

**AWM4**  
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
**1914-18 War**

Formation Headquarters

**Item number:** 1/11/4 Part 1

**Title:** Political and Economic Intelligence  
Summaries, General Headquarters,  
Egyptian Expeditionary Force

June 1918



AWM4-1/11/4PART1



**SECRET.**



## **POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**

### **ENEMY TERRITORY.**

*8th June, 1918.*

#### **POLITICAL.**

##### **A.—GENERAL POLITICS.**

##### **ENEMY INTENTIONS REGARDING PALESTINE.**

The Jewish Press Bureau, at Stockholm, stated on April 30th, that in order to counter-balance Entente influence, a Committee of non-Jewish politicians has been formed in Berlin for the purpose of furthering Jewish colonization in Palestine, within the limits of German Oriental policy.

It is reported from Constantinople that whereas, until recently, the Germans kept telling the Turks that the question of Palestine and Syria would be settled on the Western front, and that they need have no apprehensions with regard to the future of those provinces, there is now a considerable movement in Germany, bringing pressure to bear on the Government to undertake a serious campaign in Palestine.

A Society, called "Pro-Palestina," has been formed in Germany, having for its object the recovery of Palestine from the British and the establishment of an autonomous state under Turkish suzerainty, but German management. Leading Jewish bankers have been instrumental in forming this Society, and the scheme has the support of the Conservative leader, Count Westarp.

##### **THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT.**

The "Lloyd Ottoman," of March 4th, states that owing to the impossibility of holding elections, the Government has decided to prolong, by one year, the life of the present Parliament, which is almost due for dissolution.

The present session closed at the end of March, and the House will not meet again till November 1st.

##### **SITUATION OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS.**

The "El Ikbal," on March 21st, states that at the annual meeting of representatives of the Turkish press, at Constantinople, Talaat Pasha announced that the Government proposed to suppress the political censorship, but intended to maintain the military censorship.

It is reported that Enver Pasha was violently attacked by Talaat Pasha in the Chamber of Deputies over this question. It is believed that, were it not for German support, Enver would now fall.

Popular discontent was on the increase in Constantinople at the end of April, owing to the scandalous way in which certain members of the Government were enriching themselves at the expense of the population.

According to reports received from Constantinople, about the middle of April, an important opposition group has been formed in the Committee of Union and Progress, under the leadership of Dr. Essad Pasha, a well-known oculist, and has begun to publish a party newspaper. Another group of members of the Committee of Union and Progress is led by Ahmed Riza Bey, the former President of the Chamber and now a Senator. These are in addition to the group recently formed by Shukri Bey, late Minister of Public Instruction, and Fethi Bey, late Minister in Bulgaria. An endeavour will probably be made to bring these groups into line and form a "block" strong enough to overturn the present Government.

##### **TURKEY AND BULGARIA.**

The friction which has existed for some time between Turkey and Bulgaria has recently become more acute. Turkey is repeatedly asking for the return of the territory ceded to Bulgaria at the beginning of the war. Bulgaria is now unwilling to give this up as previously arranged. Turkey argues that she ought to get this territory back, for having helped Bulgaria to reconquer the Dobrudja. Bulgaria, however, declares she not only intends to retain the territory ceded by Turkey, but also requires a rectification of frontier to include the whole of Adrianople, as she considers Turkey can obtain sufficient compensation in the Caucasus.

The German Government are endeavouring to arrange matters, but it is believed Austria is encouraging Bulgarian pretensions.

##### **THE CAUCASUS.**

The "Lloyd Ottoman," of March 7th, publishes an article on the Republic of the Caucasus. With regard to the Moslem portion of the population, it is stated that it is divided into three parties, namely:—

- (a) The party of "Equality" (Mussavat).
- (b) The Social-Democrats.
- (c) The Pan-Islamists.

There is also a small minority of revolutionary socialists, but it is quite impotent.



The most important party is the first. It is nationalist with strong democratic tendencies. It aims at the partition of the land among the peasants, and proposes partially to compensate landowners from Treasury funds.

In the Constituent Assembly the party of "Equality" has 10 representatives, the Social-Democrats 3, and the Pan-Islamists 1.

A deputation was sent to Constantinople on behalf of the Moslem populations of Kars, Ardahan, and Batoum to congratulate the Sultan on the recovery of those provinces which were taken by Russia in 1878, but have now been restored to Turkey by the terms of the recent peace.

The German Wireless Press of May 18th, states that the Caucasus representatives in Constantinople have expressed their adherence to the Caliphate.

On March 8th, Hussein Zadé Bey, a native of the Caucasus, gave a lecture in Constantinople, on the future of his country. He enumerated three solutions to the Caucasus problem:—

- (a) A federation in which there would be an autonomous Moslem state.
- (b) The formation of a group of independent countries, of which a Moslem state would be one.
- (c) Annexation to the Ottoman Empire.

In any case, the speaker continued, Moslems would obtain recognition of their rights. ("Lloyd Ottoman," March 11th).

The Constantinople newspaper, "Tanin," of March 19th, complains that the Turks have not obtained representation in proportion to their rights in the new Caucasus Government, and insists on the necessity of making the best of the present opportunity, which will never recur, of destroying Russian domination in the Caucasus. To attain this end better organization is necessary.

Meanwhile the Turkish Government is contemplating the enrolment of a Moslem Army in the Caucasus, composed of men who have served in the Russian ranks. It is also reported that Turkish and German Officers are organizing an Army among the Moslem population of South Eastern Russia, *i.e.*, the Southern Urals and the Volga, Ufa, Kazan, Samara, Perm, and Orenburg districts.

#### ENEMY PROPAGANDA.

In Nablus, Government officials have been lecturing the inhabitants on British rule, saying that Great Britain only gives food and relief to the poor for her own ends. Refugees have been told that within a short time they will be back in their homes.

A deserter states that the men are told that only England wants the war to go on. All the other nations want peace.

Two special propaganda Committees have been formed in Constantinople in connection with the Turanian movement.

The first is under the chairmanship of Enver Pasha, and is to give special attention to Turkestan, Afghanistan, and India. Comitadjis are being organized in North Western Persia to operate in Southern Persia and especially in those parts under British influence.

The second is engaged in modifying the Turkish language so that it may be comprehensible to Moslems in Central Asia. Pamphlets and leaflets have been printed in this dialect.

It is reported that daily bulletins of events on the Western front are being printed at Leipzig for distribution in Northern Africa. They are prepared in German and translated into Arabic.

#### DESERTION.

A deserter states that Turkish Officers often lecture the men exhorting them not to desert. About May 15th all money was collected from the troops, the idea being that the tendency to desert would be checked by removing their means of subsistence.

#### THE RUSSIAN PEACE.

The "Tanin," on March 12th, reports that the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Damascus sent a message of congratulation to Jemal Pasha (No. 1?) on the occasion of the Russian peace.

NOTE.—This is probably the pro-Turkish Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem.

The expected enthusiasm of the people in Turkey over the peace with Russia is said not to have been realized. It is reported that Damascus was illuminated to celebrate the event.

In official circles, however, the Russian peace is looked on as a great triumph, due to the valour of Turkish arms and the support of Germany.

#### DEPORTATIONS AND EVACUATIONS.

It is reported by an Agent that many Greeks were deported between April 9th and May 9th from Damascus, Hama and Homs with their families. They were very badly treated.

An Agent reports that about 100 inhabitants of Sur, mostly Christians, have been recently deported to Urfa and that all the Christians having houses on the sea front have been removed into the interior.

An Agent reports that about twenty well known Christian Natives of Es Salt have been exiled. The town has been deserted by most of the inhabitants on account of the ill-treatment received at the hands of the soldiers.



Refugees state that Bir Adas, Kafr Sabah, Jiljulie (all about five miles North of Mulebbis) have been evacuated by the Turks.

#### B.—TURCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

The Germans appear to be making efforts to improve the relations between themselves and the Turks. The Damascus newspaper "El Sharq," of April 8th, states that a German newspaper called "El Saika" (Lightning), is shortly to be published in Damascus for this purpose. It is intended for German Soldiers and will contain articles on Syria, Palestine and Arabia.

*NOTE.*—It is reported from another source that the name of the paper is "Armeezeitung Yilderim."

The Germans are said to be industriously spreading reports in Beirut of the pending arrival of 1 to 200,000 German Troops on this front to help the Turks. This tale gains little credence.

#### C.—ARMENIANS.

An Armenian Refugee from Es Salt, a native of Deurtyol, near Adana, whence he was deported in September, 1916, gives the following information about the present condition of Armenians near his own home and in Syria.

**ADANA.**—There are about 3,500 Armenians at Adana, 200 at Tarsus, 100 at Mersina, 800 at Sis, 1,000 at Hajin and 100 at Osmanieh. Most of those at Osmanieh have been converted to Islam.

**ALEPPO.**—At Aleppo, although a few Armenians have found work, the majority are badly off.

**DAMASCUS.**—In Damascus the condition of Armenians is fairly good. On March 10th the Turks gathered them together with the intention of deporting them, but subsequently changed their minds. Men between the ages of 16 and 50 were mobilised and the remainder set at liberty.

**EAST OF JORDAN.**—Armenian refugees from East of Jordan nearly all complain of being robbed and ill-treated by Bedouins on their way to the British lines. The worst offenders in this respect are the Mejalli followers of Erfeifan Pasha, Grand Sheikh of Kerak. Refugees are, however, very grateful for the kindness shown them by Sherif Abdulla Ibn Hamza, who is operating near the South end of the Dead Sea. On one occasion during May he sent two guides as far as Hebron with a party of Armenians from Kerak. It was reported that on May 18th, Sheikh Erfeifan went to Sherif Abdulla's camp and threatened to attack him if he did not evacuate Ghor el Mezraa (12 miles N.W. of Kerak) and hand over the Armenians, who had taken refuge with him. Sherif Abdulla left the same evening for Ghor es Safi (15 miles S.W. of Kerak) and arrived there safely, taking the Armenian refugees with him.

**CAUCASUS.**—A Berlin telegram in April to the "Kölnische Zeitung" says that a German and an Austrian Journalist have arrived at the Headquarters of the Caucasus Army "to convince themselves of the untruth of the alleged atrocities of the Turks against the Armenians."

The Arabic newspaper "El Ikbal" in its issue of March 28th makes the following statement: "Since the Russian troops withdrew from the Caucasus front, Armenian bands are committing unspeakable outrages on the Moslem population of Eastern Anatolia. They are assisted in their work of destruction and massacre by the Entente. They are commanded by a British field officer named Morel, and organized by other British and French Officers, so that the Entente is also responsible for their acts. The Ottoman Army will not be slow in purging the country of these rebels, and at the same time punishing the enemy officers who are directing the movement."

*NOTE.*—Untrue statements of this kind in the Turkish Press are usually the prelude to a fresh series of Armenian massacres. In the present instance, such Armenians as remained in the Trebizond and Erzerum districts are said to have been massacred by the advancing Turkish Troops.

**GENERAL.**—The Constantinople correspondent of the "Berliner Tageblatt" (April 30th) says he has received confirmation from competent Turkish quarters that "the Turkish Government is preparing a general amnesty for all peaceful Armenians. Their repatriation will take place as speedily as possible and those without means will receive assistance."

#### D.—THE ARAB MOVEMENT.

**EAST OF JORDAN, GENERAL.**—An Agent gives the names of two Sheikhs of El Aghbein tribe who are enrolling men for the Turks among the Bedouins East of Jordan. 300 are said to have been enlisted. Pay is promised at the following rates: Horsemen £T. 10, Camelmen £T. 6, unmounted men £T. 3 per month.

Another Agent confirmed this and stated that lavish payments in coin were being made broadcast. This change of policy is attributed to Liman von Sanders.

An Arab Prisoner of War who deserted about May 11th, states the Arab tribes East of Jordan are being supplied with money, food, clothes and arms by the Turks. If these supplies are not forthcoming the Arabs threaten to destroy the railway.

**KERAK.**—Refugees confirm the fact that at the end of April Sheikh Erfeifan of Kerak visited Jemal Pasha No. 2 at Es Salt and asked him for troops. The visit was a failure. The Christians of Kerak are reported to be anxious to see the Sherif's troops enter the town, but Sheikh Erfeifan is against this as he considers his position will be greatly diminished in importance if he joins the Sherif.



The Arabic newspaper "El Ikbal," of March 30th, states that the Vali of Damascus has received a telegram signed by eight Sheikhs of Kerak professing their loyalty to the cause of Turkey and Islam.

The same newspaper in its issue of April 10th announces that the Ottoman Government has granted the title of Emir el Umara (prince of princes) to Sheikh Erfeifan.

MADEBA.—An Agent tells the following story illustrative of the attitude of certain Arab Sheikhs :—

Sheikh Fankhour of the Aghbein tribe (who incidentally is renowned as a rider and is credited with so hard a head that he kills his enemies by butting them) recently visited Sherif Murzuk et Tihaimi at Madeba and found him sitting with piles of gold and silver round him dispensing it to his followers. Sherif Murzuk offered money to Sheikh Fankhour who replied that he had previously regarded Murzuk as a great man, but that now he appeared to him as Satan offering phantom meats, for he was in league with the English soldiers "who were known to violate any woman they came across." On Murzuk increasing the present however, the Sheikh's cupidity prevailed and he accepted the money saying "Forget what I said now in anger; you are yourself from the Holy places and of the prophets lineage; were it for this alone I would respect you." A refugee reports that on May 18th, Jemal Pasha No. 2 awarded a medal to twelve Christian Sheikhs of Madeba for services rendered. The Moslem tribes are looting all Christians' property and will not allow the Christians of Madeba to reap their crops.

#### ES SALT—AMMAN.

An intelligent and credible Syrian Christian Medical Officer who deserted on March 26th, gives the following information :—

Between Es Salt and Amman the Arabs are all in favour of the Sherif. Although they are not all in actual revolt against the Turks they may rise whenever a suitable opportunity presents itself.

The Circassians who form an important part of the population round Amman are constantly fighting the Arabs. These Circassians are pro-Turk and many have volunteered for service in the Turkish Army.

The head of the Balka tribe which has about 300 tents between the Dead Sea and the Jericho—Es Salt road, is Sheikh Sultan of the Adwan. The Turks had a very favourable opinion of this man but he appears to be playing a double game. He promised to bring 200 men to help the Turks against the revolting Arabs near Amman, but when the British attacked in March he remained neutral.

The head of a sub-tribe of the Balka, Sheikh Berjet, was accused by the Turks of being in British pay. On March 12th, orders were issued for his arrest, but when his cavalry escort had brought him part of the way to Amman he said he was ill and could not go any further. Informant was sent to examine him and found he was really not in a state to proceed. Nevertheless, Riza Pasha (commanding Jordan group) ordered him to be sent to Amman dead or alive, so he was sent in a motor. Informant does not know what was Sheikh Berjet's ultimate fate, but he states that Sheikh Sultan did his best to get him released. From this informant concludes that both Sheikh Berjet and Sheikh Sultan favour the Allies. Like all the Bedouins they obtain as much money from the Turks as possible, but on the other hand they know the British are much richer and more powerful. In any case they have more confidence in the leadership of the Sherif than in any Turkish Sultan or Committee of Union and Progress.

#### DAMASCUS :—

A Syrian Christian interpreter captured on April 30th at Es Salt states that, during our first raid, the Arab population of Damascus were prepared to attack the Turks, as they heard the British had taken Amman and were advancing on Damascus.

The Damascus newspaper "El Sharq" of April 8th, states that after the British withdrawal from Amman, the notables of Damascus sent an address of congratulation to Jemal Pasha No 2 and opened a subscription with the object of collecting £T. 3,000 to be devoted to presents for the Turkish troops.

#### THE LEBANON :—

The Government of the Lebanon has now become entirely Turkish. The remaining Christian officials have been dismissed. A General Bureau has been established for the collection of taxes, which will be levied on the same scale as in the Vilayets.

#### TURKISH VERSION OF ANGLO—ARAB RELATIONS :—

On March 28th, Shekib Bey Arslan, Deputy for the Hauran, made a speech in the Chamber of Deputies at Constantinople, in which he protested against the British occupation of Egypt. He said that if their protestation of friendship to the Arabs were genuine the British would give up Egypt in deference to the wishes of the population. Far from this being the case, the British dream of annexing Palestine and Mesopotamia as well. Shekib Arslan then invoked the assistance of German arms to prevent the suppression of the Arabs.

NOTE :—Shekib Bey Arslan is a renegade Druse who joined the Young Turks and is repudiated by his own people.

A Turkish prisoner of war states that the troops have been told that the King of the Hejaz has made peace with the Turks, and will join forces with them East of Jordan.



ECONOMIC.**A.—PALESTINE FRONT.****RATIONS.**

Two prisoners, captured on March 30th, state that the rations on this front are better than in the Caucasus where they were in February, 1918, and where transport was more difficult.

Prisoners recently captured make frequent allusions to the reduction in the scale of rations at the end of April and beginning of May. A Turkish deserter who surrendered on May 21st thinks the reason for this is that new troops were arriving from the north and had to be fed. A prisoner captured East of Jordan on May 23rd states that the issue and quality of rations has since improved. Meat was issued three times a week and there was a ration of barley bread.

**KALKILIEH, NABLUS, TUL KERAM.**

New crops are now coming into the market. It would appear that in the Tul Keram district a strong organized effort has been made by troops and Arabs to gather in the harvest. In the Tul Keram and Kalkilieh districts the barley has been harvested and the wheat is practically ripe, and according to an agent was already being reaped between Nablus and Kalkilieh before the end of May. Lentils and millet are being grown.

The following are recent prices :—

**NABLUS (about May 20th) :—**

Wheat	...	30	P.T. (coin) per rotol (5½ lbs.).
Barley	...	12½	" " " "
Durra	...	20	" " " "
Meat	...	45	" " " "

**KALKILIEH (about May 20th) :—**

Wheat	...	20	P.T. (coin) per rotol (5½ lbs.).
Barley	...	5	" " " "
Durra	...	7½	" " " "

**TUL KERAM (May 26th) :—**

Wheat	...	20	P.T. (coin) per rotol (5½ lbs.).
Barley	...	7½	" " " "
Durra	...	12½	" " " "
Meat	...	42	" " " "

**NOTE.**—The marked difference in the prices of barley and durra in the producing districts of Tul Keram and Kalkilieh and the town of Nablus can be explained by the fact that the new crops have just been cut. Local purchasers would be few in the producing districts while the peasants would be anxious to realize their stock at once for fear of its being requisitioned by the Turks. In addition, transport to Nablus is very expensive, labour at Kalkilieh is scarce, several neighbouring villages have been evacuated, and something must be added for the salesman's profit in Nablus. It will be noticed that the difference in the price of wheat is much less. This is accounted for by the new crop not having come into the market yet. The exchange at Nablus was £T. 1 = 32 P.T. (silver) which rose to 45 P.T. (silver) while taxes were being collected.

An Arab prisoner of war, captured on May 11th, states that the olive trees at Anetba (N.W. of Nablus) are being cut down for fuel.

**B.—EAST OF JORDAN.****NIMRIN.**

Information from several sources is to the effect that the crops round Nimrin (127 P.7) and the Wadi Arseniyet (8 miles N. of Nimrin) were burnt on May 19th. A report was circulated that they had been fired by the British because their owner, Sheikh Sultan of the Adwan tribe was pro-Turk. A Turkish deserter however states that the Turks burnt them because the soldiers used to go out gathering wheat, and got captured by British patrols. Most of the Bedouin think the fire was due to shells exploding among the crops.

**ES SALT.**

The following is the text of orders, dated March 4th, 1918, issued by the Turkish O.C. Lines of Communication, Jordan Zone, for the collection of tithes and early crops in the Kaza of Es Salt :—

1. Two committees will be appointed, consisting of three persons including an officer, for the purpose of estimating the early ripening crops in the Kaza of Es Salt.

2. The Kaimakam of Es Salt will define the areas within which these committees will operate. The committees will notify landowners a day in advance to be present in their fields at the time the estimate is to be made. If they cannot be present in person, they must send representatives.

