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BRITISH RED CROSS
IN TURKEY

1912-1913



A. DUNCAN - JOHNSTONE



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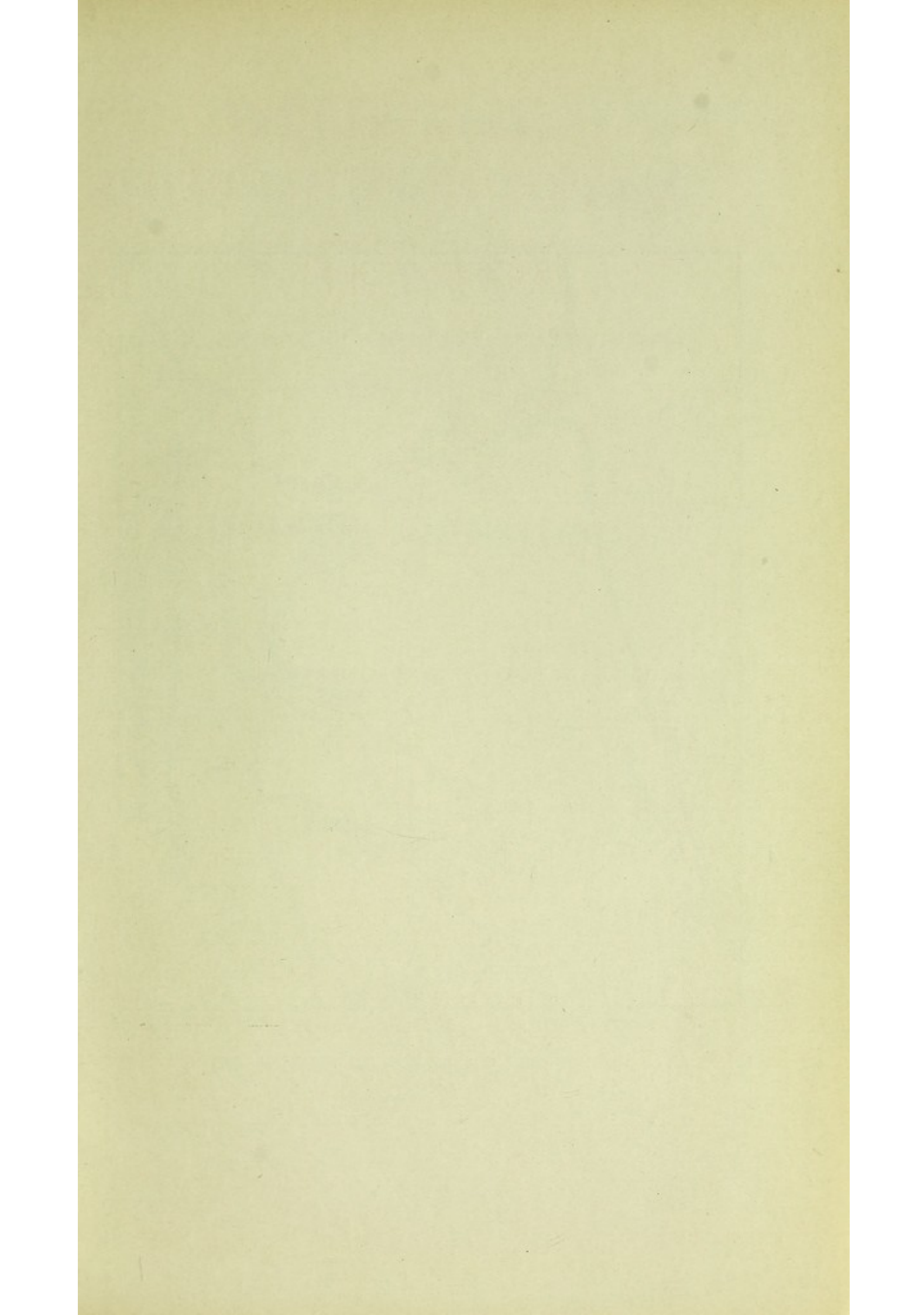


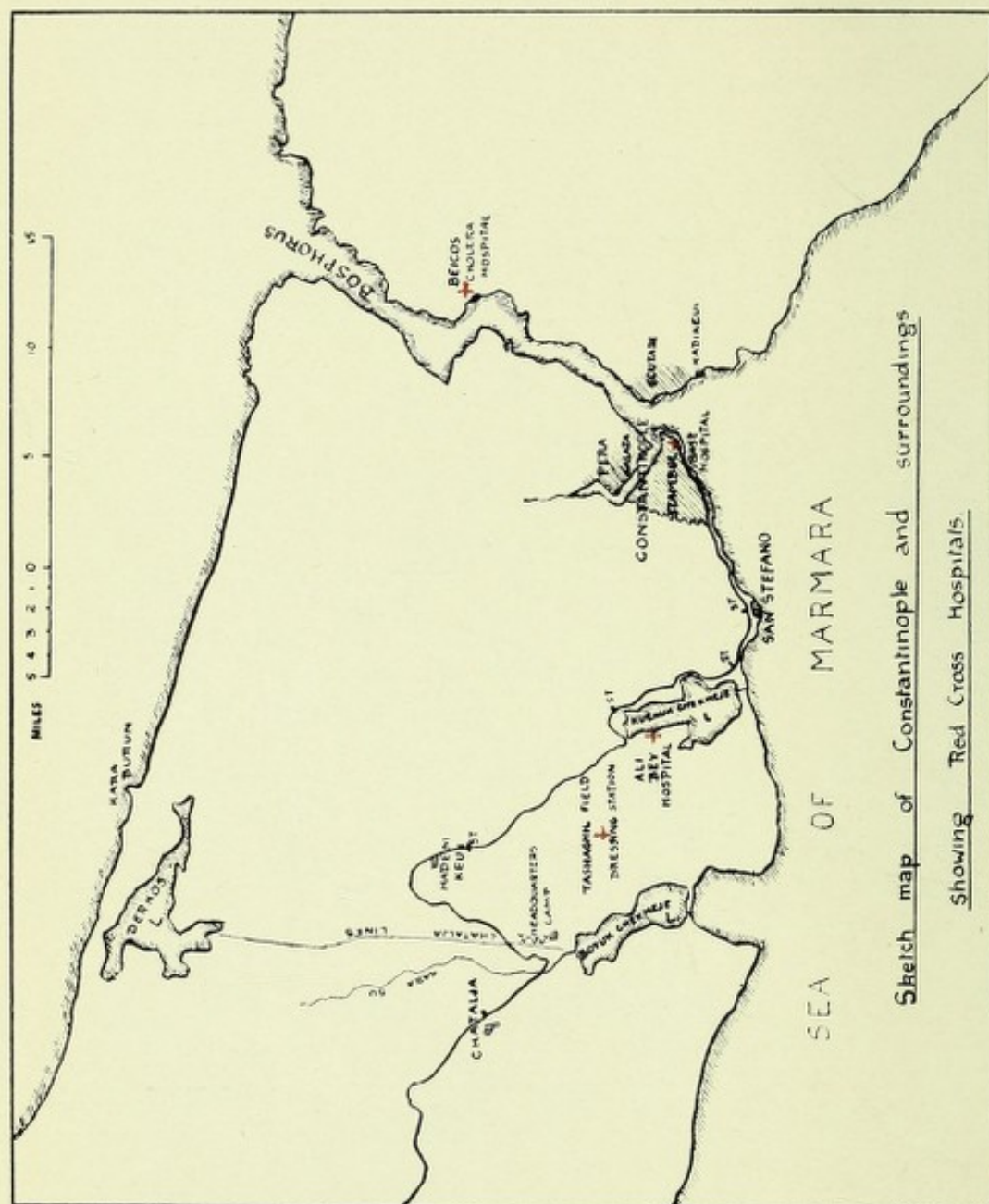
**WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS
IN TURKEY**



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Frontispiece.

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WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

THE EXPERIENCES OF TWO VOLUNTEERS

1912-13

BY

A. DUNCAN-JOHNSTONE

SKETCHES BY F. LYON

London

JAMES NISBET & CO., LIMITED

22 BERNERS STREET, W

1913





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CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE .	1
II. THE BASE HOSPITAL: EARLY WORK IN STAMBOUL	21
III. STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR: ROUND THE TOWN	44
IV. HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL: THE LANDING OF THE STRICKEN REGIMENTS	56
V. GOING UP COUNTRY: STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE	74
VI. THE FIELD DRESSING-STATION IN THE CHATALJA LINES	93
VII. DURING THE ARMISTICE: RETURN TO STAM- BOUL	124
VIII. WORK IN ASIA MINOR: EXPERIENCES IN A CHOLERA HOSPITAL	143
IX. BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS .	176

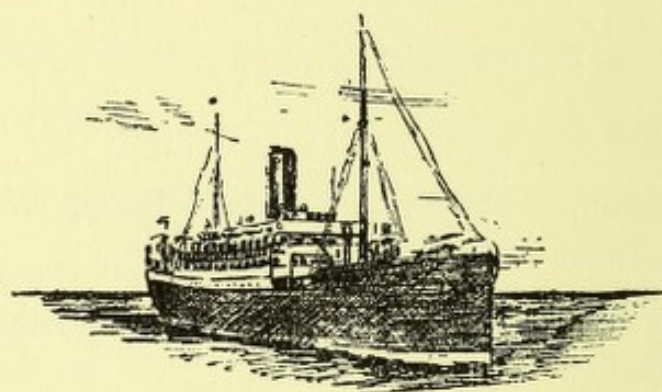
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

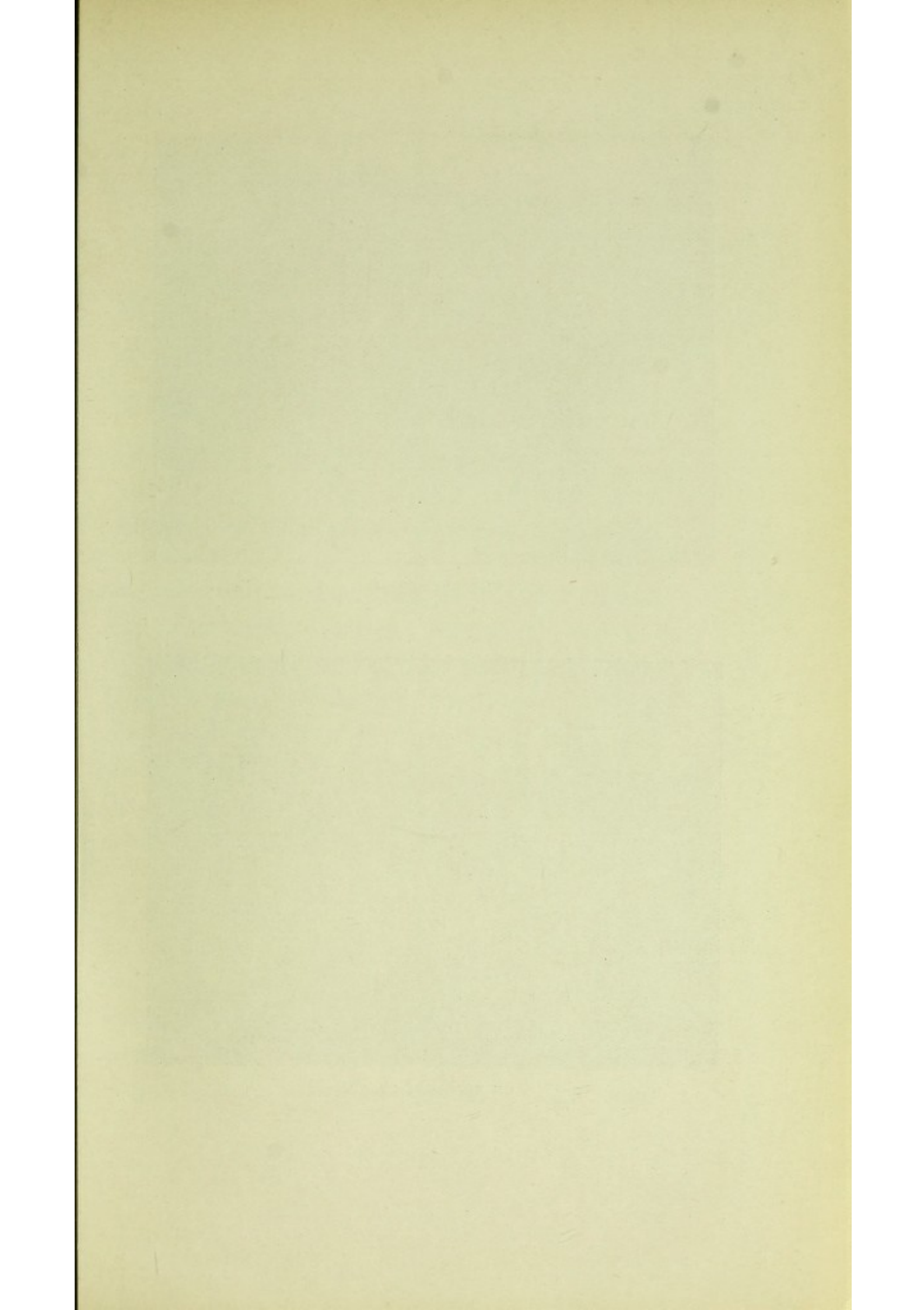
SKETCH MAP OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND SUR-
ROUNDINGS, SHOWING RED CROSS HOSPITALS.

	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
OUR DEPARTURE	1
ON BOARD THE "IONE"	1
INTERIOR OF A WARD	16
STAFF AT THE BASE HOSPITAL, STAMBOUL	16
A DESERTER UNDER ESCORT	33
QUI VA LÀ?	33
H.M.S. "WEYMOUTH" IN THE BOSPHORUS	42
TYPES OF PATIENTS.	42
THE LANDING OF THE STRICKEN TROOPS	48
A BEARER PARTY	48
UP COUNTRY	54
SOME OF THE RED CROSS	54
A WOUNDED OFFICER AT ALI BEY	65
ON LAKE CHEKMEDJE	65
THE CAMP STAFF AT TASHAGILL	72
THE AUTHORS	72

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
ALI BEY HOSPITAL, LAKE CHEKMEDJE . . .	74
NAZIM PASHA'S HEADQUARTERS AT HADEM KEUI . . .	80
THE CAMP AT KARAGATCH.	80
THE MEDICAL STAFF	90
THE FIELD KITCHEN, TASHAGILL	90
REFUGEE CHILDREN FROM USKUB	97
LEAVING FOR BEIKOS	97
THE HOSPITAL AT BEIKOS—	
AS WE FOUND IT	112
AS WE MADE IT	112
CHARALAMBOS EFFENDI. CAPTAIN LLOYD JONES, R.A.M.C.	136
CAPTAIN HORTON, D.S.O., AND THE INTERPRETER —BEIKOS	136
PATIENTS ARRIVING ON STRETCHERS, BEIKOS . . .	145
LES DOMESTIQUES. "HAZIR OL" ("TENTION!") . .	145
PATIENTS ARRIVING FOR ADMISSION, BEIKOS . .	160
CLIPPING AND CLEANING BEFORE ADMISSION, BEIKOS	160
OUR DEPARTURE FROM BEIKOS	193
THE MORNING AFTER THE COUP D'ÉTAT	193







OUR DEPARTURE.



ON BOARD THE *IONE*.

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

CHAPTER I

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

IN referring to the struggle in the Balkans, Sir Frederick Treves remarked on the appalling condition of the wounded, where the provision made for them was utterly inadequate, if not lacking altogether, and said that the sufferings of the troops in the South African War were nothing compared with those in the Near East.

To the man in the street, the pageant of war may seem a glorious thing, a time of excitement and of brave deeds; to the soldier, a quick way to honour and promotion: but it is left to those who work unnoticed behind the armies to see the maimed and mangled bodies of the dead

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

and dying, to witness the misery and suffering, and to realise to the full extent the awfulness of war. . It is with the latter that this brief tale is concerned, and I venture to think the account of our work and experiences during the campaign in Turkey may be of interest to the British public, who subscribed so generously to the Red Cross fund in aid of the wounded on both sides.

The British Aid Society commenced its work under the chairmanship of the late Lord Wantage, V.C., in 1870, on the outbreak of the Franco-German War, and the public contributions were then on so vast a scale that a large sum of money remained over for future needs.

Since then the Society has given widespread and efficient aid in the Egyptian, Sudan, and South African campaigns, and also in the Turko-Servian, Turko-Russian, and other foreign wars, for which special funds were raised. [In 1905 it became the British Red Cross Society.] The object is to give some relief and skilled aid to the mass of misery and suffering of the brave soldiers, on whatever side they may be

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

fighting, and the Red Cross recognise no particular side. During the present war they were enabled to despatch in all five expeditions—to Montenegro, Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Servia.

Ever since I was a small boy I have had a great desire to see the East.

In fact, this passion once induced me to go into the head-master's study at a preparatory school and take a Koran off one of the shelves, for which I remember getting a good licking. On the outbreak of the Balkan War this desire reawoke in me, and I tried in various ways to get out to Turkey, my idea being to serve as a volunteer with the Turkish forces; but owing to the proclamation of neutrality by England, this was impossible.

One morning, happening to read in the *Daily Telegraph* that volunteers were urgently needed for the Red Cross work in the Near East, I quickly made up my mind, and that afternoon, leaving my work early, I rushed home to change preparatory to going down to Victoria Street. While I was so engaged my friend Lyon came in and asked me where I was going. I replied

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

jokingly, "I am off to the Balkans." "Wait a moment," he said, "and I will come too"; and hailing a taxi we dashed off to Victoria Street, only to find the office closing.

We were received by a diminutive office boy, who handed us cards to fill up, on which we had to state particulars of our age, occupation, medical experience, and the languages we knew.

Next morning we were early at Victoria Street, and took our places in the queue waiting outside. To our excited imaginations it seemed as if nearly everyone was a medical student, or had some knowledge of the work, and we were very despondent, thinking that in this crowd we would have no chance. However, after waiting two hours we were at last admitted into the inner office to be interviewed by Sir Frederick Treves, upon which the following conversation took place.

"What do you want, boy?" "I want to go to the front, sir." "In what capacity?" "A general orderly." "Ahem! You know you will find it pretty rough." "Yes, sir." "Very well, you will serve with the Turkey expedition. Good luck to you."

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

Thus Lyon and I were enrolled as general orderlies in the Red Cross Expedition to Turkey, upon which we were required to fill up a contract undertaking to serve until the expiration of six calendar months from the day of our departure from England, or until our services were no longer required; in addition to which we were to be paid 25s. per week, given a free passage there and back, and fitted out with uniforms.

We found that our expedition was under the command of Major Doughty-Wylie, C.M.G., and consisted of three units, in all fifty-six strong.

Before leaving we got measured for our kit, and we were given an order on the Army and Navy Stores for boots. Our uniform was khaki, like that of the British Tommy, except that it was of better and thicker material.

While we were being measured we made the acquaintance of some of our future comrades—among them ex-soldiers, medical students, public school men, out-of-works, adventurers, men who had been everywhere, and others who had never been out of England.

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

After this we had a busy week in which we rushed round getting our kit, settling up bills, attending Red Cross lectures, and bidding good-bye to our various relations, to whom the news of our departure came as a great surprise. Lyon and I supplemented our kit considerably, going to Lawn & Alder, the well-known colonial outfitters in the City; and among the most useful articles we got were a Jaegar sleeping bag, commonly known as flea bag, which was afterwards of great service to us, and two khaki shirts on which dirt was invisible—a sound investment, as we found on arrival that we were unable to get enough washing done.

We were due to leave on Friday, 25th October, but to our great disappointment this was postponed to Tuesday, 29th October. Everybody was very keen to be off, as there were ominous signs that the war would soon be over and that we should arrive too late.

In fact, the newspapers were full every day with headlines, such as: "The Waning of the Crescent," "Speedy Termination of the War," "Hopes of Peace"—news which

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

we afterwards came to disregard, as, even up to the time of writing, the war is still dragging on.

However, on Tuesday, 29th October, we paraded at half-past seven outside the offices in Victoria Street. The men looked very smart in their new khaki uniform, and after being photographed, lined up in two ranks in the road. "Form fours"—"Right," and we were off, swinging up the street to the "Cock of the North" played by the piper. As we passed down Whitehall the sentries seemed considerably astonished as to what we were, but on seeing Major Wylie, our commandant, stood to attention.

On arrival at Charing Cross all ranks fell out, and we were given an excellent breakfast in the station—a breakfast which we all looked back to in after weeks.

At nine o'clock we steamed out of the station, some excitement being caused by the arrival of one of our men, who, coming late, caught the train just in time.

We crossed from Dover to Calais.

Although the voyage lasted only an hour, the passage was very rough, and many of us found the crossing quite long

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

enough, so that it was a somewhat subdued party which landed at Calais at one o'clock and then entrained for Paris. An amusing incident occurred on the platform, when one of our men, a Cockney who fancied his French, accosted a French porter with the peremptory request that he should fetch him some beer, which the porter, not understanding, mistook for an insult and seemed inclined to resent it, until pacified with backsheesh.

On our arrival in Paris we were received by several press photographers and a large crowd, and I gave them a tune on the pipes, finishing up with the Marseillaise, on which everyone cheered and took off their hats.

We steamed through Paris to the Gare de Lyon, where we detrained and had an excellent dinner.

We did not proceed to Marseilles by the regular boat train, but by a special relief train, the rear of which was crowded with Greeks and Turks returning from America to fight for their country. Many of them were in ragged uniforms, and the Greeks especially seemed very excited. We heard

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

afterwards that there had been some fights on the train.

They were a motley-looking crowd altogether.

The journey from Paris to Marseilles seemed to be interminable. The train was crowded and we were unable to lie down. The vin ordinaire which we had taken at Paris, and which was very ordinary, seemed to give everyone a perpetual thirst and at the different stopping places there was a scramble for drinks, during which one of our men was almost left behind at Avignon. He only succeeded in getting into a carriage at the rear end of the train full of Greek soldiers, where he must have spent an uncomfortable night. We arrived at Marseilles at 8.30 on Wednesday morning. We formed up and marched through the streets, causing many comments from the people, some of whom took us for Serbs or Bulgars proceeding to the front, while others put us down as recruits for the Foreign Legion ; but curiously enough very few recognised us as English. At all events, there was very little to show what we were, as we had not commenced to wear our Red

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

Crescent brassards, and looked a fairly warlike contingent.

At Marseilles we embarked on the C. N. paquet boat *Ione*, and left in fine weather, passing close to the château d'If of Monte Cristo fame.

Our quarters were aft, and we were stowed away four in a cabin opening on to a small saloon. Lyon and I shared ours with the sergeant-major and another man.

We were a varied crowd, I thought, as we sat down for our first meal on board ship, and it was rather amusing trying to guess what the men were. Many of them had seen service before, as their ribbons testified. Lyon and I sat between an ex-railway ticket collector and an old Navy man who had been at the bombardment of Alexandria. Opposite us sat two Cape Mounted Riflemen, a railway clerk from a South American line, and a rolling stone who spent his time globe-trotting when his funds permitted. There was also a motley crowd of Arabs, Levantines, and Turks, all stowed away under a big tent rigged up in the waist aft. They used to do their own

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

cooking, and we made our first acquaintance with some of those indefinable odours which go to make up the smell of the East. Several of the Turks on board were going out to join their regiments, and three of them we got to know quite well. One, a very nice man whose father was a colonel in the Turkish army, told me that he was employed in a bank in Berlin, but had given up his position to fight for his country. He said that he came from Anatolia, from whence came the flower of the Turkish army.

Of the other two, one was a Syrian, whom we called the "Carpet Pedlar," who had been wounded in Tripoli. He was very proud of his wound, which he exhibited to anybody who wished to see it, and kept the bullet in his pocket wrapped up in a piece of tissue paper.

The third, an Arab from Alexandria, was a regular fanatic, and was on the staff of one of the Egyptian seditionist papers. He had one gruesome story of how, during the Tripoli campaign, finding himself in the desert one day without water, he murdered a straggling Italian soldier, running his

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

bayonet through his throat, and then proceeded to drink his blood.

In appearance he was quite a mild-looking little man, with blue smoked glasses, and the suave and easy manner in which he told his tale excited the admiration of our fellows, of whom he often had a crowd round him.

Funnily enough, he turned up in Stamboul some weeks afterwards, to have a wound dressed which he had got at Chatalja.

I used to play my pipes every day on board ship, and the Arabs were very fond of them and would crowd round me. They have a species of pipes in their own country, and understand the music.

Apropos of this, an amusing incident occurred one day.

One of our Turkish friends was examining the instrument, and the "Carpet Pedlar" asked me what the bag was made of.

On my replying that it was made of pigskin he seized it in one hand and rubbed it in the other Turk's face, laughing loudly, to the latter's great disgust, as the pig,

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

being an unclean animal, is regarded with horror by all good Mussulmans.

On the first night out we were all inoculated for enteric, having the bacilli squirted into our arms, after which many of us went promptly to bed to await results. I woke up next day with my arm swollen up double its size and very stiff, and heard to my great disgust that we were to be vaccinated for small-pox in the evening.

One consolation was that the officers would have to undergo it as well. That night we were vaccinated, some of us in the same arm, but I chose as I thought the lesser evil, and had it done on the other. But those of us who elected to have it done on the other arm were rendered rather helpless for the rest of the voyage.

Some of our fellows were quite ill with their bad arms. Luckily we had a pretty smooth passage most of the way ; otherwise, between inoculation and vaccination and sea-sickness, we should indeed have fared badly.

There was no lack of food on board, and in fact we were treated to seven-course meals, but the food was cooked in a dis-

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

gusting manner, everything being smothered in oil and garlick, and served on the same plate and with the same knife and fork all through the meal. We were waited on by rather an amusing little French steward, a great performer on the flute, which he played through his nose.

We passed the Lipari Isles and were quite close to Stromboli, which we saw smoking. From the lovely weather we had it was hard to believe that it was the beginning of November, and we congratulated ourselves on getting away from the London fog.

On 1st November we passed through the Straits of Messina, close to Sicily, and saw the ruins of Messina, and on 2nd November we sighted the coast of Greece, with green hills coming down to the water, which reminded me very much of the mouth of the Clyde.

We heard that a naval battle was shortly expected in the vicinity of the Dardanelles, at which we expected to be held up.

On 3rd November we came in sight of the Dardanelles, and anchored for the night off one of the Turkish forts. The next morning we saw some of the Greek fleet

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

hovering round, half hidden by the haze, and were in hopes of seeing some fun, but they did not make any attack.

We remained off the Dardanelles for about half a day, and then in company with a dozen other boats we steamed off, under the leadership of the pilot, keeping close to the northern shore and giving a wide berth to the mines, of which we knew there were several. Everything seemed to be very quiet on shore, and it was hard to believe that this was war, except for the presence of the Greek ships.

On 5th November we arrived off Galata at six o'clock in the morning. As it was raining we could not see much of our surroundings, and no one was allowed ashore until midday, and then only on the quay. Some Englishmen came on board to see us in the afternoon, and from them we heard for the first time of the crushing defeat of the Turkish arms at Lule Burgas, and of the panic-stricken retreat through Chorlu. They were all wearing the red fez, which they said was absolutely essential for their safe conduct, as the populace were greatly incensed at the repeated Turkish reverses.

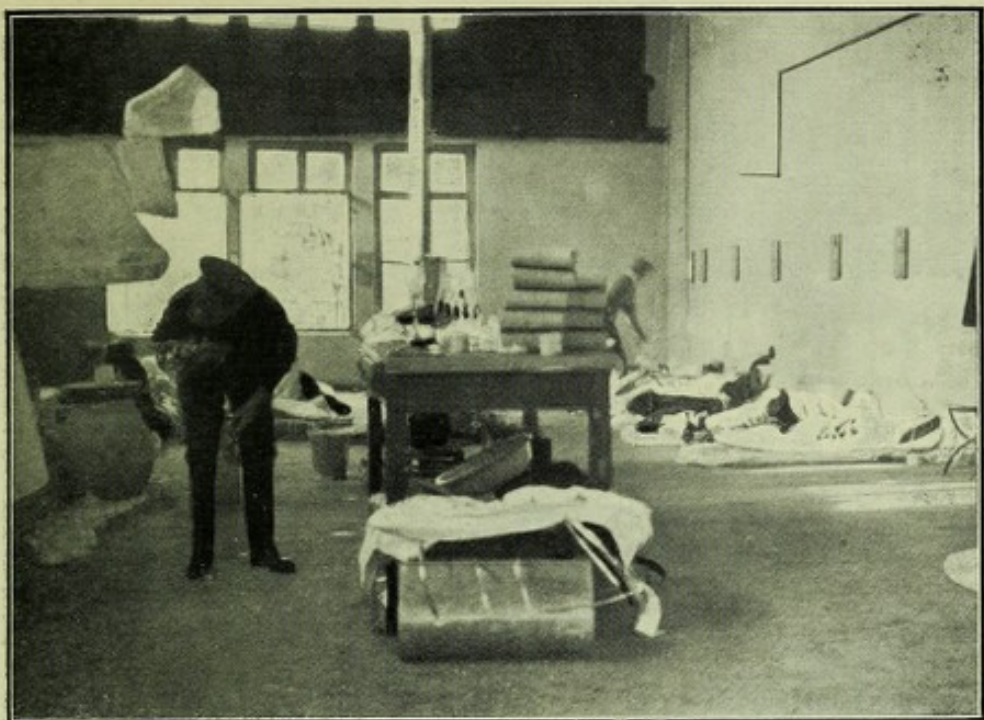
WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

and a massacre of all Christians was feared.

While I was standing on the quay I saw an infantry regiment go past, headed by a bugle band. They trudged, rather than marched, to the dull thud of the sodden drums and the curious oriental music on the bugles, played abominably out of tune, and very different to our idea of a bugle band. Following them came a battery of artillery. The men were rough and dirty looking, and their horses ungroomed, but they seemed a serviceable body for all that. They all wore big grey overcoats, and on their heads the khaki fez or kalpak, round which was wound the grey service "bashlik," resembling the Indian cavalry pugaree.

They halted outside one of the dock gates, and put pickets across the street to stop anyone coming that way. Several business men taking a short cut to the bridge attempted to push their way through, but the guards set on them with their rifles and hustled them unmercifully out of the way.

Late in the afternoon the second-class cruiser *Weymouth* arrived, the forerunner of



INTERIOR OF A WARD.



STAFF AT THE BASE HOSPITAL, STAMBOUL.



GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

the foreign fleet which was on its way. It is interesting to note that a British man-of-war was the first foreign ship to pass through the Dardanelles passage since 1878, when, by the Treaty of Berlin, it was closed to all warships of a foreign power.

In the evening some of us got leave to go ashore, and with feelings of great excitement we set off into unknown territory,

In the street just outside the docks we ran into two Englishmen, who took us to a little Turkish restaurant in the Rue de Théâtre at Pera.

Here we had a most excellent dinner.

Our host, a genial old Turk of evidently lax principles, stood us a bottle of wine, and amidst great enthusiasm we drank "Vive les Turcs et les Anglais," and "à bas les Bulgars et les Serbs."

After dinner we went on to a big café in the Rue de Pera, with broad plate-glass windows, known as Toklatian's.

Inside it was like the tower of Babel, crowded with men of every nationality—Greeks, Jews, Germans, Turks, Armenians, French, Italians, English, and Levantines. We secured a table by the window, from

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

which we could see everything which went on in the street. Everything in Pera seemed to be going on as usual, except for the fact that there were very few people in the streets, which were continually patrolled by men wearing red helmets and long grey coats, reminding one of the illustrations in the *Arabian Nights*. These were the military firemen or *Pompier*s, who were doing garrison and patrol duty at the time. In Toklatian's we met our friend from the ship, the young Turk, who told us that this was the most famous café in Constantinople, where everybody assembled in the evening to hear the latest news, or fiction, as the case might be.

It was absolutely the home of rumour and gossip, and on that night of our first visit there, there was an extraordinary rumour going round of the suicide of the Commander-in-Chief, Nazim Pasha. This rumour was curiously enough repeated at intervals, until it was at last partly confirmed by his tragic death.

Our friend the young Turk proceeded to show us round, and took us to a café chantant, where we enjoyed life for a while,

GOING OUT: LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE

and made the acquaintance of a police officer, who wrote out a pass for us which would take us back to the boat. This turned out to be of great use to us, as in our ignorance we were unaware that by martial law no one was allowed out in the streets after one o'clock, and if we had not had this precious piece of paper we should undoubtedly have been run in.

