for sale, and the two nice little boys who dealt out the water. The boys were 11 and 14 years of age. On Thursday they both had their brains beaten out with clubs in front of the shop. It was done merely for a pastime. Mrs. Gleason has discovered that some of her stolen goods are in the houses of the Jews living near them, and the police have agreed to make search and restore what she can identify.

I made this journal in three copies in order to send to all the different centres of our family. But just before I went to Scutari Sunday, Mr. Terrell told me that I must destroy any papers which I did not care to have the Turks see, for a search of the houses might be made. So I tore up the two other copies and by mistake tore up clearest one. Please let this go the rounds and reach Grandma and Uncle William and Cousin Charlie as well. Let it be understood that no part of it must be given to the newspapers on any consideration whatever. We are all well and hopeful that the Hand which has been our guard hitherto will still keep us safe. But I am very glad that Isabel and Helen have not had the horrors of these days to go through.