3. The estimate of crops is to be completed by the committees within a week. If the estimate is over or under the correct figure the members of the committees will be liable to severe penalties.

4. A note will be given to landowners by the committees, indicating the amount of the estimate of their crops and the amount in tithes and purchases to be handed over to the Government. The amount of the purchases will be equal to that of the tithes. Landowners are to be told that the purchases will be paid for in coin.



5. Landowners will hand over half their tithes and purchases to the nearest depôt before May 15th. The remainder must be handed in at the end of May. They will be given a receipt by the O.C. depôt against the purchases which will be immediately paid for by the Finance Department. The Local Authorities will obtain the necessary funds from the Army.

6. The Kaimakam of Es Salt will report to the Military Authorities on May 17th the names of those landowners who have not presented their receipts for the first half of their tithes and purchases by the Finance Department. The same will be done on June 2nd for those who have not handed over the second half of their tithes and purchases by the end of May.

The Military Authorities will take the necessary action in these cases.

7. The books recording the estimate of crops are to be regularly kept. The Mukhtars of villages and the landowners are to certify that the estimate is correct by affixing their seal. The Kaimakam will pass these books to the Finance Department.

8. The members of the two committees will be awarded a fixed salary of 800 P.T. in coin.

9. The committees are instructed to read and explain to the landowners such paragraphs of these orders as concern them.

(Signed) MEHMED VEHBİ,

Lieut.-Col.,

O.C. Lines of Communications,  
Jordan Zone.

17-4-18.

#### C. NORTHERN SYRIA.

HAURAN :—An Arab prisoner of war, captured on May 4th, says that he heard from in the Hauran that the tithe in 1918 was 60% of the total produce of the land and that the animal tax amounted to 30% of the value of the beasts.

An agent reports that the oil deposits at Mekarim (in the Hauran, on the Haifa—Deraa railway) are being worked. Another agent states that a factory in connection with oil extraction is under construction at Esh Sheis (near Mekarim) and that about 100 men are at work in the neighbourhood.

SAIDA :—An Arab prisoner of war gives the following prices as being current in the Saida Kaza in February :—

Wheat	...	50	P.T. (coin)	per	rotol (5½ lbs.).
Oats	...	20	"	"	"
Millet	...	25	"	"	"
Maize	...	25	"	"	"
Lentils	...	20-25	"	"	"
Mutton	...	24	"	"	"
Beef	...	18	"	"	"
Dried Figs	...	30	"	"	"
„ Raisins	...	25	"	"	"
Milk	...	3	"	"	"
Olive Oil	...	30	"	"	"
Butter	...	50-60	"	"	"
Sesame Oil	...	30	"	"	"
Eggs	...	1	piastre	each	

The population of Saida is said to have decreased by 30% (6,000 souls) owing to military service and deaths from starvation and disease.

#### LATAKIYA.

An agent reports that although the crops in the Latakiya district are excellent, the requisitions are so large (estimated at two-thirds of the yield) that the inhabitants are alarmed for their food supplies in the future.

Prices at Latakiya for the period mid-April to early May were as follows :—

Wheat	...	15	P.T. (gold)	per	oke (2¾ lbs.).
On account of the excellent crops the price would be much lower if Germany were not making such large purchases.					
Barley	...	7½	P.T. (gold)	per	oke (2¾ lbs.).
Chick Peas	...	10	"	"	"
Oil	...	15	"	"	"
Butter	...	20	"	"	"
Figs	...	5	"	"	"
Lentils	...	10	"	"	"
Broad Beans	...	8	"	"	"
Vegetables	...	6-7	"	"	"
Potatoes	...	7	"	"	"
Petroleum	...	70	"	"	"
Sugar	...	84	"	"	"
Rice	...	30	"	"	"
Soap	...	15	"	"	"
Salt	...	7½	"	"	"
Calico	...	20	"	"	"
Flannel	...	40	"	"	"
Bulgur	...	15	"	"	"
Meat	...	18	"	"	"
Tombeki	...	7½	"	"	"



A horse which cost	£T. 10	before the war, now costs	£T. 70
A donkey	„	£T. 2	„
A mule	„	£T. 15	„
An ox	„	£T. 5	„

#### DAMASCUS AND BEIRUT.

An Arab deserter states that during the food crisis in Damascus last winter, wheaten and millet bread cost 60 P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.). Wheat has since arrived from Aleppo and Northern Syria so that the price of bread had now (about the end of April) gone down to 15-18 P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.).

In the Quarantine quarter of Beirut it is reported that most of the houses are deserted and that nearly 90% of the people have disappeared.

The Syrian newspapers for the period March 1st to April 10th, give some interesting information about the food question in the Vilayets of Damascus and Beirut.

In spite of the fact that the Vali of Damascus announced on March 6th that the coming harvest would be sufficient for the needs of the civil population as well as of the Army, there still appears to be a good deal of distress, which "El Balagh" on March 12th attributes to (1) Government purchases; (2) Drought; (3) Lack of transport. The assertions that the high price of bread is due to German purchases of cereals are vehemently denied and are attributed to enemy agents. Any abnormal shortage is stated to be due to the necessity of feeding the Turkish Army first.

NOTE.—One of the principal reasons of shortage and high prices, namely, decrease of the area sown, is not mentioned at all. The second reason given, namely, drought, is curious as the exceptional yield this year was supposed to be due to abundant late rains.

On April 10th it is announced that a relief committee has been started at Beirut which hopes to collect £T. 120,000 to distribute during the two months before the new harvest will be fully available.

At present cereals are allowed to circulate freely within the Vilayets of Damascus and Beirut, but for export from one to the other a permit is necessary.

As the result of meetings between the two Valis and a conference at Damascus about March 18th, Jemal Pasha No. 2 issued the following proclamation, dated April 2nd, aimed at profiteers and hoarders :—

1. All corn merchants must hand over all their stock to the military authorities within a week.
2. Heads of families will keep what is necessary for their immediate needs and hand any surplus to the military authorities.
3. The price of such cereals handed in will be paid for the same day at the rate of 450 P.T. per jift (i.e. 34½ P.T. per rotol, 5½ lbs., which would be quite a fair price).
4. If, at the expiration of the period named, merchants are found to be in possession of cereals they will be prosecuted and their stocks confiscated.
5. As this notice has been published in the press no plea of ignorance will be entertained.

NOTE.—Considering the prevailing illiteracy among the poorer classes this seems rather unfair.

Certain food control measures have been instituted. About the second week in March, shops were opened at Damascus and Beirut under the direction of the Food Committee, where bread and flour could be bought at reasonable prices. At these shops in Damascus on March 17th the price of bread was 30 P.T. (paper) per rotol (5½ lbs.).

This compares very favourably with trade prices on March 13th at Damascus, when bread was at about 160 P.T. (paper) per rotol.

#### ALEPPO.

The exchange at Aleppo, on May 9th, was £T. 1 (paper)=30 P.T. (silver). The price of wheat was just over 6½d. per lb., and of bread from 6d.-7d. per lb.

#### GENERAL.

The following is an estimate by an agent for this year of the percentage of the total land usually under grain in various districts :—

Aleppo	...	...	50%	Lebanon	...	...	100%
Homs	...	...	50%	Hauran (Moslem district)	...	...	75%
Hama	...	...	50%	„ (Druse districts)	...	...	over 100%
Baalbek	...	...	50%	Beirut to Acre...	...	...	85%

The lack of seed is the cause of the general falling off of the area under cultivation. Many Lebanese have mortgaged their possessions to buy seed. The Druses encouraged by the enormous profits of last year have increased their sowing.

The harvest generally is excellent, and will be sufficient for the civil population and even for the Army if exports to Germany are stopped.

NOTE.—There have been several unconfirmed reports that this has been done.

The Valis have decided to requisition 87½% of the crops of which 12½% is to be devoted to provisioning the Army, and 12½% to the depôts. However, owing to the yield having been over-estimated, it is probable that something more like 50% will be requisitioned.

#### D.—CONSTANTINOPLE.

A Hungarian doctor, in a recent issue of a Hungarian newspaper, describes a visit to Constantinople, where he says that though there is a great display among the upper classes, there is misery among the poor. Prices are fabulously high. He quotes P.T. 35 for afternoon tea, and P.T. 70 for 1 lb. of sugar.

NOTE.—It is not stated whether these prices are in coin or paper.



A neutral European who left Constantinople at the beginning of April, gives the following list of current prices:—

Mutton ... ..	70	P.T. (presumably paper) per oke (2½ lbs.)
Beef ... ..	58	"
Sugar (very scarce) ...	120	"
Haricot Beans ... ..	60	"
Bulgur ... ..	55	"
Peas ... ..	55	"
Rice (very scarce) ...	90	"
Bakla Beans ... ..	35	"
Dried Raisins ... ..	58	"
Figs ... ..	60	"
Soap ... ..	150	"
Olive Oil... ..	160	"
Olives ... ..	60	"
Sesame (very scarce) ...	65	"
Linseed ... ..	25	"

Clothing is very dear. A ready-made suit from Stein's costs £T. 30.

Coal was coming in fairly regularly and was being distributed by means of cards.

According to information which reached Athens on May 7th, the following prices were current at Constantinople shortly before that date:—

Bread ... ..	9½d.—1/1	per lb.
Beef ... ..	5/4	"
Mutton ... ..	6/5	"
Fresh Butter ... ..	22/5	"
Cooking Butter ... ..	10/8	"
Potatoes ... ..	2/1	"
Lentils ... ..	3/8	"
Haricot Beans ... ..	4/3	"
Sugar ... ..	6/5	"
Cooking Oil ... ..	10/8	"
Olives ... ..	4/3	"
Flour ... ..	3/8	"
Soap ... ..	7/5	"
Tea... ..	117/-	"
Coffee ... ..	42/8	"
Milk ... ..	2/8	"
Rice ... ..	6/5	"
Macaroni ... ..	65/-	"
Fish ... ..	5/4—10/8	"

Eggs cost about 5d. each; a lounge suit, £28; and a pair of boots, £8 16s. 0d.

It was announced in the "Tanin" that, at Constantinople, from April 1st, a bread ration of 250 grammes per head, per day, would be issued. The European neutral previously mentioned, says the bread ration was sometimes 300 grammes and sometimes 200 grammes, according to the quantity of flour received.

The "Tanin" also says that tickets exist for cotton stuffs (P.T. 26 per pic=26½ inches), wooden tacks for shoes (P.T. 30 per kilo. Maximum amount sold is 25 kilos), tarboushes and boots.

#### E.—GENERAL.

It is reported that Turkey cannot expect food supplies from Odessa or Southern Russia, at any rate until after the harvest.

Turkey is to be allotted 63,000 tons of Austro-German Shipping in the Black Sea for the supply of her Armies.

Early in March the Turkish Minister of Agriculture and Commerce made a statement to the Turkish Chamber of Deputies on the agricultural situation in Turkey. He said that attempts had been made to remedy the insufficient means of production by making agricultural labour obligatory and by the introduction of agricultural machinery from Europe. In the past year 46,000,000 deunums (about 18,400,000 acres) were under cultivation. 2,500 tons of seed corn were being imported into Turkey, of which 70 truck loads had already been forwarded to Trebizond.

A Constantinople newspaper announced on March 10th that cotton is to be cultivated on a large scale in the Vilayet of Aidin (Smyrna) this year and that a large quantity of cotton seed has already been sent there.

The production of olive oil in Turkey for the past season amounted to 12,000,000 okes (about 14,200 tons). 50% of the production will be bought by the Government at 57½ P.T. per oke (2½ lbs.), the remaining 50% being left free for trade.

In the debate on the Food Control Law in the Chamber of Deputies on March 9th, Fethi Bey pointed out the necessity of concentrating attention on the increase of local production, and the improvement of means of transport. The new law was criticised on the grounds that it was only a slight improvement on the old law it was to replace, and that it did not settle the transport difficulties.

In the session of March 28th the Senate approved the addition of the following articles to the Food Control Law:—

1. A maximum price to be fixed, if necessary, on those articles of consumption controlled by the Food Control Administration for retail sales.



2. Prohibition to export articles of consumption of all kinds. Surplus produce only may be exported, subject to the consent of the Food Control Administration.

3. The Food Control Administration is competent to take steps to deal with profiteering and speculation in foodstuffs.

4. The establishment of a council with consultative functions in relation to the Food Control Administration, to be composed of 22 members nominated by the Government, among whom must sit 6 Senators and 6 Deputies.

The nomination of such a council has been approved by the Chamber of Deputies ("Lloyd Ottoman.")

### FINANCIAL.

A neutral European who left Constantinople at the beginning of April, states that there had been an issue of a million pounds of silver coinage, and that the German Government had promised to send enough silver for the minting of £T. 3,500,000 in silver money.

According to a report received from Constantinople about the middle of April, practically the whole of the gold reserve of the Ottoman Public Debt, the Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman treasury, in all some £T. 5,000,000, has been used up. The bulk of the gold has been expended in the form of bribes and payments to various Arabs and Bedouins for supplies, etc.

The Turkish Chamber of Deputies has voted a credit of £T. 1,000,000 for the construction of the railway from Ras el Ain to Diarbekir.

Constantinople telegrams, dated May 2nd, state that subscriptions to the Turkish Internal Loan amounted on the first day to £T. 2,200,000.

The Vali of Beirut is reported to be actively canvassing for the new Internal Loan. This practically amounts to assessing the contributions which each individual must pay. When cash is not available, contributors are forced to mortgage or sell their property.

### SANITARY.

#### ENGLISH DOCTORS AND NURSES IN ENEMY TERRITORY.

A Christian Syrian Medical Officer, captured at Es Salt, on May 1st, gives the names of six Englishmen (all but one of whom are doctors) and two ladies who have been allowed to remain in Beirut. They are quite well and have no cause for complaint.

Informant states that there are three English nurses in Damascus. One of them is matron of the Turkish Military Hospital. Her work is much appreciated by the Turkish authorities.

#### PALESTINE FRONT.

An Arab deserter, from Jiljulié, captured on May 16th, says the whole of his regiment is down with dysentery owing to bad rations.

A prisoner of war, who arrived in Palestine about the middle of March, states that the health of the troops on this front is better than in the Caucasus where he was previously, and where there were many deaths from exposure.

#### DAMASCUS.

A deserter, who left Damascus on May 14th, where he had been a hospital orderly for seven months, says the hospitals are full of sick, suffering from general debility.

In a captured document it is stated that from March 13th—15th four fresh cases of typhus and three of relapsing fever were reported in Damascus. During the same period there were seven deaths from typhus.

#### ALEPPO.

An agent reports that there is a considerable amount of typhus among the troops at Aleppo and Damascus, but little among the civilian populations. Sickness amongst animals at Aleppo has diminished.

It is reported that they have four or five cases of cholera at Aleppo.

#### BAALBEK.

A deserter, who left Baalbek about April 22nd, states that there were an abnormal number of deaths daily in the hospitals there. Typhus was spreading at Baalbek, but health conditions at the front were good.

#### CONSTANTINOPLE.

It is reported from Constantinople that the city is suffering from famine and an epidemic of typhus, which carries off 70 victims daily,

At the request of Talaat Pasha, the Chamber of Deputies voted a sum of £T. 10,000,000 for the hospitals at Constantinople and elsewhere.

G.S.P.I.,

G.H.Q.,

E.E.F.



**SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL.**

**ATTACHMENT TO POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY,  
No. 7, 8th June, 1918.**

**TALAAAT PASHA.**

Even as all military authority in Turkey is now centred in Enver, the junior Staff Captain of 1908, so Talaat, the former clerk in the telegraph office at Salonica, has gathered all the reins of civil power in his hands, as Grand Vizier of Turkey, Minister of the Interior, and President of the Committee of Union and Progress, the Secret Society which ten years ago overthrew the old autocratic régime of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and has gradually substituted for it a far more cruel and oppressive despotism, under the disguise of Constitutional Government (*see* Summary No. 1, of March 18th).

Talaat owes nothing to the accident of birth or family connection. On the contrary, he has been seriously handicapped by his somewhat disreputable origin, for there is little doubt that, on one side at least of the tree, he comes of gipsy blood, than which none is more despised in Turkey. His early youth seems to have been passed at Adrianople, where he managed to obtain a secondary school education, thus qualifying for employment in the Civil Service, which is the object of almost every Turk who can read and write and is not possessed of military ambition.

In the absence of any family or other influence, Talaat had to content himself with a clerkship in the very minor Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs, and was eventually posted to the telegraph office at Salonica, where he is first found playing a political part in the year 1903. About that time Turkish misgovernment in Macedonia had culminated in a serious movement of Bulgarian revolt, followed by severe repressive measures and European intervention. It was this last development which aroused the apprehension of Turkish malcontents, already known as "Young Turks," a small group of whom formed themselves into a secret Committee at Salonica, and set to work to undermine the "Red Sultan's" authority by every means in their power. One of the most active members of this group was Talaat, and with him were associated Jemal, Rahmi, Dr. Nazim, and later Enver, all of whom were destined to play a leading part in recent Turkish affairs. They rightly judged that, in the absence of anything resembling public opinion in Turkey, any attempt to bring about a popular rising was foredoomed to failure, and they accordingly devoted themselves to the task of winning over to their views the Officers of the Turkish Army in Macedonia, with a view to a military "pronunciamento," as the only method whereby a change of régime could be brought about in Turkey. This propaganda was carried on with remarkable skill and secrecy, and was materially assisted by certain Jews of Salonica, who admitted the conspirators to their Lodge of Freemasons, under cover of which they were able to work with little fear of detection.

The startling success of the military revolution of July, 1908, at once brought its authors into prominence, and Talaat, the ten pound a month telegraph clerk, became Deputy for his native city of Adrianople in the new Turkish Parliament, and was shortly afterwards elected one of the Deputy Speakers by the Committee Majority. In the Chamber, his strong personality, courage, and ready wit quickly made themselves felt, and it was noticed that when he occupied the chair, in the absence of the speaker, Ahmed Riza Bey, he controlled the House much more capably than that solemn and fatuous, though highly respectable personage. On the other hand, as a private member, his violent temper and coarse and unbridled language involved him in frequent personal quarrels with the bolder spirits of the Anti-Committee Opposition, one of whom aroused his fury in the course of a heated altercation by addressing him as "Kulhan Bey"—the Turkish equivalent, say, for "Mr. Hooligan" or "The Member for Billingsgate."

After the reactionary movement of April, 1909, directed against the extreme elements of the Committee of Union and Progress, which resulted in the deposition of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and the removal of most of the known enemies of the Committee, the Young Turks began to adopt more aggressive policy towards the non-Turkish elements in the Empire, especially in curtailing their Parliamentary representation and the freedom of speech and of the press. From this moment also, the leading members of the Committee began gradually to fill the higher posts in the Government, as the older Ministers, who had retained office after the revolution, were set aside or resigned in disgust at the constant interference of the all-powerful Secret Society. Its aggressive Panislamic policy involved Turkey in a disastrous war with Italy in 1911, and within the borders of the Empire the non-Turkish elements were treated with the utmost intolerance. Albanians, Arabs, Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians, and Kurds had, in turn, felt the heavy hand of the new rulers of Turkey, and their early enthusiasm for the new régime had been converted into disaffection and in some cases open revolt, when Talaat at length entered the Cabinet. Early in 1912, he took charge of the Ministry of the Interior, while the Minister, Haji Adil Bey, was engaged on a tour through Albania and Macedonia, ostensibly for the purpose of redressing the grievances of those provinces. A general election to the Turkish Parliament was in progress, and Talaat exercised such violent administrative pressure upon the electorate to ensure the return of Committee candidates only, that the conciliatory effects of Haji Adil's mission were entirely destroyed, and a formidable insurrection broke out in Albania. A portion of the Turkish Army refused to march against the rebels, and the Young Turk Government was obliged to resign in July, 1912, being replaced by one composed of elder statesmen, under Ghazi Mukhtar Pasha and Kiamil Pasha. But the mischief done by the tyranny of the Committee was past repair. The Balkan States had already concluded



a secret alliance against Turkey, and in September, 1912, adopted a peremptory tone regarding the ill-treatment of their Macedonian brethren, and though the Turkish Cabinet showed a disposition to compromise, their hand was forced by the adherents in the Army of the Committee of Union and Progress, with the result that Turkey went to war with the Allied Balkan States in October, 1912, and sustained a crushing defeat.