As it was, we were escorted back to the boat through dark, tortuous streets by the night watchmen, of whom there appeared to be one stationed every fifty yards or so. These night watchmen, who are a feature of Constantinople, are big, rough-looking men, many of them Kurds, armed with a heavy club with which they hit the pavement continually as they go along, probably in order to enable wrong-doers to escape in time and thus save the trouble of arrest. On our way down one street we ran into a picket, who halted us and demanded who we were. The only word of Turkish we knew at that time was my "Salaam Aleik-oum" (Peace be with you), the greeting of all true believers. But this, though polite, did not carry us very far, and we

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

should have fared badly if it had not been for the precious scrap of paper obtained from our friend the policeman. The picket had a wretched prisoner with them. His arms were bound behind his back, and they were hustling him along. On the officer giving the command "Halt," the picket stopped, but the prisoner, either from stupidity or deafness, continued on his way, until one of the men fetched him up all standing with a crack over the head with his rifle-butt, and on resuming their march jabbed him in the ribs with the end of the rifle. He appeared to be having a most unpleasant time. On arrival at the docks we had to climb over the gates, and were very lucky to escape the picket, who most certainly would have arrested us. We got back on board in the small hours of the morning, very pleased to find ourselves safely back in familiar territory, and thus ended our first night in Constantinople.

CHAPTER II

THE BASE HOSPITAL: EARLY WORK IN STAMBOUL

NEXT morning, as if to atone for its conduct of the previous day, the weather was bright and clear, and soon we were able to get our first real view of Stamboul. It did not belie the description given to it by enthusiastic travellers. The scene on the Golden Horn—the sheet of water dividing Stamboul from Pera and Galata—was a most animated one. Small ferry boats, caiques, dabiehs, and launches continually passed and repassed to the accompaniment of endless hooting and whistling. Tugs brought in ocean liners, and tramp steamers crawled in from the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. It was like a busy street scene, only on water, and the way the crowded shipping managed to dodge each other was little short of marvellous,

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

especially the way the great clumsy dabiehs, under sail or propelled by sweeps, eluded the ever-plying ferry boats. Across the water we could see Il Seraglio point, where our hospital was, a most picturesque spot, with its group of palaces on the hill, surrounded by the masses of dark cypress trees, so beloved of the Turks.

We disembarked at nine o'clock and paraded on the quay, a source of great interest to the idlers there, who pressed eagerly round us.

We left a guard behind on the quay to look after the baggage in the Customs House. They were treated with true Turkish courtesy, and were provided with chairs to sit on and cups of coffee while they waited. We marched off down the narrow street running parallel with the quay, and then wheeling round to the left we came on to the famous Galata Bridge, the bridge which links Stamboul with Pera and Galata, Islam with Christianity, East with West—a veritable tower of Babel. On the bridge one sees every nationality—English, French, Germans, Circassians (easily distinguishable by their great height

THE BASE HOSPITAL

and the fur kalpaks which they wear), Persians with their curious caps, wild-looking Kurdish porters from the heart of the Turkish Empire, Albanians, Montenegrins, and Greeks, many wearing their national costumes, and a continual procession of officers and soldiers in khaki uniforms, smart and unsmart, wearing the new kalpak which has succeeded the old red fez in the army.

It was with feelings of pleased expectancy and interest that we marched over the bridge into an unknown land.

As we stepped out to the skirl of the pipes, people ran on all sides to see us, and soon we had a large following. Even the phlegmatic Turk was moved to interest by this strange foreign contingent with the weird music, and joined with the crowd in cheering us continually as we passed over the bridge.

The Turkish cheer is exactly like the British, and just as hearty. On we went through the narrow winding streets of Stamboul, already blocked with refugees, for the great flight from Thrace had begun. An Englishman afterwards told me that he

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

was coming down a side street at the time, when he heard the pipes in the distance. He could scarcely believe his ears, and hurrying round the corner he saw swinging along towards him what he thought to be the leading company of a British regiment in serviceable khaki. It was very hot, and as we tramped along we found our winter clothing rather unsuitable, though we had no doubt that we should need it later on up country. At length, following the road along which the tramway runs up into Stamboul, we came to the high walls of the old Seraglio, and turning to the left through an old gateway found ourselves in the woody grounds in which the hospital was situated. It was a fine solid building, known as the School of Fine Arts, standing next the Museum, which looked across the Bosphorus to the building originally used by the late Florence Nightingale as a military hospital at Scutari.

We lost no time in moving in, and spent the morning getting mattresses into position on the floor for our future patients, unpacking stores and cleaning the place up generally. There were three wards to com-

THE BASE HOSPITAL

mence with, called Cassel, Judith, and Mary. Each section was given a room to mess and sleep in, where we made ourselves very comfortable with mattresses on the floor all round the room. In the afternoon a big fatigue party was called to construct in-



SCUTARI.

cinerators and field ovens, while our carpenters were busy making tables and forms out of packing-cases. For the benefit of the uninitiated, an incinerator, so called from the Latin word to reduce to ashes, is a big round pit, lined with stones which slope up to a cone in the centre, and is

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

used for burning all refuse, such as dirty dressings and bandages which come out of the wards—as we found to our cost later on, for the pit had been dug just under our mess-room windows, and on windy days we had to keep them shut. We knocked off at dusk and were then in readiness to receive our first patients, who were to arrive in the morning. We heard that the cholera was awful, and that the men in the lines were dying like flies. It was in the city already and some hundreds had died in the railway sheds, and it was certain that we should get it in our hospital sooner or later.

That evening Lyon and I obtained leave to go out, with the strict injunction that we were not to cross to the other side of Galata bridge after 8 p.m. as the town was in a very disturbed state. The Moslem populace were becoming more and more infuriated at the continual defeat of the arms of the Crescent by the infidels, and, urged on by the fanatical Kurds, who form the roughest and most turbulent portion of the populace, were ripe for any mischief. In fact there had already been one or

THE BASE HOSPITAL

two alarms, the mob attempting to rush the bridge and get at the Christian quarter of Galata where the hated Greeks lived, but had been driven back. However, we thought that we should have time to go across and present a letter of introduction, which I had obtained, to a police officer. We crossed over the bridge, meeting very few people on our way, and set out for Tophane where the Police Station was.

We had to go through a very low quarter of Galata, which seemed to consist of nothing but dancing saloons and dirty cafés.

There were plenty of people over there, but pickets were at the end of each street.

We had some difficulty in finding the Police Station, and on presenting my note, the Police said they knew nothing about the officer in question, and became very suspicious.

An officer came and spoke to me in bad French, and mine being equally bad we had great difficulty in understanding each other. He seemed to think that we were up to no good, and wanted to detain us.

At last we persuaded them to let us go, and they sent us away under an escort into

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

the Galata quarter, where we were again held up by a picket. At this time we knew no word of Turkish, and as they could speak nothing but their own language, the usual conversation by signs and gesticulation ensued. Finally, after much pointing to the Red Crescent badges which we wore on our arms, and the oft-repeated word "Hakim" (Doctor), we were allowed to go back over the bridge.

On our way back through Stamboul the streets were very deserted, and we only met one picket. We were very glad to get back.

Next day we paraded four stretcher parties at 8 a.m., and under the command of Doctors Page and Bourdillon marched down to the railway station to bring up the wounded. As we marched out through the gateway we passed some refugees with their wagons, forerunners of the mighty army which was commencing to invade the town.

On arrival at the railway station we found a scene of great animation. Troops everywhere, on their way to the front; conscripts coming in; and wounded who had been lucky enough to get through by train. But I am afraid they were very

THE BASE HOSPITAL

much in the minority. We found that they were placed in large sheds, each guarded by sentries, as cholera was suspected.

Inside, the place was crowded with men, some badly wounded, lying helpless on stretchers, others sitting in groups huddled up in their grey overcoats playing cards. The smell was simply abominable.

Dr. Page picked out some cases of wounded which he considered non-suspicious, and we started to carry them up the hill to the hospital. The going was very rough and steep, and the day extremely warm, so that with our thick clothes on we soon began to feel it, and for those carrying the rear part of the stretcher the odour from the wounded was most nauseating.

On account of this, it took us some little time to get to the hospital, where it was decided to abandon the stretcher parties as being too slow and arduous, and to bring the men up from the station in wagons.

We found that most of the wounded were from Kirk-Kilisse three weeks earlier. Many had not been attended to since the

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

first field dressing after the battle, and were almost starving. The wounds were horrible to look at, and had grown twice their size through neglect. They were also full of maggots and ^{dark} earth-worms, which had to be scraped out with the fingers. One man had had some wooden splinters behind his eye for twelve days without any attention. The smell in the hospital was dreadful. It appeared to us at the time that the Turkish Medical Service and the Ottoman Red Crescent seemed to be absolutely disorganised, no provision of any sort being made for the men.

Later on in the day we had a visit from the British Ambassador and Lady Lowther, also Djemil Pasha, the Prefect of the town, with other important officers, and they all seemed to be very pleased with the arrangements that had been made. The streets of Stamboul presented a most interesting sight at this time, being absolutely packed with refugees who had commenced to pour in. The only way to describe the state of affairs was to class it as a cross between opera-bouffe and a nightmare. The city was full of refugees, deserters, officers

ERRATUM.

Page 30, line 5. For earth-worms *read* dirt-worms.

With the British Red Cross in Turkey.

INTRODUCTION

Page 30 Line 11. For "with" read "and" (11-12-13)

Page 30 Line 11. For "with" read "and" (11-12-13)

THE BASE HOSPITAL

skulking back from the front with dummy bandages; crowds of wretched conscripts huddled together and watched by armed guards, served out with uniforms, and marched off, food for powder; and the wounded pouring in with wounds and diseases of every description.

There were sentries about every hundred yards in the town, and guns trained on it.

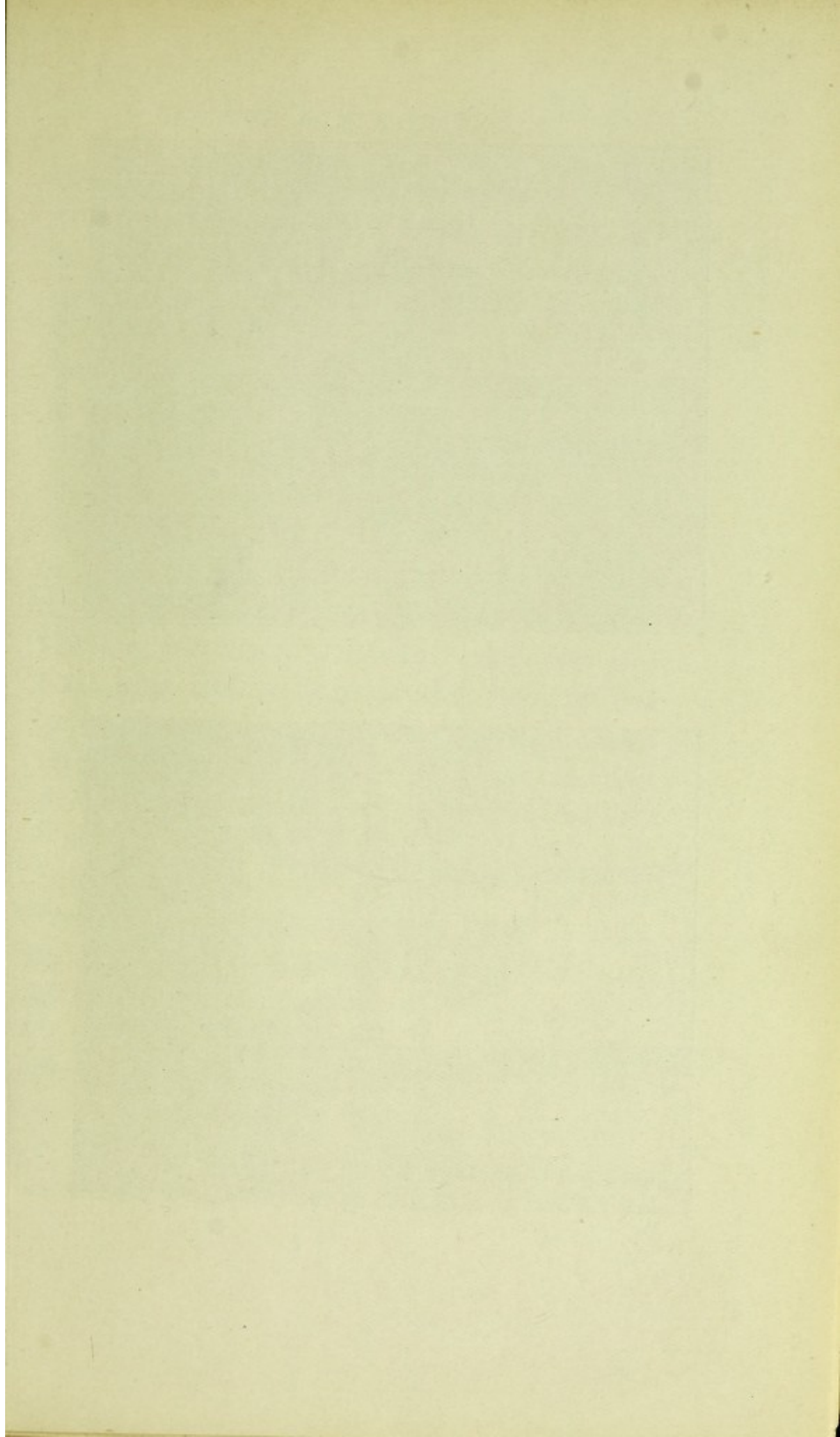
The pickets and patrols were everywhere. The streets in Stamboul which led down to the quay were choked with the wagons of refugees, and it was said that there were eighty miles of them. These people used to camp in the streets, sleeping in their wagons, or wherever they could, and they were a most pathetic sight. Old men, young girls, children in arms, stalwart peasants from the uplands of Thrace and Macedonia in their quaint, gaudy-coloured clothes, baggy trousers and turbans; the women with trousers and veils; all flying with their goods and chattels from the advance of the infidel armies. I could not help thinking how little the advance of progress and modernism had affected these people, who were

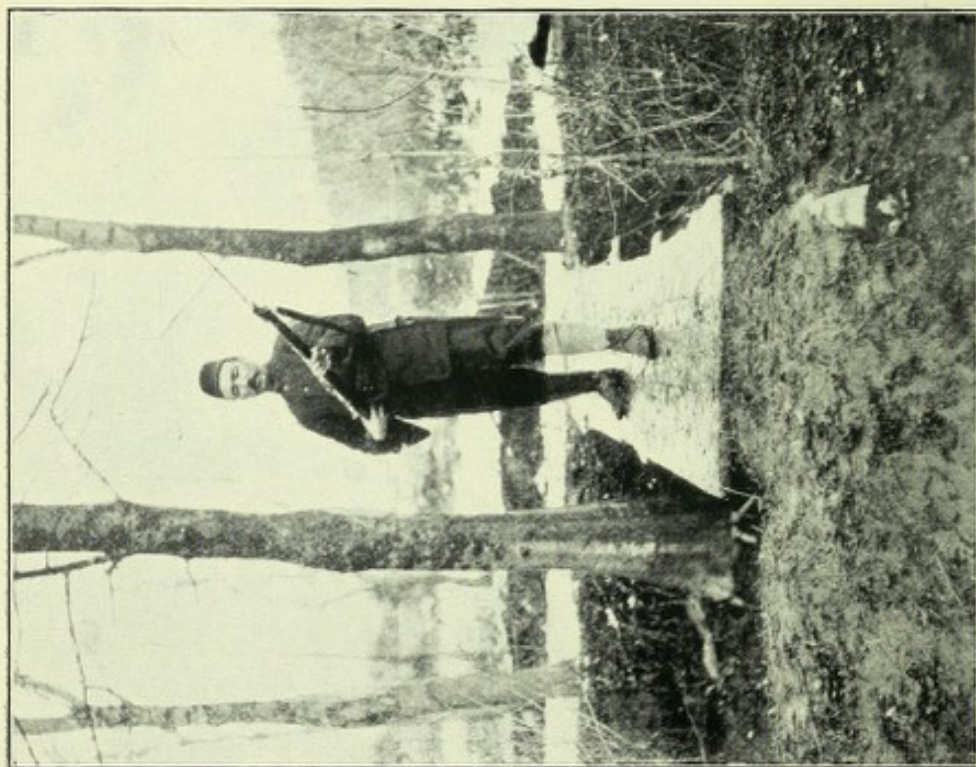
WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

returning to their ancient homes in Asia, as unchanged as when they had left them six hundred years previously to follow the banner of Sultan Mohammed II. into a new land. At any rate, looking at this crowd of broken and dispirited people, it was hard to imagine them as the descendants of the fanatical followers of the conqueror, Mohammed, who, riding at their head into St. Sofia, placed his blood-stained hand on one of the pillars as a sign that it had ceased for ever to be a Christian Church.

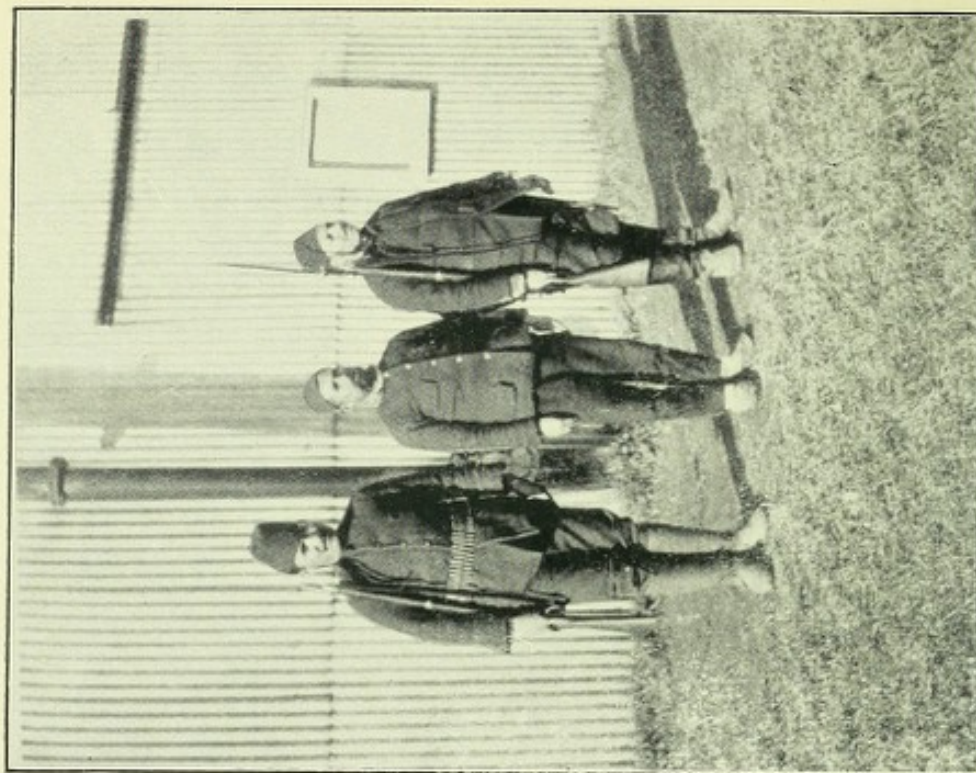
But if Stamboul was interesting by day, by night it was a veritable city of the dead. The streets were ill-lighted and badly paved, and as one walked along one stumbled over the bodies of the recumbent forms of the refugees, wrapped up in their galabeahs and burnouses, sleeping anywhere and everywhere about the road. Not a sound was heard except the occasional shuffling of the pickets, who trudged wearily along, and not a soul was visible except a few ghouliah pariah dogs, of which there were still a few left, and innumerable cats scavenging in the road.

At midnight on 7th November a fresh





QUI VA LÀ ?



A DESERTER UNDER ESCORT.

THE BASE HOSPITAL

convoy of wounded arrived, and we were kept busy till 3 a.m. At that time we had no proper light and had to work by the light of a flickering lantern. What a weird scene it was! The receiving theatre, dimly lit by lanterns; the half-naked bodies of the wounded ready for examination on the tables; the surgeons in their white overalls hurrying here and there, and outside in the semi-darkness of the big stone hall the rows of stretchers with the shadowy grey forms on them. The wounded were all in a terrible condition. I can remember one man who had a huge jagged hole in his shoulder, and on examination we found the ring of a shell fastened on to the shoulder-bone between it and the socket. The wound all around was discoloured, and full of pus; there were also the inevitable maggots caused by dirt, and altogether the sight was most loathsome. The man had also dysentery, and had not been attended to for ten days. We stripped his clothes off, washed the wound, and sat him down on a chair. One of the doctors took a pair of forceps and extracted the ring, the man meanwhile never moving or making a sound.

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

Some of our patients were exceedingly brave and never made a noise, bearing their wounds with the fatalism and indifference characteristic of the East. Others were the very opposite, screeching and howling at the slightest touch. Lyon and I were engaged on bearer duty, that is to say, we had to carry in the stretchers full of wounded to the receiving theatre, lift the subjects on and off the operating and examining tables, and stand by to take them off to the wards or the operating theatre as was required. It was most interesting and instructive, although the sights and smells at first used to make us feel sick, and some of our medical students were actually overcome during the first day or two and had to retire. As an instance of how poisonous the atmosphere was, I remember one morning a man was brought into the receiving theatre and laid on the table for examination. He had a shrapnel wound in the calf of his leg and one in his back; he had also dysentery, and had lain on the same stretcher for over a fortnight without being touched. Anyone acquainted with this disease

THE BASE HOSPITAL

will know what that means. Even our native interpreters jibbed at the smell and refused to come near him; and if they objected, it must have been pretty bad. But we being English had to grin and bear it.

When a man was brought into the hospital his clothes were taken from him and were put up in a bundle to be kept until he wanted them, or if too dirty and ragged they were burnt. The stench from the dirty clothes, old dressings and stale blood grew steadily worse, and we had no means of preventing it, as we were without sanitas or anything of the kind. There are some smells which quietly and insidiously force themselves upon you, but this smell did not, it absolutely hit you in the face. In other words, it was awful.

Our mess-room was situated between the operating theatre and the infectious ward, and opened on to the receiving theatre, while underneath our windows was the incinerator always burning, so the reader may imagine what we had to endure. At night-time we were at first kept awake by the groans of the sick and dying men,

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

many of whom were delirious, and were continually calling out to Allah. Eventually we got used to this and would have slept through it all, had we not had to endure a new evil, this time a parasitic one.

The dirty clothes of the wounded were simply alive with insects of all kinds—of which fleas were the least disagreeable and nasty—which soon invaded us, and, horrid as it may sound, we never really got rid of them until we left Turkey. In a few nights we were covered with bites, against which we were absolutely powerless. In fact, on waking up one morning I was reminded of the story of the Irish wit who stayed a night in a Dublin hotel, and on being asked how he had slept, replied, "Faith, if they had all been of one mind they could have pulled me into the Liffey." We could truthfully tell the same tale, if we substituted the Bosphorus for the Irish river.

Most of the wounds were in such a filthy, dirty state that they had become septic, requiring frequent dressings. In many cases gangrene had set in, necessitating an

THE BASE HOSPITAL

operation. Many of the wounded showed a curious aversion to operations of any kind. Whether it was that they mistrusted us, or that the loss of a limb minimised their chances of Paradise, I do not know.

On the second day after our arrival we had an operating theatre ready, and had on an average six or seven operations a day, and on one occasion ten.

The theatre orderly developed a septic hand after a few days and his place was pluckily filled by Mrs. Doughty-Wylie, who had accompanied the expedition out from England, and did such splendid work in the hospital. One man had had half the back of his calf blown away, and the bones of his leg smashed. The wound had become septic, and he was in a critical condition. He was told that an amputation was necessary, and the only chance of saving his life. He refused to give his consent and made a great fuss, threatening to appeal to the Sultan. However, he was eventually persuaded to consent to the operation, which was successful, but the poor fellow was so weak that he eventually died.

Some of the men were so desperately

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

wounded when they were admitted that they had the faintest chance of life, although they lingered on for days, clinging tenaciously to the little life left in them. Some we turned away after a brief examination, as they were too far gone. Nazim Pasha sent down one of his officers to us. He had concussion of the brain caused by a fall from his horse. He was operated on for a fractured skull, but never recovered. One man came in whose whole side had been blown away by a shell, a large portion of which was afterwards extracted from the wound. Another, who lingered on in great agony for a few days, had no back to his head, which was all crushed in. I cannot make out how they ever survived the journey down from the front. The old soldiers amongst us said that the sights were far worse than any they had seen during the South African War.

We used to admit visitors to the wards in the afternoon, and many brought flowers, which the Turks love and eagerly look for. A board was placed at the entrance with the name, division, regiment, company, and native place of every patient. Crowds

THE BASE HOSPITAL

of poor women who had trudged wearily round the hospitals of Constantinople in the hope of finding husbands or sons, came to us with new hope. To look at them, with their true Oriental indifference, one would never have guessed the grief and suffering hidden underneath. We got other kinds of visitors sometimes, such as tired soldiers who used to walk into the hospital and sit wearily down to rest.

One afternoon we were dealing with the incoming patients, and, as usual, attending to those on the stretchers first and leaving those who were able to walk to the last. The last man of the batch staggered in and lay down on the examination table. The doctor examined him carefully, but could find no trace of a wound, and on the interpreter questioning him he was discovered to be fast asleep. It appeared that the man had struggled in from the front without food or sleep for some days, and reached Stamboul utterly exhausted. Seeing his fellows coming into the hospital he had followed them in. We sat him on a chair in the hall and gave him a piece of

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

bread and some oxo. Coming back a few minutes later we found the cup on the floor and the man fast asleep, the bread clutched tightly in his hand. Sleep was the best food for him.

The wounded had now commenced to die with awful rapidity, and Lyon and I were put on night duty in addition to our work during the day. We turned in one evening after a tiring day, but had no sooner got to sleep than we were called up at 12.30 p.m. to carry out a corpse to the mortuary. Oh, that beastly feeling getting up in the dead of night, half asleep, and trudging off through the darkness to the mortuary! We got up, stumbled out over the sleeping forms of our luckier comrades, and proceeded to the ward with our stretcher. Imagine a large, dimly lighted room filled with men lying on mattresses on the floor, moaning and tossing wearily from side to side, in the vain attempt to obtain some relief in their agony, and a continual wail of "Allah, Allah, Su Effendi, Su, Su, Effendi" (Water, water, sir). Still half asleep, we found that our corpse was the man who had come in with the side of

THE BASE HOSPITAL

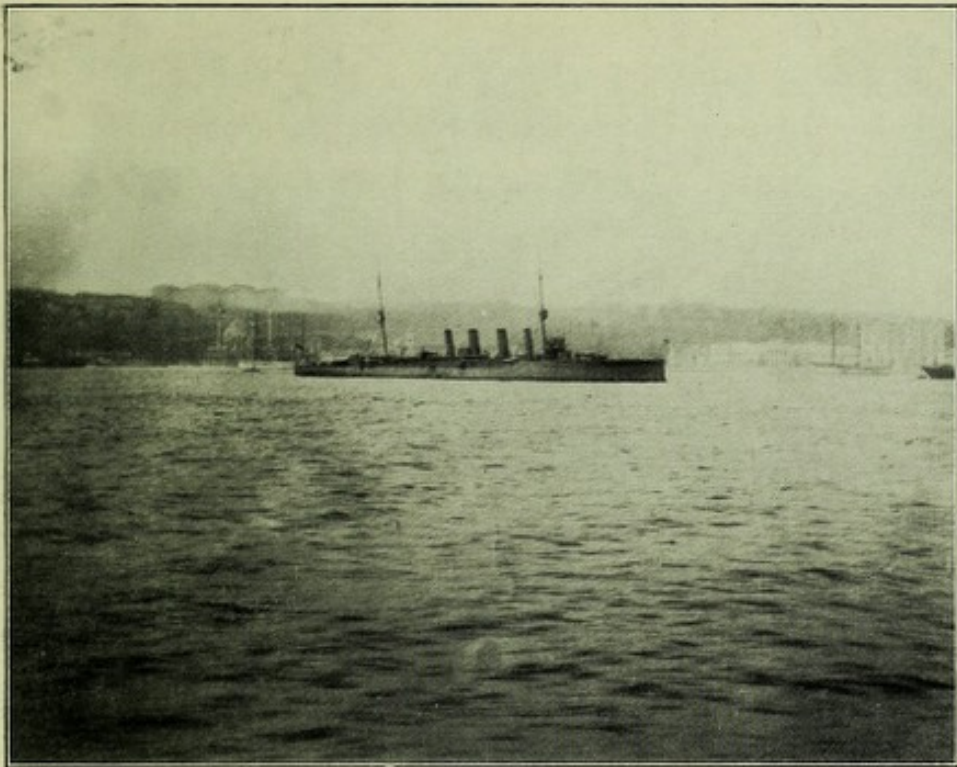
his face blown off. He had been operated upon, but unsuccessfully, and looked absolutely ghastly as he lay there rigid in the dim light, his head a shapeless bundle, enveloped in its blood-stained bandages. No wonder those next him shrank away as we lifted him on to the stretcher. We trudged slowly out into the darkness, for he was a heavy man, and up the road to the small stone hut which was our mortuary. It was very lonely and eerie at that hour in the morning, and seemed unreal, like a nightmare out of which one wakes with relief. But this feeling soon passed away, as we were called up four more times that same night and on the following night. Our first feelings of awe soon changed to a callous indifference, and on the cry of "Bearer party" we used to jump out of our blankets, race up to the mortuary with our stretcher, and back to bed again, as if we had been at it all our lives. At the same time I know of no more unpleasant work than turning out, half-dressed and half-asleep, at all hours of the night to carry out corpses.

By day we had to superintend the

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

removal of the dead, which were fetched away in carts. I remember one unseemly incident, when the relative of a dead man started wrangling with the bearers who had brought a coffin, while the body lay neglected and half uncovered in the road. However, the argument closed amicably, and they all burst out laughing. Surprised, I asked the dead man's relative how he could laugh on such an occasion, to which he replied: "Why not? he has gone to Paradise." I must say it was rather a sensible view to take.

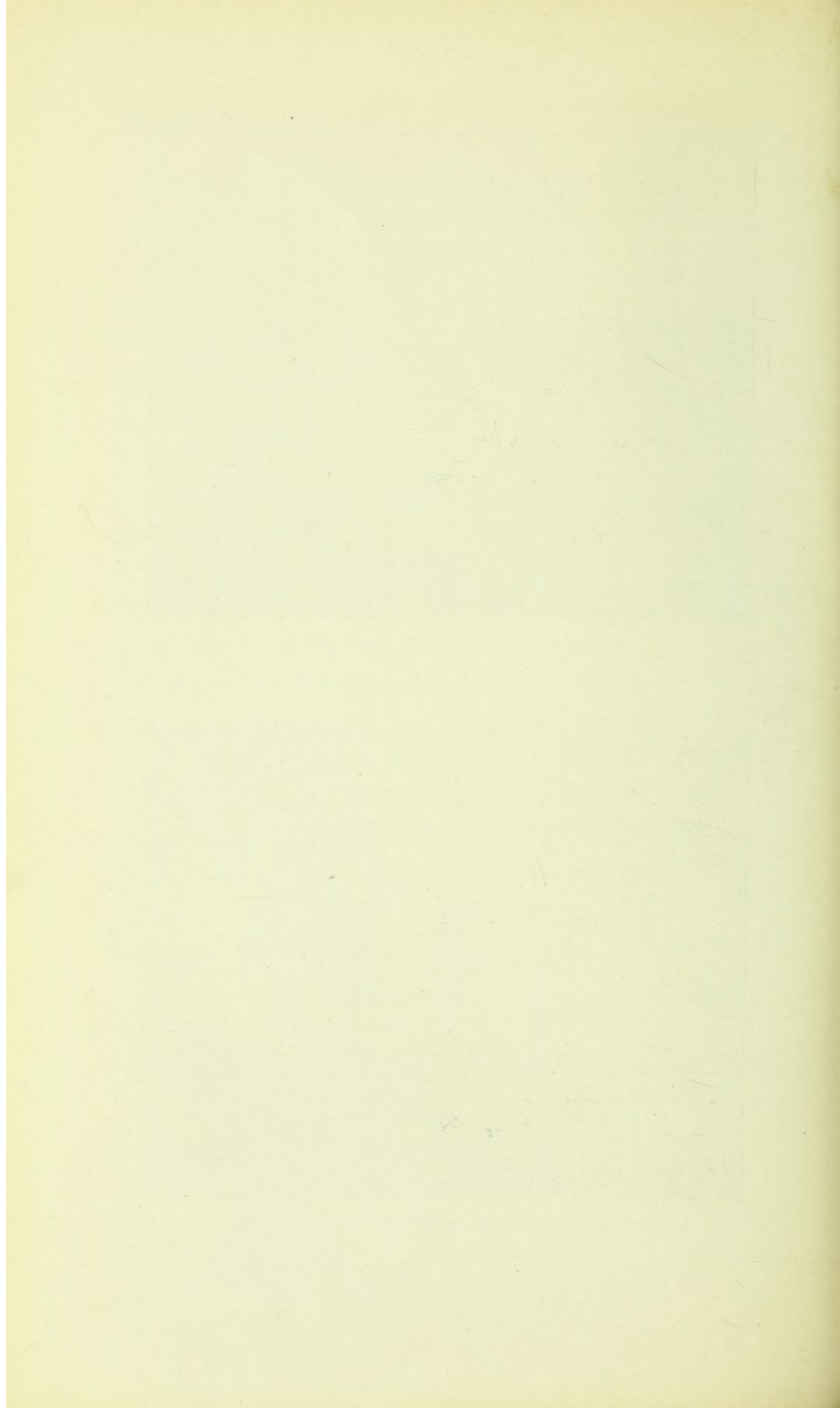
Some of the Moslem burial customs are, I think, distinctly to be commended. In the first place, when a man dies, he is buried as soon as possible, the idea being that the soul is in torment until the body is buried, and from the faces of some of our dead it seemed true. The funeral is a most simple one. The body is put in a coffin, with his fez on a little staff on top, corresponding to the Cross, and borne quietly through the streets to his last resting-place by his friends, or anyone who cares to lend a hand. In fact, it is quite a common thing for a man in the street to help to bear the



H.M.S. *WEYMOUTH* IN THE BOSPHORUS.