Most of the civilian leaders of the Committee had fled the country on the fall of their Government, fearing reprisals at the hands of their political opponents. Talaat, bolder than his fellows, remained in Turkey, and on the outbreak of war took a commission as a Lieutenant in the Reserve, though he is not known to have seen any active service. In January, 1913, when the Turkish Government were on the point of concluding peace with their enemies, a band of armed desperadoes, headed by Enver, Talaat, and Jemal, broke into the Sublime Porte during a sitting of the Cabinet, shot Nazim Pasha, the Minister of War, arrested the other Ministers, and formed a Young Turk Government, under the presidency of Mahmud Shevket Pasha, Talaat resuming the post of Minister of the Interior, which he has held ever since.

During the interval of seventeen months between the end of the Balkan War and Turkey's entry into the European War, the Turkish Government, now become to all intents and purposes the Executive of the Committee of Union and Progress, applied itself chiefly to the re-organization of the Army, and to the strengthening of the Turkish element in the state at the expense of all others. During this period it was the Greeks who had to suffer most, hundreds of thousands of them being forcibly expelled from the north-western coast of Asia Minor, and from the neighbourhood of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, to make room for Moslem refugees from the lost provinces of European Turkey. Talaat, as Minister of the Interior, was largely responsible for these measures, which were evidently intended as the prelude to a fresh war with Greece, as soon as Turkey had recovered strength and acquired warships capable of turning the balance in her favour at sea. He also showed considerable resource and ingenuity in evading the attempts of the Powers to enforce measures for the reform and protection of the Armenian Provinces under European Inspectors General.

During the first years which followed the Revolution, Talaat, mindful of the services rendered to the Young Turk cause by the Salonica Lodge of Freemasons, conceived the idea of utilizing Freemasonry of the Grand Orient type as a political agency, in conjunction with the Committee of Union and Progress. Lodges were opened in all directions and members were admitted in thousands, with very little regard for the rules of the Craft. Talaat himself was advanced rapidly to a very high degree, with a view to his becoming Grand Master, but he was not long in discovering that this movement was regarded with the greatest disfavour by almost all orthodox Moslems, who saw in it fresh evidence of the atheistical tendencies of the Young Turk leaders. He accordingly found it expedient, when he became a Minister of State, to retire as gracefully as he could from his Masonic dignities, and the bogus Freemasonry of Turkey, deprived of his patronage and of the support of the Committee, died down and disappeared almost as rapidly as it had come into being.

Another political weapon, of which Talaat and his colleagues have made great and increasing use, is the so-called Pan-Turanian movement. Beginning in 1909 with a literary campaign to purge the Turkish language of Arabic and Persian derivatives, and replace these by words of genuine Turkish origin, this movement developed after the Balkan War into a form of militant Turkish Nationalism, having for its object to make up for lost alien subjects on the European side, by attaching to itself the scattered branches of the Turkish race outside the Ottoman frontiers in Asia. A vigorous Pan-Turanian propaganda was started with Government support and encouragement, local Committees were formed and books and periodicals published in the new outlandish jargon. A Boy Scout organization was also created, the patrols of which were given strange "Turanian" names, while many of the members called themselves after more or less mythical Tartar heroes of antiquity, and Enver Pasha assumed the Tartar title of "Bash Bogh" or Chief Scout. An immense impetus has been given to the Pan-Turanian movement by the collapse of Russia, which has brought the Tartar populations of South-Eastern Russia and the Caucasus within reach of Turkish influence and propaganda.

The outbreak of the European War found everything favourable to German influences in Turkey. The presence of the German Military Mission under General Liman von Sanders at Constantinople, and of the notorious Germanophil Enver in complete control of the Turkish Army, gave the friends of Great Britain and France very little chance of prevailing if sides had to be taken. Still it was hoped that the friendly sentiments which Talaat and other members of the Government had always professed for those Powers, and the offer of the Entente to guarantee the integrity of Ottoman Territory, would induce Turkey at least to remain neutral. Unfortunately, the fact that Russia, the centuries old enemy of Turkey, was in alliance with the Western Powers, made it difficult for the Turks to believe in the Entente assurances, and the seizure by the British Government of the two Turkish Dreadnoughts built in England, followed by the arrival in the Dardanelles of the "Goeben" and "Breslau," which the Germans at once offered to the Turkish Government, still further inclined public opinion towards the Central Powers. Talaat himself hesitated long, and did not throw in his lot with the war party until about a month before the end. Even then, there is reason to believe that he tried to put off the participation of Turkey in the war until the spring. But like all the other civilian Ministers he was powerless before Enver and the German Naval and Military Forces in Constantinople. The arrival of several million pounds of German gold in October, 1914, was the last straw that turned the scale, and at the end of the month the Turco-German Naval Squadron sallied forth under the command of the German Admiral Suchon, and attacked the Russian Black Sea Ports, while Turkish Troops crossed the Sinai Frontier of Egypt.



The plunge once made, Talaat had no further hesitations, but threw himself into the energetic prosecution of the war with characteristic energy and lack of scruple. When the Turkish Army was defeated on the Caucasus front, and the Armenian Provinces were invaded by the Russians, the Armenians in general were at once accused of treacherously assisting the enemies of Turkey. A great outcry was made for their condign punishment, and Talaat and his colleagues saw an opportunity of getting rid of one of the most serious obstacles to the realization of their Nationalist ambitions, as the Armenian inhabitants of the Eastern Provinces formed an alien block, separating the Turks of Asia Minor from their Tartar kin in Western Persia and the Caucasus. On the pretext of the military necessity of removing a dangerous element of population from the rear and Lines of Communication of the Turkish Army, it was decided to deport the Armenians "en masse" to the semi-desert regions lying between Northern Syria and Northern Mesopotamia. This measure, the responsibility of which must be borne chiefly by Talaat, as Minister of the Interior, was ruthlessly carried out in the early Summer of 1915. Over a million Armenians were driven from their towns and villages, the men with few exceptions were butchered by the troops and Gendarmes, and the women and children herded southwards on foot, enduring every conceivable outrage and torture, until they dropped by the way or were drowned in batches in the rivers lying on their line of march, as the easiest means of getting rid of them. It is estimated that over 800,000 perished in this fashion, a miserable remnant only reaching their destination, and of these a large proportion succumbed later to famine and epidemic disease. Talaat has attempted to defend his action in this matter, and to attribute the blame for the sufferings of the deportees to the neglect and incompetence of local authorities. At interviews granted to foreign journalists he has even shed crocodile tears while deploring the "unfortunate incidents" which attended the removal of the Armenians. But history will record his name as the chief author of the most abominable massacres since the days of Jenghis Khan and Timur the Tartar.

Another crime for which Talaat must also be held in part responsible, though the chief actor in it was his colleague Jemal, was the execution of hundreds of Arab notables accused of anti-Turkish and separatist tendencies. The victims included members of almost every distinguished Syrian family, as well as most of the intellectual élite of Syria and the Lebanon, and the immediate result was to arouse the undying resentment of the whole Arab world against the Turks and to precipitate the successful revolt of King Husein of the Hejaz.

A year and a half ago, Said Halim Pasha, an Egyptian Prince, who had occupied the position of Grand Vizier of Turkey since the assassination of Mahmud Shevket Pasha in June, 1913, was obliged to resign, and Talaat succeeded him. The chief incident of his Grand Vizierate has been the peace negotiations with Russia, and Talaat has had the satisfaction of attending the conference at Brest-Litovsk as first Ottoman Plenipotentiary and signing the Treaty of Peace, whereby Russia gave back to Turkey the districts of Kars, Ardahan and Batum, which she had taken from her in 1878. He has also distinguished himself of late by a fresh campaign of spoliation and oppression, directed this time against the Greek inhabitants of Western Asia Minor, hundreds of thousands of whom are being forcibly removed to the interior of Anatolia under circumstances recalling the deportation of the Armenians, but without the accompaniment of wholesale massacre.

Talaat, who is now about 42 years of age, is a big burly man, with a broad face, blunt features, a very dark complexion and black beady eyes, which recall his gipsy ancestry. In addition to a strong personality, energy and determination, he possesses a sense of humour and considerable personal charm. Since he attained to political prominence he has taken every opportunity of frequenting European and especially French society in Constantinople, and has acquired a certain degree of social polish and some knowledge of the French language, which he speaks fairly fluently, though not correctly. In pre-war days he showed a marked preference for Englishmen and Frenchmen as compared with other Europeans, and his official relations with those employed in positions of trust under the Turkish Government were always of the most friendly character. He was never accused either of private immorality or public corruption in the earlier stages of his official career, though now it is said that, in common with the other Committee leaders, he has enriched himself by speculation and war-profiteering. Of his personal courage he has given ample proofs, and it is to this quality perhaps more than to any other that he owes his outstanding position among the crowd of less resolute adventurers by whom he is surrounded.

Sub-joined is a translation of the speech delivered by Talaat as President of the Committee of Union and Progress, at the fourth Congress of the Committee held at Constantinople in September, 1917. This speech, which deals chiefly with the reasons for Turkey's entry into the European War, and for the deportation of the Armenians in 1915, is a good instance of the utter disregard for truth and historic facts which characterises all recent Turkish official utterances.

---

#### **Talaat Pasha's Speech at the 4th Congress of the Committee of Union and Progress, September, 1917.**

---

#### **COMRADES.**

We are now in the fourth year of this world war, whose devastating effects it was thought Europe could not endure more than six months.

In spite of the general exhaustion visible everywhere, of the revolutions and perpetual dissensions which are disintegrating enemy countries, our opponents still pursue their ends with obstinate persistence.



The pacific attempts of ourselves and our allies to save the dying world from further useless bloodshed, loss of life and material, have failed. The enemy cannot see our point of view. Their lust of conquest and domination has unbalanced their minds. They are unable to see the terrible dangers threatening civilization.

Our own country, compelled to throw herself into this sudden conflagration at a time of internal crisis and of difficulties raised by external aggressors, has naturally suffered to a great extent by the prolongation of the conflict. But our people, knowing that all their sacrifices and prolonged sufferings have only been undergone to safeguard the independence and existence of our Government, will and must continue to face difficulties and privations with firmness and determination.

Comrades—It would have meant self-condemnation for a Government to play the part of an inactive spectator in the development of such a momentous drama as the present war and of the vital changes it must inevitably bring in the international political situation. It was impossible for our Government to remain neutral. By reason of our position at the junction of Asia and Europe we have for some three centuries acted as a shield both to Europe and the East against the tyrannical aggression of Russia, and for hundreds of years we have been affected directly and indirectly by European wars. This is why His Majesty the Sultan ordered mobilization at the beginning of the world war and why the Government, watching the situation, prepared itself weapons in hand.

We did not make a "casus belli" of British aggression against our flag in the Straits. We contented ourselves with closing the Dardanelles. Subsequently, under the provocation of the Russian Fleet and Army in the Black Sea and on the frontier we were compelled to make our choice of sides and took up our position with the Central Powers whither the predestined course of our history has been leading us.

With gratitude and thanks I salute the Army which, by its unfailing resolution and determination, has caused the souls of its dead warriors to rejoice, and by the manifestation of its courageous deeds and bravery on all fronts during the last three years has won the appreciation of the whole world. Our Government, relying on a nation capable of producing such an army, may with justification live on and live for ever.

But our enemies must also admit this right to live. If they do not, we will persevere in the fight until we compel them to admit it, relying on the solidity of our alliance, our moral and our material forces and the assistance of the Almighty. We are fighting to safeguard our existence and independence, to secure our free development and progress. We and our respected allies have repeated this at every opportunity. We are willing to enter into peace negotiations with our enemies as soon as they signify their willingness to accept this as a basis. They have failed to check the victorious onslaughts of Ottoman arms in the field. They have failed to attain the objectives of their invasions by preponderance of artillery. They have not tired of inventing lies and false accusations against us in their own as well as in neutral countries, so as to dishonour our nation in the eyes of the public and create a favourable bias towards their peace aims whose objects we know so well. They speak a great deal of our bad treatment of enemy subjects and persecution of Armenians and Jews. But, thank God, these malicious publications are now in most places appreciated at their true worth, owing to our denials and those of numerous neutrals who were actuated by motives of humanity and feelings of justice.

I do not think it would be amiss to add a few words on this subject for the further enlightenment of the public.

The kindness and humanity displayed by us towards enemy aliens and prisoners of war have been positively proved not only by neutral eye-witnesses, but also by the repeated admissions of our enemies themselves. Our glorious soldiers won the appreciation and respect of the whole world not only for the miraculous bravery and courage they displayed at the Dardanelles, in Mesopotamia and on other fronts, but also for the kindness and humanity they showed towards their enemies. The repeated allusions to this in the English press are still fresh in our memories and it will be remembered that a well known editor expressed his deep regret that he could not see this noble and courageous nation beside them as friends instead of antagonists.

In order to save time I need only mention the well known publications of Sven Hedin, the famous Swedish author and traveller; the eulogistic declarations concerning the noble Ottomans by Mr. Elkus, the United States Ambassador and the American Consuls at Jerusalem and Aleppo respectively; the article based on the reports of eye-witnesses published in the "Osservatore Romano," the official organ of the Vatican, testifying to the good treatment of prisoners of war by the Ottoman Government, and the publications of the Red Cross to the same effect; any of these are sufficient to prove our case.

Our enemies generally detain Ottoman subjects found in their countries in prisoner of war camps. The Russians exile them to far away towns in cold climates and confiscate or sell up their property. In our country on the other hand, everyone will notice that enemy aliens are allowed to prosecute their business without hindrance. Any measures against enemy aliens have been taken, as you know, either as reprisals or under the compulsion of military necessity in the defence of the fatherland. These steps have the sanction of International law and the Government could not have acted otherwise.

The Armenians are an element which has lived for centuries under the aegis of the Government. So long as they remained unaffected by seditious suggestions and did not wish for separation they were a peaceful, intelligent community, benefiting from the kindness and protection of our Government. But the Russians, whose encroachments on our territory have always been accompanied by attempts to stir up the Christians against us, also started propaganda among the Armenians in the middle of the 19th century and were



helped by certain Armenian visionaries who were ready to be their instruments for inciting the population to rebellion. When the Russians were at San Stephano in 1877, the Armenian Patriarch put forward a request for Armenian independence to the Grand Duke Nicholas, which, with subsequent applications to this end, resulted in the famous Article 61 of the treaty of Berlin. The revolutionary committees have made this article their emblem of rebellion from that day to this with the object of deceiving the population of the interior and attracting public sympathy abroad, but by their attempts at revolt they have only succeeded in increasing the difficulties of the Government and in leading their nation from one disaster to another.

We Ottoman Liberals, under the despotic régime recognised the Armenian revolutionists as our natural allies in the fight for the establishment of democracy. Marching hand in hand we gave them the benefits of full political rights, while all the time they were pursuing their own ends under pretence of serving the cause of liberty.

Without taking their numbers into consideration, we admitted Armenian deputies into the Parliament and Senate. Cabinet appointments and the highest posts in all departments were unhesitatingly thrown open to them. But while we were occupied in suppressing the reactionary movements in various parts of the country, which originated with the disturbances of March 31st, 1909, in Constantinople; while the existence of our Government was endangered by the Italian war and the Balkan reverses, the Armenian revolutionists, seeing the Fatherland oppressed by difficulties both at home and abroad, once more abandoned themselves to the prosecution of their visionary projects and sent delegations to Europe to further aims whose realisation was absolutely impossible.

Such was the state of the Armenian question when the world war broke out. As I have already explained, our Government ordered mobilization and was compelled to take part in the war. Martial Law, an accepted military necessity in war-time, put a stop to all political agitations and subjected their authors to strict surveillance. On the supposition that all attempts at treachery against the Fatherland had been removed, Armenians were given arms and took their place alongside their fellow countrymen.

The Armenian revolutionists remained quiescent until our entry into the war. But as soon as the Russians crossed our frontier and occupied parts of our territory, their attitude changed from tranquility to rebellion, from loyalty to open insurrection.

Three months after our entry into the war, Varanian, the deputy for Van, submitted a memorandum to the Vali of that province, containing demands which were identical with those in the Note previously communicated by the Russian Ambassador to the Sublime Porte. As a result of Varanian's action, Armenian soldiers took refuge in the mountains and attacked the Gendarmerie and Moslem population. The Government thereupon explained the seriousness of the situation to the Patriarch and deputies belonging to the revolutionary committees in Constantinople. They were advised to take repressive measures and for a month and a half we awaited the result.

After the risings at Van and Zeitoun, respectively, in front and in rear of the Army, searches were carried out everywhere at the urgent instance of the Army Commander. Fire-arms, bombs, and explosives were found at Diarbekir, Urfa, Kaisarie, Ismid, Adapazaar, Sivas, Trebizond, Samsun, Arabkir, Malatia, Broussa, Erzerum, and other places, the majority of which were concealed in monasteries and churches.

In consequence of this, deportation to places outside the war zone was ordered so as to guarantee the safety of the Army, whose rear and flanks were being thus openly threatened.

We cannot claim that the deportations were carried out in an orderly fashion. Most of the Gendarmerie had been incorporated in the Army, and such discipline as was desirable could not be enforced. The Central Government, however, sent out Committees of Investigation, which handed over to courts-martial any people who were suspected of committing oppressions. Those who were found guilty were condemned to death or to other severe penalties. The Government did not hesitate to perform their duty in this matter. It has a right to defend itself against those who rise in arms against it. It is a right which exists with us as much as in England or France. Would not England, who approves of every kind of tyranny and oppression towards the Irish, without consideration for the lives of women and children, have deported them from the war zone if their revolt had taken place within it, and had imperilled the flanks and rear of their Army fighting the Germans? It is sufficient to instance the starving of women and children in the Transvaal, the cruelties committed in India under pretence of inculcating discipline, which have appalled the world, to demonstrate the absence of any humane considerations in English policy.

The towns of Gaza and Jaffa were evacuated from military necessity. Our enemies who were the cause of this necessity invented every kind of impossible tale regarding our action. They were party to all sorts of accusations rained upon us in their press and communiqués. But the truth was soon revealed. The Ottoman Government, when they evacuated these towns, took every measure to guarantee the safety of the deportees. Telegrams sent by Neutral Correspondents based on their own observations, by prominent Jewish Rabbis, by Neutral Consuls and Ambassadors in Constantinople, demonstrate the absurdity of the accusations. It was once more apparent that our enemies were far from adhering to the truth in their public pronouncements.

Recently, Reuter stated in one of his telegrams that Mr. Morgenthau, the former United States Ambassador in Constantinople had gone to Europe and thence to Egypt to make arrangements for the establishment of a Jewish Government in Palestine. We presumed on reading this that the facts had been falsified, since a proposal to establish a Jewish Government in part of our territory would have been an act of gross ingratitude on the part of the Jews.



Hundreds of thousands of Jews expelled from Russia under the Ignatieff régime have taken refuge in our country. Wherever else they may have been oppressed and persecuted, they have always found our Government ready to extend its protection towards them. We may well say the Ottoman Government is the only one which has extended the full benefits of political and civil rights to the Jews.

The United States Government informed the Sublime Porte through the Swiss Ambassador that Mr. Morgenthau was not sent to Europe and Egypt for the purpose described. Our presumptions were therefore officially confirmed. England wishes to disturb our relations with our allies by provocations such as these, although she knows the Jews are held in great respect in Germany and Austria. I am fully convinced that the Jews, who are an intelligent race, will not be deceived by these hostile intrigues.

These are the true explanations of the accusations brought against us. I now wish to say a few words about the Pope's peace proposals which he forwarded to the heads of each belligerent nation, and which were based on the highest and most humane considerations.