TYPES OF PATIENTS.



THE BASE HOSPITAL

coffin a short way, thereby getting absolution for some of his sins, and doing his good action for the day. How different from the useless public mourning and tawdry show of the Greek funerals !



CHAPTER III

STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR: ROUND THE TOWN

ALTHOUGH there was plenty of work to be done in the hospital we occasionally found time to look around us.

Just below the hospital was a big concentration camp, and all day and night there was bustle and stir, continual bugle-calls, and men and horses arriving and departing. I used to watch the long columns of conscripts from Asia Minor, trudging wearily up the road past the hospital. They were all unarmed, and escorted by guards to prevent them deserting.

They all looked weary and dispirited, as they probably were, having had to march many miles through Asia Minor. They were served out with badly made and ill-fitting khaki uniforms, most of them old

STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR

and worn already, and taken down to drill on a big maidan near us. I used to go up and watch these fellows, some absolutely raw, others old men who had served their time and forgotten their drill years ago, being put through their elementary drill by cadets fresh from the military college. They were very stupid at first, but were not given long to learn. The first week rifle and marching drill; the second extended order and field exercise; and then after a fortnight's training off to the front, food for powder.

Will similar scenes be witnessed in our own country, or shall we be prepared when the day comes? The downfall of Turkey, caught unprepared, is a striking object lesson.

Owing to the close proximity of the war, one was practically on active service in Stamboul, which was in a state of siege. Life was a succession of extraordinary contrasts. At one moment one might be up to the eyes in work among sick and wounded amid the usual ghastly sights, and the next dining comfortably in a hotel or restaurant in Pera. Men used to

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

come straight from the front in soiled and tattered uniforms and sit down next to well-dressed men and women in a restaurant. Every place of amusement was shut up except one or two café chantants, and in one of these everyone used to forgather and listen to songs in execrable French and German. The show would not have been tolerated in a third-rate music hall at home, and one paid up to seven shillings and sixpence for a bottle of beer, but it was the only place there was and we used to enjoy it.

I remember one evening when the company included several of the Navy, a war correspondent or two, and the usual cosmopolitan crowd. We were introduced to a correspondent of a well-known pink weekly sporting, who was there getting local colour, and who offered us some hospitality in the shape of champagne. Later on, wishing to return our host's hospitality with some refreshment, he declined on the plea that he only drank champagne, and therefore we must have some more with him. There were some English girls performing on the stage,

STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR

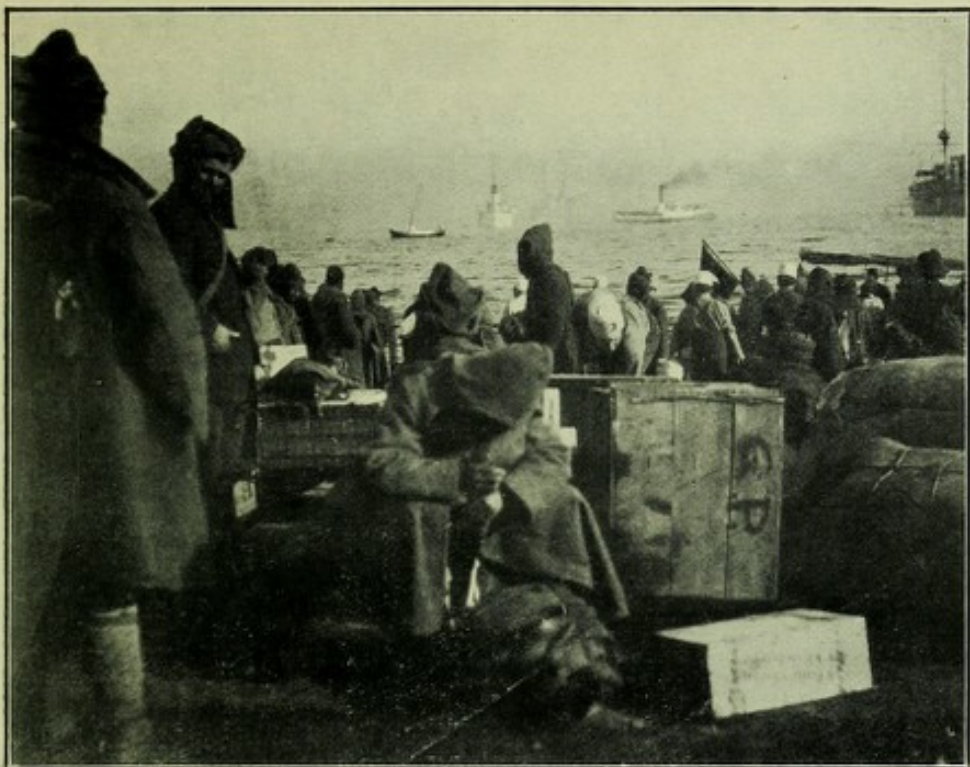
singing a song the chorus of which runs, "All the nice girls love a sailor," which appeared to be quite new in Constantinople. This was too much for a certain gallant sailor in the audience, whom I remember chiefly for his skill in mixing original and varied American cocktails, and leaping on the stage he took the girls through their song, finishing up with a step dance amid a hurricane of applause. Our friend the correspondent, who also had a *penchant* for the giddy *can-can*, was not so successful, finishing up with a header into the orchestra, for which he was also loudly applauded.

It was after one of these evenings that we got back to the hospital to find that another contingent of wounded had come in, and we turned to and worked until three o'clock in the morning.

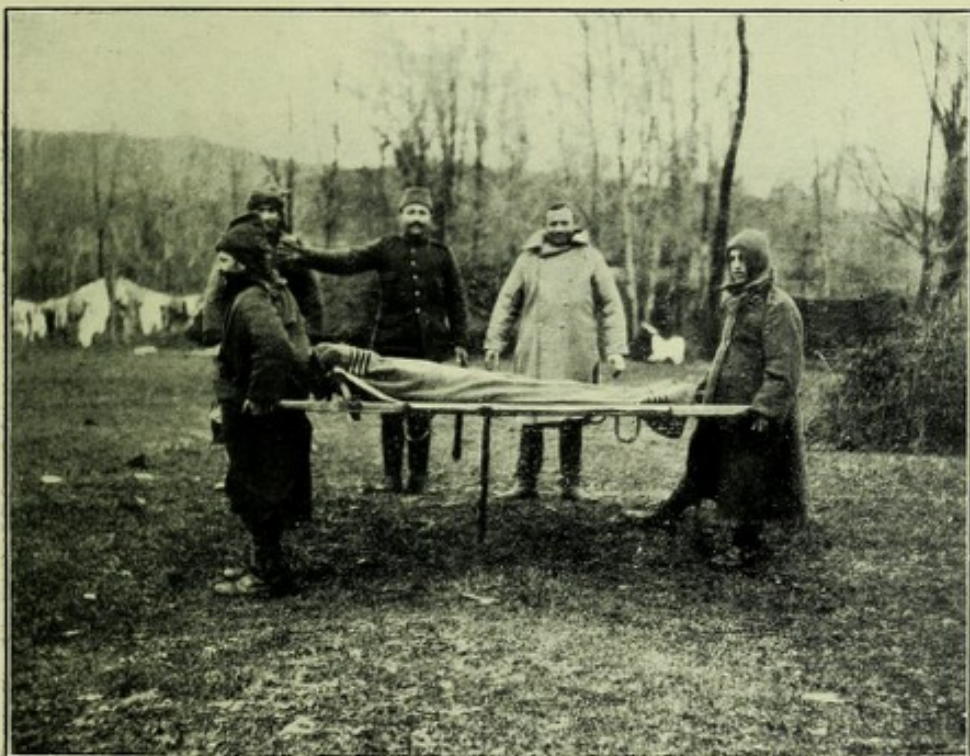
Soon after this we received an invitation to visit our friends on the *Weymouth*, which was then lying in the Golden Horn. We could not find any boat to take us off, so commandeered one which lay alongside the quay. It was pitch dark and we could find neither rudder nor rowlocks, but

nothing daunted, we made some lashings out of rope and pushed off.

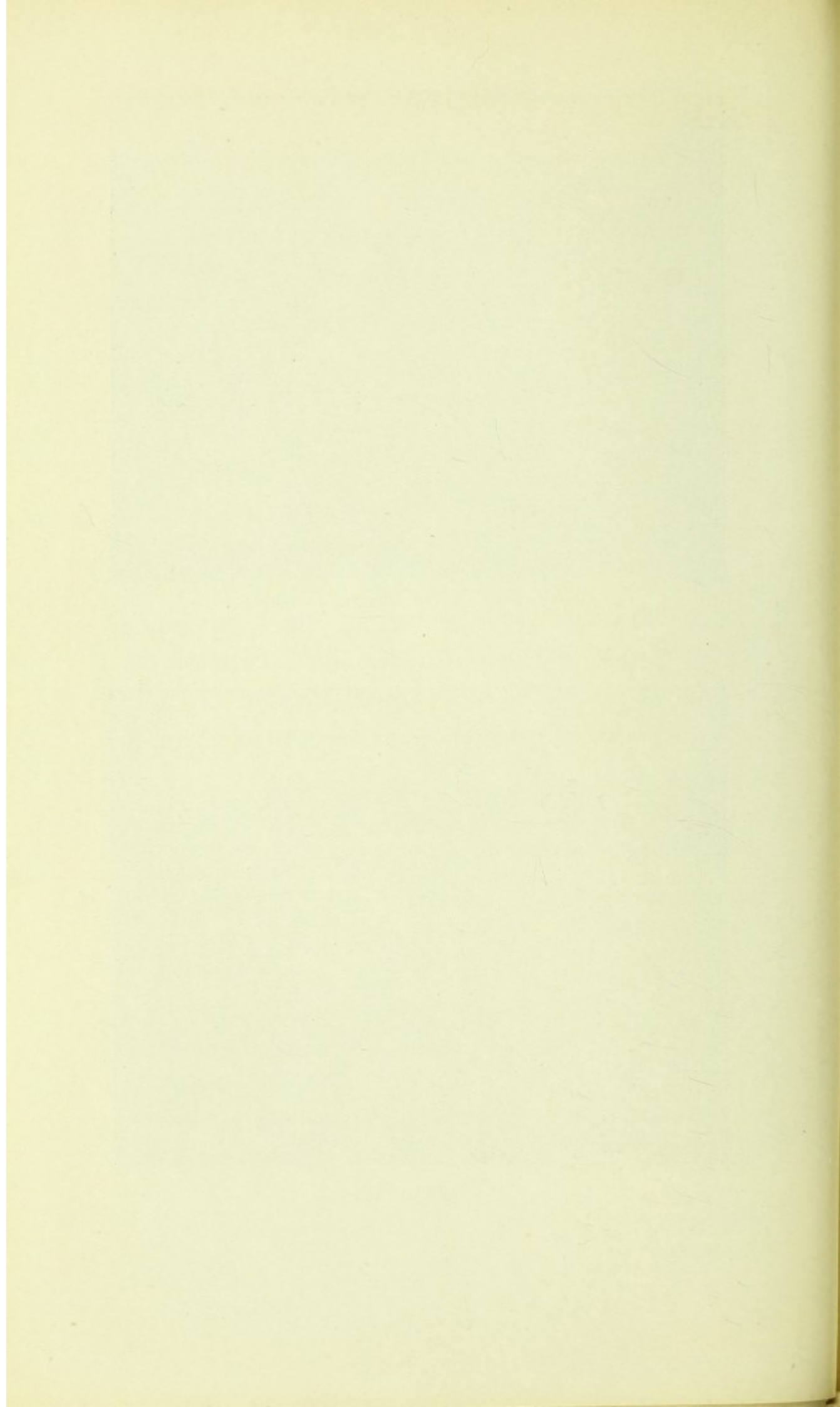
The boat was big and clumsy and smelt abominably. We found out afterwards that it had been used for carrying refuse. We were unable to make much progress with our makeshift rowlocks, and if it had not been for the current which carried us along, should have made very little headway. After one or two narrow escapes from passing picket boats and launches, we drifted past the French and Austrian warships and came within hail of the *Weymouth*. I shall always remember the look of astonishment and disgust on the face of the bluejacket standing at the gangway as he watched our dirty old boat appearing out of the darkness and drifting alongside. I discovered several brother Scots on board, and we had a convivial evening, arranging to hold a St. Andrew's night dinner on shore on 30th November. But unfortunately it never came off, for when the date arrived we were at the front, and our friends on the *Weymouth* were gallantly guarding a young ladies' seminary off San Stefano.



THE LANDING OF THE STRICKEN TROOPS.



A BEARER PARTY.



STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR

Before we left that night they presented us with some tins of ship's tobacco, a most welcome gift. I kept mine until I went up country, where I was very glad of it. The landing parties were all in readiness to go ashore in the case of any trouble, and the signal to the Europeans in the City to make themselves scarce and to get into safety, was to be a blank shot from the *Weymouth*.

We were towed back by a motor boat to the sound of my pipes, which sounded fine out on the Golden Horn, and must have puzzled the pickets on shore, and I afterwards heard that the sound of them had carried as far as our hospital in Stamboul. We cast off the tow rope as we approached the quay, and our friends disappeared in the darkness with many laughing promises that they would be delighted to put us up as refugees when the massacre came off or the Bulgarians arrived. In the darkness we drifted quietly into the quay, tied up the boat, and departed without anyone discovering us. We had by this time abandoned our khaki headgear, known as "cardboard hats," for the white kalpak of the Red Crescent, which franked us everywhere, and

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

I must say it was much smarter and more comfortable. On getting back we heard that a move was contemplated very shortly, and No. 3 section were to go to a school in Stamboul about two miles away, which the Ottoman Red Crescent had converted into a hospital, containing eighty beds. Our Section, No. 2, was to go to San Stefano, where we were to establish a hospital and then push on towards the front. We ought to have done this much sooner, and had parties on the trains to attend to the wounded coming down, and to keep their wounds clean. I cannot quite understand the delay, unless it was a case of jealousy on the part of the Turkish authorities, who did not want foreigners about. This was, I believe, the first attempt of the Turkish people in the way of a volunteer medical corps such as the Ottoman Red Crescent, and its inception was due mainly to the efforts of the Turkish women, who had held meetings and raised large sums of money for it. During the bad old days of Abdul Hamid they had never been allowed to help themselves, and so they very naturally wanted it to be a success, and did not welcome foreign

STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR

societies coming and getting any credit which was really due to the Red Crescent.

On 13th November we packed our kits joyfully and started off for the station. I went down in charge of one wagon pulled by two seedy-looking ponies, and Lyon in another pulled by bullocks. We tried to race each other down to the station, my ponies being faster but not so strong as his bullocks, so we were equally matched. However, Lyon's traces broke several times, putting him out of the running, and my wagon crawled into the station yard an easy winner. The station was, as usual, picketed all round, and wore its usual deserted look. It was two o'clock when we got the baggage on to the platform, where we sat until four o'clock with no sign of a train. There were any number of officers walking about the platform, all looking extraordinarily spruce and neat, and not at all as if they were going on active service. Now and then an officer in tattered and mud-stained uniform would come along, in striking contrast to his trim fellows.

The Turkish officer's uniform is quite a neat one, and of khaki something like that

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

of our own officers. But as khaki is absolutely a field service dress, worn so as to be invisible and not to show the dirt, it seems stupid to spoil it by the addition of green, black, or red velvet collars and shining epaulets and shoulder straps which completely detract from its useful and serviceable appearance, making it appear tawdry and bizarre. Over his uniform nearly every officer wore a grey cavalry cloak with a hood, and carried in his hand a little leather reticule, which looked very much like a lady's Dorothy bag. All wore the military kalpak of astrachan with the gilt braid on top, which has now entirely superseded the fez in the army, although the navy still stick to it. They all wore riding boots or puttees and the ubiquitous galosh.

At 4.30 a long train backed into the station and there was a rush for carriages, but we managed to secure two, and stood at the doors on guard while our baggage was put into the train. A few minutes before we were due to start a staff officer dashed up and told the doctor in charge of us that the order for our departure had been countermanded, and that we must all

STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR

detrain immediately. We tumbled out and were told that San Stefano was isolated by cholera and that a cordon had been drawn round it. We were too annoyed for words, and had not the heart to even argue with the station-master when he came and tried to make us get into the train. We quickly unloaded our kit and sat looking mournfully after the train as it steamed slowly out of the station, full of men, but without any enthusiasm, and in dead silence. What a contrast to the excited scenes at the commencement of the war! There was nothing to be done but to take the baggage back to the hospital and regard the affair as a test mobilisation. It was bad enough to be told not to go, but why on earth had we not been informed earlier and saved all the trouble? So, while some one went off to get the carts, three of us were left in charge of the baggage, where we had to wait two hours before any wagons appeared. We made friends with some pompiers or military firemen who were on duty there, and who could talk a little French. They brought two patients up to be examined. One man had an affliction of the eyes, and a medical

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

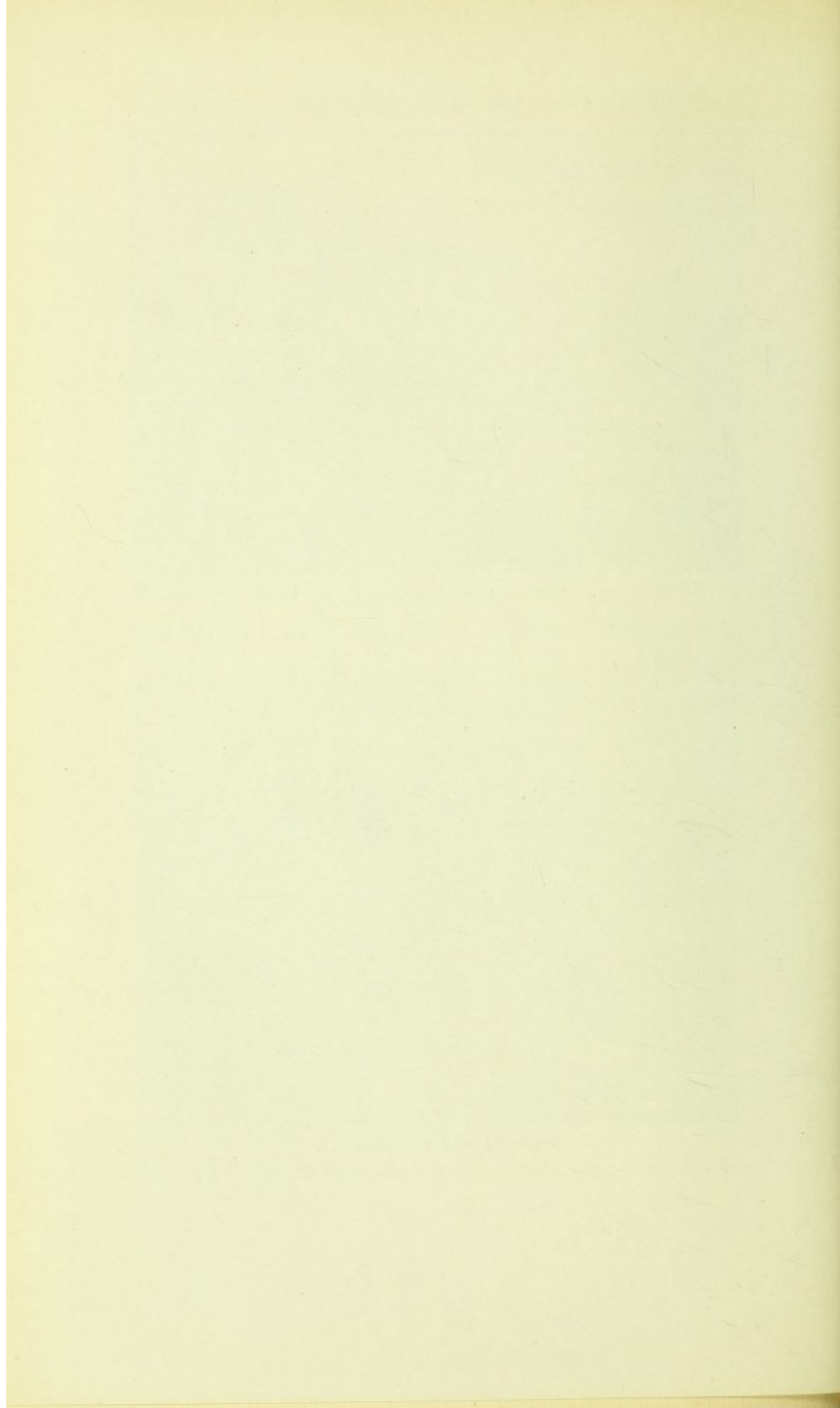
student examined him but was unable to give him any advice, because neither could understand the other's language. By the time we were relieved it was quite dark, and, in company with another man, I hired a pony in Galata and rode up to the club. There were always ponies to be hired in Galata, though we never could understand how they escaped being commandeered by the Government. The pony boys, who spoke a weird jargon, a mixture of Italian, Greek, French, and Turkish, used to say, "Bueno Caballero, una ora, duo franco." Then we would bargain and argue for about ten minutes, finally galloping off up the narrow and slippery streets of Pera, with the ragged boys running after us yelling at the top of their voices. Outside the club I met one of the German Red Cross, mounted on a nice little Arab. He was so resplendent in his army grey uniform, plastered over with red crosses, and his white-topped cap with a big red cross in front, that we felt quite shabby in our old khaki. Inside we found Lyon talking to the Consul, who invited us all three to dinner, which we accepted. It seemed funny to



UP COUNTRY.



SOME OF THE RED CROSS.



STAMBOUL DURING THE WAR

sit down again to a white tablecloth, and in the company of ladies. On our way home that night we noticed that there seemed to be more patrols about than was usually the case, and that the sentries on the bridge were doubled, but otherwise everything seemed to be very quiet. When we arrived at the hospital we heard that the long-awaited massacre was expected that night, and that small detachments had been landed from the warships. About two o'clock in the morning we heard a great shouting and noise in the town, and one or two shots, and then all was silent.

Next morning everything was quiet, and we realised that it had been another false alarm, of which there were so many during those troublous times.



CHAPTER IV

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL : THE LANDING OF THE STRICKEN REGI- MENTS

FOR some time now we had heard of the ravages which cholera and other diseases were making amongst the troops at the front, and how all the hospitals in Stamboul had declared cholera. We were an exception, although we had some very suspicious cases, and had already lost several men from dysentery and tetanus. Cholera is primarily a water-borne disease, and we were most careful only to allow boiled water to be drunk in the hospital. It used to arrive every morning in little barrels, and sometimes our stock ran out before a fresh supply arrived, and we had to go without unless we were able to boil some for ourselves. Although we took all necessary precautions with regard to water,

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

fruit, and vegetables, we were not able to prevent the crowds of flies which infested the hospital from settling on our food, and it was not conducive to one's appetite to see these pests, already gorged with blood from the wards, settle on our mess table.

Major Doughty-Wylie in his official diary said: "The cholera is awful. Hawker tells me that men in the lines are dying like flies. We shall certainly get it here sooner or later. It is in the city already, and some hundreds have died in the railway sheds, which I visit every morning to pick out the wounded. In the station shed a poor fellow died at my feet of what was said to be typhus, and there had been over a hundred deaths from cholera."

On 10th November we opened up a basement room underneath the hospital as an isolation ward with twelve cases. It was my lot to serve there as a nursing orderly with another man named Moore, and a better companion I could not have wished for. He was splendid in the cheerful way in which he tackled the work, which was of a most unpleasant character, consisting of dysentery, enteric, suspected cholera, and

typhus cases. Mrs. Doughty-Wylie used to make this ward her special care, and positively delighted in the work, setting an example to some of the more white-livered of the nursing orderlies, who were always complaining loudly of the awful work they had to do. All the patients in this ward were seriously wounded as well as diseased, and I remember one man, with a fearful wound in the calf of his leg, who used to lie all day resting it in a bath of Condy's fluid to cleanse it from the pus and dirt continually oozing out of it. Another patient, in addition to his wounds, had an affliction of the eyes which prevented him from seeing clearly. He used to suffer from extraordinary delusions, and was nearly always delirious, shrieking out continuously, "Su, Su, Effendi" (Water, water, sir). When I brought it to him he would refuse it, saying it was milk, and when I brought him milk he would pretend it was water I had offered him. At night he used to become quite violent, raving against the infidel devils who kept him there to torture him.

There was another man in Cassel Ward

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

who afterwards died, and no wonder, for, seriously wounded, he used to tear his bandages off and run amok stark naked in the ward, and on one occasion he turned on the nursing orderly and bit him right through the thumb, snarling all the while like an animal. However, some of our patients were quite sensible and interesting to talk to, and seemed grateful to us. The greater number were redifs from Anatolia in Asia Minor, although we occasionally had a stray Greek or Armenian. One or two of our patients told us that they had served in Hindostan in our Indian Army, and that it was by no means uncommon in large families for one of the sons to go and take service under the British Raj, where they got such good pay. One man came in wearing a greatcoat marked King's African Rifles, but as he died without recovering consciousness we never found out how he came by it.

Some of our patients were most awful thieves, and would steal anything;—one, a cross-eyed scoundrel minus a leg, was one of the worst offenders. The moment one's back was turned he would be out of bed,

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

stealing food, blankets or pillows from his fellow-patients. One day there was a great outcry in the ward, and this sportsman was discovered with three pillows and a blanket, which he had just taken from a dying man, evidently thinking that the latter had no further use for them. How he managed to get about so quickly with only one leg was a mystery. We often threatened to kick him out altogether if he did not behave, at which he would grin wickedly and shake his head. Opposite to him was another old fellow, far too miserable for practical jokes of this kind. His jaw had been smashed by a bullet, and had been screwed up with two brass screws from our tool box, as we had no silver ones available. He was in a dreadful condition, and so ashamed of his appearance that he used to sit all day long with his face turned to the wall, mumbling prayers to Allah.

One eventful day, November 15th, I shall never forget. To begin with, coming on duty in the morning, I discovered that a man, dangerously ill of suspected typhus, had disappeared during the night. It happened in this way. The night duty in

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

the isolation ward was rather an ordeal, for the cases were all of a troublesome nature, and the ward was cut off from the rest of the hospital and opened on to the road. The night orderly, a man who had seen active service before, appears to have developed an attack of nerves, and said that all through the previous night he had heard the most peculiar noises, and had seen wounded and exhausted men shuffling past the hospital. At all events, he absolutely refused to go on night duty alone again, and so a medical student offered to keep him company and divide the watch with him, and it was during their joint turn on duty that they allowed a half-dead man to escape from the hospital under their very nose. Of course, there was great excitement next morning when it was discovered, and both the night men accused each other of being asleep, to the delight of the other orderlies, who thoroughly enjoyed the joke. I had been on duty half an hour when a cab drove up to the hospital, and to my intense astonishment out got the missing patient, kicked off his shoes at the door of the ward, and lay down on his mattress.

He seemed very exhausted, and at first refused to speak, but on being pressed, said laconically, "My captain called me, and I went." He was that rarity in the East, a volunteer, fighting for his country purely from patriotic motives, and had delusions, imagining that his captain was in danger and continually calling to him.

All through the morning the patients, with a premonition of coming evil, were unusually troublesome, especially the man in delirium. He shrieked and shouted continually for water, throwing the empty cups at me. By the end of the morning I was pretty sick of the ward, the smell, and its animal-like occupants, so I was naturally delighted when a man came in with the welcome news that our section, No. 2, was to go up country next day en route for the front. We were to establish a half-way hospital on Lake Chekmedje, and a field dressing-station behind the Chatalja lines. We were to leave Stamboul early next morning, proceeding by sea to Lake Chekmedje, and that afternoon our baggage party started off for Il Seraglio point, where the baggage was to be left close to the

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

water for the launch to call for in the morning.

Lyon went in charge of one of the loads in a bullock-wagon, and afterwards gave me his account of what occurred, as follows :—

“I started off with my bullock-wagon, turning to the right below the hospital, and proceeding at a walking pace down the hill as far as the railway bridge, where I was held up by an enormous crowd of men crawling slowly up the hill; many were falling down on the ground as they came along, while the track was marked with their prostrate bodies. Some were being assisted along by their companions on either side, as they were hardly able to crawl. A double line of guards prevented anyone from escaping. I was held up for about half an hour, eventually having to make a detour to reach Il Seraglio point, and there saw an extraordinary sight. Men were lying about in all directions, twisted up with agony and with horrible expressions on their faces. Those still alive shouted continually for water. I could do nothing for them, and, leaving the baggage under a guard, returned with my empty

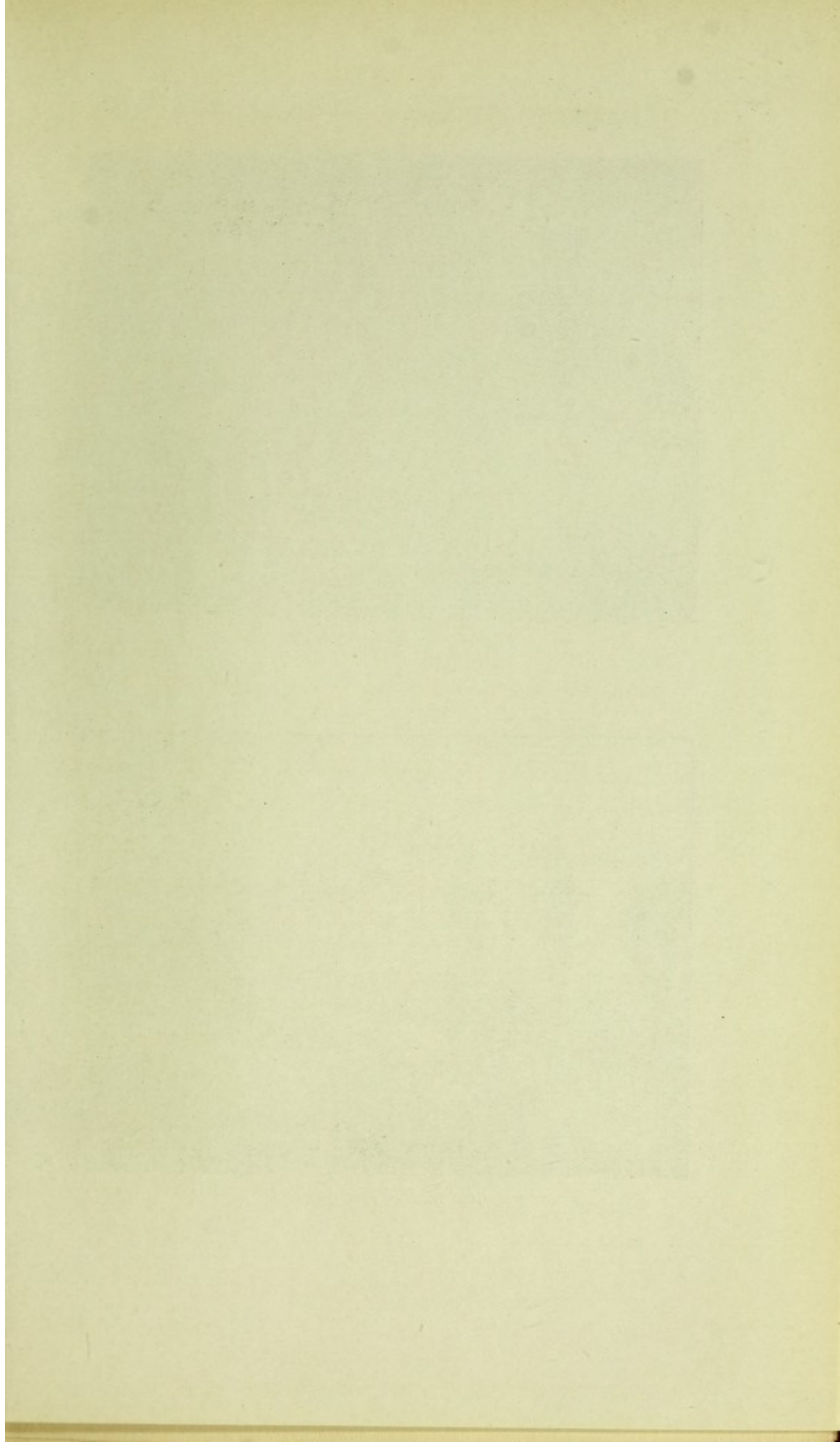
WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

wagon to the hospital, where the news of the arrival of the cholera-stricken troops had forestalled me, and preparations were being made to send immediate assistance."

Meanwhile those of us on duty in the wards had been aware of a dull persistent rumble, which continued all the afternoon, like the sound of distant waves breaking on the seashore. On going outside I saw what I thought at first to be a column of troops on its way to the front. As it drew nearer I noticed that all were unarmed and escorted by a double line of guards with fixed bayonets and rifles carried at the ready.

As the grey-coated throng, their heads enveloped in big hoods, crawled slowly by, I saw the track of bodies they were leaving behind them, and then the horror of the thing dawned upon me. This was no body of men stepping out bravely to the front, but the advance guard of the stricken army, virtually prisoners, which had commenced to invade the town, and I understood that the long and much-dreaded cholera was amongst us.

On they crept, these thousands of broken





A WOUNDED OFFICER AT ALI BEY.



ON LAKE CHEKMEDJE.

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

and dispirited men, dragged from their far-off homes in Asia Minor to a quarrel in which they had no interest, only to fall a victim to the worst scourge of war. Men held each other's hands, sobbing aloud like children; every now and then a man would drop in his tracks and lie there, while his comrades shuffled over him. The officers carried whips, which they used unsparingly on any man who lagged, as one would flog a jaded horse along. The first column passed slowly by and disappeared up the road leading to St. Sophia, which was to be their prison. That ancient and noble pile has witnessed some strange scenes in the course of its tumultuous history, but since the days of Mohammed the conqueror a stranger or more awful scene could not have been beheld than that vast rabble, starving and stricken with disease, shut up like wild beasts, and guarded by a wall of living steel.

By this time it was growing dusk, and I returned to the hospital to find that preparations were being made to send out stretcher parties. Dr. Page, our chief, called for volunteers, getting a ready response, and I am glad to say that every

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

man who could turned out to help. We marched down in the darkness to Il Seraglio point round which they had now placed a cordon. The road from the railway station to the camp was lined with sentries, motionless and with fixed bayonets, to prevent any man getting away, and at the entrance to the camp was a strong guard. Inside the cordon the ground was literally strewn with the dead and dying. It was a ghostly scene. The pitch darkness, lights flashing here and there, and the peculiar volume of sound, continually rising and falling, made by many hundreds of men moaning and calling out for help. We went round in twos with a stretcher and lantern, picking out those still living; then with our burdens we stumbled off through the darkness to the station, tripping over the recumbent forms of the dying as we went along. As we got to the gap in the cordon there was a sudden alarm, men trying to escape in the darkness. An officer whistled, up rushed the guard and went for the dazed prisoners, clubbing them unmercifully with their rifles as they drove them back. On our way we met a fresh stream of men, this

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

time flowing in from the station, where a troop train had just arrived. The scene reminded one very much of the painting of the retreat from Moscow, more especially as the men wore big grey overcoats with the hoods drawn over their faces like those in the picture.

We carried our burden into one of the goods sheds, and here what a sight met our astonished gaze! A big bare shed, dimly lit by oil lanterns, crammed full of bodies, most of them rigid in death. It was impossible to count them, but there could not have been less than five or six hundred men, all huddled on the floor, and closely packed like sardines. I found one man alive, but unable to move, underneath three dead bodies of men who had been carried in after him. We put our man down, only to find that he had died on the stretcher as we came along, so promptly put him outside again to await his burial amongst the quicklime of the common grave pit.

I have never seen a more awful sight than these hundreds of men all lying still in death, with the most ghastly and agonising expressions on their faces, which

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

were of a greenish-grey hue, the features sunken, and the shrivelled lips drawn back over the gums, showing the teeth in a grin of agony.

In the face of these hundreds of dying men, the task of our little contingent seemed to be a hopeless one. Where was the Turkish medical staff?—we saw no sign of it. However, we did our best, and the record of this sent to England by Major Doughty-Wylie will serve as an answer to the unjust accusations made against the Red Cross orderlies at the time by some irresponsible war correspondent;—one of them actually going so far as to write home to his paper, a big London daily, describing a walk through the cholera camp at San Stefano, and how he saw the dead and dying, thrown out of the trains, lying as they fell in the high road and in the ditches, spreading the disease, while the Red Cross orderlies and medical students lounged about at their ease, laughing at and mocking the sick men. However, the conscientious war correspondent must get some news through to his paper, in order to justify his existence, and as, under modern

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

conditions, he is often unable to get the truth, it is quite obvious to those who really know the facts of the case, that in this instance such a report can only be the result of some zealous correspondent allowing himself to be deceived by an overheated imagination.

We had all to be thoroughly sprayed by the disinfecter before we were allowed to pass out of the cordon. As I went through the station I saw a troop train which had just arrived from the front. It was literally crammed with men, who were packed inside the vans like herrings in a barrel, piled up on the roofs, and lashed to the footboards. Many of them were already dead, and, as the ropes which bound them on to the footboards and roof were cut, the bodies fell with dull thuds on to the ground.

A fire had broken out just outside the station amongst the closely packed wooden houses, and that, in Stamboul, invariably means the destruction of at least twenty or thirty other buildings. A huge crowd was standing round, watching the flames in an apathetic way, but not attempting to help, and from time to time figures

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

dashed out of the blaze with their arms full of property or loot.

I watched for some little time, but seeing no signs of the fire brigade I got a horse and, in company with Hallows, a medical student, rode off to Pera to the house of Sir Henry Woods, where we had been invited to dine. On our way across the Galata bridge we heard the sound of trumpets, and there, approaching us at a walking pace, was a most curious cavalcade. In front marched four men with torches, followed by four trumpeters, sounding continuously; after them came what at first looked like a battery of artillery, but turned out to be two fire engines, pulled by teams of four horses on which the drivers were riding. After them came a small manual engine, pulled by what looked like the local football team, bare-headed and bare-kneed, in jerseys and shorts, followed by men with hooks to pull down the houses, more torch-bearers and the usual mob. They did not seem in a hurry to reach the fire, and I was reminded of the remark that the Turk is never seen to hurry, except at a funeral.

HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

We rode on to the house of Woods Pasha, where we had to refuse the dinner, telling him of our experiences inside the cholera cordon. He very kindly lent us two shot guns to take up country with us, and we started back, two men carrying the gun cases for us. On our way through Stamboul we were stopped by a Customs officer, who wanted to know what was in the cases. We kept him talking until our men, who were on foot, had got a good start, and then galloped off, leaving him standing in the road. When we got back to the hospital we found that we were not required to do our turn on baggage guard, for it had been taken off at eleven o'clock by Major Wylie, who had returned from the front. He put a Turkish picket on instead, saying that he preferred to lose the stores altogether rather than let the men run any further risk.

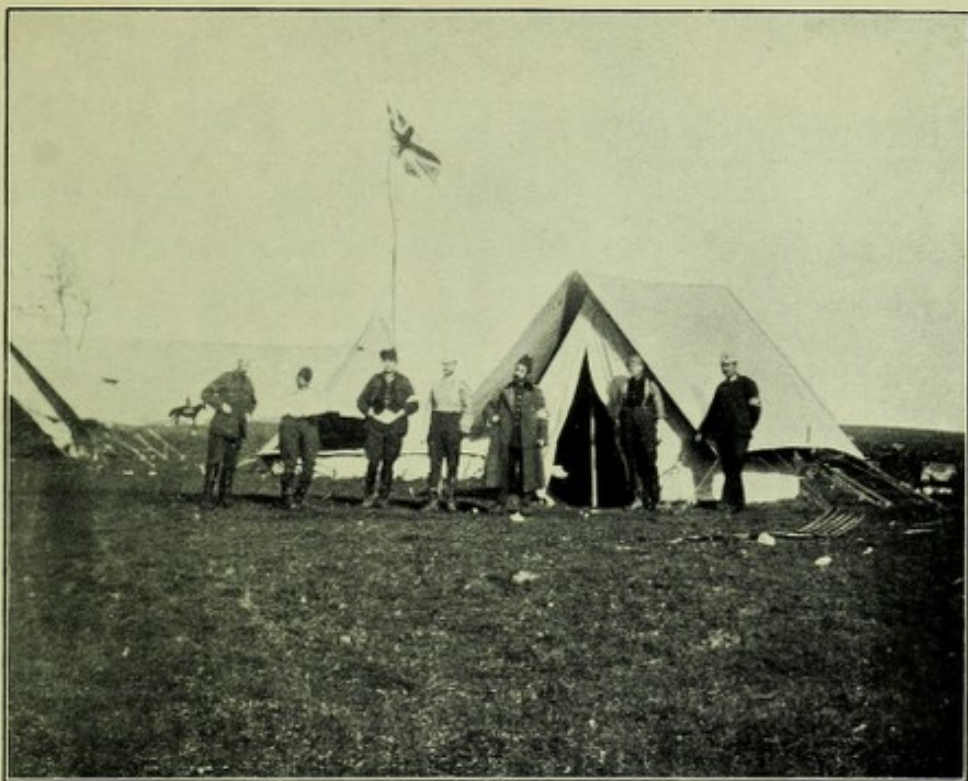
Lyon, however, had gone on guard for two hours earlier in the evening, and seemed to have had quite enough of it. He said: "I left the hospital at seven forty-five, together with another orderly, to do our turn on guard. When we got inside the

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

cordon of sentries I somehow got separated from my companion, and before I realised it, a crowd of men rushed up and mobbed me, trying to seize my water-bottle. Drawing my Browning pistol, I threatened them with it. At the same moment the guard, seeing my plight, rushed in and drove the men back, striking right and left with the butt ends of their rifles.

“Picking my way through the dead and dying, I reached the baggage, where I found my companion vainly trying to drive off the mob surrounding it. We went for them together with boot and fist, and succeeded in making them draw off. The ground was in a filthy state, and, choosing the cleanest spot, we made ourselves as comfortable as we could for the next two hours. I have never spent such a long two hours in my life, and to make matters worse I had left my overcoat behind, and it began to grow very cold.

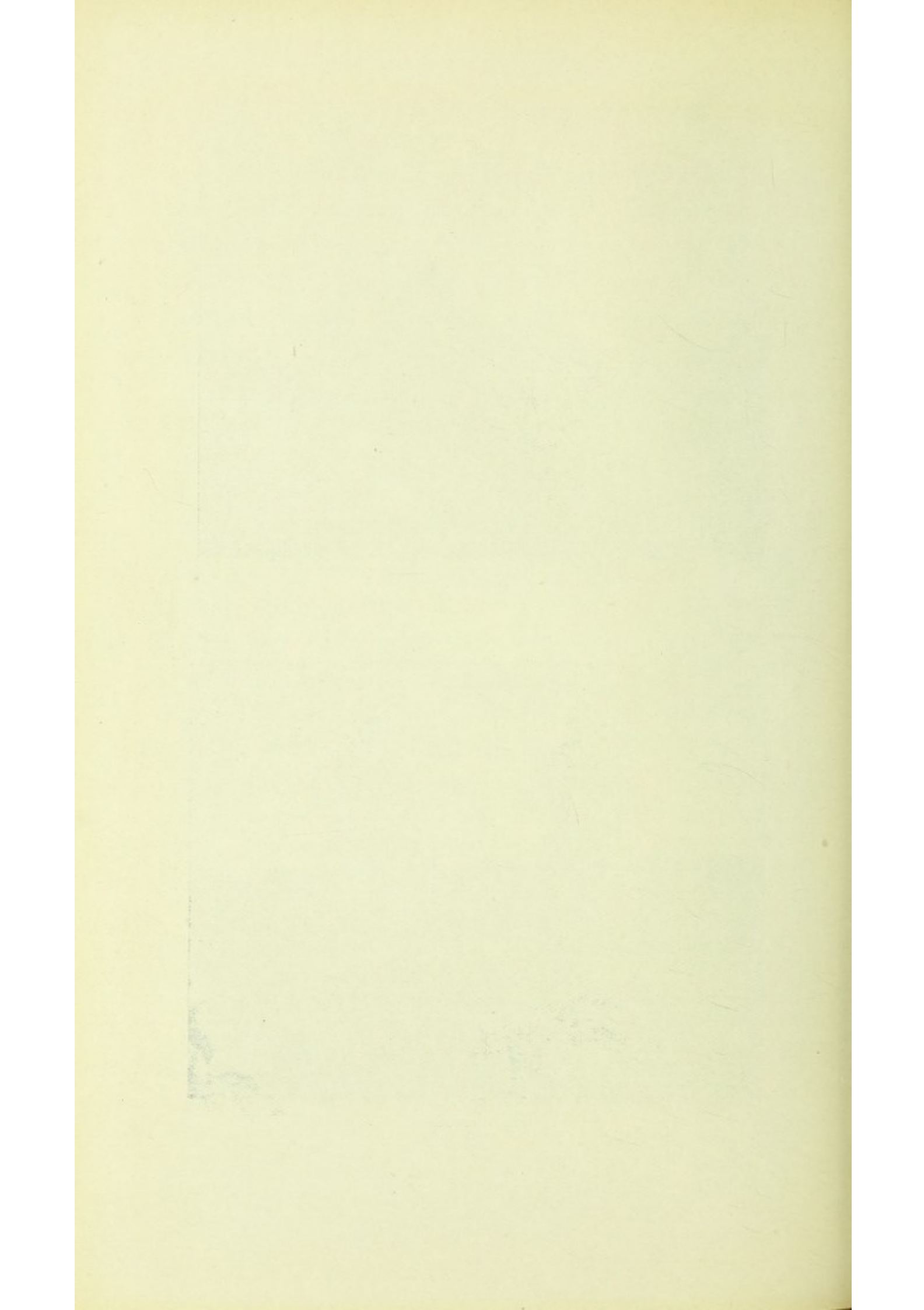
“We were presently cheered by the band of H.M.S. *Hampshire*, lying a quarter of a mile away off the point, and it helped us to forget the groans of the dying men all around. What a contrast : here in the dark-



THE CAMP STAFF AT TASHAGIL.



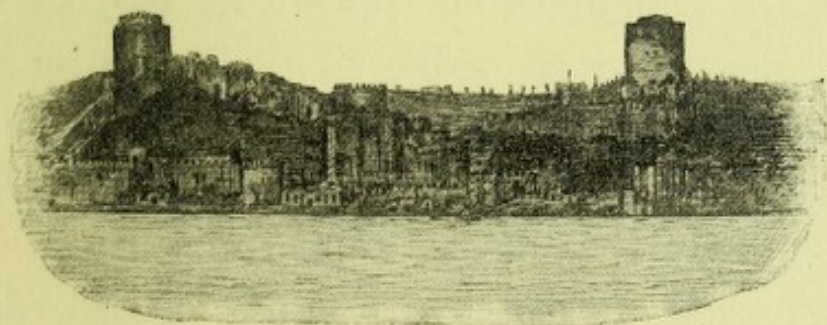
THE AUTHORS.



HOW THE CHOLERA CAME TO STAMBOUL

ness we two standing silently on guard, surrounded by the shadowy forms of the dying, lanterns flashing hither and thither, giving a ghostly effect to the whole scene. There, close by lay the British warship, a blaze of lights, her band playing the latest musical comedy airs. But then, we were in a land of contrasts, where one steps out of a motor car, the essence of modernism, into a street which might have come out of the *Arabian Nights*, where the cloth coat and bowler hat mingle with the caftan and turban. I was heartily thankful when our reliefs arrived at ten o'clock."

Thus ended a day which we shall long remember, marking our first introduction to the dreaded scourge which destroys armies, and with which we afterwards came to be only too familiar.





CHAPTER V

GOING UP COUNTRY : STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

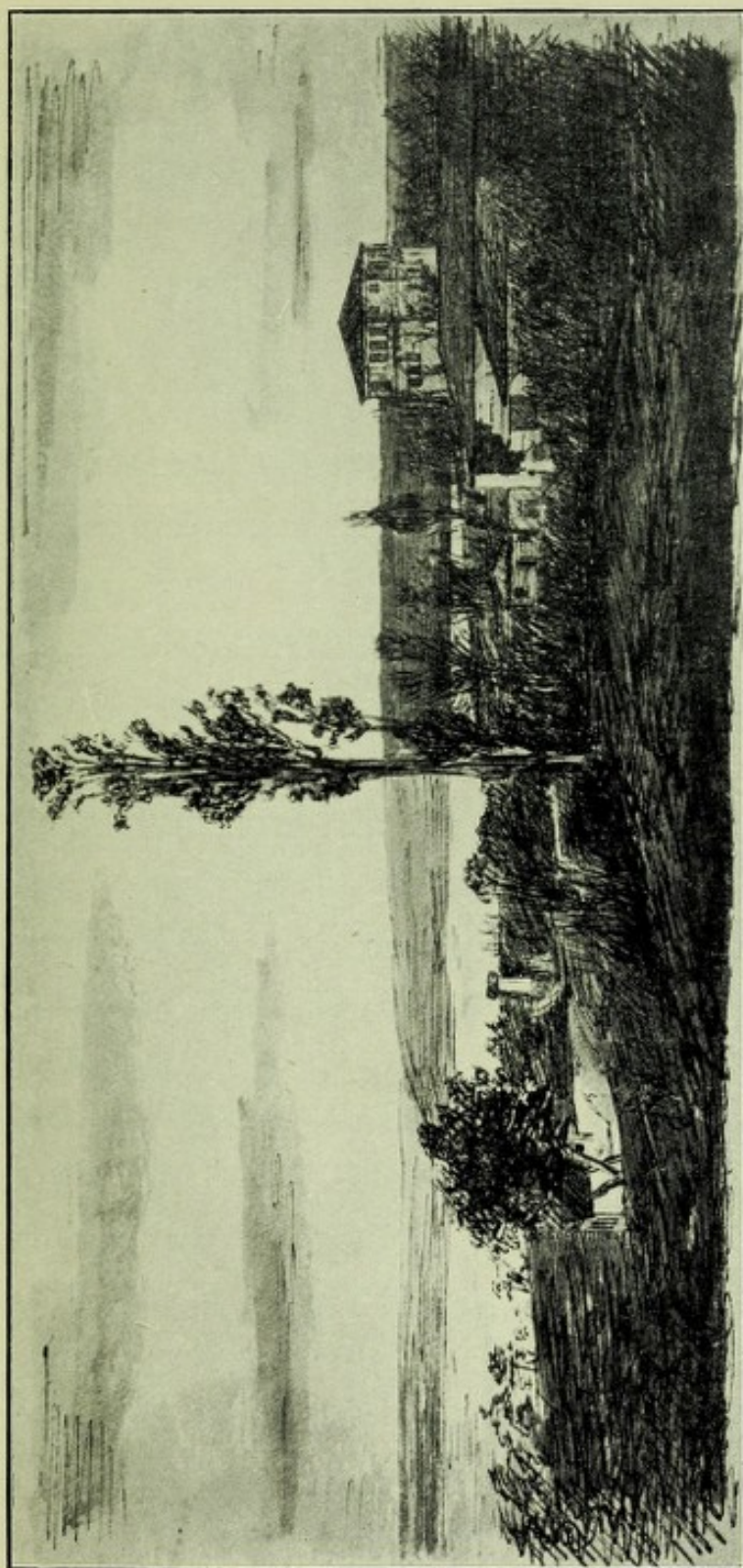
ON 16th November, No. 2 unit paraded sixteen strong with three doctors, and we set off at 7.30 a.m. with a bullock-wagon and an escort of two of the Turkish gendarmerie. We heard that there had been a riot in St. Sophia the night before, some



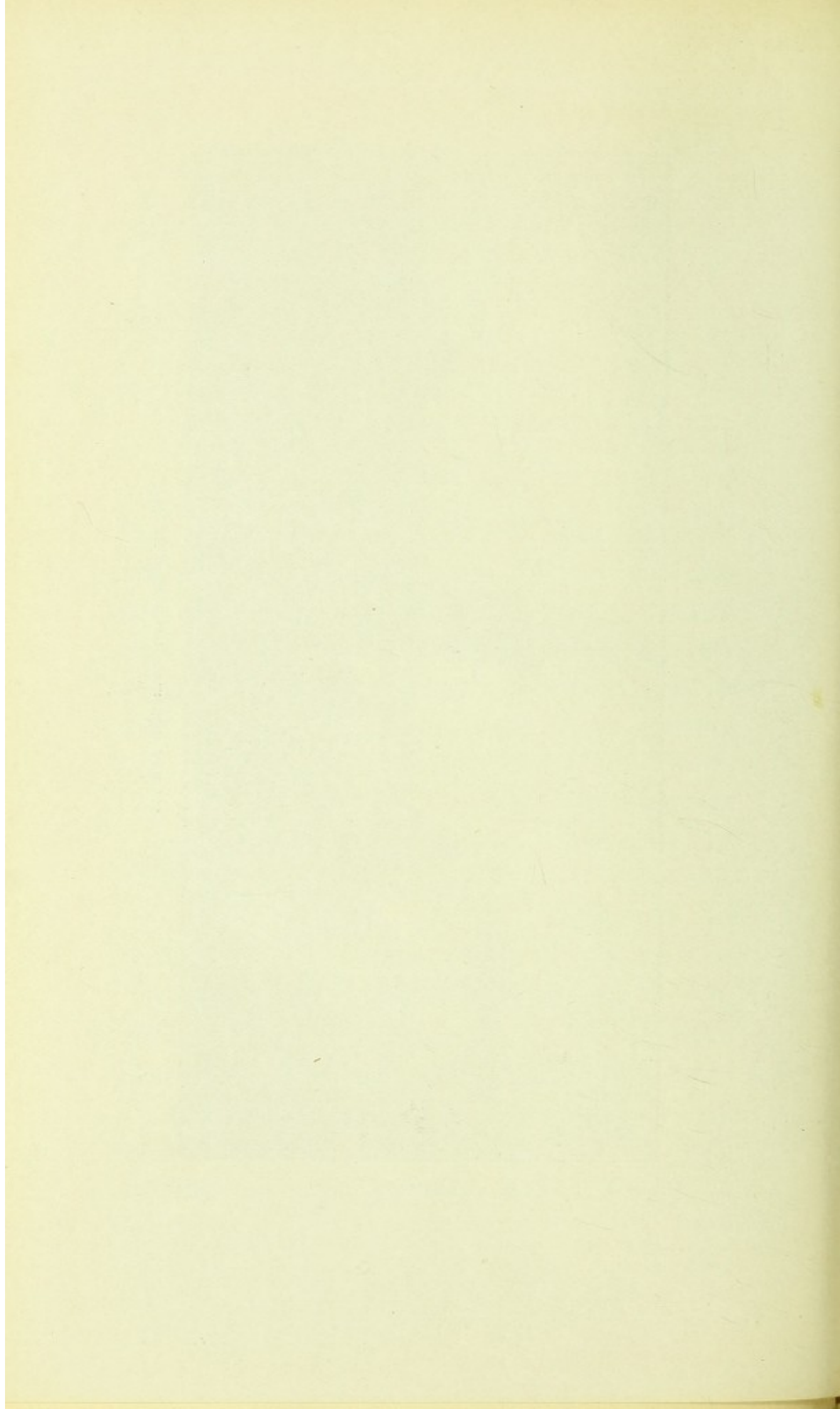
of the starving prisoners attempting to break out.

We had to make a considerable detour to get to the Customs quay in order to avoid the mob of refugees and soldiers, all of whom were starving, and whose temper was uncertain.

On arrival at the Customs quay we embarked on a Government launch, and, towing a large pinnace, sailed round to



ALI BEY HOSPITAL, LAKE CHEKMEDJE.



STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

Il Seraglio point to pick up our baggage. As we approached the scene of our labours of the previous day, we found the point crowded with men, of whom many more had arrived overnight. The place was a vast cholera camp. Many were sitting or lying on the ground, while others wandered dejectedly about. There must have been two or three thousand of them. As we reached the shore, a number rushed the pinnace, and about fifty succeeded in getting on board but were driven off by the gendarmerie and sailors.

We landed a party to get the baggage, which was completely hidden by the bodies lying on it. One old man crawled down to the launch, begging for water, of which we had a small keg on board; but we had to refuse him, or we should have had the whole mob on board demanding it. We hurried over the loading, and it was with feelings of relief that we pushed off. I have never seen a more dejected or miserable lot of men, whose continual cry was "Give us water; Give us bread," and the awful part of it was that there seemed to be nobody to help them, except a few dis-

tracted Turkish doctors running aimlessly about.

It was a lovely day, quite summerlike, and we were able to see the extent of the huge city of Stamboul as we sailed past it, looking so beautiful with its white houses, mosques, and palaces, all glistening in the morning sun: but, alas! like all Eastern cities, it was a whited sepulchre, a close inspection revealing filth and decay. On the way we were sprayed with some compound of mercury to guard against any infection from the cholera. Passing the crumbling walls of Yedi Kouleh, or the Seven Towers, of such bloodstained memory, we left the city behind and sailed along the coast past San Stefano, famous for its treaty, and to become still more famous from the cholera horrors to be enacted there. In the distance we could make out the monument erected by Scobeloff in 1878 to commemorate his advance, almost to the gates of Stamboul; and now it appeared as if history would repeat itself, and the invading Christians recapture the ancient capital of the Byzantine Empire.

We fed in the launch, so as to

STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

save time, and Lyon and I made our first acquaintance with a service ration, on which we were to live until we could get supplies up. It consists of a tin of "bully beef," six hard biscuits, a piece of cheese, a cake of chocolate, some lumps of sugar, cubes of Oxo and compressed tea. This was divided between two of us, and was to last a day. Judging by the state of the cheese and tea, both of which were absolutely green and mouldy, and quite uneatable, I should not have been surprised to learn that they had been in stock since the Boer War.

We arrived off the bar at Lake Chekmedje early in the afternoon, and as the water was too shallow to go in close, we had to take our kit into a small pier by rowing boat. Luckily it was a lovely warm day and the Sea of Marmora was like a mill pond. About half a mile off lay a Turkish warship, evidently watching the Bulgarian position. We spread all our kit out in the sun and thoroughly disinfected it with the sprayer, after which we proceeded to carry it over the quarter mile of loose sand which separated the lake from the sea. In

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

this everyone took a hand, including Major Doughty-Wylie and Captain Deedes of the Turkish gendarmerie.

It was a deserted spot, with no sign of life except a few cholera camps in the vicinity. Near by was an old disused powder factory, on the main line from Stamboul to Adrianople, along which presently came a troop train, as usual crowded with men. On this train, men were sitting in the cab of the engine, on the tender, on the buffers between the carriages, and on the roofs, while men who had died on the way were lashed to the footboards. It seemed dreadful to think of these trains carrying disease to Stamboul, although the sick had to be taken away from the front somehow and somewhere; but why to Stamboul?

After we had placed our kit on the shore of the lake, ready to load up, we were allowed a welcome bathe in the sea, which, though it was the middle of November, was just as warm as it is during an average English summer. While we were in the water the cruiser *Hamidieh* opened fire on the Bulgarian position on the hills over

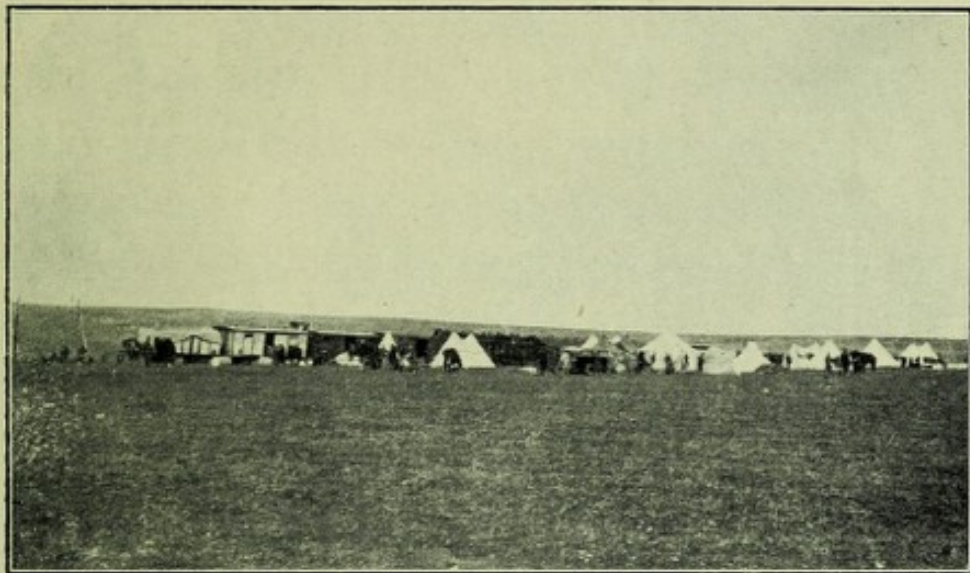
STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

Boyuk Chekmedje, but we could not see if any damage was done,—probably not, as accurate shooting is not a feature of the Turkish navy. In fact, it was said that during the Bulgarian attack on Rodosto, the Turkish ships lying off the town in trying to drop shells over the hill up which the Bulgars were advancing, fired short, doing great execution amongst the redifs who, lining the crest, were bravely resisting the enemy's attack.

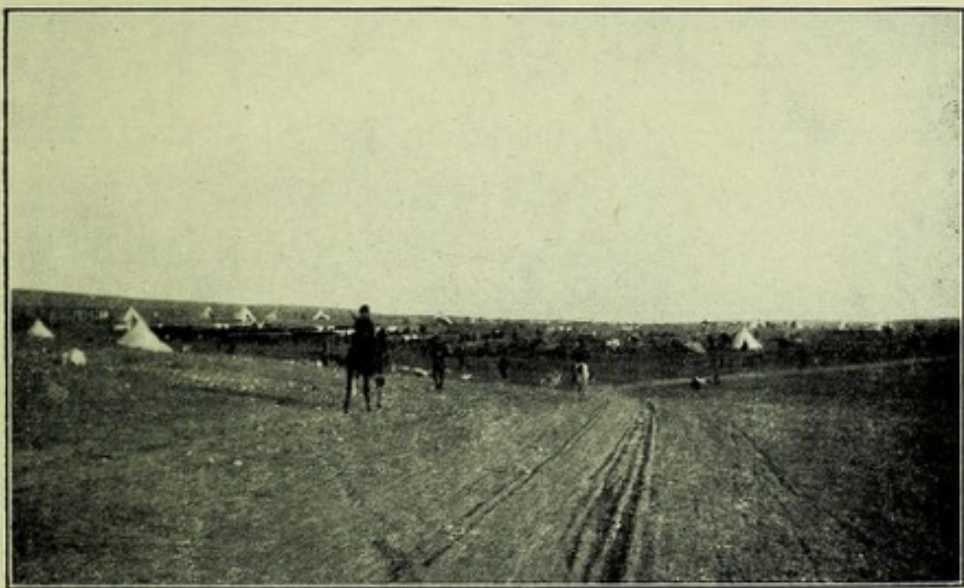
It was growing dusk as we finally started off, after much preparation and fuss on the part of the Turkish engineer; the launch towing three heavy-laden boats. The way lay up a narrow winding river, and the course was rendered more difficult by repeated stakes and nets, placed across the river by the fishermen, leaving only a narrow passage through which to pass. We passed the little Greek fishing village of Kutchuk Chekmedje and emerged into a broad lake. I shall always remember that sail in the gloaming; the broad lake, surrounded by low barren hills, its surface unruffled, save for occasional flocks of coot and wild duck, which fled at our approach,

making a noise like a racing motor-boat as they flew along, half in and half out of the water, the rays of the setting sun dyeing everything crimson, and over everything a spirit of peace, making it hard to realise that we were in a state of war, and that there, over the hills, only a few miles distant, lay two conflicting armies preparing for the death struggle.