His Holiness, desirous of sparing the world from further destruction and suffering, proposed a general armistice and the settlement of international differences by a Supreme Court of arbitration. We have no aims in view but to be allowed to develop our moral and material resources for the benefit of the nation and the universe in general. We are more anxious than anyone to see the formation of such a Supreme Court whose decisions will rest on the equality of all Governments, weak or strong. We will abide by any solution of the problem of disarmament so long as our vital interests are safeguarded. A written reply has been sent to the Pope based on decisions arrived at after consultation with our Allies.

The military situation is to-day more decidedly favourable to the Central Powers than ever before. We certainly stand on firmer ground, politically, than our enemies, who are fighting in the midst of revolt and dissension. We are not confronted by any unsurmountable economic or financial difficulties. Though it is impossible to foretell when peace will be signed, we are evidently approaching the final stage of the war. If we remain steadfast in our purpose and faithful to our alliance we will, in the near future, attain that ultimate victory which will bring us freedom.

[The speech closes with a peroration emphasising the duty of the Committee of Union and Progress, which is to secure legal and judicial freedom by means of increased knowledge and morality.]

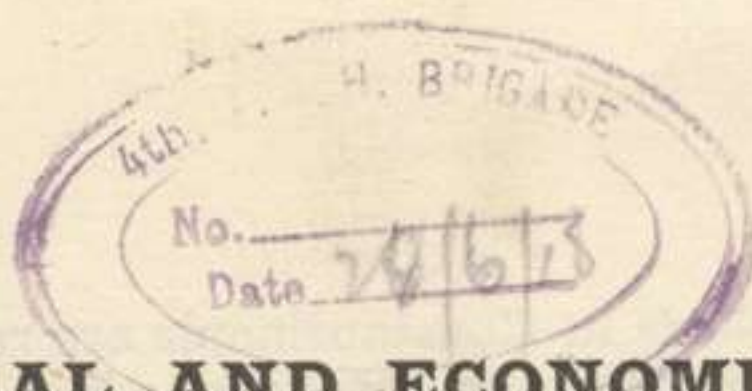
G.S.P.I.,

G.H.Q.,

E.E.F.



**SECRET.**



11<sup>th</sup> dH Regt

No. 8.

**POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY**

**ENEMY TERRITORY.**



**POLITICAL.**

**A.—HOME AND FOREIGN POLITICS.**

**SITUATION OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS.**

It is reported that in spite of the apparent strengthening of the opposition, Germany's hold over Turkey is so great that there is little possibility of a change in the political situation. Enver alone remains the convinced friend of the Germans, who are suspicious of the other party leaders, including Talaat and Jemal.

It is said that Germany has discovered that a considerable amount of discontent exists in the Army, owing to the jealousy of certain members of the Committee of Union and Progress at the rapidity with which Enver is amassing a fortune by illicit means. The Germans requested Enver to moderate his appetite, but Enver took the advice in bad part and has recently been showing a certain reluctance to execute orders from Berlin.

In order to put pressure on Enver the Germans have for some time past been supporting Jemal Pasha, who is rapidly increasing his following. Among these are to be numbered Fethi Bey, the leader of a party of more moderate members of the Committee.

The dissatisfaction against Enver is manifesting itself among the opposition parties by a growing desire to emancipate the country from German control and oppose German designs for the Economic exploitation of Turkey.

The immediate object of the opposition is the overthrow of Enver. Talaat's position is still strong. He can be said to occupy a middle position with leanings towards the German side. He is, however, constantly quarrelling with Enver, and the opposition does not despair of persuading him to throw his weight into the scale in order to cause Enver's downfall.

The party of Essad Pasha, the oculist, is said to be gaining ground among the military and the passive members of the Committee. It is anti-German and preaches a more liberal treatment of subject races, but is apparently not in sympathy with the party of Shukri Bey, which is said to be suffering from Essad's successes.

It would appear that Shukri Bey, Fethi Bey and Jemal are working together, possibly with the support of Talaat, against Enver. Essad's party has presumably not yet been brought into line, possibly because they cannot approve his policy of decentralization.

In the event of Enver being overthrown, Izzet Pasha, former War Minister, or Zekki Pasha, formerly commanding the Turkish Army in Macedonia during the Balkan War, are mentioned as his possible successors at the Ministry of War.

Javid Bey, the Minister of Finance, is said to have become very unpopular with profiteers and dishonest officials, owing to the feeling that certain measures introduced by him will curtail their gains.

There is considerable discontent in Constantinople directed against the Germans and the Committee of Union and Progress. People were saying at the end of March that, whereas formerly they had one Abdul Hamid they now have a hundred.

**TURCO-BULGARIAN RELATIONS.**

With reference to the Turco-Bulgarian differences on the question of the territory ceded by Turkey to Bulgaria in 1915, it is reported that the Moslem Deputies for the Gumuljina district interpellated the Bulgarian Government in the Sobranje, declaring that their Moslem brethren in Eastern Macedonia were being treated as enemies rather than as Bulgarian subjects.

It is generally believed that the incident was prompted by the Turkish Government, and was not unconnected with Turkish aspirations in the Gumuljina area.

There is very little definite information regarding the present state of Turco-Bulgarian negotiations. Germany is supporting Turkish claims, but, although it has been reported that a settlement has been reached, this does not appear to be the case, as neither side is willing to give way on essential points. It is said that Bulgaria will not consent to the proposed cession of territory to Turkey until she enters into possession of the Dobruja, which is still being jointly held by the Powers of the Quadruple Alliance.

In Constantinople, about the beginning of May, a lecturer at the Law School stated that now Russia had gone under, the Black Sea must be considered a Turkish lake. A Bulgarian lawyer who was present, protested violently and accused the lecturer of raising barriers between Bulgars and Turks.

**THE CAUCASUS.**

The Russian newspaper "Izvestiya," of April 27th, announces that the Trans-Caucasian Diet proclaimed complete independence on April 22nd.

A Constantinople telegram, of May 14th, states that Cis-Caucasia has done the same.

A telegram from the Russian Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, of May 14th, accepts German mediation between Russia and the Caucasus as "it seems Germany and Turkey are taking part in the events now in progress in the Caucasus."



Meanwhile, the delegates of the Caucasian Moslems in Constantinople are reported to have declared that apart from Military Administration, the details of which would be arranged mutually, they wished to be placed in a similar relationship to the Ottoman Empire as that in which Hungary stands to Austria. They would not, however, consent to be in any way governed directly from Constantinople.

It is reported (May 4th) that the Turkish Government is studying the possibility of forming a federation of states, including Persia, the Caucasus and Turkestan. It is for this reason that the Turkish Armies have received orders not to advance into the interior of the Caucasus at present.

*NOTE.*—Recent information shows that these orders are not being acted on, if, indeed, they were ever given.

The Turkish Press is said to have received orders to propagate the idea of a Moslem Federation.

The "Lloyd Ottoman," of March 25th, published a long interview with a Georgian Prince, who was passing through Constantinople. The Georgians, he says, are divided into the following parties:—

1.—SOCIAL DEMOCRATS.—These formerly belonged to the Russian Social Democratic party, which stood for federalism. They broke away from the Bolsheviks and now advocate a Federal Trans-Caucasian Republic.

2.—ALLIONIST SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, who are grouped round the nationalist newspaper "Allion." Their programme is practically the same as that of the first party.

3.—SOCIAL FEDERALISTS, who uphold the formation of an independent Confederation of Trans-Caucasia.

4.—GEORGIAN REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISTS, who are a development of the Russian Revolutionary Socialists and follow the third group.

5.—"NATIONAL DEMOCRATS," composed of the more thinking "bourgeoisie." This party has recently considerably increased in importance, and aims at the union of all those provinces which belong historically or ethnically to Georgia.

The Government is composed of nine members under the presidency of a social democrat called Noe Jordania, who was educated in Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and was a member of the first Duma.

The population of Georgia includes 2,500,000 Georgians of pure race. Russian statistics credit the country with 150,000 Moslems, but the Prince assured the representatives of the newspaper that there were actually 300,000.

*(NOTE.*—The Turkish paper naturally aims at establishing as high a figure as possible.) Only the upper classes have learnt Russian. The mass of the people speak Georgian only.

According to the Russian newspaper "Zaria," Germany has suggested that Turkey should return Batum to the Trans-Caucasian Republic, on condition that they allow the German Army of Occupation to pass through the Caucasus, in order to operate against the British in Mesopotamia.

The "Zhisn" reports that Baku is surrounded by Moslems demanding the surrender of Soviet troops.

## THE CRIMEA.

The Germans are said to have promised Turkey that they will arrange for the inhabitants of the Crimea to petition the Sultan to accept the same position with regard to the Crimea as that offered by certain Baltic provinces to the Kaiser.

*(NOTE.*—This would imply the establishment of the Crimea as a vassal state under Turkish Suzerainty.)

At a dinner given at Constantinople by the Committee of Union and Progress to Jaafer Seid Ahmed Effendi, Director of Foreign and Military Affairs of the Crimean Republic, Midhat Shukri Bey made a speech in which he said that Turkey was essentially Moslem, and that the Crimea and the Southern Caucasus were bound to Turkey by ties of race, religion and history. He went on to say that they would shortly witness the union of these two fractions of the Tatar race with Turkey, and that they would not differ from Anatolia in their relations to the Mother Country.

## PERSIA.

There are reports from Constantinople of a Turco-Persian agreement to be signed in the near future, dealing with railways, the Postal Union, and the formation of a Persian Army under Turkish and German auspices.

## ZIONISM IN AUSTRIA.

A Vienna telegram to the Jewish Correspondence Bureau, dated May 2nd, states that the Austrian authorities have closed all Zionist Headquarters and meeting places in Cracow.

In Vienna, the message adds, many Socialist Zionists, even young students, have been arrested, and the Pro-Ally Zionist Society has been dissolved.

The Jewish Press Bureau at Stockholm on May 2nd, announces that the Polish Zionists are being systematically persecuted in Austria and Poland. Both of the existing Zionist organizations in Warsaw have been suppressed. Several Polish Zionists have been arrested and domiciliary searches have been carried out in Warsaw, Lemberg and Berlin.



## EGYPT.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the death of the prominent Nationalist leader, Mustafa Kamel, the Egyptian Nationalist Society, under the presidency of Mohamed Bey Farid, held a meeting at Berlin on March 4th. Besides a number of prominent Turks and Egyptians, Admiral von Tirpitz and Count Reventlow were present.

The principal feature of the meeting was a speech by Abdel Malik Hamza. Comparing the Egyptian and Belgian questions, the speaker stated that the solution undoubtedly lay in the hands of the possessor of power. It would be a mistake, however, to confuse power (Macht) and force (Gewalt). Belgium had been conquered by the force of German arms, but this was not sufficient to decide the country's future. The cleverness of Entente diplomacy was a proof of that: similarly, the fact of Great Britain being in actual forceful possession of Egypt should not be taken as final. Much could still be achieved for that country by the power of right and German diplomacy.

In reply to Mr. Balfour, who had said that England would defend Egypt against Turkish oppression, Abdel Malik Hamza stated that if Great Britain's intentions towards the Egyptians were honest, she ought to propose the independence of Egypt under international guarantees such as were given to Switzerland. He said he was sure that not a single Turkish statesman would object to this. If Great Britain will not do this, the speaker asserted that she would be denying the right of self-determination to Egypt, which she insists on with regard to other civilized countries.

In support of the contention that the Egyptians do not want to remain under English rule, he instanced the desertion of coastguard officers to the Senussi, and said that most of the officers fighting for Turkey in Tripoli are Egyptians. Although, he added, England had sent the armies of most of her dependent peoples to the front, she had sent no Egyptian troops. The attempt to do so provoked a protest from Egyptians against fighting their brothers the Turks, and resulted in General Maxwell's recall. This passive resistance was a proof that the Egyptians wanted to throw off British domination.

## GENDARMERIE.

The "Lloyd Ottoman" reports that at the sitting of March 24th in the Senate, Abdul Halik Bey, Under Secretary for the Interior, went into details of the reinforcement of Gendarmerie in the Interior. He did not disguise the fact that some of the officers had been found guilty of abuses in the execution of their duties. 171 had been punished, of whom three had been sentenced to death.

## B.—ARMENIANS.

## GENERAL.

The "Tanin" in a leader of March 10th, attacks the Armenians and adopts a somewhat threatening attitude. After accusing them of "imperialism" (sic), the paper goes on to say that "if they had been merely nationalists we should have understood and even might have protected them. In a short time the curtain will fall on the scene of this war and then we and the Armenians will meet face to face. The Armenians must be made to understand that their duty is to show themselves good subjects of the Ottoman Government. This is the real lesson they will have to learn through the war."

## CAUCASUS.

The same paper on March 21st, says that the Turks cannot leave the Moslems in the the Caucasus to the tender mercies of the Armenians and Bolsheviks. "The Armenians," it says, "though few in numbers, have a strong organization and are capable of causing great misfortunes to our brothers of Russia."

## EAST OF JORDAN.

An Armenian refugee from East of Jordan states, that after the operations against Amman, the Circassians were sent out to gather in Armenians and other Christians who were later sent to Damascus. Informant left the farm where he was working on June 1st, for fear of being caught, and came into our lines.

NOTE.—The Circassians of Amman seem to have interpreted their instructions rather liberally, by cutting the throats of all the Armenians whom they were able to gather in (see Summary No. 5, of May 10th, p. 2).

Since the 1st of June, 1918, 581 more Armenians have been brought in to Hebron from Kerak, where they were being very badly treated by the Mujalli Sheikhs.

## C. TURCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

## GENERAL.

The results of the campaigns in Russia and Roumania have given a great impetus to German influence in Turkey. Certain circles are under the impression that as Germany has conquered so many nations, final victory must be hers.

## ALEPPO.

A native of Aleppo, who left that town at the end of April, states that the arrogance and bad behaviour of German soldiers has led to violent scenes at times with the Syrian population. It has been found necessary to establish a German Military Police force, in view of the increase of German units on this front.

## DAMASCUS.

An officer prisoner of war states, that recently while a Turkish officer was travelling with his luggage in a tram at Damascus, two German officers got in and one of them sat on the luggage. The Turk was annoyed and offered to give up his seat to the German. A quarrel ensued in which other Turks joined, and which ended by the two German officers being shot. As a result one Turk was court-martialled and sentenced to death.



## D.—ARAB MOVEMENT.

## KERAK.

A Refugee who left Kerak on May 29th, reports that the troops which arrived at Kerak from Damascus on May 26th were sent at the request of Sheikh Erfeifan, who telegraphed to Jemal Pasha No. 2 that the Sherif's forces were approaching. Sheikh Erfeifan is said to have received £T. 800 in gold from Jemal, and to be recruiting men to oppose the Sherif.

Some Armenian refugees who arrived at Hebron from Kerak on June 6th, state that the 150 soldiers who were sent by Jemal to help Sheikh Erfeifan turned out to be Arabs and in favour of the Sherif. Sheikh Erfeifan, fearing that they would desert, ordered them to be put under lock and key until further orders.

Informants stated that Sheikh Erfeifan had extorted large sums of money by continual threats and oppression from the Christians at Kerak, who were impatiently awaiting deliverance by the British.

Another Armenian refugee stated at the beginning of June that our air raids have an encouraging effect on those Bedouins who are pro-Sherif, as they look upon them as the prelude of another British advance.

## E.—GENERAL.

## ENEMY PROPAGANDA.

A certain Jemal ed Din is reported to have left Berlin for Constantinople with some Germans, to consult with the Committee of Union and Progress on the subject of sending a secret mission to Afghanistan, provided with funds to win over the tribes.

A Turkish mission including Abdur Rahman Sami, a son of the famous Bedr Khan, is reported to have left Constantinople about the end of April to reconcile the Turkish and Persian Kurds.

A Greek deserter recently captured states that the troops are being told that, in addition to Arabs, there are also Armenians fighting against them on this front, who kill Turkish prisoners.

## DESERTIONS.

A deserter captured about June 1st, says that the number of persons deserting to our lines are very few compared with the numbers deserting into the interior.

It is reported that, South of Nablus and up to the front line, the Turks do not collect deserters, for fear of causing them to come over to the British.

## EVACUATIONS.

It was reported on June 1st, that many Government Departments have been sent North from Nablus but that the Mayor and his staff are still there. Supplies, arms, ammunition etc., have all been evacuated and only guards and police are left in the town.

## GREEKS.

It is stated that the Germans in Turkey are endeavouring to ingratiate themselves with the Greek element of the population, and to prove that they were not responsible for their persecution.

## PALESTINE FRONT.

It was reported on May 24th, that Jemal Pasha was to go to Palestine on June 3rd to inspect the troops.

ECONOMIC.

## A.—PALESTINE FRONT.

## RATIONS.

A deserter who was captured on June 11th, states that rations, though still bad, have improved recently. He says that he himself has had sugar daily for the last 10 days, together with figs, raisins and tinned meat. The sugar, he states, comes from Russia.

A German prisoner of war, captured on June 8th, says that his rations were good. He had a hot meal twice daily, meat every day,  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. of bread, butter, sheep dripping, jam, raisins, coffee and occasionally tea. They used to give the Turks half their leavings. There were Turks in his unit. They received the same rations as the Germans except the white bread. They received also an issue of olives, which the Germans did not get, and had olive oil instead of butter. The pay of German soldiers was £T. 2 (paper) and £T. 1 (gold) per month.

## FORAGE.

A Turkish prisoner of war belonging to the Veterinary Corps gives the following scale of forage issued to animals at the 1st Veterinary Hospital, VIIIth Army, at the beginning of June:—

- 1st day—4 kilos of barley.  
1 sackful of tibbin.
- 2nd day—4 kilos of wheat.  
1 sackful of tibbin.
- 3rd day—4 kilos of durra.  
1 sackful of tibbin.

and so on in rotation.

Salt is issued twice a week with the morning feed.

Horses are also taken out to graze.

The above presumably represents the best possible ration which the army can afford to give its animals.



## KALKILIEH.

An agent reports that many of the poorer inhabitants of Kalkilieh have emigrated to the Hauran in search of food, their crops this year having either been severely damaged or stolen by the Turks.

A refugee states that Turkish soldiers have stolen a quantity of crops round Kalkilieh. Informant gives the following prices in Kalkilieh on June 1st:—

Wheat	...	17½ P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.)
Barley	...	13½ " " "
		(only purchasable from troops)
Durra	...	16 P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.)
Meat (scarce)	54	" " "

The exchange was £T. 1 (paper) = 30 P.T. (silver).

An agent states that nearly all the crops in the district East of Kalkilieh (Azzun, Kafr Thilth, Bidieh) have been reaped. Owners are allowed to keep enough grain for next year's sowing, but much of the remainder is being requisitioned by the Government. Owners are said to be forbidden to sell to the Germans.

## TUL KERAM.

Aircraft observed on June 5th that all crops had been reaped between Anebta and Tul Keram.

## HARVEST.

It is reported that the Valis of Beirut, Damascus and Aleppo, with the Mutessarif of Latakia, arrived at Nablus about May 18th and sanctioned the requisition of 60% of this year's cereal harvest.

In a letter dated May 24th from an informant at Nablus, it is stated that 63% of the year's produce has been requisitioned by the Government and that the suffering population has no one to listen to their grievances.

## B.—NORTHERN SYRIA.

## DAMASCUS.

An intelligent prisoner of war says, that on two occasions about five months ago, Arab caravans brought a quantity of loaf sugar to Damascus. On the first occasion they sold their goods direct to the merchants, but on the second they were seized by the Military Authorities. In consequence of the arrival of these stores, the price of sugar at Damascus fell from 100 P.T. (silver) to 50 P.T. (silver) per oke (2½ lbs), but after a few days rose again to its former rate.

NOTE:—This appears to refer to the caravans which were reported to have arrived at Damascus from Koweit at the beginning of the year.