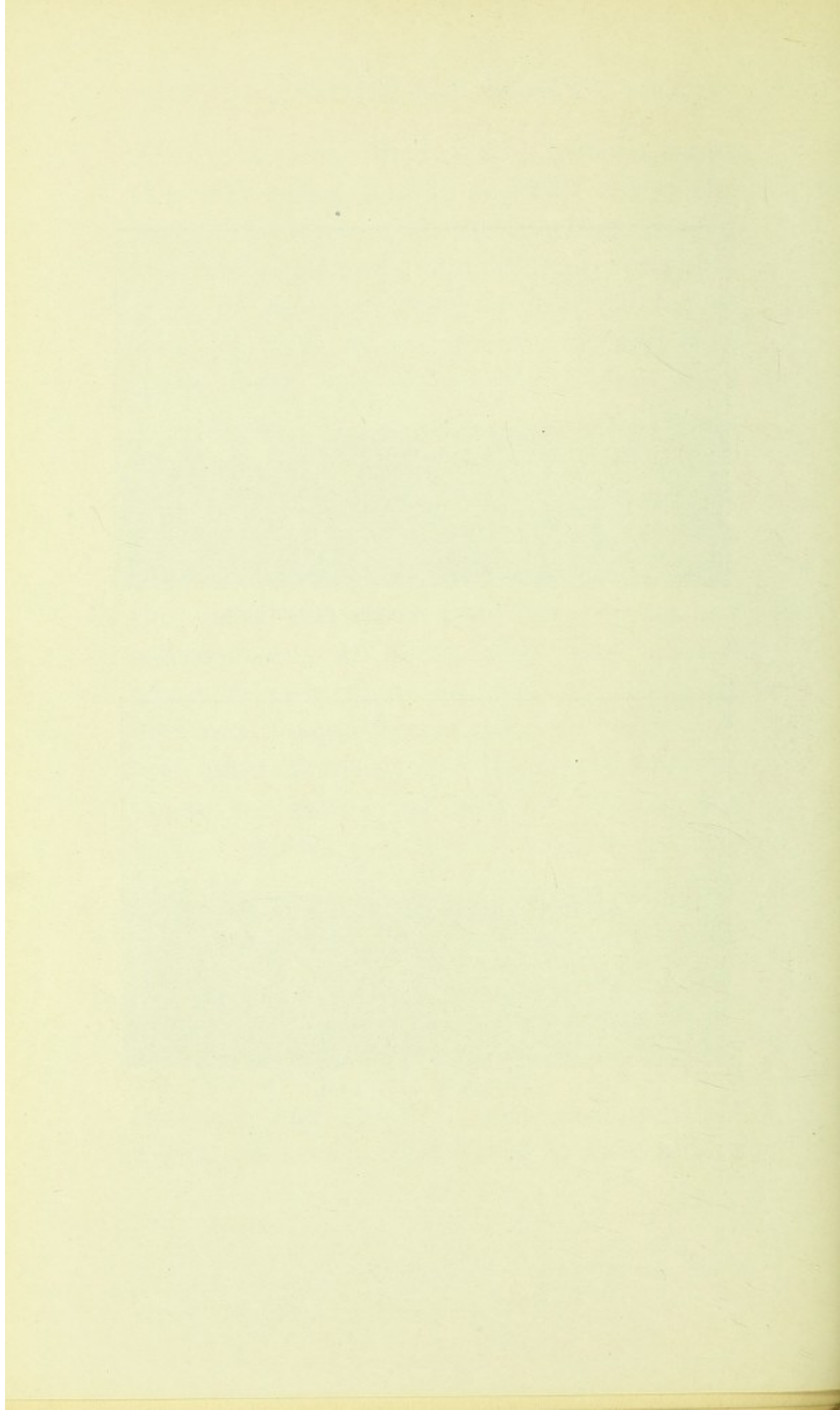
It was quite dark when we reached the farm at Ali Bey, where our hospital was to be, and as we drew inshore there ensued the usual excitement and fuss, to the accompaniment of those yells and excited commands which seem an indispensable part of Turkish aquatic manœuvres. We found that our quarters were in the farm buildings, where we were given a small room for the night. Before turning in, a message was sent to us by Major Doughty-Wylie, to the effect that there were Turkish women in the farm, and we were on no account to look at them or go near their quarters, so as to avoid offending the susceptibilities of the old farmer, Sali Effendi. We turned in early, and spent a most uncomfortable night. We were not allowed to have any of



NAZIM PASHA'S HEADQUARTERS AT HADEM KEUL.



THE CAMP AT KARAGATCH.



STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

our kit in with us for fear of infection, and we slept in our clothes on the bare boards.

I woke up early, feeling bitterly cold, and turned out with my pipes to play *réveillé* at 6 a.m. Soon after, a dull rumble was heard, which gradually increased in volume, until by 8 a.m. there was a regular cannonade. The great Bulgarian advance on the Chatalja lines had begun. I counted thirty reports in a minute, and there was a tremendous noise, which continued up till 6 p.m., when the darkness put an end to the fight.

We were hard at work all day long bringing up our stores from the lake, and putting up tents, building latrines, and making the hospital ship-shape. It was one of the hardest day's work I remember, all manual labour, and I was quite surprised to learn that it was Sunday. The farm in which we were quartered had once been a royal pleasaunce, and possessed a fine three-storied house, also a Turkish bath, both in a very shaky condition, and falling into decay. The place was built round a square courtyard, the farm buildings forming two sides of the square, the house another, and

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

the fourth a high wall. The buildings were very strong, and the manner in which the place was built looked as if it were made to resist attacks. The house, as usual, was filthy dirty, and we cleaned it up, and hung two flags out of the windows—a Red Crescent and a Union Jack. We also erected two flag-staffs on the hill beyond the hospital, on which we flew the jack and the red crescent, both as a mark for incoming patients, and as a protection against any Bulgarian advance, which would pass close to us, although I do not suppose that at the present long range in modern warfare they would have been distinguishable.

In the evening four patients, two officers and two men, were brought in on bullock-wagons from the railway station at Sparta Keui. All the wounded were brought down country in this way, and those with fractured limbs must have suffered agonies from the jolting of the carts over the rough ground. The new arrivals told us that the Bulgarians had attacked the Turkish outer line of defence, but had been twice repulsed with great slaughter. We had erected receiving tents

STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

for the patients, where we dressed their wounds and examined them for any infectious disease before carrying them into the hospital. It was hard work carrying a loaded stretcher upstairs, as they were dark, steep, and narrow, and there were no lights. I turned in early, being very tired, but was called at 2 a.m. to take night duty in the ward.

It was rather a weird experience, sitting up in one of the bare empty rooms of that old shaky house during the small hours of the morning with the wind howling about it, alone, save for the company of three wounded men. One of them was a Circassian named Mukhtar Bey, leader of a volunteer regiment of Circassian horse. He had been wounded by a sabre cut across his foot, and he was very sad about the death of his horse, which he mourned continually. The presence of the Circassian troops, who were splendid fighters, created a very good impression amongst the Turkish soldiery, and helped a great deal to restore their morale. Indeed, the way in which the Moslem peoples sank their differences and rallied round the banners of the Prophet is

a striking proof of the solidarity of Islam. As an example of this, one had only to look at the Arabs in the Yemen, always rebellious, who not only suspended hostilities, thus releasing the closely pressed Turkish troops, but sent contingents to help them, together with the Circassians, Russian subjects, many of whom came over at their own expense, and the wild and lawless Kurds coming willingly from their mountain fastnesses, all eager to come to grips with the infidels.

Old Mukhtar Bey and I soon became very friendly, and when he heard that I came from the Scottish Highlands claimed kinship, as he came from the mountains of the Caucasus. We used to have long talks in French, and he told me that his name was only an assumed one, a practice amongst Circassians, as their own were absolutely unpronounceable to a foreigner. He was very bitter against the Russians and Germans, and used to say that Great Britain was the only real friend of Islam. I used often to play my pipes to him, which, being a mountaineer, he greatly appreciated.

STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

I remember one day he told me how much he admired our foreign policy. "But," I said, "we have not got one." He answered, "Oh yes, a very fine one: England appears always to be asleep, indifferent to everything, but while the nations quarrel she steps in quietly and occupies a place which she never gives up again." He gave as an instance the British occupation of Egypt and Cyprus.

It was difficult to get our stores up from Stamboul, and quite impossible in rough weather, and for the first few days we were on very short rations. We lived practically on bread and jam, and not too much of that, as the ration, half a loaf of bread between two, had to last from breakfast to breakfast. Lyon and I, having huge appetites, used to dispose of ours before midday, and we had to beg, borrow, or steal, or go hungry. We bought a rice pudding one day from old Sali Effendi, to whom the farm belonged, for which he charged us fifteen piastres (half a crown), and though according to Oriental standards it may have been a very nice pudding, to ours it was uneatable; and, hungry as we were, we

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

gave it away to some of the gendarmes who used to hang round the quartermaster's store in hopes of picking up some unconsidered trifles. We had about a dozen of these gendarmes with us, mostly Greeks: they were smarter and cleaner than any soldiers we had yet seen, in their neat blue uniforms and black, red-topped kalpaks, but a lazier and more childish set I have never come across.

There were some sailors too, belonging to our launch, one a huge man, whom we christened "Sinbad," a most truculent-looking ruffian with a fastidious appetite. One morning when we were all on short rations, he entered the quartermaster's store asking for jam. The quartermaster explained to him that no one was allowed jam that day, whereupon Sinbad flew in a rage, and hurled his breakfast on the floor, which the sergeant-major took pride in keeping clean. The next moment out flew Sinbad with the sergeant-major's boot behind him, and it was a very meek and hungry sailor who came to draw his rations next morning.

We had a great many visitors, including

STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

Captain Deedes of the gendarmerie ; Rustem Bey, ex-Turkish representative to Montenegro ; and Mr. Ernest Bennet, ex-M.P. for the Woodstock division of Oxfordshire, fresh from the Tripoli campaign, on which he has written such an interesting book.

There was very little firing on 18th and 19th November, but on the evening of the 18th we got another wounded officer in. He said that there had been some tremendous hand-to-hand fighting, and that he had been without food for three days. Most of our patients at Ali Bey were officers or warrant officers, and were very little trouble to nurse : a pleasant change after our experiences with the half-civilised Anatolian redifs at Stamboul.

On 19th November two of the wounded officers left for the base hospital in Stamboul, which they seemed very anxious to reach. We told them that it was no better than Ali Bey, and full of private soldiers, but they had got it into their heads that it was a sort of El Dorado, and go they would. We carried them down to the pier which we had built, and put them on board the

little launch, and they departed under the charge of one of the medical students. That evening a doctor and a medical student arrived from Stamboul with fresh supplies. They told us that the position in Stamboul had become more serious, and the warships had landed armed parties for the protection of the Europeans. Our friends in the *Weymouth* had moved round to San Stefano, where they were guarding a girls' school. We also heard that the cholera prisoners inside St. Sophia, who were almost starving, had mutinied, and some had succeeded in breaking through the guards and getting outside. It was a critical moment, but an officer went for them with his whip, lashing them vigorously, and turned them all except a tall gaunt Anatolian, who stood his ground for a few minutes, but the cruel lash curling round his face was too much for him, and he turned and staggered back. The large crowd assembled outside were greatly incensed, and being urged on by the priests, would have done some damage had not the guard advanced, and seizing the priests bundled them off without ceremony.

STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

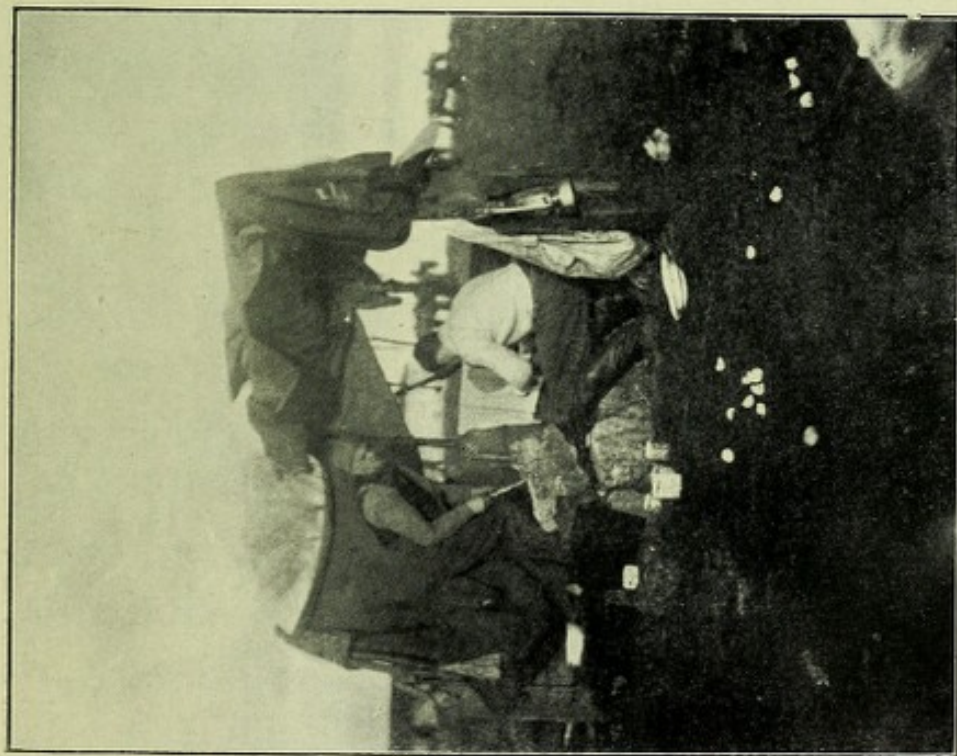
A brisk cannonade commenced about 5 a.m. on the morning of the 20th, but died away after an hour or so, as it grew light. Mukhtar Bey, the Circassian officer, left us for Stamboul. Our carpenter had made him a rough crutch, on which he was able to hobble about, and was delighted to get out into the sun again. He was in great spirits, and very keen to get back to the fighting line. I took a photograph of him as he left. Two or three battalions of infantry passed during the morning on their way to the front. They marched in very open order, and there seemed to be a good many stragglers. At 2 p.m. the guns recommenced, and the firing was heavier than ever. The noise from the big guns was tremendous, and there was a continual rattle of musketry. Another Bulgarian advance was in progress, but was unsuccessful.

We lived very healthy lives up here, getting up with the daylight, and turning in when it was dark, and if anything was wanting, it was owing to the shortness of rations. We had no butter or sugar, and not much bread. We used to go out with

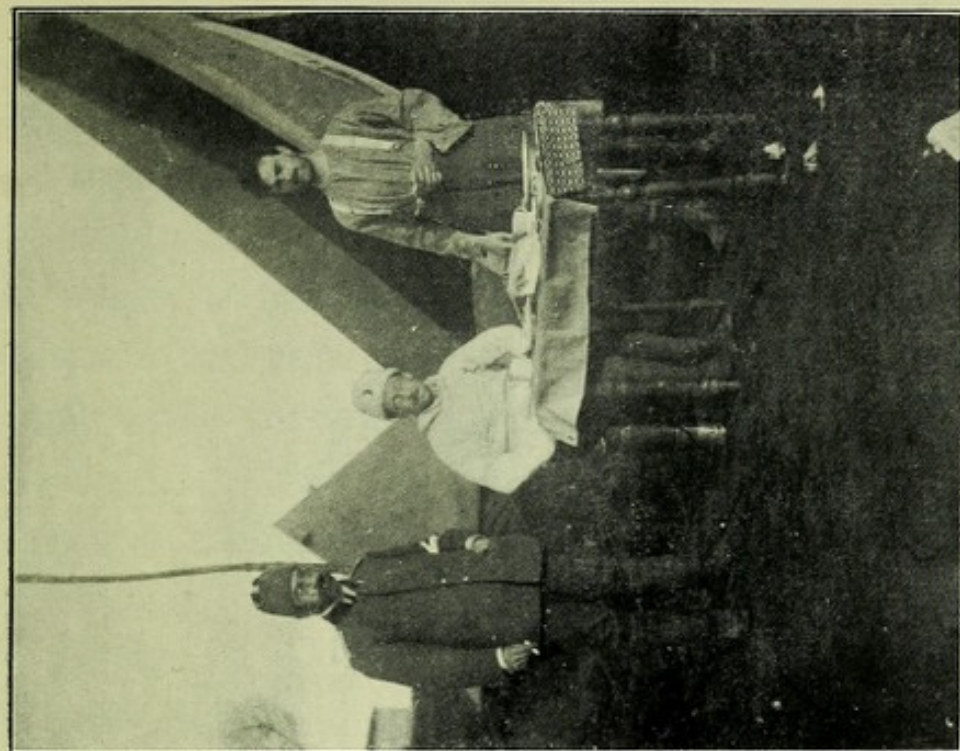
WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

the guns to supplement the larder, but only got a few coot, which were not nice to eat, being tough and of a fishy flavour. We were able to buy some sheep from the farmer, and presented one to the gendarmes, as it was the feast of Bairam. One of our men, an ex-Stock Exchange clerk, made an excellent butcher, having learnt the trade from his father, and took quite a pride in his work.

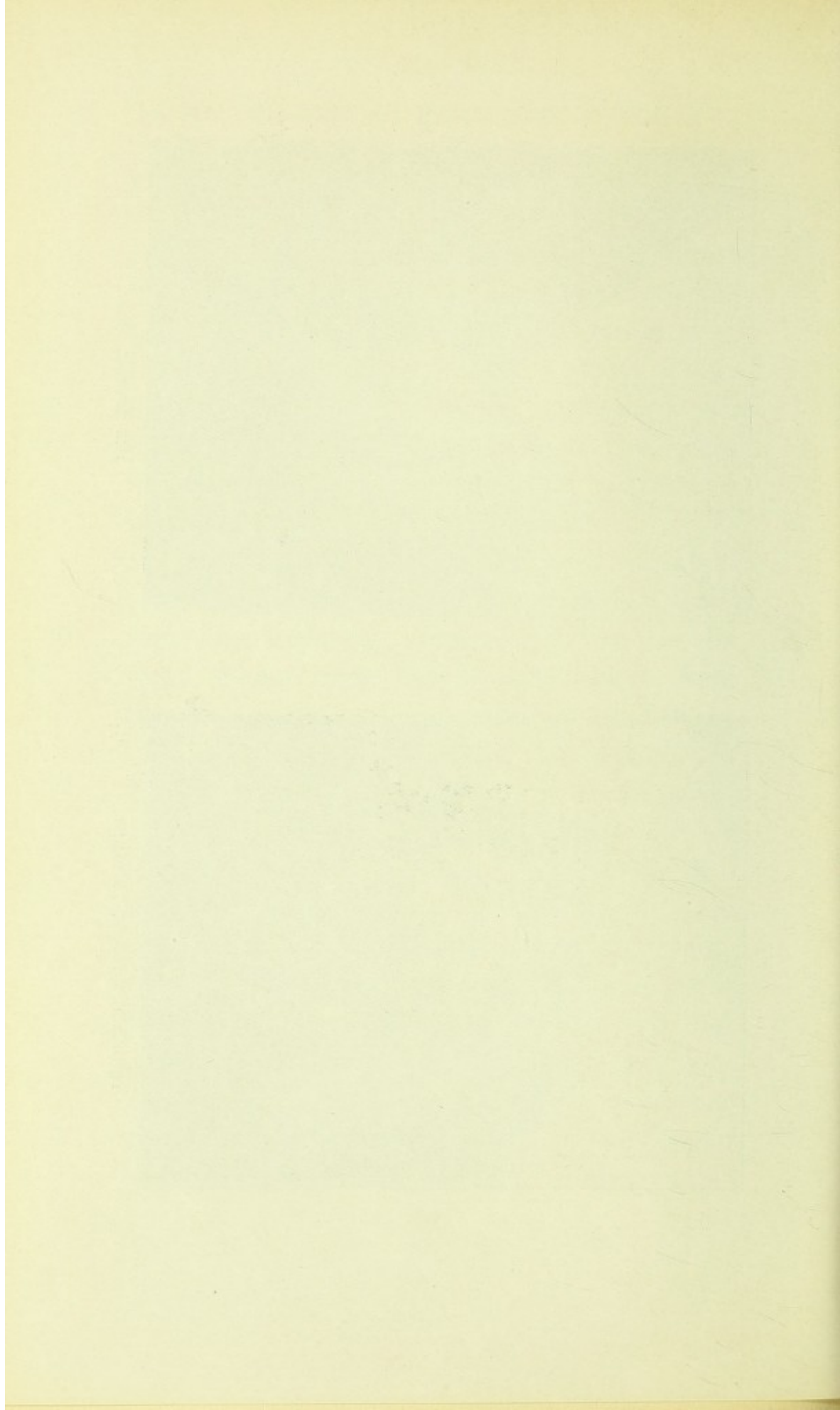
On 21st November we heard that a party of six, consisting of a doctor, a dresser and four orderlies, were to proceed to the front, where they were to establish a field dressing-station, and to our great delight Lyon and I were included in this party. That afternoon, in company with a doctor, I rode out to Sparta Keui on the railway line. With the exception of one or two troop trains which passed us, as usual laden with sick men, the only signs of life about were the sentries, standing motionless along the line as far as one could see. We had quite good ponies, country breeds, and very willing. They do not trot, but go either at a fast amble or a canter. They both had chaplets of blue beads on their fore-



THE FIELD KITCHEN, TASHAGILL.



THE MEDICAL STAFF.



STAMBOUL TO LAKE CHEKMEDJE

heads, presumably to keep off the evil eye, and one had a Turkish saddle with a high pommel and shovel-like stirrups. It proved too much for the doctor with me, and he ended in a bed of thistles. We changed horses after this mishap, and I must say I never had a more uncomfortable ride, sitting hunched up in the saddle like an Arab, with the ridiculously short stirrup leathers which the Turks affect.

As we rode back we met one of the dressers, who had been down to Stamboul with some wounded two days previously. He was riding in on a small pony, followed by two tired and dusty soldiers. He told us he had come round by launch as far as the bar, where he demanded a horse. How he got one I don't know, as he could not speak a word of Turkish. However, he managed to make them understand somehow, and they gave him an old pony, on which he started off round the lake escorted by two soldiers. After leaving the village he tried to give his escort the slip, and galloped off; but they promptly opened fire on him, the bullets coming so unpleasantly close that he deemed it prudent

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

to halt and let them come up, on which they grinned and became quite friendly again.

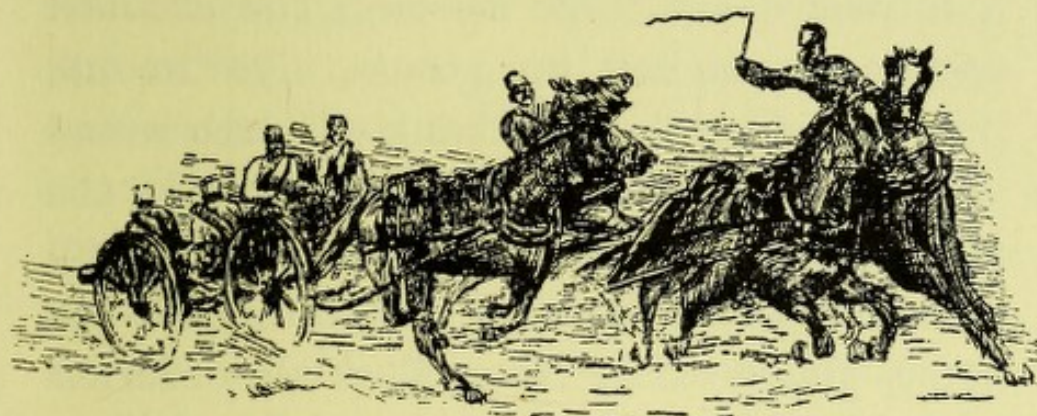
We had some more wounded in on 21st November—two men and one officer; both the men were seriously wounded and very dirty. We put their clothes out on the grass, and put the disinfectant spray on them. I don't think I have ever seen so many fleas on any man's clothes before; one shirt was simply black with them, all hopping in the sun.

It was rumoured that the Turks had gained a big victory, and that the Bulgarians were retreating and concentrating in the hills above Chatalja.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIELD DRESSING-STATION IN THE CHATALJA LINES

NEXT day we were astir early, and started off with three bullock-wagons and an escort of gendarmerie. The way lay over rough and hilly country, barren and wild, but possessed of a certain charm, with the Sea



of Marmora just visible in the distance, reminding one of the Sussex downs. We marched most of the way, preferring that to the jolting of the springless wagons as they lumbered along the apology for a track. We met several belated bands of

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

refugees trekking towards Stamboul with their wagons and cattle, the men carrying long antiquated guns slung across their backs. Our destination was a farm, named Tash Agil, a mile or two from the headquarters of Nazim Bey, the Turkish principal medical officer at Kara Agatch on the left of the lines.

We arrived at midday, and spent some time selecting a site for the camp. We discovered that there had been cholera at the farm, and the ground around it was very dirty and littered with the refuse of a former camp. We selected the cleanest spot and pitched our tents, five in all, putting a trench and a bank of earth round each one to keep out the draught. In the afternoon a Turkish doctor rode up on an antiquated hair-trunk which he called his horse, followed by two Turkish orderlies with his kit. He introduced himself as Rechid Bey, and had been sent down by Nazim Bey to keep an eye on us. The weather grew colder, and owing to the wind and rain we could not get our fire to burn, so turned in after a most uninteresting supper off the remains of our service rations,

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

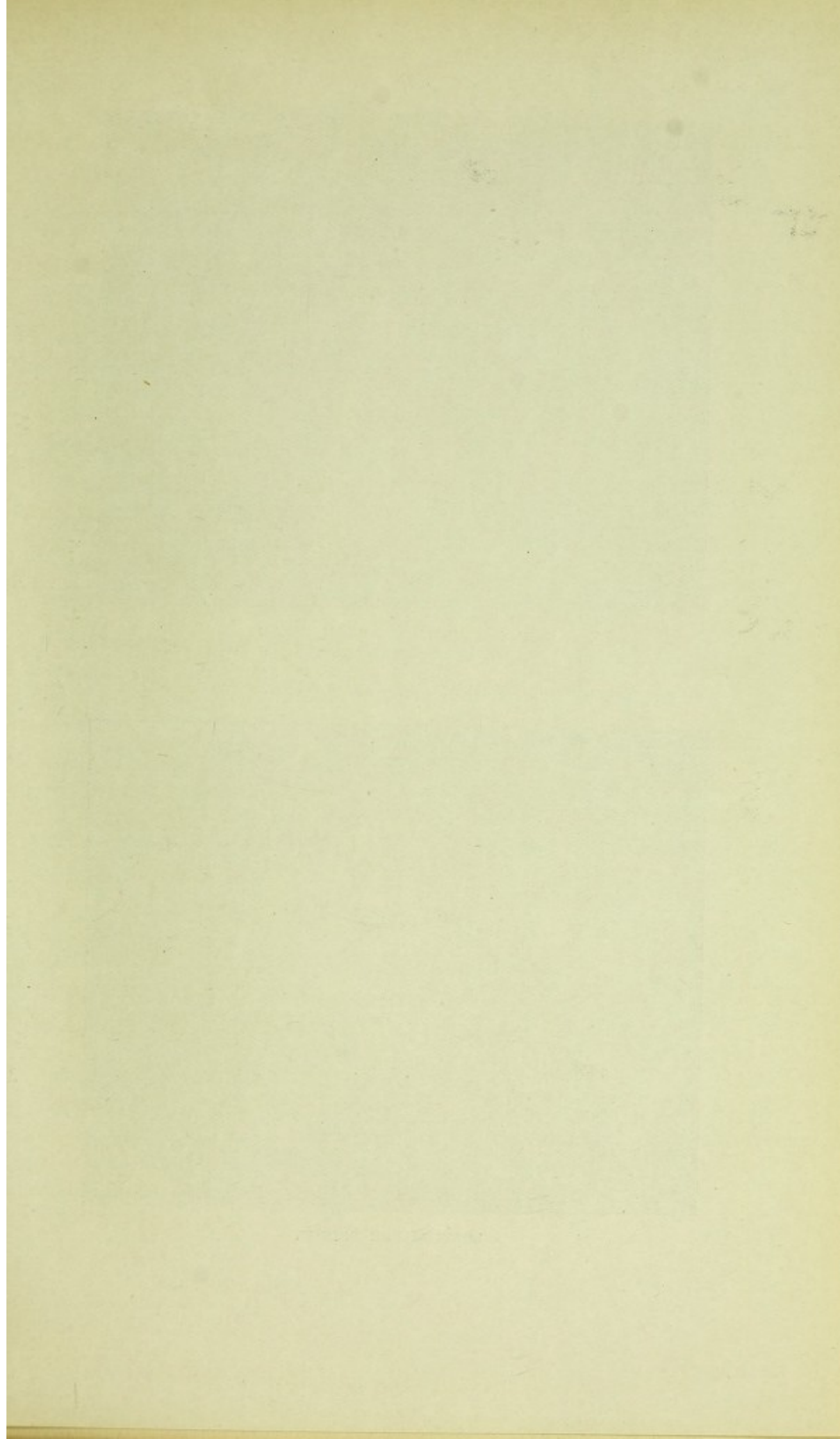
washed down by water from our water-bottles.

We were awakened twice in the night,—first by the “pi” dogs sniffing round the tents in search of food, and later on by shots from our sentries, as a warning to any curious night wanderers. I spent a most uncomfortable night on the damp ground, and woke up early with cramp in the stomach. We turned out, and got a fire going, on which we were able to boil some water. It was intensely cold, and I don’t think many of us bothered to wash much that morning, or for that matter on any succeeding morning, as the nearest water was some distance off in the farmyard.

Our camp was pitched in a most bleak-looking spot on top of a wind-swept hill, almost devoid of vegetation except for a solitary tree or two. A few hundred yards away lay the farm, a most disreputable and tumbledown-looking building. We had no wood for the fire, and nothing to protect it from the wind, so I took two gendarmes and went off to see what I could find in the farm. It was the usual type, the ramshackle buildings all falling to pieces, built round a

dirty courtyard, in the middle of which was a fountain. The place seemed to be deserted save for the fierce-looking, half-starved pariah dogs which wandered disconsolately about.

Some of the doors in the building were in a fairly good state of preservation, and these we determined to have. I set to work with an axe and soon had the first door down. We found ourselves inside a filthy room in which was a pile of wood, a lucky find. The gendarmes entered into the spirit of the thing, and speedily chopped down four more doors, when suddenly a most ferocious-looking scoundrel appeared. He was armed to the teeth with a Martini-Henry rifle, knife, and revolver, and wore a coat on the collar of which was written the word "Inspector." At first he seemed inclined to show fight, but, seeing we were three to one and all armed, he evidently thought better of it. He told us that he was an inspector, left in charge of the deserted farms in the neighbourhood, and that we must not touch anything; but we smoothed him down with backsheesh, in the form of tobacco, and he became quite





REFUGEE CHILDREN FROM USKUB.



LEAVING FOR BEIKOS.

friendly, offering to show us where we could get some more doors. He was an Arnaut or Moslem Albanian, a most truculent-looking fellow, but who improved on acquaintance and soon became quite friendly with us, taking up his quarters in our camp and doing himself well. While we were engaged in chopping the doors and window frames off, the farmer himself appeared with his family in a great state of excitement. I was most surprised, as I had thought that the farm was empty; anyhow, I refused to surrender the doors and marched off with them to our camp, where we rigged up a sort of hut round the camp-fire.

Meanwhile Lyon had been enjoying himself hugely in the farmyard, doing great execution amongst the fowls with his Browning pistol, aided by the perfidious Arnaut inspector, who had now thrown in his lot with us, as the stronger side. We hung the chickens in our larder, a tree by the camp, well out of the way of the prowling dogs, and put a fatigue party on to clean up the camp.

Later on, Major Doughty-Wylie and Rustem Bey rode up to visit us, and to

them went the farmer with his tale of woe, upon which a board was held. We were paraded and asked if we knew anything about it, and it was no use saying we didn't, for there were the chickens hanging from the branch of the tree, swaying accusingly in the wind, and there, as large as life, were the doors built round the field kitchen. We explained that we had no idea that the farm was inhabited, and put the blame on the Arnaut inspector, who merely grinned wickedly and shrugged his shoulders. Major Wylie gave the farmer's wife some money for the loss of the doors and chickens, but the farmer himself, a Turkish Bulgarian, did not get much sympathy from the Turkish officers, one of them telling him that he had no right to any doors and chickens in war-time, or to his house, and that he was lucky to be alive; and so the matter was settled.

That afternoon a detachment of men arrived from the Turkish headquarters at Hadem Keui and took possession of the rest of the farm, turning it into a bakehouse for the army. This was the last straw, and that evening we saw the farmer and his

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

family stealing away in the dusk with their wagons and what cattle remained, to swell the ever-growing army of refugees. In the rear rode our friend the Arnaut, who grinned from ear to ear, waving his rifle as he passed.

The weather was still very cold, and a decided change after the mild climate of Ali Bey, where we used to bathe every morning. We put on all the clothes we could, and I found two sweaters and a waistcoat under my tunic none too warm. Our party consisted of a doctor, known as the Skipper, one dresser, four orderlies, Rechid Bey, the Turkish doctor, and last, but by no means least, Achmed Fahmi, our interpreter.

The latter was a fat, oily and comfortable looking Egyptian, not too fond of work, who kept an antique shop in Cairo, getting fat off the wandering tourist. He was a most impracticable chap, and accompanied us to the front carrying all his kit in a cardboard hat-box belonging to his wife, which was continually bursting open. His boots, which were of the pointed-toe brown-paper variety, were worn out in a

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

week, and we had to supply him with a pair of ammunition boots, several sizes too large, of which he was immensely proud, and used to flounder round in the mud like a performing seal. On the outbreak of war he came to Stamboul from Cairo, and joined the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, wiring to his wife in Cairo that he would be away some months on urgent business. He knew nothing whatever of medical work, so the Red Crescent people attached him to us as an interpreter, which office he fulfilled to the best of his ability, though his English was execrable and his Turkish was very little better. However, he was never at a loss for a translation, making it up as he went along. Another of his little weaknesses was, that he could not stick strictly to the truth, and passed as a Hadji, one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He also told us that he loved the English, and numbered Lord Kitchener among his friends. I used to call him "Hadji Baba," which was soon corrupted into "Baby," which name stuck to him. One day, hearing a soldier address him as "Hadji," I asked him why he passed as one, not

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

having been to Mecca. "Hush," he said, "it is better for us all that I appear so." However, he was a very likeable person, and quite the best, most pleasant, and amusing of our interpreters.

Then there was a little Turkish doctor, a most amusing man. He was a Syrian Arab and greeted Baby as a brother, sharing his tent with him. I can see him now, as he used to stand outside his tent in the morning, bawling orders to his men, dressed in a frayed and ill-fitting khaki uniform, minus several buttons, one of the stars missing from his epaulet, and the usual goloshes and puttees put on anyhow, and making his ankles and calves of a uniform thickness. In fact, I saw very few Turkish officers who could wind a puttee neatly. We soon found that puttees were most impracticable, owing to the mud, which was ankle deep, and many of us wore leggings instead.

The doctor was very proud of his English, which was painful to listen to, and insisted on speaking it, though he spoke French fluently. He was very frightened of cholera, and took all sorts of little pre-

cautions, going so far as to hold his bread in the flames of the fire, which generally blackened it and made it even more unappetizing than it was before. This process he called in English "showing his bread to the fire." He had an extraordinary-looking horse, a wicked and down-at-heel-looking sorrel with a bad temper, which we all used to ride, until the doctor, thinking evidently that so much exercise was not good for it, repented of his generosity and said that it was sick, which it remained all the time that we were there.

He knew enough English phrases to string a few sentences together, but hardly ever understood what was said to him. The day after his decision regarding his horse, I came out of my tent and said in English, "A fine day, doctor!" He said, "Ah, my friend, my 'orse is seek, you cannot 'ave 'im to-day." A few hours later I spoke to him again, asking him if he heard the guns. He replied, "My 'orse is still seek." He seemed to have got it into his head that I was determined to have his horse, for whenever I addressed him in English he always replied with the same formula, "Ze

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

'orse is seek." His bad English seemed to have an effect on Baby, whose English, none to good at any time, began to get worse.

The second day in camp, one of the orderlies, our "globe-trotting" friend, was down with malaria and dysentery, and we put him in the isolation tent, where he spent a most uncomfortable time. We lived principally on the heavy black bread of the troops, which was not suitable for a dysentery patient, so after his fever had abated we fed him on ship's biscuit, condensed milk, and oxo, a diet on which he did not thrive, and he emerged looking a complete wreck after his illness. Some lime had been spilt in the isolation tent where he was, which, in addition to its unpleasant smell, seemed to draw the moisture out of the ground, making the tent humid and disagreeable, so he must have spent an exceedingly unpleasant time as he lay on his damp groundsheet with very little to eat and nothing to do but sleep.

We found some primitive forms of harrows in the farm-house, flat boards

studded with small flints, but by turning them so that the smooth side lay uppermost, we used them as beds. They were very hard, but kept our blankets dry. I woke up in the middle of the night, and suddenly remembered that mine had come out of a cholera-infected room in the farm, but I was too sleepy to think about it, though next morning I got some boiling water and thoroughly scrubbed it, to make sure that there were no germs left, for they have a way of lying latent in the ground and coming out when least expected.

We had eight of the Turkish gendarmerie with us as an escort, for the country was over-run with half-starving deserters. They were a splendid lot of men, and all Moslems,—a very different type to the lazy Greek gendarmes at Ali Bey. They kept their uniforms very clean, and were far smarter and more intelligent than any of their soldier comrades I had yet seen. They were armed with Mausers, and drilled in the German fashion. The chawush (sergeant) and onbashi (corporal) were both Bosnians by birth, and spoke Slav as well as Turkish. They were very fond of

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

showing off their drill to us, and were most interested to learn how the British soldier drills. We had also a mounted gendarme, or sowar, attached to us, who often used to lend us his horse, for which we rewarded him by giving him slices of bread and jam, of which they were all very fond. I found the best way of rewarding a man was to feed him, as they were nearly always hungry.

Riding along the track, marked by the rotting carcasses of dead horses and bullocks, one reached the headquarters camp of the Turkish left wing at Kara Agatch, lying in a narrow gap in the lines, flanked by forts and practically invisible to the enemy.

To the left was the lake of Boyuk Chekmedje, beyond which lay the Turkish warships in the Sea of Marmora, guarding the long bridge which carries the main road across the end of the lake. To the right were the bare and rocky hills, dotted with forts, running across country to Derkos, while in front lay the tract of marshy ground, backed by high hills, on which the Bulgarians were strongly entrenched.

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

In the plain, a little to the right, one could see quite clearly the little village of Chatalja, now world famous, which gives its name to the lines. Owing to its position in the open, where it was exposed to the fire from both sides, neither had been able to hold it, and the Bulgarians had fallen back to their entrenchments on the hills.

There is little of the spectacular about a modern battlefield, except for the bursting of the shells and the roar and rattle of the firing, and this was no exception to the rule, the guns being masked by earthworks, and the men practically invisible in the deep trenches.

Everyone who visited the camp at Kara Agatch was shown with great pride a captured Bulgarian rifle and a shell. Think of it. One rifle and one shell! I wonder how many thousand Turkish rifles there are at present in Sofia?

Behind the lines there were scenes of comparative activity. The transport was now working better, and long trains of pack-horses and wagons, laden with food and ammunition, were continually coming and

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

going along the road between the camp and the railway station at Sparta Keui. Belated regiments from Asia Minor arrived tired and footsore after their long march. I walked alongside such a regiment one day and had a good look at them. The officer in command rode in front, a swarthy Mephistophelian-looking fellow, sitting huddled up on his horse, and enveloped in his long grey coat, looking strangely spick and span, in striking contrast to his ragged-looking men trudging behind him. They all wore ragged grey overcoats, and their heads were enveloped in the bashlik. As they shuffled along out of step, in any kind of order, they seemed more like a mob than a regiment. Some of them were quite old men, and did not look as if they would be much good against the savage Bulgarians, inflamed by success. But "Baby," the interpreter, who was with me, assured me that they were devils when roused.

All around us were little squads of men, drilling hard. Some were advancing and retiring in extended order, while others were being instructed in the manual and firing exercises. We strolled over to one

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

squad, and had a talk with the kutchuk zabit (warrant officer) in charge. He seemed very pleased to see us, and brought his squad to attention. He then explained to the men that we were English and had come out to help them. He told us that many of the reinforcements, hastily collected, were hardly drilled, and they had to take every opportunity of instructing them further.

On our way back we passed half a battalion, drilling in close order, marching up and down with weary monotony. It seemed a curious thing to see those hundreds of men taking advantage of a lull in the hostilities to rub up their elementary drill, with a fierce and tireless enemy a few miles away.

Close to our camp was a steep hill, at the bottom of which was a viaduct over a deep ravine, and as we passed that evening we found a wagon stuck fast in the ruts in the road. There was a great deal of shouting, and two or three men were lashing the poor horses, but no one was attempting to help them. Lyon and I got hold of the soldiers near us, shoved them against the

wagon and told them to push. We shoved together, and got the cart up the hill, on which they drove off without a word of thanks. I have seen this happen often, and I cannot say that the Turk is kind or attentive to his animals.

Most of the horses at the front were dreadful to see, as thin as rails, and their backs covered with sores. We had four horses at Tashagill besides the two belonging to the mounted gendarme and the doctor, and I am afraid that they were not much better, as they came to us in an utterly exhausted condition. We had three ponies for the purpose of taking the two wagons for wounded down to Ali Bey, and three more wretched-looking specimens it would be hard to imagine, fearfully thin, and covered with open sores caused by the traces. We used to refer to them facetiously as the "carriage horses."

Lyon and I took the cart one day and went down to Ali Bey for supplies. It was an awful day, raining in torrents and the mud almost up to the axles. We got there without a mishap, but our troubles commenced on the return journey. The pony refused to start off at all, and it took three

of us to persuade him. He stopped again after the first mile, and then after half a mile, and so on, with decreasing distances, until he stopped every hundred yards or so. The poor brute was dead beat, and so galled by the traces rubbing against an open sore in his chest, which must have been agony to him, that he refused to pull. In addition to this, the wheels of the cart were clogged with mud, which was so deep that we could hardly keep our feet.

It took us over three hours to cover the six miles, and we had to urge the horse most of the way. Our load, a sack of potatoes and some bottles of whisky, both luxuries, was too heavy to carry and we were not going to abandon it. Darkness found us still two miles from our camp, where we seemed likely to remain, an unpleasant prospect in that cold and wind-swept land, infested with prowling bands of hungry soldiers. The "Skipper," however, anxious at our non-appearance, sent two gendarmes to look for us, and with four of us pushing behind and the driver alternately beating and pulling the horse along, we eventually came in sight of the camp,

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

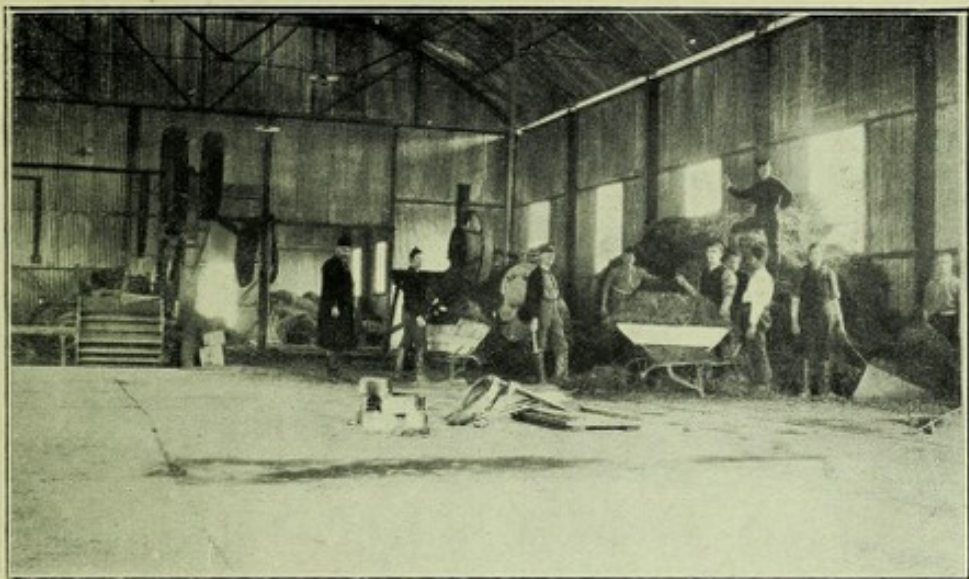
with its fire shining cheerfully in the darkness.

Unfortunately that journey back was too much for the pony, who never recovered, and died next day. If there had been an inspector of the S.P.C.A. on the spot he would have spent all his time reporting cases, but then in war time things are done which would not be tolerated in time of peace. It was quite a common sight to see mutilated dead horses, out of which pieces had been hacked by the starving troops.

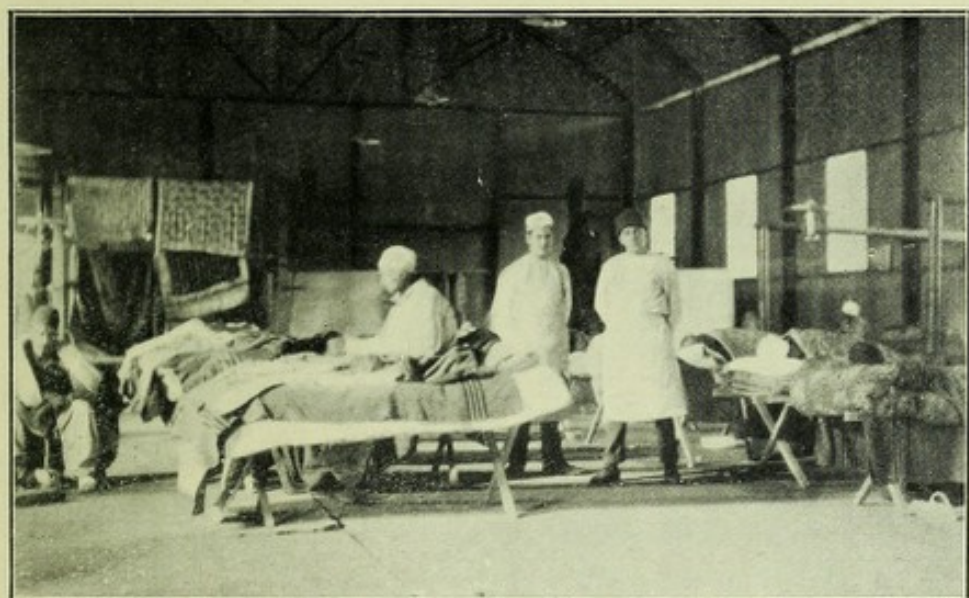
That evening Lyon brewed some excellent whisky punch, and we had a sing-song in the gendarmes' tent. They had covered the floor with sacks filled with straw, and we sat cross-legged in a circle round the dim lantern. What a squash it was! and what an atmosphere! sixteen of us in a small tent. There were three of us, nine gendarmes, two soldiers, and two visitors, the father of the Chawush and our friend the Arnaut, who had returned and taken up his abode with us. After an exchange of compliments and cigarettes, the conversation flagged, and we suggested

a song. At this they all protested that they knew nothing, so we gave them "John Brown's Body," which impressed them very much, and they wanted to know if John Brown was a British Sultan.

Our sowar (trooper) then said he knew a song, and started to warble a love song, which appeared to be vastly appreciated by the audience, although we could scarcely contain ourselves as he rolled his eyes and moaned out a weird ditty in a nasal minor key. At last we burst out laughing, in which they joined, probably out of politeness. After that the two Bosnians sang a soldier's marching song, in which they all joined, to the effect that Abdul Hamid was no more, and Sultan Reschad reigned in his stead. It was very melancholy, and I should not like to march far to it. The Arnaut, evidently the comedian of the party, then sang a tuneless ditty. It had about twenty or thirty short verses, and at the end of each he stopped dead, and then began again just as we were going to applaud him. He made a wheezing noise like a cheap phonograph. We had a most successful evening, and bade them good

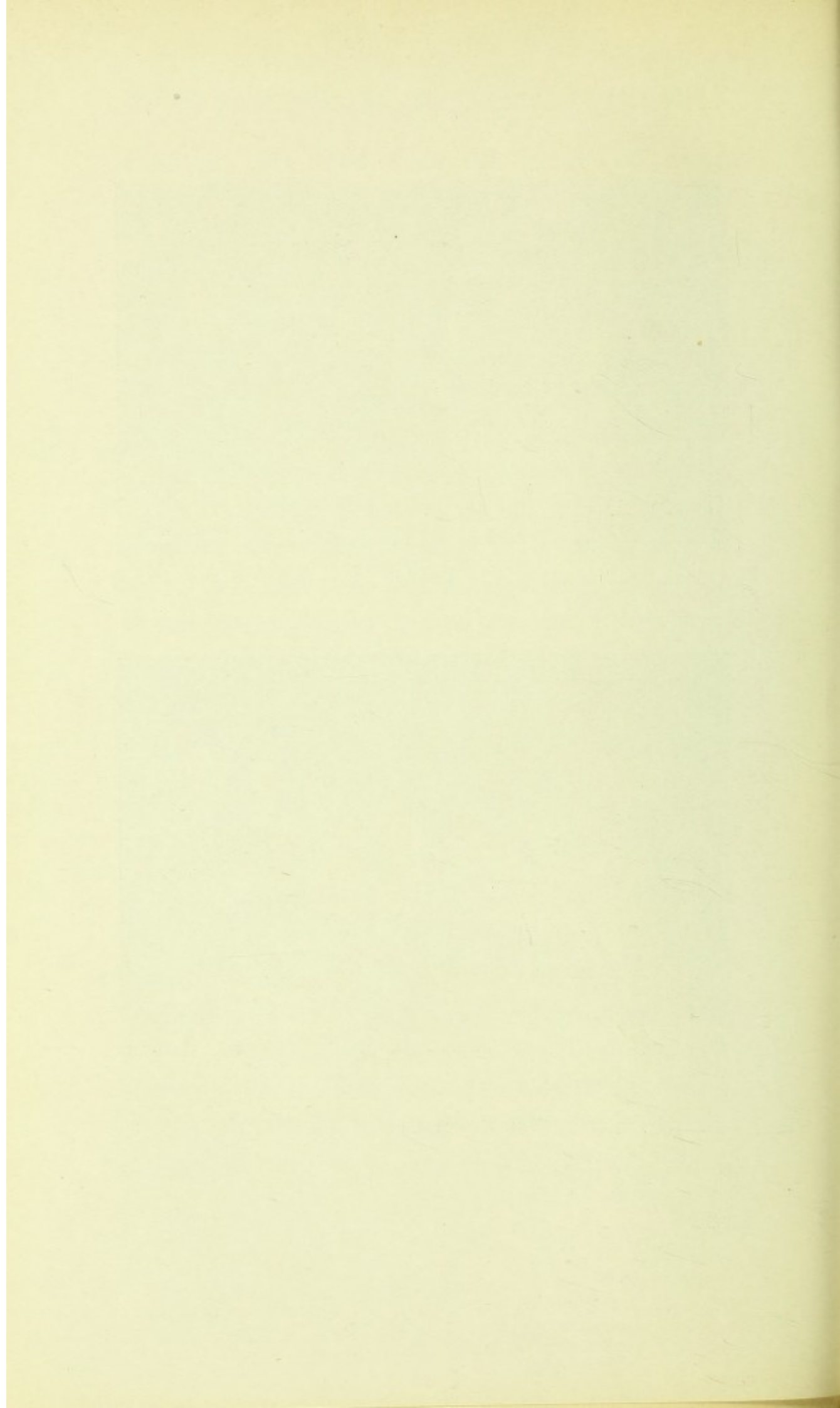


AS WE FOUND IT.



AS WE MADE IT.

THE HOSPITAL AT BEIKOS



IN THE CHATALJA LINES

night, everyone rising as we went out. Long after we had turned in, they sat singing and talking; but this was nothing unusual, as I have often awakened in the middle of the night and heard them talking hard, and I wondered when they slept.

The cholera was still ravaging the troops in the lines at the rate of a thousand cases a day, and we heard that the Bulgarians were in no better plight. The streams and ditches around were full of dead cholera bodies, which tainted the water and made it impossible to drink and dangerous to wash in. We had nothing to store water in, so a pot of boiled water had to last some time. Near us was a big cholera encampment, and it was not difficult to find one's way there, for it was marked by freshly dug graves, of which there were several close to our camp.

I wonder how many mothers and wives there are to-day in Asia Minor waiting in vain for news of their absent ones, who are huddled together under these nameless heaps of earth. The approaches to Hadem Keui were lined with dying men, and in

the village itself the scene beggared description. The sick and dead lay thick on the ground, and all day long the burial carts carried their dreadful loads to big pits, filled with the destroying quicklime.

When one learns that many of the dead were eventually cremated, as the only speedy and effective way of getting rid of them, and this in spite of the strong opposition of the more fanatical Moslems, one will realise the extent of the scourge, for only under the most desperate necessity would the authorities have consented to this, for the Turks, like all Mohammedans, have the strongest religious prejudice to this disposal of their dead.

There was rather an amusing yarn going round concerning the captain of one of the French warships then at Stamboul, who was taken to Hadem Keui by some Turkish officers. Later, when dining with the officers of one of the British cruisers, he was asked what he thought of the state of things behind the lines. He answered: "It is dreadful, it is 'orrible; zey throw ze dead and ze living in one big 'ole, and over zem zey put ze rapid chalk" (quicklime).

One thing that struck one rather forcibly

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

was the enormous number of men to be found wandering aimlessly about behind the lines, or camping in little bivouacs by themselves. We could never find out what they were doing, or where they were going, and I do not suppose they knew themselves. I suppose they were men who had straggled and got lost, or men whose regiments had been cut up and destroyed, or they may have been deserters. At any rate, there were any number of little bands of sick and starving men wandering round our camp in the hopes of getting food, until warned off by the sentries, when they would trudge dejectedly off, leaving one or two of their number here and there to mark the course of their wanderings. Many carried rifles, which they used to let off at anything they saw. On one or two occasions they took to sniping at our camp. I remember one night we were standing round the fire watching Baby, the interpreter, doing a sort of whirling Dervish dance to the accompaniment of my bagpipes, when there was a singing noise through the air just over our heads, followed by the crack of a rifle.

The dance stopped abruptly, and we

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

were wondering where the bullet came from, when two more came unpleasantly near us. The gendarmes rushed for their rifles, while Baby went to earth in his tent. It was only the usual sniping which used to go on, probably some passing soldiers who had been attracted by the fire; but all the same the bullets came uncomfortably close, and it was by no means an uncommon occurrence.

I was surprised to see the amount of ammunition allowed to the gendarmes, of which they were most wasteful, firing at anything. I watched two one morning firing at a flock of birds up in the air, and the bullets were going right across the valley. At other times they would select a point on a hill and blaze away at it, regardless of who might be there. These bullets made nasty wounds, as it was the practice among the soldiers to file the points down until the lead showed through and the bullet was flat and soft-nosed. Thus when it hit anyone the bullet expanded, making a much bigger wound. This was also done by the Bulgarian troops, and will continue to be done despite the conventions of war.

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

It may explain the allegations made, that each side was using dum-dum bullets.

A number of dogs used to be always hanging round the camp in search of food. Wild, fierce-looking beasts they were too, more like wolves than dogs. We adopted a black one whom we called "Kara," and he constituted himself the camp guardian, keeping all the others off. There were also a number of homeless cats, half wild, and they were a great source of annoyance, as they used to sneak into the tents and also climb up into our larder—a tree—and eat the meat. We awoke one morning to find that our meat hanging from the tree had nearly all been eaten by the cats. That night we organised a hunt, and succeeded in plugging one cat with a bullet, just as it was climbing into the tree. With a howl it fled towards the farm with us after it. It was pitch dark and Lyon, who was in front, had a narrow escape. Bolting round a corner, pistol in hand, in hot pursuit of the cat, he ran full tilt into one of the sentries who was on guard over the bakehouse. The man challenged and brought his rifle to the present, but Lyon managed to remember

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

one of the few Turkish words he knew, and bellowed out "Inglese Hakim" (English doctor), which undoubtedly saved his life, for the sentries did not hesitate to shoot, as they challenged, and the sight of a man suddenly appearing round the corner with a pistol in his hand, would be excuse enough for any sentry to fire. After that we did no more cat-hunting at night.

We had all kinds and conditions of visitors in camp, from a Turkish General down to a starving private soldier.

We used to have to turn away these sick and weary men, as we were there primarily to attend to the wounded and not hamper ourselves with sick.

However, one day we took a sick officer in who seemed to be at his last gasp.

It was a cold and rainy night when he turned up with a small patrol and asked for shelter. We put him and his men in the farm for the night. Next morning we found him lying on the floor, apparently in the last stage of consumption, and utterly exhausted. He told us that on receiving orders to present himself for service he had done so, although ill at the time, and had

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

marched all the way with his men from Stamboul. He told us that he intended to push on as soon as he was a little stronger. He left at midday, and we never saw him again. If the officers of the Turkish army had all been imbued with his brave spirit, the course of events might well have been different.

We saw two or three aeroplanes while at Tashagill, and one day a Bulgarian aeroplane came over the Turkish lines. It made a great noise as it came along, and could be heard quite a long way off. Everybody was very excited, especially the little Turkish doctor, who ran about shouting, "Le ballon, le ballon." Later on in the afternoon Lyon approached him, holding a letter in his hand, upon which the following conversation took place.

"Did you see the aeroplane pass over here this afternoon?"

THE DOCTOR (*looking puzzled, and then seeing letter in Lyon's hand*). "Ah! you wish zee letter posted. Verra good."

"No, you do not understand me. Did you see the aeroplane pass over here?"

THE DOCTOR. "Ah! I now understand ;

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

you wish to see the battle, is it not? Eh, bien, why not? We will go together."

Lyon (*getting exasperated*). No, no. The aeroplane" (*makes buzzing noise and flaps his hands*).

THE DOCTOR. "Ah! I now understand; le ballon, is it not? I speak good Inglese." (And so on, *ad lib.*)

French was the medium in which we conversed generally with Turkish officers, most of whom speak it well. The German speech does not appear to have made much headway as yet in the army, although the drill, uniform, and guns, are absolutely German. In fact, I do not think it ever will, as the soft Latin speech is far more adapted to the Turkish tongue than the rough Saxon.

On 30th November we heard that an Armistice had been fixed, and Lyon and I received marching orders for Stamboul. We had expected this for some time, though it had been a long time in coming. It was rather amusing to read in the old English newspapers we had sent us, headlines such as, "The Last Fight," "The End in Sight," "Peace absolutely certain." They were

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

always wrong, though they stuck to it pluckily and kept on prophesying things in the hopes that one day they might be right. Just before we left the front, a number of men were shot for malingering. They had cut off their trigger fingers, and Nazim Pasha resolved to make an example of them. A similar instance of malingering on a large scale occurred among the Arab irregulars in the Turco-Russian War of 1878.

Our reliefs arrived on the morning of 30th November, and that afternoon we departed with our bullock-wagon. I was quite sorry to say good-bye to our Turkish comrades, with whom we had become very friendly. I learnt quite a lot of Turkish from them, which was exceedingly useful, and the doctor, talking English to the last, complimented me on the rapidity with which I had picked up some of his language, saying, "Ze Turkish like you well."

We were now rather different looking from the spick-and-span people who had started from Charing Cross in October. Our uniforms were beginning to look

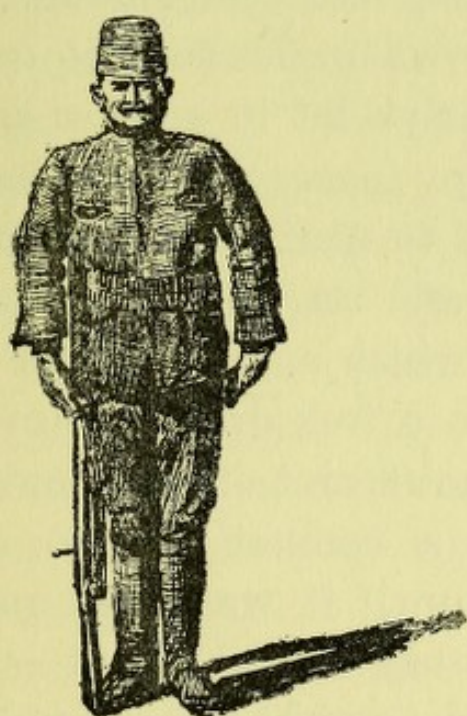
WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

shabby, and some of us had grown beards. During the cold weather at Tashagill we wore everything we could, and sometimes presented a curious and varied appearance. Lyon wore motor-cycle overalls and a sou'-wester hat, which, with his beard, made him look like an advertisement for Skipper sardines. I took to wearing the bashlik or turban round my fez, like the soldiers did, which keeps the ears and head warm. I made quite an effective one out of my "Old Glenalmond" muffler, and its somewhat oriental colouring quite put those of the gendarmes in the shade.

We passed large flocks of sheep and goats on our way down, headed by wild and picturesque-looking shepherds in big sheepskin coats, and guarded by fierce-looking dogs. Half-way back we came across a little procession of refugees on foot, leaving their homes under the escort of a few gendarmes, carrying their worldly possessions in bundles on their backs. There were about twelve of them, men and women, —a most forlorn-looking little band. We had two splendid bullocks, great powerful animals, who went half the way at a curious

IN THE CHATALJA LINES

lumbering trot, nearly shaking every bone out of one's body, and we had to hang on for dear life, perched on top of the baggage. The driver seemed content to let the bullocks steer themselves, and they appeared to make a bee-line for every stone and boulder on the track. The sun was setting as we reached Ali Bey, down in the hollow by the lake, looking so peaceful that it was hard to imagine that a state of war existed, except for the sentinels along the line to the left of it, in the direction of Sparta Keui.



CHAPTER VII

DURING THE ARMISTICE: RETURN TO STAMBOUL

ON reaching Ali Bey Lyon and I were told that we were destined for the cholera camp at San Stefano. We received this news with rather mixed feelings. We wanted to go there for the experience, but on the other hand we had seen enough of cholera to know how unpleasant it was, and a general orderly's lot in such a camp is not a very happy one. But we said nothing and resolved to wait and see. They told us that there was an American medal given for cholera, which amongst other things entitled one to a free drink in any American bar. On the receipt of this news there had been quite a competition to qualify for the medal, until it was explained that by "American bar" was meant any bar in America, on which the interest waned considerably.

DURING THE ARMISTICE

Nearly all the wounded had been sent down to Stamboul, and now that there was an armistice no more were coming in, so they were using Ali Bey as a rest camp for those of our people who had been sick. We heard that one of the dressers was down with dysentery very badly, and had to be taken down to Stamboul by motor-car. They had tremendous difficulty in getting the car to Ali Bey, as there were no roads worth calling by the name. I found one old friend in the hospital, a warrant officer, or kutchuk zabit, who had been wounded by a shrapnel bullet on top of his head and had been trepanned. He was now almost convalescent.

We stayed two days at Ali Bey, and were put to plucking chickens and making ourselves generally useful. There was very little work to do, and I noticed that everybody was getting quite fat. Some wag nicknamed the expedition "Cassel's Picnic"—an allusion to Sir Ernest Cassel, who had financed the expedition.

There was a vast difference in the demeanour of the gendarmerie since we had been away. Rustem Bey had taken them

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

in hand and knocked them into shape. On 2nd December we left Ali Bey for good *en route* for Stamboul. We were commanded to shave our beards before we went, to our great disgust, as they had now grown quite respectable. Lyon, however, left side whiskers on, which gave him an early Victorian appearance. The weather was just like summer,—a pleasant change to the chilly atmosphere up at Tashagill. There was the usual bother in starting off, the engine of the launch refusing to work, and we very nearly drifted ashore. The Turks do not show to advantage on the water.

The launch belonged to the Red Cross, and the engineer, captain and Sinbad the Sailor were in their employ. But the former owner, for some reason, was allowed to sit on board, and he used to spend his time making fun of the captain and his mate, telling them how to do the work, and making their life generally unbearable. One day the captain could stand it no longer and started arguing with the owner, getting so excited that he fell overboard. It was a truly Gilbertian state of affairs.