It is reported that a small factory now exists at Damascus for the production of castor oil, to be used as lubricating oil for the Hejaz Railway and also for Aeroplane engines. Castor beans in commercial quantities used to be grown in the Plain of Esdraelon 40 to 50 years ago. When a shortage of lubricating oil began to be felt on the Hejaz Railway early in 1915, the Administration began to grow Castor beans experimentally along the railway near the Shatta and Beisan stations. The first experiments were a failure owing to bad agricultural methods, but they were renewed more successfully in 1916 and extended to the Aleppo region. In 1917, a crop of about 20,000 kilograms was obtained, which should have yielded 8 to 9,000 kilograms of oil, but the oil presses established in Damascus were somewhat primitive and only half of the expected yield was obtained. This had to be used for lubricating oil on the German locomotives which arrived in August 1917. These work with super-heated steam (350 degrees C), and olive and sesame oil being the only available oils and quite unfit for such high temperatures, castor oil was the only alternative.

## C.—CONSTANTINOPLE.

From a reliable source, information has been received that a great fire has taken place at Constantinople, destroying the Eastern part of the Sultan Selim quarter of Stamboul, with the exception of the Fatih Mosque. The Austrian Ambassador in the name of his Government has expressed his sorrow at this terrible fire.

A deserter who left Constantinople about May 15th gives the following current prices for that date in the capital:—

Bread	...	65 P.T. (paper) per oke (2½ lbs.)
Maize flour	...	32 " " "
Bulgur	...	35 " " "
Raisins	...	70 " " "
Dried figs	...	80 " " "

An Armenian prisoner of war, captured on May 1st, states that the bread ration in Constantinople was about 250 grammes of bread per day, and 250 to 500 grammes of meat per week.

The "Ottoman Lloyd" of April 7th complains of the rise in the price of sugar which was retailed on April 2nd at 155 P.T. per oke, on April 3rd at 180 P.T. per oke, on April 5th at 200 P.T. per oke and on April 11th at 210 P.T. per oke. The "Lloyd Ottoman" accuses the profiteers, as it says there is an ample stock, and that after the Ukraine peace the price fell to P.T. 110 per oke. "Tasvir-i-Efkiair" however denies that profiteering in sugar is possible, as the Government alone can import it from Germany and Austria and also controls the distribution.

(NOTE:—In this case it looks as if any profiteering was done by the members of the Government themselves).



With regard to the price of meat, the Turkish press in March and April complains very bitterly, and attributes the exorbitant rise to profiteers, as there should be plenty of animals from Roumania and Anatolia. The "Lloyd Ottoman" (March 21st) says, that prices vary in Constantinople in different quarters of the town from P.T. 60 to P.T. 200 per oke, on a basis of average quality, which shows what an excessive profit some people must make. There is also an outcry over the slaughter of young lambs under the regulation weight.

There is abundant evidence of the shortage of wood at Constantinople. The "Lloyd Ottoman" (April 8th) criticises the cutting down of trees in the Sultanieh Park at Beicos. The same paper (March 23rd) protests against the desecration of the cemeteries, where the cypress trees are rapidly disappearing. Again on April 4th, the "Lloyd Ottoman" states that in certain quarters of the town old houses are being demolished for the sake of the timber, which is a great source of profit to proprietors, and affords an opportunity to the population of indulging in what the newspaper calls "a new form of poaching."

#### D.—GENERAL.

A widespread movement has arisen in Turkey for the nationalization of commerce and industry. The newly founded paper "Zeman," the organ of Shukri Bey's opposition party, has instituted attacks on such companies as the "Banque Ottomans," "Compagnie des Chemins de Fer Ottomans," "Régie des Tabacs Ottomans," which are all working in Turkey for the benefit of foreign capitalists.

The "Tanin" of April 13th, has an article on the economic education of Turkey, in which it applauds the growth of the commercial spirit. If England is beaten in the war, it is because she lacks military education. Turkey must not throw away the advantages gained in the field by want of economic education.

It is stated that the Minister of Finance wishes to make the Ottoman National Bank of Credit a State Bank.

A number of new Turkish Joint Stock Companies have recently been formed. Among the most important are the "National Insurance Company of Turkey," "The Wine Growers Bank of Magnesia," "The Banque de Commerce et de Crédit Général," the "Company for Home Spinning," the "National Company for the Improvement and Progress of Turkish Agriculture" and the "Company for Metallurgical Industry and Manufacture of Machinery." The manufacturing companies are severely handicapped owing to the impossibility of obtaining the necessary building material and machinery during the war.

The "Bulgarische Handelszeitung" of April 24th points out that, although the Turkish chemical industry is poor, the oil and soap industries could be very advantageously developed and brought up to date.

A Greek Smyrna newspaper, the "Amalthia" says that the Red Crescent is requisitioning all the soap in Smyrna.

(Note:—Aivalik where the best Turkish soap is made is near Smyrna).

Four foreign engineers are surveying the mines at Heraklea (Eregli) and Eski Shehr.

The "Lloyd Ottoman" of April 10th states that researches are being made for coal, lignite, graphite, naphtha, petroleum and pitch in the Sanjak of Magnesia.

In the sanjak of Smyrna, a German or Austrian Firm (Goldberg & Co.) have obtained a concession for a mine of mercury and arsenical copper ore.

A mine of arsenical antimony has been discovered in the Sanjak of Karasi (Balikesir).

The 6% Royalty on mineral products has been re-established. (Hilal—April 12th).

It is reported that Turkish bees-wax is being exported to Germany to replace Mozambique, Madagascar and other wax previously obtained through London. There is no indication of shortage in this commodity and the quality is fairly good, although softer than the best African wax.

The Smyrna newspaper "La Réforme" of March 23rd states that the Ministry of Agriculture has purchased 2,500 tons of maize from Roumania, for distribution as seed to farmers.

The S. S. "Mourad Bey" arrived at Constantinople from Roumania on March 31st, with a cargo of petroleum.

The "Vakit" says that an important consignment of beans from Roumania reached Constantinople on March 19th.

The same paper (April 10th), with reference to the Food Commission sitting at Berlin, quotes Javid Bey as having said that, if the Government had allowed the free importation of food stuffs from the Ukraine, it would have been the merchants and not the people who would have profited. Big Companies have been formed in Germany and Austria-Hungary for the purchase and importation of foodstuffs from the Ukraine. Turkey has not followed this example owing to the cost of transport. Turkey will receive her share from these companies, who will deliver the goods to Turkish representatives at Odessa or other Black Sea ports. When the foodstuffs arrive, they will be distributed by the Government. Javid ends by saying that he does not know whether Turkey's share will be sufficient for her needs, but states that these were the best terms obtainable.

(NOTE:—This looks as if Turkey would have to be satisfied with German leavings).

The cotton production of Turkey is reported to amount to 150,000 bales per annum. The home manufactories use only one third of this. All the rest is exported. Efforts are being made to intensify the cultivation of cotton in the Vilayet of Adana, and to extend it to the Vilayet of Aidin.

With reference to the Advisory Food Control Commission, whose appointment was reported in the Summary of June 8th, the "Tanin" of April 14th states that the Government was against this measure, but was obliged to give way to the wishes of Parliament.



There may be legal objection to its formation, but its supporters look upon it as an excellent means of obtaining practical results. Commenting on the fact that most of the members of the Commission appointed by the Government appear to be precisely the people who were hostile to its formation, the newspaper says, that doubtless the Government has chosen the men with the most experience, regardless of their opinions.

It appears to be established that, in theory at least, paper money is accepted by the Government at face value for the payment of taxes. In practice, however, much depends on the individual official. Dishonest finance officials have in many cases forced tax payers to pay in coin, which they kept themselves and accounted for as though the payment had been made in paper. In consequence they made an enormous profit. When Rushan Bey was dismissed from his post of O.C. Lines of Communication at Jerusalem by Jemal Pasha for similar malpractices, his house was searched, and £T.40,000 in gold was found there. As he was a prominent member of the Committee of Union and Progress, the only punishment he received was transfer to Aleppo.

#### AFIUN KARAHISSAR. (BRUSA VILAYET.)

A letter found on a prisoner, dated May 13th, gives the following prices as being current at Afiun Karahissar (Asia Minor):—

Wheat ...	...	18½ P.T. (paper) per oke (2½ lbs).
Barley ...	...	12 " " "
Poppy Seed Oil ...	...	150 " " "
Cheese ...	...	100 " " "
Onions ...	...	20 " " "
Leeks ...	...	8 " " "

The letter also says that, owing to abundant spring rains, the harvest prospects in that district, which is very important agriculturally, were excellent. The vineyards, in spite of some signs of disease, promised well on the whole.

#### FOKIA (AIDIN).

A prisoner captured on April 9th, gives the following prices for the Fokia district (North of Smyrna):—

Bread ...	...	8-9 P.T. (paper) per oke (2½ lbs.).
Rice ...	...	Unobtainable.
Sugar ...	...	Had been unobtainable, but was now coming in again at high prices.
Coffee ...	...	1½ P.T. (paper) per cup.
Eggs ...	...	2½ " each.
Yoghurt ...	...	6-10 P.T. (paper) per oke.
Meat ...	...	40 " " "
Cheese ...	...	15-20 " " "
Olive Oil ...	...	60 " " "
Vegetables ...	...	Cheap and plentiful.
Native Shoes ...	...	£T. 2 (paper) per pair.

### FINANCIAL.

It is reported from Turkish sources that subscriptions to the Turkish Internal Loan continue to be numerous. A further £T. 110,000 have been collected in the capital, and large amounts are being subscribed in Sokia (Vilayet of Aidin). The village of Deyirmenjik subscribed £T. 100,000.

NOTE.—A British officer who knows the Sokia Caza very well, says that, even in the prosperous pre-war days, it would have been impossible to obtain large subscriptions to a Turkish loan without great pressure on the well-to-do Greek inhabitants. Deyirmenjik is a village of a few hundred inhabitants, and the idea of their subscribing £T. 100,000 is simply ridiculous.

The utmost efforts are being made to popularize the Internal Loan. Subscribers are to be given their first six month's interest at 5 % at the same time as they pay their subscription. All interest will be paid in gold, which Germany is said to have undertaken to supply. Bonds will be redeemed twice yearly, on October 20th and April 20th, of each year. The bonds to be redeemed will be drawn by lot and payment for them will be made in gold. All transactions connected with the Loan will be free of tax, stamp duty, or other Government charges. The Loan is guaranteed by the excess revenue of the Ottoman Public Debt and the receipts of the Aghnam or sheep tax.

(NOTE.—The Aghnam has hitherto been one of the few taxes not mortgaged in some way or other.) The service of the Loan will be in the hands of the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

In spite of these inducements, the Ottoman Government does not seem over confident of obtaining the necessary sum from the interior alone. An attempt will be made to put the Loan on the Swiss market. Ottomans abroad are invited to subscribe, and even enemy subjects will be able to participate, owing to the suppression of the formalities required by the Law of January 24th, 1331 (1915).

The "Hilal" (April 12th) says that the Mint is coining £T. 30,000-40,000 in gold daily for the payment of interest on the Loan.

It is reported that by these measures Javid Bey hopes to reduce the premium on gold in the country, or in other words to raise the value of Turkish notes.



SANITARY.

## A.—PALESTINE FRONT.

## ES SALT.

Documents captured in the hospital at Es Salt, on April 1st, indicate that the Turks experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining the necessary foodstuffs, drugs, and stores.

The Senior Medical Officer, 20th Division, writes that there were practically no white sheets for the beds, and urgently demands anti-tetanus serum, emetin, microscopic dye, and equipment such as buckets, towels, cotton and hydrophile, gauze, oil cloths, catgut, etc.

He states that dysentery germs were present in large numbers in the water at Jericho, and in a lesser degree at Es Salt.

"To provide our dysentery patients with rice pudding (without sugar)" he writes: "we have only been able to purchase 6 kilos at 20 P.T. per kilo. Can you imagine our straits and sufferings? There is absolutely no sugar here. Instead of sugar we are buying a substitute at 6 P.T. per kilo. You can conclude from the above how much work we can do. We therefore beg you to send us a sufficient supply of rice, sugar, tea, and more particularly soap."

## B.—CONSTANTINOPLE.

It is reported that there are 30 or 40 cases of "spotted fever" daily at Constantinople.

## ATTACHMENT.

Turkish Civil Administration, with List and Sketch Map.

G.S.P.I.,

G.H.Q.,

E.E.F.



**SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL.**

**ATTACHMENT TO POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY,**

**No. 8, 22nd June, 1918.**

**TURKISH CIVIL ADMINISTRATION.**

In the course of the last hundred years, the internal administration of Turkey has evolved from extreme decentralization based on the feudal system, to a highly centralized form, largely copied like other modern Turkish institutions from the French model.

The early Ottoman Sultans had parcelled out their conquests to successful soldiers, who held their fiefs, known as "Timars" and "Ziamets," subject to the payment of tithe and the production when required, of a contingent of irregular cavalry and infantry, whom they armed, equipped, and led. The regular army consisted of Janissaries, recruited from the Christian races of the Empire, the pick of whose children were forcibly converted to Islam, and trained to arms from an early age as professional soldiers under rigorous discipline. The Empire was divided into large provinces, each a kingdom or principality in itself, under a Pasha, who, so long as he contributed a sufficient share of revenue to the Imperial Treasury, and the required contingents to the Imperial Army and Navy, was allowed to govern much as he pleased, and in some cases to pass on the succession of his government to his heir.

The House of Osman gradually ceased to produce Sultans of the old conquering type. The Janissary Army, no longer recruited from the subject Christian races, but mainly from the sons of former Janissaries, lost their rigid discipline and fighting qualities, and degenerated into a Pretorian Guard, which made and unmade Sultans at will, but proved more and more incapable of withstanding European armies in the field. The authority of Constantinople, especially over the more distant provinces, was relaxed, and the process of decay, beginning towards the end of the Seventeenth Century, continued almost without intermission until the beginning of the Nineteenth. By that time, of the African possessions of Turkey, Algeria had ceased to acknowledge her suzerainty, and Tunis owned a purely nominal allegiance, while Tripoli and Egypt were practically independent, though their rulers still received their investiture from the Sultan. On the European side, Serbia was in open revolt which ended in her recognition as a vassal state, and both in Europe and Asia, cases were frequent in which provincial governors, on one pretext or another, refused obedience to the Central Government; while in the more distant provinces local chiefs, known as "Deré Beys," or Lords of the Valleys, ruled over large districts with little or no interference from Constantinople.

At length a strong Sultan appeared, in the person of Sultan Mahmud, who resolved to put a stop to the disintegration of the Empire and establish his direct authority over its provinces. When he came to the throne in 1808, Turkey was at the lowest ebb, and during the early years of his reign he was greatly hampered by unsuccessful foreign wars with Russia, by the Greek War of Independence, and by the mutinous spirit of his Janissary Army. In spite of these difficulties, he contrived to crush some of his rebellious Pashas, notably Ali Pasha of Janina in 1822, and also to create the nucleus of a regular army, trained by European instructors, with which he was able ultimately to free himself from the tyranny of the Janissaries by their complete extermination in 1826. He then proceeded to reduce the other rebellious Pashas and Deré Beys by a series of punitive expeditions under capable leaders of his own selection. These operations, however, were much delayed by the long war with Mohammed Ali of Egypt, in which the Turkish armies were constantly defeated, and Syria was occupied for several years by Mohammed Ali's son, Ibrahim Pasha. But Mahmud never ceased his efforts to restore the power of the Sultanate. Great Britain and France intervened and compelled the Egyptians to withdraw from Syria, and not long after Mahmud's death in 1839, his son Abdul Medjid found himself in possession of an Empire, most of the provinces of which had already been brought back under the direct control of Constantinople, while the others were reduced to obedience during the early years of his reign.

Owing to the protection afforded to Turkey by Great Britain and France against the encroachments of Mohammed Ali, and later against Russian aggression at the time of the Crimean War, Abdul Medjid, a weak but well-intentioned Sultan, fell very much under the influence of the two great Western Powers, and readily accepted suggestions from them for the reform of Turkish Administration, and the grant to his Christian subjects of rights which had hitherto been denied them. The new liberal institutions were announced with great pomp in Imperial Rescripts, and during the reigns of Abdul Medjid and Abdul Aziz there is no doubt that the lot of the non-Moslem inhabitants of Turkey was very much alleviated. But as the autocratic powers of the Sultan remained unimpaired, it only required the accession of a true oriental tyrant like Abdul Hamid to make the position of the subject races as unenviable as it had ever been.

The Administrative and Judicial changes introduced during this period were modelled almost entirely upon French institutions, as Great Britain furnished no symmetrical system of internal administration or Code of Laws for Turkish imitation. Thus Turkey found herself endowed with the "Code Napoléon," and a judicial organization slavishly copied from the French, while the old Turkish provinces were split up into administrative divisions depending on the Ministry of the Interior, and corresponding to the Departments, Arrondissements and Communes of modern France.



These paper reforms did not contribute much to the better government of Turkey, and it soon became apparent that they were but ill-adapted to the needs of a primitive Moslem country, possessing a very limited educated class capable of providing the necessary administrative and judicial staff. But they certainly had the effect of greatly strengthening the hands of the Central Government, and when, under Abdul Hamid, the Sultan, assisted by his Palace Camarilla and an elaborate Secret Service organization, gradually assumed direct control of the provinces, he had in his hands a highly centralized and absolutely subservient instrument for the carrying out of his policies. This instrument has now been taken possession of by the Committee of Union and Progress, the present President of which, Talaat Pasha, is at the same time Grand Vizier and Minister of the Interior. It may be briefly described as follows:—

Each of the old provinces, such as Syria, with its capital at Damascus, Irak with its capital at Bagdad, and Kurdistan with its capital at Erzerum, was, as stated above, split up into several smaller provinces under the name of Vilayets—corresponding to the French Departments. These are governed by a Vali, the equivalent of the French Prefect, appointed by Imperial Iradé, and directly responsible, in theory at least, to the Minister of the Interior. Under him are representatives of all the Departments of State, with their staffs, and he is assisted by an Administrative Council consisting of the heads of the most important Government Departments and the chiefs of the different religious communities recognized by the State. Shortly before the outbreak of war, Vilayet Councils were also created by a new Law, which granted a certain measure of local self Government to the provinces, and provided for Vilayet Budgets, a proportion of certain local revenues being earmarked for local expenditure on education, public works, sanitation, etc. But it is believed that effect has not yet been given to this Law, owing to the state of war. This measure was adopted in imitation of the French institution of “Conseils Généraux” in the Departments.

The Vilayets in their turn are subdivided into from two to five Sanjaks, each governed by a Mutessarif, assisted by representatives of the different Departments and by an Administrative Council. The Mutessarif is under the direct orders of the Vali of the Vilayet, and the Sanjak officials are under the heads of their respective Departments in the Vilayet.

There are also a number of Sanjaks which do not depend on any Vilayet, and are known as Mustakil or Independent. The Governors of these Sanjaks are in direct correspondence with the Ministry of the Interior, and are practically on the same footing as Valis, except in respect to rank and pay.

The Sanjaks are subdivided into Cazas, each governed by a Kaimakam, with a small official staff and Administrative Council, and the Cazas again are composed of two or more Nahiés, each of which should be in charge of a Mudir, who may have two or three clerks and a few policemen to carry out his orders. But it has not been found possible to extend the Nahié system to some of the outlying Vilayets, for want of the necessary personnel.

The higher branches of the Administrative Service are supposed to be recruited from the graduates of the Mulkié School at Constantinople, where selected candidates who have completed their secondary education go through a four years' course of Law and Political and Social Sciences. This Institution had at one period a good teaching staff, including several capable French Professors, and one meets among Turkish Governors now approaching middle age, a certain number of men who appear to have really benefitted by the training which it gave them. But in the later years of Abdul Hamid's reign, the standard of the School fell off sadly, and its recent graduates have proved themselves but ill prepared for an Administrative career. In practice, a very large proportion of Civil governors have received no official training whatever, but owe their appointment to rank favouritism, membership of the Committee of Union and Progress being now regarded as almost the only qualification for office.