We stopped at Kutchuk Chekmedje on

DURING THE ARMISTICE

the way, for water. The place seemed to be full of old men, some of whom were stationed along the railway line as sentries. They were armed with old pattern rifles and carbines and did not look as if there was a kick left in them. These were the mustaphis or landsturm, the last line of defence, distinguishable by their old blue uniforms and red fezes, which they still wore, as the supply of khaki uniforms and kalpaks had long since given out. We landed at the bar and bade good-bye to "Sinbad" and his comrades. While we were sitting on the sand waiting for the Government launch, a man came along the railway line wearing a dark suit and a bowler hat, carrying a bag in his hand. He looked absurdly out of place in his kit and did not harmonise with his surroundings. Lyon facetiously set him down as a bagman returning home after a week-end in the country. The arrival of the launch cut short our speculations, and we quickly embarked and set off down the coast.

We went ashore at San Stefano and walked up to the cholera camps. The Americans had taken possession of a Greek

school, which they had turned into a hospital, and the British Red Crescent had a camp there. We met some of our fellow orderlies who had been lent to the Red Crescent and they took us round. They had a fine big house to live in overlooking the sea, plenty to eat and drink, and were looking remarkably fit.

We went past the sentries into the camp and were agreeably surprised at its cleanliness and order. One orderly told me that when they first arrived things had been very different, and there had been some ghastly sights. Troop trains used to come in and disgorge their helpless burdens, who lay about all over the place until they died. He said that he had seen the officers hustling and kicking the men down the bank to get rid of them. The cholera camp then consisted of a cluster of dirty tents, most of the sick lying in the open. It was impossible to look after them at all, except to give them food and water. The stench must have been fearful.

But with the coming of the Foreign Missions everything was changed. Dirt and disorder had given place to cleanliness

DURING THE ARMISTICE

and method. In place of the heaps of dying men were long rows of clean white tents in which were the patients. Here and there women in white dresses moved about, carrying buckets of water to the sick. These were the Austrian nuns belonging to the Austrian Red Cross Mission, and our orderlies could not speak too highly of their pluck, energy, and cheerfulness. They were always ready to help, and no work was too disagreeable for them. They must have been a godsend to the camp. Many of the men were suffering from gangrene of the feet, caused by long standing in the trenches half full of water. Their feet, which were quite dead, had turned black and would have to be amputated. I spoke to one man thus afflicted and he burst out crying, saying that he had stood in a trench for seventeen hours on end. "Buck up, old sport," said an orderly through the interpreter,—“I stood in them for seventeen days in South Africa.”

I saw a Bulgarian prisoner there who had just attempted to hang himself. He was sitting on the ground with a hunted expression in his eyes, his neck swathed in

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

bandages. He was quite mad and firmly convinced that his captors meant to kill him. A few days afterwards he tried to jump over the cliff at the end of the camp, but was caught in time. However, we heard afterwards that he managed to kill himself, his third attempt. He was one of the few prisoners I saw, for there were not many captured by the Turks.

We left the camp with the satisfaction of having seen something which was a tribute to British efficiency and organisation. On the pier a gang of men were engaged in pile-driving. They had rigged up a kind of derrick and hauled a big weight up by means of pulleys, letting it down with a bang on top of the pile. They were a picturesque-looking crowd, mostly Greeks, and chanted a chorus while they worked. The foreman sang the verse through, and then they all joined in the chorus with a haunting refrain, pulling up the weight as they did so, and letting it fall after they had finished the verse. They varied this procedure with frequent rests, and, needless to say, did not get through very much work.

Just as we were restarting, two dabiehs

DURING THE ARMISTICE

were towed alongside. They belonged to the Egyptian Red Moon Society and were laden with stores for their new camp at San Stefano. They were a splendidly equipped expedition, and had brought out their own transport with them, consisting of seventy pack-mules. They had base hospitals at Beyler Bey and San Stefano, and field hospitals at Derkos and Hadem Keui. I believe that they had been helped by the Egyptian Government, which of course rendered them the more efficient. Their uniform consisted of khaki drill with a red moon on the collar, and with the red Egyptian tarboosh as headgear. It looked very nice but was rather thin, and I doubt whether it was half as serviceable as our thick khaki, which wore splendidly.

We reached Stamboul that evening, going in to the Customs quay, where Major Doughty-Wylie met us and told us to be ready to proceed next day to Kara Burun, a place on the Black Sea, near Derkos, where there were some wounded. Directly we had taken the baggage up to the hospital we made a bee-line for the Pera Palace Hotel, where we indulged in the luxury of a hot

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

bath and a hair-cut, both of which we were badly in need of.

We went on to the club afterwards, where we met Rustem Bey, who told us that peace was practically certain. That was on December 2nd.

Next day we received orders to proceed to the Customs quay and embark on the Customs yacht for Kara Burun. But, as usual, when everything was in readiness to go, the authorities began to put all sorts of difficulties in the way, finally refusing to let us go on the grounds that we ran the risk of being torpedoed by a Bulgarian torpedo boat. I do not know what the real reason was, but anyhow it was very disappointing. We were now getting more used to the Turk's little ways of procrastination, where he qualifies all his promises with the word "yarin" (to-morrow), which is to him as "mañana" (to-morrow) is to the Spaniard. In fact, there is nothing certain in the East except the rising and setting of the sun.

The hospital had changed very much since we had last been there, and the nursing stage had now been reached. The

DURING THE ARMISTICE

hurry and bustle of the first few weeks had given place to a quiet and orderly routine. There were several Turkish doctors and dressers working with our doctors, and a few Turkish ladies helping Mrs. Doughty-Wylie with the nursing. They were unveiled and wore European clothes, a sign of the times.

Many of the patients were now convalescent, and all had beds to sleep on. I went into the isolation ward, but found that all the patients I had known were dead. A number of patients had died from tetanus, which had set in soon after they had been admitted to hospital. This had been caused by dirt getting into their wounds while lying on the ground, which was teeming with the tetanus bacilli. We were warned not to put our knives into the ground to clean them, and had to take great care of any small scratches. Several of our men had very bad septic fingers, many of which had to be lanced, simply from getting dirt into their cuts. The ground must have been absolutely poisonous. Tetanus, or lockjaw, is one of the most painful deaths there is, and the

mortality is about eighty-five per cent. A most important part of the treatment is perfect quiet and avoidance of any possible cause of irritation or excitement, and therefore the wretched sufferers during the war had not a dog's chance.

I saw one man at Stamboul who had developed lockjaw. All the other patients had been removed from the ward in the vain hope of pulling him round. He lay perfectly still, with a fixed and ghastly look on his face, his body rigid, forming an arch. He died in great agony.

So many of the wounded were so far gone when they were admitted that there was never any chance of saving them, and there had been an unavoidably large percentage of deaths. A public institution will always find plenty of detractors, and ours was no exception to the rule. Sundry rumours floated round in regard to inefficiency, slackness, lack of organisation, and the percentage of deaths after operations. These were probably started by narrow-minded and jealous Turkish doctors and dressers, doubtless from a genuine grief for their unfortunate countrymen.

DURING THE ARMISTICE

There seemed to be a good deal of jealousy amongst the different foreign Red Cross contingents in Stamboul, and Lyon and I met a Yankee doctor one day who was particularly offensive to us in his remarks.

It was a pity that there should be this jealousy, but it was undoubtedly increased by the attitude of the Turkish authorities, who seemed to grudge patients to the foreign societies, thereby making the competition for them all the keener.

At all events, the British contingent had done its fair share in the work, and had already had two hospitals in Stamboul, one at Ali Bey on Lake Chekmeje, one at the front, and detachments of men in Pera and at San Stefano. This was due to the energy displayed by our able commandant, Major Doughty-Wylie, who, from much experience in the Near East, had the knack of getting what he wanted.

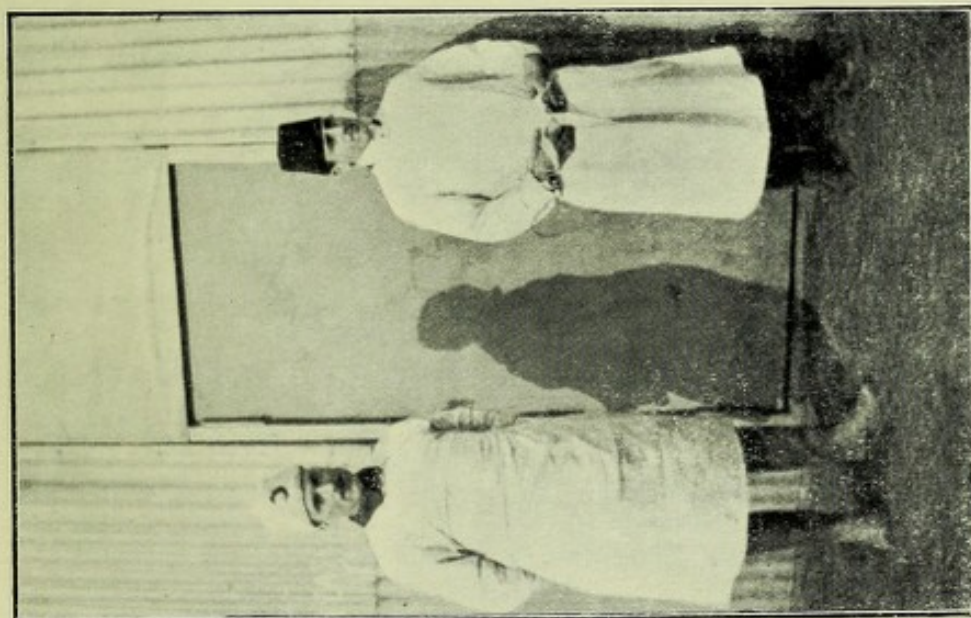
On 4th December Lyon and I were told to go down to Galata and meet the *Phrygie* from Marseilles, which was bringing out a fresh Red Cross contingent under Captains Horton, I.M.S., D.S.O., and Lloyd

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

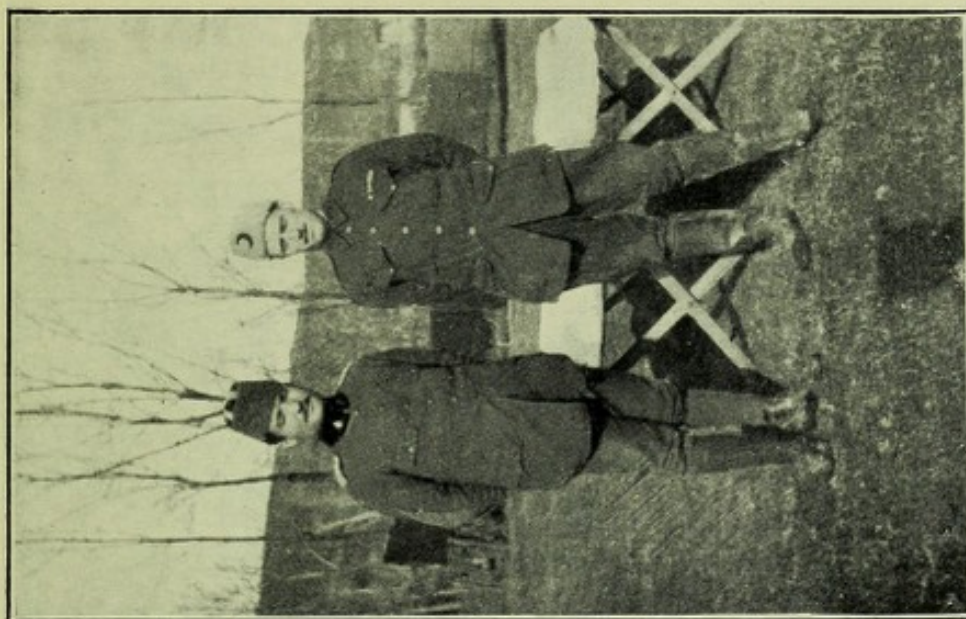
Jones, R.A.M.C., for work in the cholera camps. They were accompanied by Captain Smallman, who had come out as bacteriologist, and was going to work in the laboratory in Stamboul. His object was to examine the cholera microbes and determine whether it was the true Asiatic cholera. When the *Phrygie* came alongside, we went on board, and were cordially received by the doctors, on whom Lyon's Val Prinsep whiskers seemed to make an impression. They asked for all the latest news, and told us that they had been very much afraid that they would arrive to find the war over.

There were a number of refugees on board, mostly Arnauts. They had come from Uskub, which was in the hands of the Servians, and had come on board at the Dardanelles. The men were fine big fellows, all armed to the teeth. There were number of little children, looking with wondering eyes at the strange scene before them.

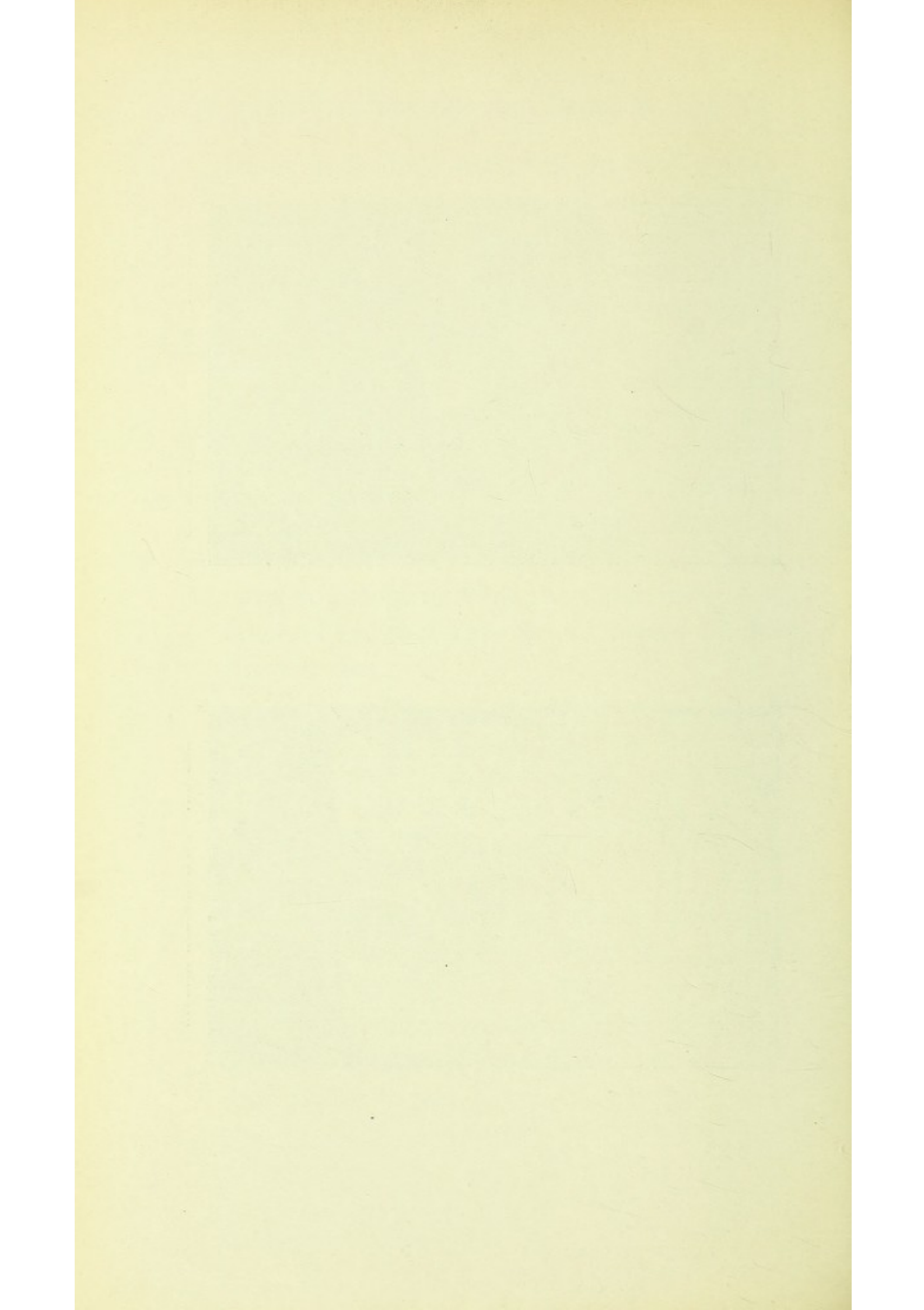
Having delivered our message to Captain Horton, Lyon and I went on to the British Post Office to get the mail. While I was



CAPTAIN HORTON, D.S.O., AND THE
INTERPRETER—BEIKOS.



CHARALAMBOS
EFFENDI
CAPTAIN LLOYD
JONES, R.A.M.C.



DURING THE ARMISTICE

waiting in there, a long and lanky individual entered. He was theatrically got up in a kind of Wild West kit, top-boots, big spurs, Stetson hat, whip, and a big service revolver buckled round his middle. I was given to understand that he had belonged to some Colonial corps, and was now employed as a war correspondent. I didn't know how much of the war he had seen, but, judging by his distinctly warlike appearance, he evidently believed in getting the right atmosphere.

He was quite original in the way he began the conversation. "Say, I hear that you people are a bit slack. Do you want any wounded?" He might have been the representative of a benevolent institution to supply out-of-work Red Cross societies with patients, from the tone in which he said it. He went on further to tell me that he had heard of our attempt to get to Kara Burun by sea, and how it had been frustrated by the Turkish authorities; but he knew of another way. He would get us there; he was the only correspondent who got anywhere; he knew how to manage the Turks. I bundled him into an araba, and

drove up to the hospital, where I left him with Major Doughty-Wylie. However, his plans were apparently not feasible, as nothing came of it, and we never went to Kara Burun.

There were about forty or fifty correspondents of all kinds in Stamboul during the war, from the "pukka" representatives of well-known papers down to mere press photographers and cinematograph operators. We met several of them, and with a few exceptions formed a very poor opinion of them. The types of old-time war correspondents, such as G. W. Stevens of Soudan fame, Bennet Burleigh of the *Telegraph*, Forbes and Dr. Russell, have now almost entirely passed, and their places seem to have been taken by men who fill the papers with mere journalese—not invariably correct, either.

Some of them were astonishingly ignorant of military matters, and were very jealous of each other. One gave me an account of his experiences during the retreat through Chorlu. I happened to mention this while talking to another, who said, "My dear chap, So-and-So ran away with the first few panic-stricken regiments. I stayed

DURING THE ARMISTICE

behind, and I can assure you the Turks fought a very fine rearguard action." So what is one to believe? He proceeded further to tell me that the cholera had been caused by the troops living on grapes as they retreated. Is it credible? Grapes in November, on these bleak hills! If he had told me that the cholera had been brought in by the troops coming from Asia and coming through the grape country, it would have been believable; for I saw cholera-stricken regiments arriving straight from Asia Minor. But to ask one to believe that there were grapes in November on the bleak highlands of Thrace!

There was a curious incident in Stamboul during the early stages of the war. A correspondent with his motor-car tried to break through a column of troops on the march, and the soldiers, properly incensed, dragged him bodily out of the car, and it would have fared ill with him if he had not been rescued. This escapade appeared in one of the English papers under the heading "Unfortunate Occurrence in Stamboul. To-day, as a column was marching through the town . . . the rest of this message suppressed."

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

The censor must have had a hard time during the war, and was worried to death at the front by the various correspondents. One correspondent appears to have distinguished himself especially. He had never been on horseback before, and could not tell the difference between cavalry and infantry. One night, after a hard day, he approached the censor, hard at work in his tent, and said, "Please, sir, will you come and make my horse lie down? I have given him his food, but he refuses to lie down." The censor's reply is not recorded. The correspondent, who hardly knew one end of his horse from the other, noticed that all the other horses were picketed to pegs in the ground. He wondered why this was so, but resolved to follow suit. He could not find a suitable peg, so stuck a candle in the ground and tied up his horse to it. In the morning horse and candle had vanished, never to return. I do not vouch for the truth of this yarn, but it was told me by a war correspondent.

One afternoon a cinematograph operator and a photographer wandered past our camp on their way to the lines. In the evening

DURING THE ARMISTICE

they returned under escort, and the officer in charge handed them over to the Red Cross for the night, putting the prisoners on parole. They appealed to Nazim Pasha against their arbitrary imprisonment. They were given the isolation tent to sleep in, and an extra sentry was put on that night. Next day, when the escort arrived to conduct them to Nazim Pasha, they protested, saying that they had changed their minds. The officer demurred, answering them after the manner of Festus's answer to St. Paul.

But before they started he persuaded the prisoners to photograph him and his men as they charged past. After that, they went off to Hadem Keni, and we never heard what became of them. It remains to be seen what part the war correspondent will play in the next big war, if he is allowed there at all. Personally, I cannot see his use in modern warfare. He is never allowed to see much of the fighting, and if he does, the science and technique of the modern battle, and his own ignorance of tactics, make it impossible for him to render an accurate account of it. In this case he has had to console himself by writing long

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

articles on what he had to eat during the campaign, how he dodged the censor, and so on. This, though off the point, can be forgiven, but not the man who deliberately cables home lies to satiate a sensation-loving public. I refer to the scare headlines in some of the English dailies concerning the situation in Stamboul, which were much exaggerated.

By giving free rein to his excited imagination, by failing to verify his facts, by pandering to the ever-increasing desire for sensational news, the correspondent may degrade his calling and earn for himself an undesirable reputation.

Judging by the remarks heard in the clubs in Pera, their ears must have burned.

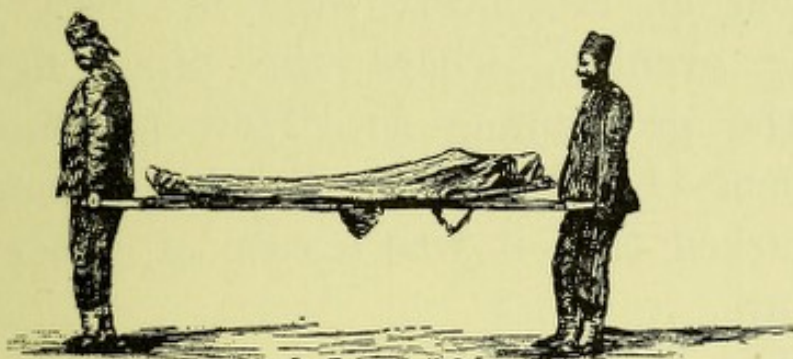
Of course there are exceptions to every rule, but they only serve to show up the rest.

No, the correspondent's day in the fighting line is clearly over, and his place will probably be taken by a military officer, properly qualified for the post, who will send through properly censored reports. Failing this, the public will have to wait patiently until the war is over and the official histories are published.

CHAPTER VIII

WORK IN ASIA MINOR: EXPERIENCES IN A CHOLERA HOSPITAL

AFTER the collapse of our projected trip to Kara Burun in search of wounded, Lyon and I settled down to ordinary general duty in the base hospital. We were told off to scrub floors, act as mess orderlies, and make



ourselves generally useful. We found it rather slow after our previous experiences up country, though there were certain compensations. We were able to get about and see Stamboul, food was plentiful, and, luxury of luxuries, we had camp-beds to sleep on.

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

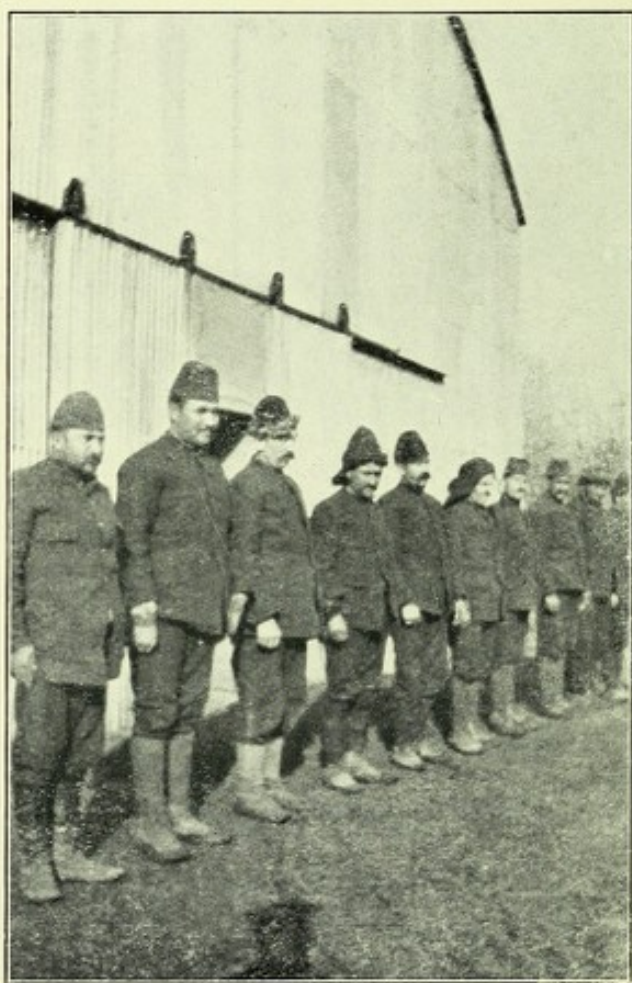
Many of the patients were now convalescent, and used to stroll about the hospital with blankets over their shoulders. One evening I played my pipes to them, marching round through all the wards in turn. The effect on the patients was instantaneous. All who could got up and followed me, as if fascinated by the music. I felt like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, and I do not think that ever piper had a stranger following than that maimed and gaunt little crowd of men, many minus a limb, as they hobbled along after me. I played at a concert over in Pera that same evening, where the pipes figured in the programme as "How to Quiet a Patient—by the Red Cross." Someone remarked that it was a case of either kill or cure.

The concert was given at the Seamen's Institute for the naval contingent from the *Weymouth*, who had been guarding the Consulate for some weeks and were returning to their ship next day. It was a most successful one, and finished with a topical song composed and sung by the popular Consul-General for the occasion,





PATIENTS ARRIVING ON STRETCHERS, BEIKOS.



LES DOMESTIQUES. "HAZIR OL" ('TENTION!).

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

to the tune of the "British Grenadiers."
The chorus was something like this :—

"Of all the foreign sailors
The ones we look for most
Are the hustling, bustling sailors
From the land where beef is roast."

Later on we played some of these hustling, bustling sailors at Rugby football over in Asia Minor. It was a great game, and we just managed to win by eleven points to eight. We had some difficulty in getting a ball, and had to have one made at Baker's, the Whiteley's of Constantinople. It was an awful thing, made by an Armenian girl, and like a small push-ball. At the last moment someone on board the *Hampshire* produced a proper ball from somewhere and saved the situation. We turned out in special colours for the occasion, red-and-white jerseys, with a little red cross. After the game we were entertained on board the *Hampshire*, and as one man remarked, we had lunched in Europe, played football in Asia, and had tea between the two.

Stamboul was still full of refugees, many of whom were starving. Relief camps had

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

been organised outside the city, and were being managed by the Lady Lowther Relief Fund Committee.

The Turkish Government's method was to send as many refugees as they could over into Asia Minor. They were taken down the railway, and truck-loads of them dropped off at different points to shift for themselves. Beyond allowing them a piastre a day, the authorities appeared to have made no other provision for them. In many towns where work was scarce the inhabitants strongly resented their presence, and frequent riots ensued.

The Government appeared still to cherish the hope that they would regain the lost territory and send back the refugees. Therefore they gave them no land in Asia Minor, and with winter coming on the position of the refugees was most precarious. They had left home without anything, and the piastre a day allowed them was not sufficient. The money was paid at the end of every month. The piastres were nickel, specially coined by the Government, and were practically tokens and worth next to nothing. Many of the

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

refugees had sold their cattle, as they were unable to feed them.

We rode out to San Stefano one afternoon, and outside the walls of Stamboul passed several little refugee camps. It was a dark, rainy afternoon, and our horses went up to the fetlocks in mud. Passing one camp, I saw a horse lying in the middle of the road. It was white with mud and at its last gasp. A few apathetic men sat and watched it. Farther on we came upon a miserable-looking little group squatting round a dead horse, which they were skinning. Riding back in the dark, my pony shied violently at something, and I found that it was at the poor horse, which was still lying in the road and feebly moving. We wanted to shoot it, but no one had a revolver with him, which perhaps was just as well, as there would have probably been trouble with the owners of the horse. The Moslem shows indifference to the sufferings of animals, and will never kill one however badly injured it may be. To save himself trouble, he still slavishly and blindly follows the rule in the Koran which teaches that life is not to be de-

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

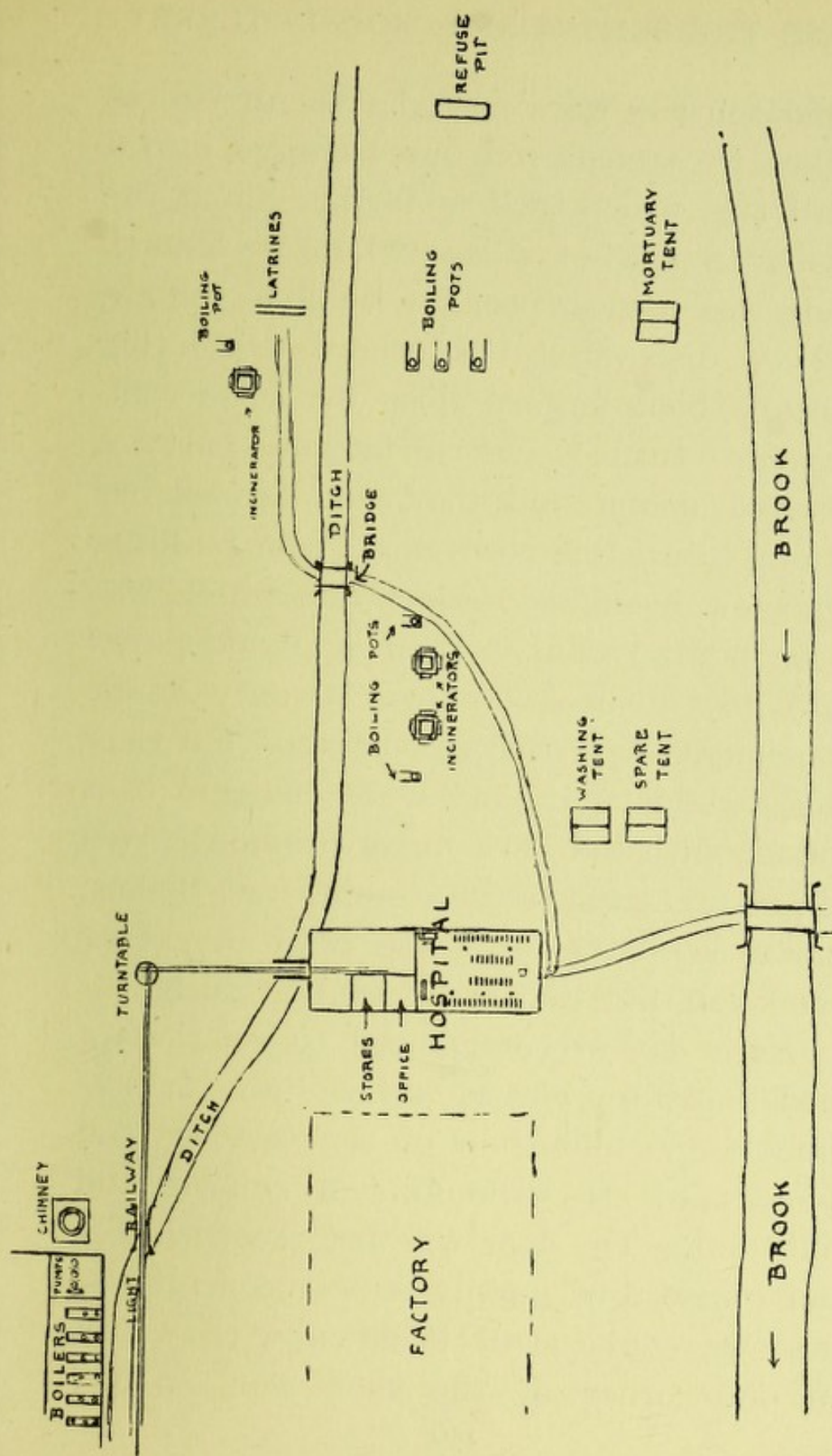
stroyed uselessly, although human beings, especially infidels, are immune from this rule.

There was a rumour that the British Red Cross were going to take up refugee work in Asia Minor in the event of peace being declared.

We were getting very tired of the ordinary hospital routine, and it was with relief we heard that we were to go with the new contingent to Beikos in Asia Minor for work in the cholera camps there.

We left Galata on 8th December, fifteen men under the command of Captain Horton, I.M.S. Beikos is about an hour and a half's journey up the Bosphorus from Stamboul, and we had plenty of time to look about us on the way. It reminded me somewhat of the Clyde with its low hills coming down to the water, though on a much smaller scale.