Attached is a list and sketch map, showing the present Administrative Divisions of the Turkish Empire.

G.S.P.I.,  
G.H.Q.,  
E.E.F.



# ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE.

VILAYETS.	SANJAKS.		VILAYETS.	SANJAKS.
CONSTANTI- NOBLE.	Bey Oghlu (Pera). Iskudar (Scutari).		TREBIZOND.	Trebizond. Gumushaneh. Lazistan (Rizeh).
ADRIANOPLE.	Adrianople. Kirk Kilisse. Tekfur Dag (Rodosto).			Janik (Samsoun) (independent).
	Chatalja (independ- ent).		SIVAS.	Sivas. Amasia. Tokat. Karahissar Sharki.
	Gallipoli (independ- ent).		ERZERUM.	Erzerum. Erzinjan. Bayazid.
	Kala Sultanieh (Chanak) (inde- pendent).		MAMURET EL AZIZ (Mesré).	Kharput (Mesré). Dersim (Khosat). Malatia.
	Ismid (independ- ent).		BITLIS.	Bitlis. Mush. Sert. Genj (Cheveli).
KHODAVENDI- KIAR (Brussa).	Ertoghrul (Brussa). Kutahiyah. Afiun Karahissar.		VAN.	Van. Hekkiari (Bashkalé).
AIDIN.	Aidin. Smyrna. Sarukhan (Magne- sia). Menteshé (Mughla). Denizli.		DIARBEKIR.	Diarbekir. Mardin. Arghana. Severek.
KONIA.	Konia. Nigde. Hamid Abad (Isparta). Burdur. Tekke (Adalia).		MOSUL.	Mosul. Kerkuk. Suleimaniyeh.
ADANA.	Adana. Kozan (Sis). Jebel Bereket (Jar- pus). Mersina. Itch Eil (Selefké).		BAGHDAD.	Baghdad. Divanieh. Kerbela.
ANGORA.	Angora. Kaiserieh. Yosgat. Kirshehr. Chorum.		BASRA.	Basra. Muntefik. Nejd. 'Aamara.
KASTAMOUNI.	Kastamouni. Changri. Sinop.			Zor (independent).
	Bolu (independent).			Urfa (independent).
			HEJAZ.	Jeddah. Mecca.
				Medina (independ- ent).
				'Asir (independent).
			YEMEN.	Hodeida. Yemen.



VILAY-ETS.	SANJAKS.	KAZAS.	VILAY-ETS.	SANJAKS.	KAZAS.
ALEPPO	MARASH.	Aintab. Killis. El Bab. Aleppo.		JERUSALEM (independent.)	Jerusalem. Jaffa. Hebron. Gaza. Beersheba.
	AINTAB.	Jebel Saman. Harim. Beilan.			
	ALEPPO.	Alexandretta. Antioch. Idlib. Jisr el Soghur. Ma'arit el Na'aman.		HAMA.	Hama. Hamidiyeh. Selemla. Homs. Baalbek. Nebk. Zebdani. Damascus. Dumer. Rasheya. Hasbeya. Wadi el Ajem.
BEIRUT	LATAKIYA.	Latakiya. Babanna. Jebeli. Baniyas.	DAMASCUS	DAMASCUS.	Kuneitra. Sheikh Miskin. Busr el Hariri. Jebel Druz. Deraa. Jebel Ajlun.
	TRIPOLI.	Safita. Kalaat El Husn. Akkar.		HAURAN.	Es Salt. Kerak. Et Tafle. Ma'an.
	BEIRUT.	Saida. Sur. Nerj Ajun.			
	ACRE.	Acre. Safed. Tiberias. Nazareth. Haifa.		KERAK.	
	NABLUS.	Selfit. Jenin. Nablus. Tul Keram.			
	LEBANON (independent).	Kourna. Batrun. Kesraun. Metem. Shuf. Jezzin.			

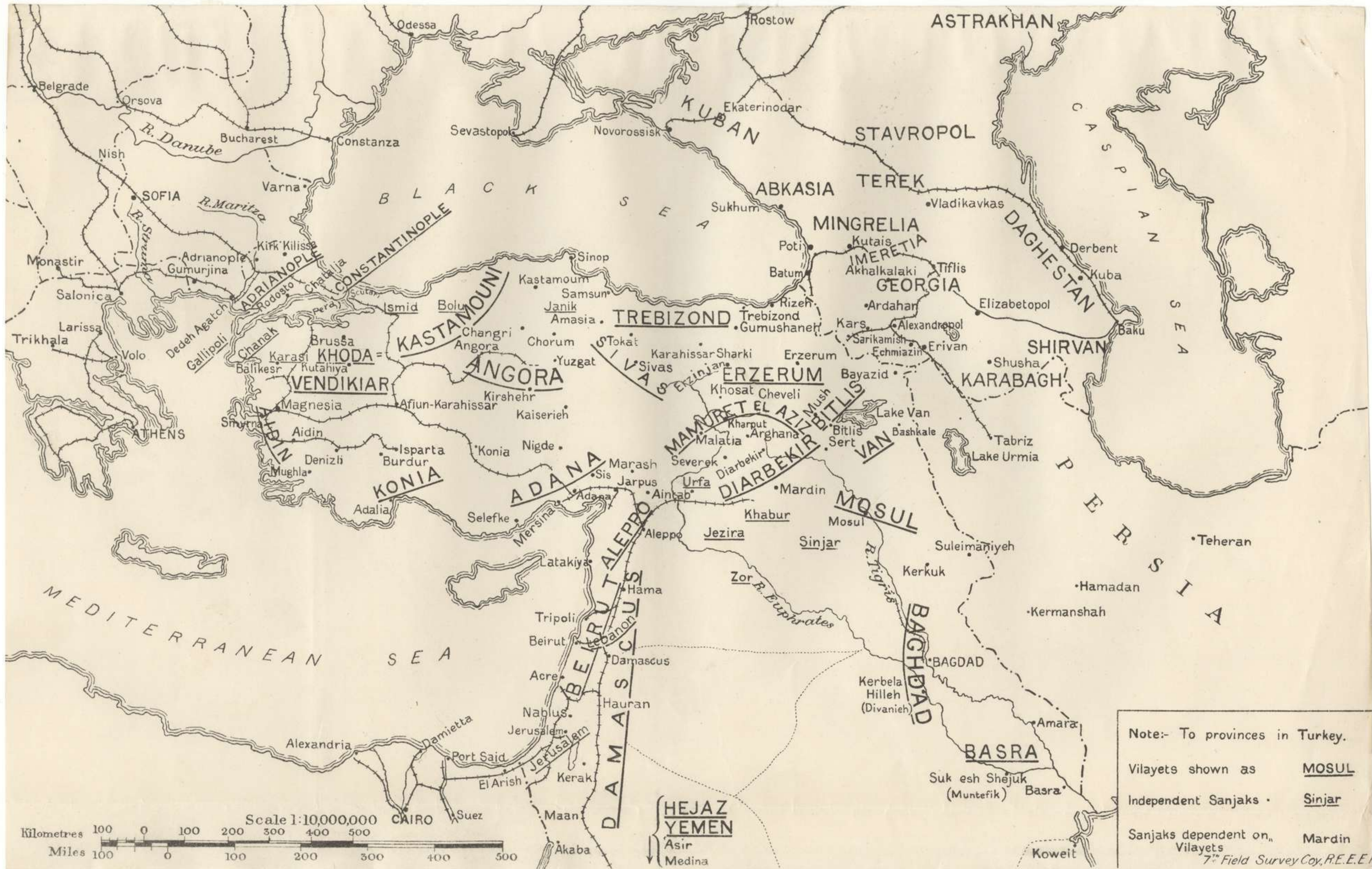
**NOTE.**

1. In January, 1918, the Turkish Chamber passed a bill for the formation of three new independent Sanjaks in Mesopotamia, namely: Sinjar, Khabur, Jezireh. This law will come into force in March, 1919.

2. The remnants of the Vilayet of the Archipelago have been merged into the Sanjak of Kala Sultanieh.

3. For the Kazas of the Syrian provinces, reference should be made to the Map issued with Summary No. 5, of May 10th, 1918.







**SECRET.**

No. 9.

**POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**

**ENEMY TERRITORY.**

30th June, 1918.

**POLITICAL.**

**A.—HOME AND FOREIGN POLITICS.**

**THE CAUCASUS.**

According to a Moscow message, the Russian newspaper, "Novaya Zhizn," of May 21st, announces that the peace negotiations between Turkey and the Trans-Caucasian Government, at present proceeding at Batum, will shortly be broken off, in consequence of the uncompromising attitude which Turkey, at the instigation of Germany, is adopting with regard to her claims. The Trans-Caucasian Government, on its side, is in no way disposed to make concessions.

Whereas the Central Powers are said to favour an independent Trans-Caucasian State in close touch with Turkey, the Russian Government, fearing the increase of Turco-German influence in that part of the world, has telegraphed to the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, suggesting that a Russian plenipotentiary should take part in the peace negotiations. The Russian Government denies recognition to the Trans-Caucasian Government, whose authority, it states, is not admitted by a large part of the country, and it claims that an important section of the local population has protested against separation from Russia. (Stockholm message, May 17th, and Kölnische Zeitung, May 20th).

On May 28th, a message from the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs protests against the attitude of the German Government. "Baron von Kühlmann (German Minister for Foreign Affairs)," it says, "accuses us of threatening to invade Trans-Caucasia, where the local Government is oppressing a country which is faithful to us. Moreover, the Turkish Army is advancing on Baku. When we speak of an armistice at all points, we include also the Turkish front. It is necessary to secure the cessation of this Turkish advance."

*NOTE.*—From the above it would appear that Russia now looks on Trans-Caucasia as a part of Russian Territory, and therefore subject to the provisions of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. This is hardly consistent with the attitude adopted by Russia at the Peace Conference, when she asserted the right of the Caucasus to guide its own destinies and protested against the seizure of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan by Turkey. Fear of enemy control of the oil wells at Baku is probably at the bottom of this move. The people with Russian sympathies are most likely the Bolsheviks of Baku and Daghestan, which do not form part of the Trans-Caucasian Republic. Tiflis and Kutais are also mentioned as containing many pro-Russians, but information points to the fact that Bolshevism is practically non-existent there.

Turkish ambitions in the Caucasus are giving rise to considerable protest, both in Russia and in Germany. The "Frankfurter Zeitung" quotes Russian newspapers to show that, whereas the Bolsheviks formerly denied any wish to prevent the secession from Russia of territories peopled by foreign races, recent events in the Caucasus, the German occupation of the Crimea, and the Revolution in the Ukraine, had so affected Russian opinion that propaganda is now on foot for the reconstitution of United Russia.

The German press is very plain spoken against Turkish activities in the Caucasus. The "Kölnische Volkszeitung" points out that Turkish efforts to gain influence by way of Tiflis in the direction of Baku have displeased the Russian Government, and that everything indicates that the Georgian and Armenian populations have no desire for union with Turkey. The paper then remarks that the Turks would do better to seek expansion in other directions, and might particularly concern themselves with the British, who are still at Baghdad. Count Reventlow writes to the "Deutsche Tageszeitung" commenting on certain statements made by the Turkish Minister at Berne, to the effect that the Caucasus question at present formed the central point of Turkey's interest, that Turkey desired the complete independence of all the Caucasian peoples, and the close union of Trans-Caucasia with the Ottoman Empire.

*NOTE.*—The last two sentences are obviously contradictory.

Count Reventlow says that it looks as if Turkey had directed comparatively strong forces against the Caucasus, that operations had extended far beyond the frontiers of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan, and that Turkey aims, for instance, at taking Tiflis. The writer points out that such a policy must entirely shift the centre of gravity of the Turkish Empire from the South to the North, and that it would be to Turkey's own interest if she concentrated her strength on the restoration of her territorial integrity. The "Vossische Zeitung," on June 3rd, expresses the opinion that Turkey's liberal interpretation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty is strengthening the influence of England, and her desire to seek contact again with a strong Russia. Germany ought, therefore, to exert friendly pressure on Turkey, especially as the Turks know that Germany is the only real guarantor of a Turkish Constantinople. The same paper, quoted in the "Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung," of June 5th, announces that Herr von Kardoff, hitherto German representative in Finland, has left for the Caucasus, via Constantinople, accompanied by General von Kress and Jemal Pasha, in order to acquaint himself personally with the situation created by the Turkish advance.



## TRIPOLI.

It is reported from a reliable Italian source that Prince Osman Fuad, a grandson of Sultan Murad, of Turkey, arrived by submarine, at Syrta, in Tripoli, about May 13th. Prince Osman Fuad was born in 1895, was A.D.C. to the Sultan and has served in the Prussian Guards.

## ARMENIANS.

The Constantinople newspaper "Stamboul," of May 3rd, publishes an interview with Hussein Jahid Bey, Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies. Talking about the Armenians he says that, in spite of what Turkey has endured owing to their rebellious spirit, she is ready to open her arms to them if they repent. "Cast off by Russia," he says, "without hope of assistance from England, the Armenians must seize this auspicious moment to draw near once more to their tender mother."

## GREEKS.

A Greek Prisoner of War, interrogated at Mudros, states with reference to the situation of the Greek population on the Western Coast of Asia Minor that he knows of no official deportations by the Turks in these districts. The Christian population has, however, diminished owing to military service, deaths from starvation, and migration. The Greek School at Vurla used to have 1,000 pupils, last year there were only 400, and this year the number had dropped to 250. The larger communities were sufficiently powerful to look after themselves, and had not been seriously disturbed. Among the smaller communities, Moslem terrorism had caused a large number of Christians to take refuge in the islands. The Government may have tacitly supported the Moslem persecution. The Turks recognise the importance of the Greek element in the Ottoman Empire, and will not deal with the Greeks as they have done with the Armenians. They would, however, no doubt be pleased to see the number diminishing to make room for Moslem immigrants from Bosnia, Syria, etc. The Vali of Aidin, Rahmi Bey, has not persecuted the subject population.

## JEWS.

The Jewish Korrespondenz Bureau at Amsterdam states that it has been informed from authentic German sources, that the German Government has been seriously considering a plan to form a Jewish Legion to fight in Palestine. The scheme was conceived to counter-balance the strong movement in Entente countries, and particularly in the United States, to form a Jewish Legion to fight for the Allies. It has fallen through, owing to the opposition of the Turkish Government.

## BRITISH PROPAGANDA.

A Deserter, captured about June 17th East of Jordan, states that the troops have picked up pamphlets dropped from our aeroplanes. The contents were discussed among the men, who were favourably impressed, and agreed with our remarks regarding the attitude of Germany towards the Turks.

A Prisoner of War captured on June 19th states that, although troops have strict injunctions to give all pamphlets dropped by our aeroplanes to their officers, the contents nevertheless become known to the troops. It is believed that our propaganda is beginning to have the desired effect upon the enemy.

Two Greek Deserters and a Prisoner recently captured near the North end of the Dead Sea, state that the troops are now beginning to disbelieve stories told to them by their officers, that the British kill their prisoners. The contents of pamphlets dropped from our aeroplanes become known to the troops. Desertion is now freely discussed, even in the presence of Sergeants.

## EVACUATIONS.

Deportees from Beirut under 15 or over 60 years of age, who were exiled to Angora at the beginning of the War, have been pardoned. Two of them, including Esper Shukair, dragoman of the British Consulate-General, have already returned.

B.—TURCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.  
ON PALESTINE FRONT.

A prisoner of war, captured about June 15th, said that the Germans told the Turks they had already taken Paris. If the British advanced the Turks should not risk heavy losses by a strenuous resistance, but should retire on Damascus. The Germans would soon deal with the British in Palestine. He had several times heard that Jerusalem had been recaptured. He was also told that the Sherif had joined the Turks.

## PROPAGANDA AT SMYRNA.

It is reported that German propaganda is so good at Smyrna that even the English are absorbing German ideas. The dragomans of the Entente Consulates have been bought, and the Greeks are also being won over. The Germans distribute vernacular newspapers full of their own victories. They have even imported a German theatrical company to extend German influence.

## IN GERMANY.

The Turco-German Committee of Friendship is said to comprise 5,000 members. It has started the publication of a bulletin in Berlin. 500,000 marks have been devoted to the benefit of Ottoman students in Germany. ("Hilal," April 14th).

A Bulgarian newspaper, under the heading of "German Coolness towards Turkey," quotes largely from a recent number of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung," dealing with anti-Turkish actions and sentiments in Germany.



The "Augsburger Post Zeitung," of April 18th, publishes a remarkable anti-Turkish article presenting Turkey in its historical rôle of enemy to Christianity, and discussing the dangers of the present German policy.

After stating that the proverb "Where the Turks go, the grass ceases to grow," has lost none of its meaning, and is applicable not only to Turkey, but to all Islamic States where culture is rigid and is no longer capable of development unless all the peoples of Islam adopt Christianity, the article continues: "Germany to-day is trying to galvanize Islam into new life, and even to unite the whole world of Islam in order to benefit militarily and economically later on. In this fight for its existence Islam as such has failed. The "Holy War," from which such wonders were expected, has not justified the hopes placed in it. To-day, as before, Moslems are still fighting on the side of the Entente. Financially, Turkey is incapable of bearing the burdens of war. She has not been able to float a war loan. How will it be with the economic benefits which Germany has promised herself from the revival of Turkey? Those intimate with Turkish conditions await this revival and economic impetus very pessimistically."

With regard to Germany's economic relations with Turkey, the opinion of an expert is quoted, who considers that "German relations with Turkey are of a political rather than an economic nature. On this very account, an artificial economic interest has been created by heavy investments of capital—a risky policy, because it disregards economic laws and creates artificial obligations of a purely speculative character, which, for this very reason, carry with them a constant liability to crises, and a menace to other legitimate economic interests."

The article then goes on to say that, owing to the poverty of the population, Turkey can only be of small importance as a buyer of foreign industrial products. The balance of trade is always against her. The only hope is for Turkey to maintain her character as an agricultural State. Even then she cannot be counted on as an exporter of raw materials; her forests are being destroyed, agricultural methods are still primitive, communications are undeveloped, and the population is not large enough to exploit all the cultivable areas.

**NOTE.**—If the massacre and deportation of Armenians and Greeks continues, there is likely to be in future an even greater dearth of labour, and, what is more important, of brains to direct it.

Yet, instead of remedying those evils, Turkey has suddenly turned her attention to manufactures, completely ignoring all economic laws, and attempting to create a factitious industrialism, in pursuit of the one idea of being no longer dependent on foreign countries, which is clearly ridiculous as all instruction must come from foreigners.

The article ends up by saying that the German Alliance is by no means so popular in Turkey as is generally believed. It is not to be supposed that Germany will enjoy an economic monopoly after the war. The Turks will buy wherever they get goods cheapest. The French and British still command great sympathies, and their commerce will quickly resume its position on the markets of Constantinople. The Italians, with their cheap goods, will do even more.

No illusions should therefore be indulged in as to Germany's future prospects in Turkey. We are indeed convinced that Turkey, in spite of an apparently increasing prosperity, is on the down grade. As a result of all these observations, many experts are of opinion that the dissolution of Turkey cannot be arrested, because the Turkish Empire is rotten from the core outwards, and Islam contains no regenerative force which might lead one to expect an inward recovery.

#### TURCO-GERMAN CONVENTIONS.

A Berlin periodical which deals principally with Near Eastern subjects, states that the abolition of the Capitulations in Turkey and the conclusion of reciprocal legal and commercial treaties between Germany, Austria and Turkey, have necessitated considerable legal and administrative reforms. One of the causes for the hesitation abroad to give up the Capitulations was to be found in the deplorable state of prison affairs. Wherever possible, the Turkish Government has undertaken a reorganization of prisons on a modern basis. In those provinces where reforms are impossible owing to the war, the work will be begun immediately after the conclusion of peace. The necessary credits for this undertaking have already been voted.

The German adviser of the Turkish Ministry of Justice, Geheimrat Heinze, has given the "Vakit" details of the Turkish legal reforms. Special commissions are studying the changes to be made in Turkish Civil and Commercial Law. A "Freundschaftsverein" has been formed for the mutual study by Germans and Turks of each other's laws, and for the establishment of personal contact between the great lawyers of the two countries.

On April 9th, the new Conventions concluded between Germany and Turkey in January, 1917 were ratified. These treaties deal with consular jurisdiction and protection, and reciprocal rights of domicile and extradition. It is stated that, before the war, the question of domicile had no great interest for either state, but presumably it is expected that after the war the number of Germans in Turkey will increase. The emigration of Turks to Germany is to be expected for purposes of education, as most of the Turkish youth requiring commercial or technical instruction will now come to Germany.

#### C.—ARAB MOVEMENT.

It is reported that the Egyptian Nationalist, Abd el Aziz Shawish, arrived in Constantinople from Berlin early in May. He has been sent with Hairi Bey, the ex-Sheikh ul Islam, on a mission to Ibn Rashid of Hail, and various other Arab Chiefs, with decorations and money from the Sultan.



With reference to the Mission under Musa Kiazim, the present Sheikh ul Islam, which was reported to be on its way to negotiate peace with the King of the Hejaz, it is stated on June 9th, that Musa Kiazim returned northwards from Deraa some time ago. The Mufti of Damascus, who was to have accompanied the Mission, feigned illness and did not proceed. Jemal Pasha No 2 is said to have turned Essad Effendi and Sabri Hoja, two other members of the Mission, back from Deraa.

#### PALESTINE FRONT.

It is reported that the Turks on this front have succeeded in making the Arabs believe that the British have no respect for women, and that when our troops enter a place, all the native women are outraged. For this reason, most of the Bedouins near the front have moved north.

#### EAST OF JORDAN.

A Prisoner of War, captured on June 19th, states that he was in charge of an escort sent from Es Salt to Amman to bring £T. 56,000 in gold and 87 cases of Mejidiehs, each case weighing 48 kilos. This money was for distribution among the Arab tribes.

The Arabic newspaper, "El Shark," reports on May 5th, that Moharrem Effendi, Mudir of Amman, has been awarded the Iron Cross (2nd class) and the Mejidieh (4th class).

#### DAMASCUS.

With reference to the report (see Summary No. 7) that a subscription had been opened by the inhabitants of Damascus on behalf of the troops who fought against us at Amman in March, "El Shark," on April 17th, states that a deputation from the Damascus Municipality has gone to visit the 4th Army, with the object of distributing the presents purchased with the money subscribed.

#### DRUSES.

The Government is said to be making every effort to win over the Druse family of El Atrash in the Hauran. On May 9th, one of the Atrash family and 200 Druse horsemen were entertained by the Vali and the Government authorities at a Damascus Hotel. Unfortunately, a balcony collapsed, killing nine people.

In connection with the above, it may be noted that the "Journal de Beirut," of May 11th, publishes the award of the following decorations :—

2nd Class Osmaniye	—	Nejm el Atrash
"	"	Mutid el Atrash
"	"	Farez el Atrash
2nd Class Mejidieh	—	Nessib el Atrash
"	"	Mustafa el Atrash
"	"	Abd el Ghaffar el Atrash

### ECONOMIC.

#### A.—PALESTINE FRONT.

The shortage of lubricating oil in Turkey is further confirmed by a captured document, in which units are directed to indent for olive oil for cleaning machine-guns.

#### BIDIEH.

A refugee reports that between February and March, olive trees round Bidieh, Senirieh and Kafr Kasim were felled and carried on camels for engine fuel to Tul Keram. Olive trees round Haris and Kafr Haris were not touched, being outside the legal limit of 6 hours distance from the nearest railway.

In the Bidieh area, wheat was sold at 40 P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.), barley at 20 P.T. per rotol, and durra 30 P.T. per rotol.

#### KALKILIEH.

An Arab refugee gives the following prices at Kalkilieh on June 16th :—

Wheat	...	...	13 P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.).
Barley	...	...	8 " " " "
Durra	...	...	10 " " " "

There is a quantity of durra growing round Kalkilieh.

#### ZIMMARIN.

It is reported (June 21st) that the civilian population is allowed the use of the military flour mill at Zimmarin (18 miles S. of Haifa) on two days a week.

#### TUL KERAM.

A deserter captured on June 25th gives the following prices at Tul Keram :—

Wheat	...	...	17½ P.T. (silver) per rotol (5½ lbs.).
Barley	...	...	12 " " " "
Durra	...	...	12½ " " " "

The rate of exchange was £T.1 (paper) = 20 P.T. (silver).

The Government claims 36% of cereal crops, and requisitions in addition 25% at 4½ P.T. (paper) per rotol.

#### B.—EAST OF JORDAN.

It was reported on June 9th that wheat supplies are very low East of Jordan, and that the Government has issued severe proclamations ordering the delivery of the coming crop to Government depôts against payment, half in gold and half in paper. None, however, has so far been brought in.

NOTE.—The orders issued for the collection of the tithe in the Kaza of Es Salt were quoted in Summary No. 7, of June 8th, 1918.

Informant states that there is a German officer buying grain at Kutrani, the price there being twice that in Kerak.



## C.—NORTHERN SYRIA.

The Economic Supplement of the "Journal de Beirut," of April 20th, contains an article on the silk industry of Syria. Before the war 200,000 boxes of silk-worm eggs were imported from the Department of the Var (France) and a very small quantity from Italy. Since 1915, owing to the distress which compelled the peasants to cut down the mulberry trees for fuel, the silk industry has sensibly diminished. In 1917 only 45,000 boxes of eggs were used and in 1916 only 36,000.

Almost all the cocoons produced last season are reported to have been purchased by the Germans. The present silk production is only about a quarter of that of last year.

In the Kazas of Batrun (Lebanon) and Akkar (Sanjak of Tripoli) and also in the hill districts, the Germans are said to be buying the potato, tobacco and grain crops in advance. They have also purchased the grain harvest of Ghor Beisan (Kaza of Tiberias).

Syrian newspapers report that, to cope with distress in Syria, asylums for the indigent have been established in most of the big towns. They also state that 5,000 people are assisted in this way at Tripoli, and 1,100 at Damascus. A special commission of notables has been formed at Beirut to deal with the situation.

## ALEPPO.

The "Journal de Beirut," of April 27th, states that the agricultural situation in the Vilayet of Aleppo is said to be very favourable this year. Nearly all the cultivable land is reported to have been sown.

The following are detailed figures for the Sanjak of Aleppo :—

KAZA.		Acres sown.	Seed sown.
Aleppo	...	80,708	4,241 tons
Munbidj	...	100,569	5,028 "
Ma'arit el Na'aman	...	82,909	3,119 "
Killis	...	275,078	15,404 "
Alexandretta	...	9,420	565 "
Idlib...	...	29,471	1,723 "
Antioch	...	55,652	2,954 "
El Bab	...	73,770	4,131 "
Beilan	...	14,382	— "
Jisr el Soghur	...	45,202	1,635 "
Rihanidi	...	39,720	2,198 "
		<u>807,151</u>	<u>40,998</u> "

The paper says that, according to these figures, 88 % of the land normally under cultivation has been sown.

## BEIRUT.

It is reported that the olive crop in the Beirut district promises to be excellent.

The following were prices at Beirut at the end of May :—

Flour	...	220 to 225 P.T. per rotol (5½ lbs.)
Salt	...	60 " " "
Sugar	...	750 " " "
Coffee	...	1200 " " "
Cloth and leather have nearly doubled in price lately.		

NOTE.—These prices are presumably for paper money.

The price of grain was still very high in Beirut at the end of May, because the authorities had not yet settled the question of tithe, and therefore the new harvest was not yet on the market.

Last year, owing to the bad harvest, the authorities allowed the payment of a certain amount of the taxes to stand over. Orders have now been received from the Ministry of the Interior to collect all outstanding sums on the present harvest.

The "Journal de Beirut," of April 27th, states that in the Vilayet of Beirut, 1,477,208 deunums (about 370,000 acres) were sown between September, 1917, and the end of March, 1918, for which 18,000 tons of seed were required. Wheat, barley, oats, lentils, lupins and chick peas have been sown. The yield of cereals should be at least 140,000 tons.

With reference to the rate of exchange, the "Journal de Beirut" on April 27th says: "Recent transactions in paper money have been considerable and a rise in its value has been the result. It is true that we ought to rejoice at the increased value of paper money, but only on condition that prices of foodstuffs fall in consequence. This has not, however, been the case. When, during the last few days, paper money reached 33 to 35 piastres, vegetables, flour, and all other foodstuffs, were still selling at the same prices as when paper money was only worth 25, 20, or even 15 piastres."

The "Journal de Beirut," of May 2nd, says that the price of flour has again gone up. Merchants assert that this is due to the exhaustion of stocks, but the newspaper says that this is not so, as profiteers have stocks of wheat in their depôts sufficient to feed the population for three months.

According to Syrian newspapers, the price of flour at Beirut early in April, fell from about 225 P.T. (paper) per rotol (5½ lbs.) to 160 P.T. (paper) per rotol, but rose again on April 4th to 200 P.T. and even 215 P.T. per rotol.



"El Ikbal," of April 27th, publishes a notice by the Municipality of Beirut asking for 150 labourers to work in the coal mine at the village of Bahamdoum. The wages offered are 10 P.T. (paper) and 1 kilo of wheat daily.

It is reported that considerable traffic is carried on by sea between Beirut and Haifa. Wood, grain, and provisions are shipped daily. On May 10th, 16 schooners and small boats left Beirut for Haifa.

#### LEBANON.

It is reported that Adil Arslan, a Deputy for the Lebanon, recently made a speech in the Chamber of Deputies, in which he said that the Province was a prey to poverty, famine and death. There had been 150,000 deaths from famine, and he added that if the Government knew of the state of affairs, they ought to have taken steps to improve it, which they had not. Arslan is said to have left Constantinople immediately after this speech, for fear of consequences.

It is reported that orders have been received to exempt the Lebanon from the payment of this year's tithe.

#### DAMASCUS.

According to "El Shark," of April 13th, the authorities of the Vilayet of Damascus have announced that, as the Government has assured the provisioning of the Armies, thanks to the depôts of grain in the North, it will buy no more cereals from the Hauran, Kerak and the stores at Damascus. Merchants and inhabitants are authorized to procure cereals for themselves from any part of the Vilayet.

The Council of Supplies at Damascus has decided to sell bread on presentation of a ticket at 9 P.T. (paper) per oke. ("Journal de Beirut," May 2nd).

#### HAURAN.

The following report has been received from a trustworthy source on the oil works at Mekarim (Hauran, on the Deraa-Haifa Railway):—

The boring for oil was started about 1912 by a company formed by a clever but unscrupulous German named Schumacher. The boring, which had not been successful, was stopped at the beginning of the War.

A German, Lieut. Vrobel, O.C., 503rd Motor Lorry Column, happened to be in Damascus about this time, and was struck by the relatively high proportion of bitumen in the rocks round Mekarim. (Informant states, that they are not so rich as those of Nebi Mussa). Lieut. Vrobel, who was formerly director of a gas works in Germany, made experiments with the rock, and finally obtained 30% oil, including 18 parts petroleum, 3 parts benzine, and 7½ parts lubricating oil. (Informant says these are Vrobel's figures and thinks they are optimistic). The net cost of each of the above valuable products was calculated by Vrobel at 2.65 marks per kilo. Recently an officer was sent to Germany to get material to start a large distillation plant. It is probable that the works reported at Mekarim during the last two months are the result.

#### D.—GENERAL.

##### FOOD CONTROL.

The following is a free translation of the Law of Food Supply, voted by the Turkish Parliament, and promulgated on April 2nd, 1918:—

- 1.—A General Directorate of Food Supply is created under the Ministry of War.
- 2.—While the Army is on a war footing, in addition to the tithe collected in kind, the General Directorate of Food Supply is charged with the purchase of an amount equivalent to the tithe, and, if necessary, a second equivalent amount of the following cereals, food-stuffs, and forage grown in the Ottoman Empire: Wheat, rye, maize, durra, millet, barley, oats, vetches, and various forage plants. It will distribute the resulting supplies to the Army, the indigent population of Constantinople and the provinces, Government officials, teachers and inmates of boarding schools. The residue retained by producers may be freely transported, sold, and purchased.
- 3.—For the supply of the Army, Government officials, teachers and inmates of schools, orphanages and the inmates of charitable institutions and hospitals, the General Directorate of Food Supply is authorized to purchase an amount equivalent to the tithe, and, if necessary, a second equivalent amount, of the following cereals and vegetables grown in the Ottoman Empire; rice, lentils, chick peas, broad beans, French beans, peas, potatoes, etc. The residue retained by the producers may be freely transported, sold, and purchased.
- 4.—The price to be paid for the first requisitioned amount (one equivalent of the tithe) will be six times the average price of each product during the three years preceding the General Mobilization (August, 1914). If the second requisition should become necessary, the price paid will be double that of the first requisition. The average prices will be fixed by the Municipal Councils.
- 5.—The amount of olives and olive oil which the General Directorate of Food Supply is authorized to requisition will be three times the amount of the tithe, the residue being left to the producers. The prices will be fixed after consultation between the General Directorate of Food Supply and the local authorities.

The General Directorate of Food Supply is charged with the distribution of olive oil required by the Army, Government officials, and the inhabitants of Constantinople.



6.—The importation from abroad and sale of the cereals and foodstuffs mentioned in articles 2, 3, and 5 is unrestricted.

7.—A Food Supply Committee will be formed wherever necessary. The Chief Civil Official of the locality will preside, and the members will consist of the Senior Military and Gendarmerie Officers, and the Senior Finance Officials, together with two members each of the Municipal and Administrative Councils of the locality.

8.—All hoarding of food supplies is absolutely prohibited.

9.—The General Supply Board will hand over to the General Directorate of Food Supply all its balances and stocks in cash and kind, its assets and liabilities, and the contracts entered into with purveyors. The unexpended balance of the £T. 3,500,000 allotted to the General Supply Board by the Treasury in accordance with the decisions of July 10th and October 25th, 1916, will be transferred as a loan to the General Directorate of Food Supply. The mode of transfer of this balance will be determined by a board appointed by the Ministry of Finance.

10.—The General Directorate of Food Supply is charged with the duty of providing the necessary seed corn for the agriculturalists who require it, and for its delivery to the Ministry of Agriculture.

11.—All persons infringing this law and the regulations promulgated for its execution will be brought for trial before the Summary Courts of Peace or, where these courts do not exist, before the Courts of First Instance, and will be punished according to their degree of guilt by the imposition of a fine of from £T. 1 to £T. 100, or a sentence of from one day to one year's imprisonment.

The foodstuffs concealed or withheld from the amounts to be delivered to the General Directorate of Food Supply will be confiscated as a penalty.

Officials who attempt to requisition any article of produce not specified in this law, or to obtain more than the authorized amounts of the produce specified, or to purchase such produce at a price inferior to that authorized, will be suspended from their functions, and punished by the imposition of a fine of from £T. 50 to £T. 200, or a sentence of from three months' to three years' imprisonment.

12.—In order to ensure the supply of the Army and the population, all officials are held responsible for the prompt and accurate execution of the orders issued by the General Directorate of Food Supply in virtue of the present law.

13.—The "Procès-Verbaux," duly drawn up by the competent officials of the General Directorate of Food Supply, will be considered legally binding until proof of the contrary.

14.—When this law comes into force, all the foodstuffs in the depôts of the General Supply Board, or still to be delivered under the existing contracts, which do not belong to the categories specified in articles 2, 3, and 5, will continue to be distributed as before to the Army and the civil population by the said Board until they are exhausted.

15.—Regulations will be drawn up for the details of the execution of the present law and the formation of the General Directorate of Food Supply.

16.—As long as the present law remains in force, any articles of other laws which may be in contradiction to it will remain without effect.

17.—The General Directorate of Food Supply will include a mixed Food Supply Council of 22 members, selected as follows by the Council of Ministers:—six members each from the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, two members each from the Vilayet Council of Constantinople, the Municipality of Constantinople and the Chamber of Commerce. The Chief Public Prosecutor of Constantinople will be appointed to the Council, the Director General of Food Supply together with the two heads of his departments will also be members. One of the representatives of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, alternately, will act as Chairman of this Council for a period of one month. The following are the questions which will be referred for decision to this Council.

A.—The exercise of special care in the execution of article 2, providing that sufficient cereals be left to the small farmers for seed, food and forage.

B.—The prevention of all attempts to hoard food supplies.

C.—Method of rationing and scale of rations.

D.—The allotment to merchants of rolling stock on a fair and equitable basis, and the duty of securing the maximum advantage to commerce from railway, sea and other means of transport.

E.—The investigation and adjustment of claims by the public under the Food Supply Regulations.

18.—The Food Supply Council is an Advisory body.

19.—All the Ministers are charged with the execution of this Law as far as their respective Departments are concerned. The Law will come into force on the day following its promulgation.

*NOTE.*—This Law replaces all previous legislation on the subject, and sets up a General Directorate of Food Supply as a dependency of Ministry of War in place of the former General Supply Board, whose cash balance and stocks in hand it has taken over.

The most important change introduced by the new Law is the extension of the power of requisition given by Articles 2 and 3. Whereas the former General Supply Board was authorised to requisition cereals and other produce of the soil to an extent equivalent to the tithe collected in kind, the new Directorate is empowered to requisition, if necessary, a second equivalent amount. That is to say, that the Government may take, firstly, the tithe in kind, being  $12\frac{1}{2}\%$  of the gross produce, then the war tithe,  $12\frac{1}{2}\%$  more and finally, two equivalents of the tithe =  $12\frac{1}{2}\% + 12\frac{1}{2}\%$  more, making in all 50% of the gross produce of the soil, against a maximum of  $37\frac{1}{2}\%$  under the present law.



Owing to over estimation of the crops by Government officials, cases were frequent in which the producer was called upon to deliver an amount of cereals exceeding his total crop. When he protested that if he delivered all his produce, it would still fall short of the amount claimed, he was told that he had better buy or steal the shortage, if he wished to avoid fine or imprisonment. If this occurred when the maximum of tithe and requisition was 37½%, even worse exactions may be expected when it has been increased to 50%.

With regard to the price authorized in payment of requisitioned produce, *i.e.*, six times the average price of the three years preceding the war, it is to be remembered that, as the payment will be made in paper money which at present is worth between a quarter and a third of its face value, and the prices in coin have at least trebled or quadrupled, the rate offered is very much below the real market value of the produce. The fact that it is really an underpayment is practically admitted by the readiness of the Government to pay for the second instalment of requisitioned produce at double the price of the first.

Recent information from Constantinople is to the effect that the appointment of the Advisory Council created by Article 17 of the New Law was forced upon the Government by the Chamber of Deputies, as a check upon the profiteering by high Government officials and members of the Committee of Union and Progress which notoriously took place. The Government has retorted by appointing as members of the Council, some of the strongest opponents to its creation, who may reasonably be suspected of being the very persons at whom the measure was aimed.

#### SUPPLIES FROM THE UKRAINE.

With reference to the statements made to the "Vakit" by Hussein Jahid Bey, Vice-President of the Turkish Chamber, on the subject of supplies from the Ukraine which were quoted from the "Lloyd Ottaman" in the Summary No. 8 of June 22nd, the following is the "Journal de Beirut's" version of the declarations which appeared in the "Vakit." The portions omitted by the German newspaper, evidently on the ground that they contained very definite accusations against the Central Powers, are underlined.

"With regard to our share of the goods to be received from the Ukraine, I do not know whether the share fixed by our German and Austrian Allies will be sufficient or not. Unfortunately it has been impossible to obtain more. Nevertheless I cannot pretend that our Allies have appreciated at their true worth the urgent needs of our country, and the great sacrifices which it has consented to make."

#### KARASI.

The "Lloyd Ottoman," of April 18th, states that in the Sanjak of Karasi, 1,034,111 deunums (about 260,000 acres) were cultivated last winter. This is 17% more than the preceding year.

#### THE BLACK SEA.

It was reported, early in May, that the port of Odessa had been cleared of mines, and that the route to Constanza and the mouths of the Danube were also free.

### FINANCIAL.

#### INTERNAL LOAN.

It is reported that great efforts to secure subscriptions for the Internal Loan are being made in the Aidin Vilayet. The Vali has issued a public appeal, and the Manager of the Smyrna Railways has written to the Banks, asking for the names of merchants who have subscribed, probably with a view of influencing the others by granting or withholding railway facilities. The loan is being made practically compulsory by such means.

It was reported on June 16th, that the failure of the Turkish Internal Loan in the provinces has caused an unsatisfactory impression on public opinion at Constantinople. The total amount subscribed in the capital during the first month (up to June 1st) was £T.8,000,000, while subscriptions in the provinces for the first six weeks have not yet reached the sum of £T.3,000,000. It is stated by some newspapers that the reason for this is the delay in sending gold to the provinces for the payment of interest, but it is hoped that by the end of the second month the provinces will have done their duty.

### SANITARY.

#### EAST OF JORDAN.

A German Prisoner of War, captured on June 15th, states that his unit suffered a number of casualties from venereal disease, fever, typhus and dysentery. About four weeks ago three subalterns and 20 other ranks from another battalion of his regiment bathed in the Wadi Nimrin. They were all taken ill during the night with diarrhoea and vomiting, and all died before the morning. It was believed that the cause of death was cholera.

NOTE.—It was previously reported that the troops were not allowed to use this water.

#### ALEPPO.

25 cases of cholera were reported at Aleppo in 48 hours ("El Shark," April 11th).

#### ATTACHMENT.

Turkey and the Caucasus.

G.S.P.I.,

G.H.Q.,

E.E.F.



**SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL.**

**ATTACHMENT TO POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY,**

**No. 9, 30th June, 1918.**

**TURKEY AND THE CAUCASUS.**

Cis-Caucasia and Trans-Caucasia, the names given to the country between the Caspian and the Black Sea, were purely geographical and political terms, and correspond to no ethnological or philological boundaries. They contain a greater number of distinct nationalities and languages than any other area of equal size in this part of the World. The country has received the backwash of almost every immigration into Europe from the East, and neither the lapse of time nor the effects of proximity have been able to weld the heterogeneous elements of Mongolian or Caucasian origin into anything approaching a homogeneous whole. The Caucasian Georgians, Mingrelians, Lazes, Abkhassians, Lesghians, Avars, Armenians, and scores of others are for the most part much more distinct from each other than are the Latin and Teutonic races, while the tribes of Moslem Tatars differ widely among themselves in type and dialect, though they spring from the same Mongolian stock.

These differences have been somewhat obscured to the general mind owing to the fact that, during the last hundred years, the Caucasus has been brought under a uniform rule as a province of the Russian Empire. The Russian Viceroy, from his capital at Tiflis, governed a country extending northwards to a point 75 miles South-West of Rostow on the Don, across to a point on the Caspian Sea, 150 miles South-West of Astrakhan, and southwards to the Persian and Turkish frontiers, including the provinces of Batum, Kars and Ardahan, which were conquered from Turkey in 1878.

With the exception of the region lying north of the main chain, the whole of this country is extremely mountainous, poor in agriculture, but rich in minerals, growing barely sufficient cereals for its own nourishment, but exporting great quantities of oil from the wells at Baku, on the Caspian, through Batum, on the Black Sea, to the markets of Europe.

The area of the Russian Government of the Caucasus (180,703 square miles) was rather greater than that of the British Isles, and its population (12,288,100 in 1915) rather more than a quarter of our own. The capital, Tiflis, has 165,000 inhabitants, and Baku, the seat of the petroleum industry, has 179,000, though thirty-five years ago it was little more than a Caspian fishing village.

Although the population is so varied and divided, there are three "blocks," whose importance completely overshadows the rest. These are the Armenians, the Georgians and the Tatars. Each is divided from the other, not only by race and language, but also by religion. The Armenians and the Georgians are Christians, but belong to separate and rival churches, the Tatars are Moslems and themselves suffer from the sectarian jealousies of Shia and Sunni.

When Turkey entered the War in 1914, her first effort was directed against the Russian Caucasus front. In the depth of winter Enver ordered the advance of the Army from Erzerum. Already preparations had been made for the furtherance of Turkish aims in the country to be invaded. It is said that a scheme was drawn up to partition the Caucasus into autonomous Tatar, Georgian and Armenian States. Propagandists are reported to have been engaged to follow the Army and raise the Moslems of the country to revolt, while an unsuccessful attempt was made to induce the Ottoman Armenians to act as intermediaries between the Turks and the Armenians of the Caucasus.

Unfortunately for these schemes the Turkish expedition was both ill-planned and ill-led. At Sarikamysh and Ardahan it broke against the Russian resistance and with heavy loss in prisoners and material, the remains of the Turkish Army poured back across the frontier over the snow-covered mountains with the Czar's Divisions hard on their heels.

With the theatre of war removed to the heart of Turkish Armenia, this was the end of activities in the Caucasus for the time being, but with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in March, 1917, the idea of national autonomy once more revived. This time, however, it was not at the instigation of Turkey so much as by the awakening of national consciousness among the peoples of the Caucasus themselves.

Georgians, Armenians and Tatars, found themselves all of a sudden freed from the restraint of the central Russian Government. Messages reached them from the revolutionaries in Petrograd calling on them to assert their right of self-determination. Tatar representatives attended the All-Russian Moslem Congress in August and demanded "the realization of the national cultural rights of personal decision," and whole peoples, which, up till then had lain submerged beneath Imperial Russian domination, found themselves free to do as they liked, though but ill-equipped to do it well. Armenians, Georgians and Tatars were soon wrangling amongst themselves over their respective spheres. At first it was noticeable that, whereas formerly there had been friction between the Georgians and Armenians, owing to the immigration of large numbers of Armenian refugees from Turkey into Georgian districts, and whereas Tatars and Georgians, under Russian instigation, had been known to unite against the Armenians, there was now, for a time, a Georgian-Armenian rapprochement on the ground of their common Christianity. It did not last long, however, and very soon the old jealousy and hostility reappeared.



In the early days of the Revolution the Provisional Government attempted to maintain its authority over the country by the appointment of a Commission of Administration for the Caucasus. Under the Kerensky Government, the national spirit developed rapidly, and Georgians, Armenians, and Tatars each set up a National Council in opposition to the Russian Council of Soldiers and Workmen. But it was not until after the Bolshevik "coup d'état," in November, 1917, that the first Trans-Caucasian Government came into being at Tiflis.

It was headed by a Georgian Christian called Gegetchkori, who declared that he would maintain order until the meeting of the Constituent Pan-Russian Assembly, and then retire in favour of whatever form of Government was chosen by the nation.

At first, although Gegetchkori did not recognise the Bolshevik Government under Lenin, and refused to follow its instructions, he did not actually break with it. In order to strengthen his position he approached the other neighbouring states, which were also struggling to assert their independence, and directed his attention towards making agreements with the Ukraine, the Kuban and Daghestan. It was not till January, 1918, when the Armenian Bolshevik, Schaumian, was appointed Commissioner for Caucasian affairs, that Gegetchkori definitely declared himself no longer dependent on the Central Russian Government, and proposed independent peace negotiations with the Turks. It was fully time that some settled form of rule should be established.

Through the latter months of the year the Russian troops, who had been fighting the Turks on the other side of Erzerum, came pouring back, an undisciplined mob, without organization, and living on the country as they went. The Moslems of the frontier districts rose against them as they passed and harassed their retreat. Chaos indescribable must have been the result, and behind them all, the Turkish Army was advancing to reap the benefit of the disorder.

The Caucasian Government bestirred itself to raise an army for its defence. A Moslem Commander-in-Chief, formerly a general in the Russian Army, was appointed, and was joined by independent Armenian formations. Georgian contingents were not long in coming in as well, and the whole proceeded to arm and equip themselves with material taken from the Russian soldiery, who were still hurrying through, in haste to reach home in time to get a share of the landlords' properties, which Lenin's Commissioners were distributing among the peasants.

Once again, however, cohesion was lacking in the Caucasian ranks. While the Georgians and Tartars aimed at a federation of the Trans-Caucasian States, the Armenians were said to hold somewhat opposite views and to favour a union with Russia or an appeal to the Entente. Turkish propaganda, financed with German money, was hard at work among the Moslems, who began to favour a rapprochement with the Turks, the one eventuality which spelt destruction to the Armenians, who were already suffering extermination at their hands.

It is difficult to ascertain, with any exactitude, the area over which the influence of the Trans-Caucasian Government extended at this time, but it appears to have comprised the old Kingdom of Georgia, together with the districts taken from Turkey in 1828 and 1878, namely: Batum, Kars, Ardahan, and Erivan.

The Georgian population may be estimated roughly at about 3,000,000, the Armenians at over 1,500,000, while the number of the Moslems is very uncertain, but probably does not exceed 1,000,000, though some Georgians have placed it so low as 150,000.

The country lying further to the East appears to have early come under Bolshevik influence. In December the Bolsheviks seized power at Baku, but although the Trans-Caucasian Government lived in constant fear of Bolshevik attack from this quarter, they do not seem to have been seriously disturbed within their own sphere of influence.

At Tiflis such Bolsheviks as made their appearance were soon suppressed, but once the necessity for union against this common danger was past, dissensions once more arose between the Georgian and Armenian parties. Georgian national pride had grown considerably owing to the results of the meeting of the Georgian National Congress in November, 1917, the re-establishment, after over a century, of the independence of the Georgian Church, and the inauguration of a new Georgian University in January, 1918. The Armenians, whose wealth and numbers had made them a very important element in the capital, saw their influence diminishing, so much so that the Armenian head of the municipality withdrew to the purely Armenian town of Alexandropol. They likewise found themselves in a minority in the Government as the four Georgian and three Moslem Ministers usually combined to outvote the four Armenian representatives.

On February 1st, 1918, a Caucasian National Assembly met in place of the Pan-Russian Constituent Assembly, which had been dispersed at Petrograd. Gegetchkori, in accordance with his previous declaration, at once offered to resign, but as he apparently commanded greater confidence than any other party leader, he was persuaded to remain in office. This was the situation when peace was signed between Russia and the Central Powers, at Brest-Litovsk, on March 3rd.

Meanwhile, Turkish schemes to extend their influence over the countries adjoining their North Eastern frontier were being vigorously pushed forward. Appeals to the Caucasus Moslems on the grounds of racial and religious affinity did not, however, produce quite such favourable results as were expected. Anxious though the Caucasus Moslems may have been to secure help against Russian encroachment, whether Tzarist or Bolshevik, they had no intention of handing themselves over bound hand and foot to the Turks. Propaganda among Russian Moslem prisoners of war in Turkey was not a conspicuous success. Bad though the Russian Government had been, they declared that, from what some of them had seen of it while on pilgrimage to Mecca, Turkish rule was a good deal worse. The Turks, despite strenuous efforts in this direction, also found it difficult to reconcile religious differences between the Shias and Sunnis, from whose union they had hoped to produce far reaching results.



The necessity of overcoming the reluctance of the Caucasian peoples to accept Turkish proposals by a substantial threat of invasion, was very soon recognized. As early as January, 1918, it was reported that it had been decided in Berlin to despatch an expedition of German troops to co-operate with the Turks in this quarter, though it would first be necessary to get control of Odessa and the ports of the Crimea, before the Black Sea could be made safe enough for the transport of troops by water to Trebizond and Batum.

Under these circumstances, the Turks took steps to delay the the peace negotiations which Gegetchkori had proposed in January, until the situation should offer a good prospect of successful military intervention.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk provided the necessary pretext for active interference in Caucasian affairs, if any such formal requirement had ever been considered essential.

In spite of repeated Turkish assertions that Turkey had no annexationist aspirations, and only considered herself a guarantor of Caucasian independence, the treaty, nevertheless, provided for the return to Turkey of the provinces of Batum, Kars and Ardahan, which the Russians had annexed in 1878, but which had become integral and indeed essential portions of Caucasian territory.

No sooner had the treaty been signed, than the Russian delegation at Brest-Litovsk protested against this cession of territory, on the grounds that such encroachments could only mean preparation for a fresh offensive against Russia, and that as the Soviet Government had never conquered those provinces, it was quite beyond their power to dispose of them. At the same time the Caucasus Government announced their repudiation of any agreement affecting the Caucasus, arrived at between the Central Powers and the Bolsheviks, whom they in no way recognized. They stigmatized the cession of the three provinces to Turkey as a breach of the principle of self-determination, and asked the Turkish Government whether their action was equivalent to a wish to break off peace negotiations.

The Turks were, however, very little worried by any protest the Caucasians or the Russians chose to make, and the Caucasus Government were not in a very good position to back up their words with any substantial action.

Internal dissensions were still rife. The sympathy of the Moslems for Turkey was at any rate sufficiently strong for active resistance on their part to be improbable, while they could certainly be relied on to help in any scheme aimed at the destruction of Armenian influence. This unhappy people was once more submitted to a régime of massacre and extermination. Their levies, reinforced by Georgian elements, who, as Christians, were being shown almost as little mercy by the Turks, had taken their places in the line which the Russians had abandoned. Under the pressure of the Turkish advance, which commenced in the middle of March, they were forced to give way. The Turkish armies once more entered their villages, murdering, ravishing and plundering as they went. The Armenian National Council appealed in despair through the Soviet, at Petrograd, to the German Government. As the Ally of Turkey, through whom alone the Ottoman Empire could realize its aspirations, they laid the responsibility of their misfortunes on Germany, and piteously besought her help in the name of humanity.

Needless to say, no material assistance or protection was forthcoming, though it is said that later, the German Government "guaranteed" the security of the Armenians in the occupied territory.

By the end of March the Turkish advance had recaptured Erzerum and the territory lost since the beginning of the war. By the middle of April, Batum was in Turkish hands, and by the end of the month they had pushed their line well over the frontier in the direction of Kars and Erivan.

Peace prospects from the Caucasian point of view did not seem very brilliant. A delegation which went to Constantinople early in March failed to achieve its mission, and after various attempts at a settlement, it was dismissed by the Turks, on the grounds that there were too many Christians in the delegation, and that the Moslem population must be far more strongly represented, if the negotiations were to be resumed.

The occupation of Batum, their principal Black Sea port, and the terminus of the Baku-Batum Railway, was a heavy blow for the Trans-Caucasian Government, not only because of the loss of trade and prestige it implied, but also because the transport of hostile troops from Odessa, Sebastopol or Trebizond into the heart of their country became possible.

Such was evidently the intention of the Turkish and German Governments. Towards the end of April, Jemal Pasha, Minister of Marine, and Halil Bey, Minister of Foreign Affairs, arrived at Batum, the first to inspect the port, and the second to get into touch once more with the Trans-Caucasian Government. The ministers were shortly followed by troops, including some German units, which began to push along the railway towards Tiflis. The Turkish troops in the south, whose advance had been temporarily suspended while the abortive peace negotiations were proceeding, assumed the offensive, and in spite of some resistance pushed on towards Alexandropol and the shores of Lake Sevan.

Turkey's mastery of the situation was becoming more and more evident, and it is not surprising to find the Turkish Press of this period advocating the same treatment for the Caucasus, as the Germans had meted out to Finland, the Ukraine, and Roumania; in other words a peace of so humiliating a nature as to differ very little from complete political and economic subserviency. On the strength of their recent successes, the Turks re-opened peace negotiations, this time at Batum, with the confident hope that they would be able to secure their favorable conclusion.



It would be satisfactory to know more of the composition of the Trans-Caucasian Government which was faced with this critical situation. Unfortunately no very clear picture can be drawn from the scanty material available of the internal conditions of the country, which were no doubt exercising the minds of Caucasian leaders as much as the pressure from outside.

All we know is that, at about this time, the Prime Minister Gegetchkori was replaced by Chengelli, a former member of the Commission for Caucasus affairs under the Russian Provisional Government, who seems to have proved more susceptible to Turco-German influences than his predecessor.

Besides Gegetchkori and Chengelli, the Republic possesses in Tcheidze, a President whose name had been familiar in Russia in the earlier days of the revolution. As one of Kerensky's partizans he had organized the Councils of Soldiers and Workmen in Petrograd. With other Revolutionary-Socialists he had been driven from power when the Bolsheviks under Lenin seized the Government, and had sought refuge in his native country, where his appreciative fellow citizens raised him to the highest place in their State.

Of the opinions held by the people who had so suddenly made themselves masters of their own destiny, information is scanty and probably inaccurate. The Armenians as an organized body seem to have given up the struggle, and to be trying to make the best terms they can with the Turks, from whom however they have not much mercy to expect. The southern parts of the country where they predominate are already in enemy occupation, the hand of every Moslem is against them, they have only precarious support to expect from their Georgian Co-religionists and, in spite of their constant appeals, little to hope for from the outside world.

Whatever may be the divergence of opinion among themselves, the Georgians as a nation are resisting foreign interference to the utmost, and are clinging tenaciously to their independence. In any case they are less exposed than the Armenians, and even in the event of domination by Turkey, can look forward to fairer treatment than that unhappy people.

The Moslem Tatars, on the other hand, are on the whole sympathetic to Turkey. Many of them have now been persuaded to enlist in the Army of Russian Moslems, whose formation the Turks have been attempting for some time. It is even said that its strength has reached 60,000 men. Their delegates in Constantinople have been greeted as long lost brothers, and their country as the keystone of the Turco-Tatar Empire of the future. But they have not yet been entirely won over to Turkish ideas, and are recently reported to have declared that, although they were willing to place themselves in a similar relationship to the Ottoman Empire as that in which Hungary stands to Austria, they would not consent to be in any way directly governed from Constantinople.

But in spite of internal dissensions, the spirit of the Trans-Caucasian Government has not yet been so reduced as to make it pliable in Turkish hands, and other complications have arisen to hinder the execution of Turkish plans. The main sphere of activity has passed beyond the reconquered provinces on the Turkish frontier, and over prostrate but still struggling Trans-Caucasia. The Lenin Government has become uneasy at the growth of Turco-German influence. In contradiction to their former disinterested attitude towards the Caucasus, they have suddenly invented a theory that the existing Governments in Daghestan and Cis and Trans-Caucasia have imposed themselves upon peoples who are really pining for re-union with the Bolsheviks. They have claimed representation on the Peace Conference at Batum, which in the middle of May was reported to have been interrupted, owing to the unwillingness of the Trans-Caucasian delegates to make the necessary concessions.

As the military situation develops it becomes daily clearer that the immediate objective for all parties in the Caucasus is the control of the Baku oil fields. Baku itself is not in Trans-Caucasian territory; it can hardly be said to form part of any recognised state and at the present moment, is divided within itself by the struggle for possession between Tatars and Bolsheviks. But it is separated from the Black Sea by Georgia. The pipe line for conveying the oil to Batum follows the railway which passes through Tiflis. If the Turks, after occupying the provinces claimed in accordance with the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, are still advancing into Trans-Caucasian territory, it is because they are aiming at Baku and the line westward to the Black Sea. If the Germans, after helping the Turks in their attempts to impose terms on the Trans-Caucasian Government, have advanced on Tiflis, it is with the same object. But each is intent on securing the spoil for himself. A race is in progress between the allies which already shows signs of arousing serious contention between them. It is more than a local dispute. The German Press at the beginning of June is very plain spoken in its warnings. Turkey is being told that her efforts at expansion might with advantage be turned in another direction. She is reminded that the British are still in Baghdad and Jerusalem, and that the restoration of her territorial integrity will require the concentration of all her strength. Once more Turkey is being made to feel the grip of Germany. But this time the stakes for Turkey are greater than ever before, and it remains to be seen whether she will submit to be dictated to, or whether she will at last rouse herself to shake off the yoke of her masterful ally.

G.S.P.I.,

G.H.Q.,

E.E.F.