We kept close to the Asiatic side, which is more picturesque than the European, and called in at innumerable little piers. We passed quite close to the palace at Beyler Bey where Abdul Hamid is imprisoned. It stood almost at the water's edge. All



SKETCH PLAN BEICOS CHOLERA HOSPITAL

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

round sentries were posted. On arrival at Beikos we transferred our baggage into a small tug, which took us farther along the coast to a kind of village where we landed. There was a most peculiar smell in the air, and we discovered that there was a big military boot factory close by. The commandant turned out a fatigue party a hundred strong, and they soon carried our kits up into a big corrugated iron building some few hundred yards away, which was to be our hospital. It was an old paper mill, now disused for over twenty years. It belonged to a British company, but they had abandoned it, and were engaged in a lawsuit with the Turkish Government. We all put up at the Greek inn down at Beikos. It was no better or worse than any other Greek inn, but that is not saying much.

Next day we commenced to get the tin shed ready for use as a hospital. It was the old machine-shop of the factory, and there were still some old fly-wheels and belts left. The floor was littered with dirt and refuse, but luckily it was concrete, so that we could swill it down with water. In one corner of the shed was an old

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

stationary engine, in another a stack of straw. It was the cleansing of the Augean stables on a smaller scale.

It took us two or three days to get the place in order, for there was a great deal to be done.

We discovered the remains of an old light railway leading down to the quay, and I started to repair it, while Lyon went to work on the boiler of the stationary engine, where he was in his element. It was hard work making the line, as the ground was overgrown with thorn bushes four or five feet high which we had to cut down before we could do anything. The old track had fallen away in parts, and there were big holes in it. I wondered what to use as ballast, when I remembered a huge pile of old corsets which we had found in the paper mill. I do not know how they came there, but there were thousands of them, and I used them to fill up the holes in the track, and nice firm ballast they made. We built a bridge over the brook at the back of the shed, took the line over it and continued it into the hospital. The carpenter had built a big truck, and we were

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

able to load it up with dirt and refuse, run it right out of the hospital, and tip it farther down the line. We continued the line right down to the quay, and it was ready for use the second day, and used for bringing up stones into the hospital. Meanwhile Lyon had thoroughly overhauled the boiler, and got steam on, which heated the building and gave us unlimited supplies of hot water. This was quite an achievement, as the boiler had been out of use for nearly twenty years.

We washed the concrete floor down with hot water, and I made openings for drainage by the simple method of taking a pickaxe and knocking holes at intervals in the corrugated iron sides of the building. The carpenters made rough beds by stretching pieces of canvas across a wooden trestle.

On the third day our arrangements were completed and we were ready to take in patients. Major Doughty-Wylie seemed very pleased with the work, and promoted me to be sergeant and quarter-master.

Sanitation was one of our strong points, and was carried out on the most approved R.A.M.C. methods. The shed was divided

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

into two parts. One was the hospital ward, and the other, screened off by canvas sheets, was divided into offices and storerooms, the walls of which we constructed out of trusses of straw.

Outside in the hospital lines were the incinerators, the boiling-pots, the refuse-pit, and over across the brook the latrines. The first patients arrived on December 14th. They came from the Turkish cholera camp on the hill, where they were dying at the rate of seventeen a day, and I don't wonder either, after seeing the camp. It consisted of the usual cluster of dirty tents full of sick men, the barbed wire fence, and the sentries. The sick were never washed or attended to by the orderlies, but were left to shift for themselves, which they did, shuffling off this mortal coil with alarming rapidity. Once a day a doctor put his nose into the camp, looked round and went away again. The camp was put out of bounds for our men, for fear of offending the authorities, who were very ashamed of it, although they seemed unable to improve it. Oh, the hopeless and criminal incompetency of the Turk!

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

Of the thirty patients who arrived, two died at once, before we had a chance of doing anything for them. What a scarecrow lot they were as they came to us!—some on stretchers, some crawling along by themselves, all of them in the last stages of disease. Here is an extract from my diary a day or so after the arrival of the first batch of patients:—

“Two more men dead to-day, making four in a day and a half. They don't seem worth saving. We have put them in an old hen-house, which we use as a mortuary until we get a tent up. This hospital resembles nothing so much as a big monkey-house in a Zoo, both in the appearance of the patients and in the noise they make.”

Every entry contains the monotonous words, “More dead to-day,” or another such as “Have now reached double figures.” It seemed as if the Turkish medical authorities were sending us all their worst cases, so that our statistics should not beat theirs. It was enough to take the fight out of anyone to begin with, to see man after man come in and peg out. I remember one man being brought in from the cholera

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

camp, where he had lain unattended for twenty days. He was in the most filthy condition I ever saw, and simply swarming with lice. We shaved his beard and hair off, washed him and put him into bed, upon which he promptly had a fit and died.

We thought by this time that we would have become used to dirt after our experiences in Stamboul, but these men were a revelation to us as to how dirty it was possible to get. It was altogether horrible, though like most things we gradually got used to it. Everyone grew very callous after a while, and this was not surprising, for you cannot see men die at the rate of two or three a day without getting to regard it as a matter of course. It grew to seem the most natural thing in the world to start the day by carrying out the corpses of those who had died in the night. There is no doubt that war has a most brutalising effect upon one, and the veneer of civilisation, which is but skin deep, soon wears off.

I read a letter from an orderly in one of our units with the Greeks at Salonica to his friend with us, in which he described some of the atrocities he had seen. He

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

ended up by saying, "When I think of the awful sufferings that I have witnessed, I feel that I could shoot the 'man in the street' who shouts 'Let's have war!'"

Some of the men in the hospital were half-witted, probably the result of want, exposure, and the ill-treatment they had received. When they first came to us, they were frightened to ask for anything, as in the camp where they came from they had been beaten whenever they complained. There was one funny little chap, almost a dwarf, whom we called "Little Tich." He used to sit all day long cross-legged on the end of his bed, which would collapse from time to time, throwing him on to the floor. When asked his name, he would point to the board hanging above his head, and on it being given to him he would hold it upside down and solemnly read out his name, Mustapha Ali. I noticed that whenever I showed a photo or a picture paper to a patient he invariably held it the wrong way up.

As some of the men became convalescent we made them do light work in the wards, and then the trouble began. They were

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

awful thieves, and constant quarrels arose from one man stealing another's bread. One man in particular, a priest, who ought to have known better, was a continual source of trouble. He complained one day to an inspecting Turkish officer that he had been given no bread for two or three days. The orderly in charge was called up to explain. He promptly turned the man over in bed, and there underneath him were six large pieces of bread which he had stolen. I have seen men watching a dying man, and before the breath was out of his body get out of bed and creep towards him to steal his money and personal effects, and even his food. They were just like wild beasts.

It was rather curious, too, the different manner in which men died. Some made no effort to live at all, but simply gave up the struggle, saying that it was the will of Allah. Others made a great fight, and hung on for days half-conscious.

I watched a man die one night. He took a long time over it, and breathed with a queer rasping noise in his throat which I suppose was the death-rattle. When he was nearly gone, his face grew livid, his eyes

glazed over, and he opened and shut his mouth like a fish out of water.

It was extraordinary how a man would recover and be almost convalescent, only to have a relapse and snuff out like a candle. Men who were strong enough to get out of bed and walk round the ward in the morning were as often as not dead that evening. Many of the patients had contracted dysentery, which killed the cholera bug and saved their lives for the time being. But most of them succumbed to a nameless disease which baffled the doctors.

When the first batch of convalescents were ready to go out, there was great lamentation ; for though they had grumbled continually while in the hospital, they did not like the idea of going out. "Little Tich" looked a sorry sight as he paraded in a dirty uniform several sizes too large for him. He wept bitterly as he went off, and refused to say good-bye to us. The other outgoing patients kissed Captain Horton's hand and pressed it against their foreheads. It seemed a shame to send them out half cured as they were, but we had to make room for those in greater need.

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

Later on that afternoon I met a long column of men marching slowly through Beikos. These were discharged patients from the camp on the hill. They looked as if they ought to be entering hospital, not leaving it. A more ghastly set of men you could not imagine than these poor emaciated, broken-down creatures. As they shuffled along, the air resounded with their continual coughing. This was the price they had paid for serving their country, and they were returning to their homes with ruined health and constitution, the mere shadows of their former selves. They disappeared, wrapped in their grey overcoats, an army of ghosts. I did not see any of our men among them, and heard that they had been too late to start with this batch and had been detained in the camp on the hill, where they would soon fall ill again if they stayed long.

As the patients grew stronger they became more human and more interesting. They all took a tremendous interest in their diet, and if an orderly left out anything, would point to their food charts and say, "The doctor bey ordered this or that."

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

Some of them told us some curious tales of their experiences in the war, and there was one tale which was very general. It was about a trick the Bulgarians had played on them up near Kirk-Kilisse. Two or three Turkish regiments were encamped for the night in a village. To them came two Bulgarian regiments disguised, who mingled with them, saying, "Do not be afraid; we are brothers in faith." But when the Turks were asleep, the Bulgarians started to massacre them. Turk killed Turk, and the Bulgarian killed both. Such was the story which I heard in several hospitals.

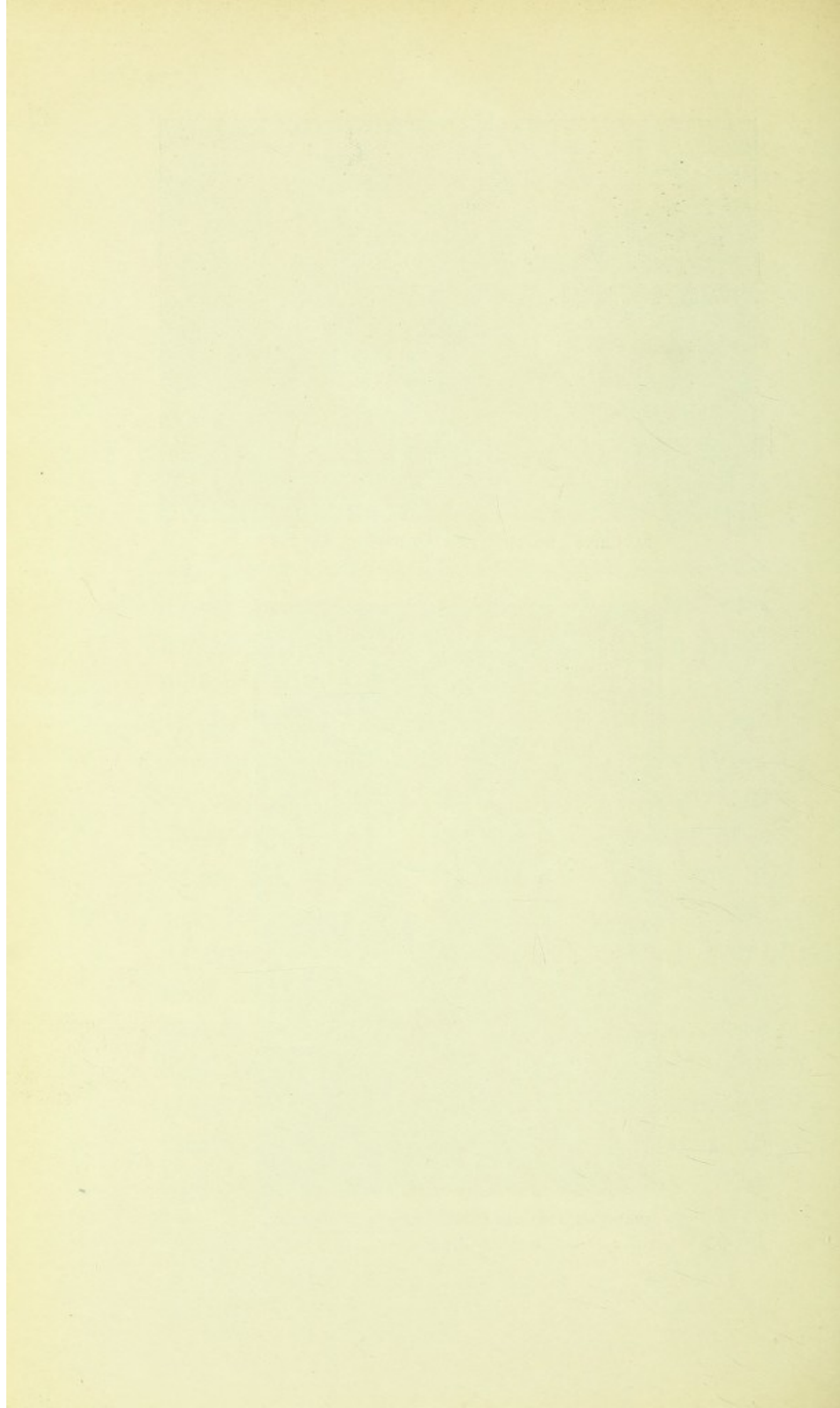
Lyon was put in charge of the incinerators, and constructed a special type, on which he was continually improving. First of all a pit was dug in the shape of a cross, six inches deep. Across the top of the pit were put fire bars, and on these foundations brick walls were built in a four-foot square. At a height of about eight inches from the ground more fire bars were laid across to act as a fire grate. The sides were then built up, sloping gradually towards the middle, until they ended in an opening about eighteen inches across. The



PATIENTS ARRIVING FOR ADMISSION, BEIKOS.



CLIPPING AND CLEANING BEFORE ADMISSION,
BEIKOS.



WORK IN ASIA MINOR

total height of the incinerator was about four feet, and it resembled a small, squat chimney or brick oven. The pit underneath allowed an ample draught through the fire bars, and a further supply of air was obtained through the porous bricks. The incinerator is filled up with straw and refuse of all sorts, which is set burning and then smoulders on while fresh supplies of fuel are added from time to time. These incinerators were never allowed to go out the whole time we were in Beikos. Every bed-pan which came out of the ward was emptied into them, and all dirty rags and dressings were got rid of in this way, thus almost eliminating the danger of infection from insanitary conditions.

Farther on in the lines was a row of boiling-pots, in which all the blankets and bedding from dead patients were thoroughly boiled and sterilised before being washed, prior to being used again.

The most stringent regulations were enforced with regard to the nursing orderlies washing before leaving work for meals. A tent was pitched outside the hospital, and by it were two tins, one of

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

warm water, the other of izar. As every man came off duty he hung up his overalls in the tent and washed his hands in izar and warm water before going to his meal. Lyon used to stand guard outside the tent to see that everybody carried out this rule. But in spite of all our precautions some of the men managed to contract dysentery, and one man was so seriously ill that when we eventually left Beikos he had to be carried on board the launch on a stretcher.

Although comparisons are odious, I have no hesitation in saying that Beikos hospital compared exceedingly favourably with any other Red Cross hospital in Turkey in its efficiency and organisation. This was due almost entirely to the untiring efforts of the officers in charge, who set us a fine example in the way in which they stuck to the work, which was often monotonous and discouraging. I know that I am voicing the sentiments of all who were there when I say that it would be hard to serve under two better officers.

One day we received a surprise visit from an old Turkish general, the Inspector-General of Military Hospitals. He came

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

round the ward accompanied by his staff, amongst whom was a German officer. He seemed delighted with what he saw, and stopped to bawl loud remarks to the patients every few minutes. In one of them he said, "Whoever is convalescent, go away and make room for a comrade," on which there was loud wailing from the men. As he finished his inspection, he turned and addressed everyone present, saying, "We Turks would become men by serving under the English—or the Germans," he added hastily, catching sight of the German staff-officer with him. We heard afterwards that he had given the officers in charge of the camp on the hill an awful dressing down, and I must say they richly deserved it.

The hospital staff consisted of two English doctors, a Turkish medical officer attached to us, an interpreter, three dressers, twelve British orderlies, and fifteen Turkish soldiers, of whom more anon.

Both the medical officer and interpreter were Greeks, though Turkish subjects, and spoke Greek, Turkish, and English. They were products of Robert College, the big American college over by Roumelie

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

Hissar, the public school of Turkey, which has done so much to spread the English language. Charalambos Effendi, who was an apothecary down in Konia, had been forced to serve by the Turkish Government, and had survived the retreat from Lule Burgas. He was not at all keen on his work with the army, and indeed he could not have had a very pleasant time at Beikos, as he was the go-between or medium between us and the Turkish camp on the hill, a position which I should not have cared to have filled, needing much tact and long-suffering in view of the extreme jealousy of our neighbours towards us.

Both he and Yanni were quite outspoken in their criticisms on Turkish methods, for which they had no love, and Charalambos used to tell us of his experiences up at the front, where his division was cut to pieces. The conversation always came back to the same channel—the hopeless inefficiency of the Turkish organisation. One day poor Yanni got a great fright. A military policeman appeared with a paper ordering him to report himself at once in Stamboul for military service. He had to go down

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

to the War Office, and there managed to get off, as he was a medical student still at college, and also attached to the British Red Cross.

However, at the time he did not know what his fate would be, and went off looking rather dejected, escorted by our little Turkish sergeant, Ahmet, who had taken on himself the duties of provost-sergeant. We had a fatigue party of fifteen Turkish "Tommies" to do the heavy work—"Les domestiques," as Captain Lloyd Jones used to call them, and I can think of no more expressive word than that nickname given to the men in the French army.

As Bash Chàwush (Sergeant-Major) I was responsible that they did their work, and what a trouble they were until I got used to their little ways and found out how to manage them.

I remember the morning they arrived, sixteen sulky devils, drawn up in a ragged line, glowering at me, and wondering what new sufferings were in store for them. They were nearly all men who had been invalided down from the front, and were now supposed to be fit for light work. But

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

they were not by any means, and we found that many were suffering from œdema of the legs, and were hardly able to walk. On examining them, we found that the flesh was soft and pulpy, and dents could be made in it with the finger all round. I saw a man who was suffering from this beaten for some misdemeanour, and he bellowed aloud as if in great pain. I wondered why at the time; now I know. It must have been agony.

The first few days the fatigue party were with us I could do nothing with them. They would leave their work on the slightest excuse, and always had some ready reason for it. They felt sick, they had to go and pray, they were hungry, and so on. I could not be always going round after them with a stick, so I tried a new plan.

I first of all went through a course of drill under the tuition of one of our sentries, and learnt all the commands.

Next day I paraded the fatigue party, and made them fall in properly, pick up their dressing, and stand to attention while I called the roll. It had a marked effect on them getting the commands in their

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

own language, and I remember their astonishment when I barked out for the first time, "Saga bag—sagdan beraber gel, yerinde rahat—hazir ol!" (Eyes right, dress—stand at ease—attention!). I then told them through the interpreter that there would be three roll-calls a day—morning, noon, and evening—at which every man must be present and answer his name. No one was to leave work until the whistle sounded. Each man who worked well would be allowed a day off a week. Those who disobeyed these rules would be handed over to the military authorities and flogged.

Two days afterwards one of them, an idle villain named Toormüş, absented himself without leave. We resolved to make an example of him, and he was flogged and imprisoned in the barracks. After that I had no more trouble with the fatigue party, and I am glad to say I never had to use the stick on them from that time until we left. I soon got to like them, and found that the Turkish Tommy is an excellent fellow when you get to know him, and does his best. Of course we had to make allowances for them, as the Oriental idea of hard

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

work differs very much from ours, and the Turks under us all swore that they had never worked so hard in their lives.

It amused me to hear the way in which some of our ignorant British orderlies, who had been out in South Africa, referred to these dignified Orientals as niggers. One of them, a weakly and under-developed cockney, tried to kick one of the Turkish soldiers, a man over six feet. But the Turk turned on him such a look of rage and contempt that he thought better of it and backed away. The outcome of this was a petition from the Chàwush in charge of the fatigue party, that the orderlies should not be allowed to touch them. They did not mind how much I beat them as I was Bash Chàwush in authority over them, and even presented me with a staff which they had cut.

I was surprised at the patient manner in which they will stand punishment from a superior, and have seen them calmly salute after an officer has beaten them, as if it was the most natural thing in the world. I must say that the system which allows its officers power to beat private soldiers lends

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

itself to all sorts of excesses, and must be most prejudicial to real discipline. The Turkish soldier is paid a "mejidie" (3s. 4d.) a month, which he very rarely sees, and is a long-suffering individual.

By degrees the hospital routine became very monotonous, though we tried to give the men as much time off as possible for exercise. We all lived in a tumble-down old wooden house on the shore of the Bosphorus. It was filthily dirty, although we used to clean it out every day. One half was used as a stable for the horses and oxen of the wood-cutters who came down from the hills and valleys of the interior with huge loads of timber, which was loaded into dabiaks. We made one room a kitchen, but there was no chimney to let smoke out, and it used to sweep through the house, blackening everything, and making it impossible for us to keep clean.

The carpenter rigged up some tables and benches in the big hall, and we eventually got some rough camp-beds made to sleep on. One had to be very careful how one got into them, however, as they had a trick of suddenly giving way and subsiding

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

on to the floor. We trained one of the fatigue party to act as cook's assistant and mess waiter, which he did very well, and began to pick up odd bits of English. At night we used to build up a big fire, and sit round it swapping lies. I can see them all now, grouped round the fire—an ex-soldier or two, a purser's assistant, an engineer—adventurers all, a mixed little crowd.

Sometimes our circle round the fire was augmented from outside by a Turkish soldier or two, and often the "Bekji" (watchman), a tall, hook-nosed Kurd, would stroll in and sit down. He used to supply us with wood for the fire, and we gave him food in return. He and I became quite friendly, and I used to practise my Turkish on him. He had been shot through the thigh at Kirk-Kilisse, and was a picturesque figure in his big sheepskin coat and blue turban, with a big revolver strapped round his waist. His full title was Mehmet Ali Kurd Chàwush (Kurd sergeant), and he was very particular about it, saying always, "I am a Kurd and no Osmanli" (Turk). We used to have long talks, helped out by signs and a dictionary.

His great idea was to save up enough money to go to England or America, which he imagined was a sort of El Dorado. He was outspoken in his criticisms, and did not care for the Turkish officers, whom he said were no longer men. He admired the Russian officers, because they looked clean; but, most of all, he admired the English. I asked him if he liked Armenians, and he drew his hand across his throat with an expressive gesture.

I ran short of tobacco one night, and he gave me some of his, which was not at all nice. It reminded me of the yarn in "Hadji Baba" of the man who started a tobacconist shop in Bagdad. He sold four kinds of tobacco in descending scale. They were: "Tobacco, Inferior Tobacco, Camel Dung, and Inferior Camel Dung." Mine was most inferior, judging by the taste.

The Turkish cigarette was a great disappointment to us. All the good brands are sent abroad, and those we got were not worth smoking.

I found time to explore Beikos and the surrounding country a little. It is an extremely pretty place, and full of memories

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

of the ill-fated Sultan Abdul Aziz, one of whose palaces overlooked the house in which we lived. Towards the interior the country was hilly and heavily wooded. It reminded me very much of the Black Forest. We rode up into the forest on two or three occasions, and passed an old shooting lodge which had also belonged to Abdul Aziz, but was now in ruins. The country is pretty wild, and there is plenty of game, including bears, wolves, and foxes. We climbed up the Giant Mountain one day, and got a fine view of the Black Sea. It looked dark and dreary, and its appearance quite justified its name.

Just outside the hospital compound was a barracks, and every afternoon at half-past four the bugles sounded cease work, and the men paraded on the barrack square. Then the bugles sounded a fanfare, the officers drew their swords, and the commandant ordered three cheers for the Sultan. Some of the Turkish bugle calls were very weird and discordant, but the prayer call in the evening was very pretty. Every evening after the soldier muezzin had finished his call of "Allah Ackbar ; La

WORK IN ASIA MINOR

Allaha Il Allah" (God is great; there is no God but God), the bugle would sound a long low note and then go gradually up, finishing on another long-drawn-out note.

We did not get very much news at Beikos concerning the progress of the peace negotiations, and were quite in the dark. Transports from the Black Sea kept passing by on their way to Stamboul. They were packed with troops, cheering and sounding bugles continuously as they went along. At last we heard that, peace or not, the Red Cross had decided to withdraw their units, and that we were to prepare to leave.

One afternoon just before we went, Monk Mason of the Consular Service paid us a visit. I showed him round the hospital, and he told me that he was engaged in distributing relief to the refugees in Beikos, and worked once a week on Lady Lowther's Relief Fund. I went round with him, and spent an instructive afternoon watching him deal out bread and charcoal. At one house he asked how many there were in the family, and as the girl was about to answer her sister said something

CHAPTER IX

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

WE handed over the hospital to the Turkish authorities on the evening of 20th January. I paraded the fatigue party for the last time and presented each man with a packet of tobacco. I was very sorry to say good-bye to them, for though they were awful slackers they were good fellows in their own way, and did their best. There was a vast difference in their demeanour and appearance compared with their half-cringing and half-defiant attitude when they had first arrived. As I walked through the neat and cleanly ward, I made a mental note that I would slip in before leaving next morning and see how our successors were managing.

That night we all went down to the Greek inn to say good-bye to our friends there, and spent a jovial evening. We had

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

some dancing, and were shown how to do a Greek round dance, which seemed very simple; the company joining hands and going round in a circle, like the first step of an eightsome reel. We danced in rubber boots on a stone floor.

Next morning I called Hairi, Zilphugar, and a select few of the fatigue party who had worked well into our quarters, and Lyon and I

started to give them our old clothes. I don't know how the rest of the fatigue party got wind of it, but



in a few minutes they all came slinking up like dogs round a carcase. We could not very well turn them out, so had to divide the clothes equally. Men who had not done a hand's turn since they had been with us, crowded round jostling their fellows out of the way. One beggar who had been a source of trouble all along, actually had the cheek to demur when I gave him a pair of socks, and pointed to a shirt. I snatched the socks

out of his hand, and bundled him outside as a lesson to the rest. There was great competition for our shirts, army grey backs, as those the Turks had were practically in rags. Next of importance in their eyes came socks, and it was amusing to see one man trying to make up his mind between a thin gaudy coloured pair with mauve clocks, and a pair of useful thick woollen ones. His vanity eventually overcame him and he departed with the ornate pair.

When I had given nearly everything away, another man turned up late. I had nothing left except a few handkerchiefs and he looked very disappointed, when I suddenly remembered a number of leather bootlaces I could give him. Directly I produced these there was a regular rush to get them. But I shoved the men back and gave them all to the last comer. He took them and proceeded to bargain with the others. None of them had any laces in their boots, hence the eagerness to obtain some. Hairi, as house boy, got the lion's share, levying toll on everybody, and I saw him going away with five shirts, a kalpak,

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

several pairs of socks, a jack-knife, and two bright-coloured calendars hanging from one of his coat buttons.

Before leaving, I slipped across to the hospital to have a last look round. I found a sour-looking warrant officer in my place, and his looks boded ill for the fatigue party. The change in the appearance of the ward in one night was almost incredible. It was between nine and ten o'clock, the time when we were usually swabbing decks, cleaning up generally, and getting ready for the C.O.'s daily inspection at ten o'clock. Now I saw no signs of bustle or activity, or of any attempt to get the place ship-shape. The Turkish orderlies lounged about talking to the patients and smoking cigarettes. No one had attempted to wash the patients, and various utensils, unemptied, lay about the floor. It was a beautiful sunny day, and over everything floated a spirit of *dolce far niente* so beloved of the Turk. Why bother; would it not do later, Yarin (tomorrow)? I wondered what the place would be like in a week's time.

The old commandant and the Turkish doctors came down to the quay to see us

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

off, also Hairi and Zilphugar, who seemed very sorry at our departure.

I was glad in some ways to get away, for the work had been dreary and monotonous, and I think that if I had stayed there long I should have become like a Turk, and ceased to worry about things. I don't know whether it was the climate or the atmosphere, the "stimmung," as the Germans say, that one gets into, but sometimes it really seemed too much trouble to exert oneself at times. On the other hand I had some feelings of regret, for one cannot stay in Beikos any time without getting to like it, with its charming scenery. The rows of little white houses ascending in steps from the water front, the palace of Abdul Aziz on the hill, and the wooded valleys and mountains stretching away into the distance.

As we came into the Golden Horn and headed for the Customs quay, it seemed as if we would never be able to get alongside, so closely packed were the dabiehs and barges in front of us. We eventually had to carry the baggage over four or five intervening boats before we could get on shore.

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

The captain of the launch gave us his men to carry out the baggage through the custom-house to the wagons, as a parting compliment. While I was watching the wagons being loaded, I saw two Kurdish porters fighting. They are tremendously strong chaps as a rule, and carry enormous loads on their backs. In fact, the "hamals" (porters) of Constantinople are famous for this, and are nearly all Persians or Kurds. They form the rough and turbulent element in Stamboul, and are to be found in every disturbance. These two went at each other with a will, and it took two or three men hanging on to each one, to finally separate them.

The loading completed, we started off through Stamboul at the funeral pace customary to the oxen. When last I had marched with the wagons through the town, the streets were almost impassable, thronged with refugees and troops. Now they seemed all to have disappeared and the streets looked strangely clean and empty. On the way we met a mule battery coming down the street, looking serviceable and efficient. The officers wore

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

khaki with bright green facings, and the roll collars of their cloaks were also of the same striking hue. Why do they spoil the look of khaki so, with these totally unnecessary and bizarre facings?

Arrived at the hospital we handed over the baggage, and reported ourselves. My duty as sergeant now ended, I got leave off and Lyon and I went off to the Pera Palace Hotel as hard as we could, and spent the rest of the afternoon in making ourselves presentable members of society again.

That night, between one and two o'clock in the morning, the door of the ward where we were sleeping was flung violently open and a man staggered in, and flung himself down on an empty bed next to Lyon. It was one of the orderlies who had been celebrating his last night in Stamboul, not wisely and but too well. I got up to fling him out and seized him by the arm when I noticed blood all over him. On looking closely, I found that his left wrist was almost severed and that he was bleeding like a pig. We managed to get one of the doctors to turn out and he came and put a

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

tourniquet bandage on. We could not get much out of the man, except that he had run all the way from Galata Bridge, a good mile distant, with his wrist almost off. He left a bloodstained trail behind him, which must have puzzled the police next day.

When they had taken him off to bed, Lyon discovered, to his rage and disgust, that his clean clothes which he had carefully put out on the bed were covered with blood. Next day it was found that this man had been trying conclusions with a plate-glass window, and had put his fist through it. While withdrawing it, he had cut his wrist to the bone, both tendons and veins being cut through. He was put under chloroform, and it was found that the tendons had gone right up into his arm. Another incision had to be made at right angles to the cut in order to get hold of them again, and sew them together. He went home with a little memento of his trip in the form of a red cross on his arm.

There were about twenty-one cases of sickness amongst our own men during our stay in Turkey, including cases of dysentery, malaria, and one of scarlet fever. Some of

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

them were quite serious enough to cause some anxiety.

On the whole we were extremely lucky, and kept wonderfully free from sickness, considering the risks we must have run. Of course, we were very fit when we arrived in Turkey, after our sea voyage, and that made a great difference. Some of the other expeditions were not so lucky, notably the expedition to Greece, which lost a nurse at Salonika; and the Servian unit, whose commanding officer, Captain Carter, died from typhoid; a piece of bad news which reached us just before we left for home.

Lyon and I spent the last few days in sightseeing round Stamboul, under the guidance of Yanni, our interpreter. Of course we went to see St. Sophia, and were awfully disappointed in it. As we went in through the big courtyard in front, I thought of the scene of a few weeks earlier, when the whole place was packed with starving and sick soldiers kept in by sentries, and pressing against the railings like wild beasts, clamouring to the passers-by for food. Now the courtyard was silent and deserted save for a few men washing round

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

the fountain prior to worship. Inside, the first feeling was one of disappointment, and one felt as if one were in a huge barn, placarded with huge discs of red and white on which were written inscriptions from the Koran. In the centre hung huge candelabra, from which were suspended tails of horse hair and sheaves of dried-up wheat. The air of mystery and solemnness peculiar to a Christian cathedral was absent.

The mosque had just been cleaned up after its change from a cholera lazaretto back into a place of worship. The Turks certainly put their mosques to some curious uses. At the commencement of the war St. Sophia was used as an armoury, and was filled with stacks of rifles and ammunition. Then it was turned into a prison and a hospital, and had just become its original self again. Fresh matting had been put down over the carpets, and the expanse of yellow matting gave the place a terribly bare look.

We were shown the mark of the blood-stained hand of the Sultan Mohammed high up on a pillar, which he placed there as a sign of conquest. There certainly is a

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

hand mark there, but so high up that Mohammed must have performed a miracle to put it there. We were also shown a gate known as the sacred gate, which, so Yanni told us, had never been open since the capture of Stamboul by the Turks. The legend was that when the gate was opened some awful disaster would befall Islam and the Turkish Empire. At all events, the mosque was supposed to be mined, in order that the Bulgarians should never get it, and hold their Christian service there; and as they would be certain to open the gate, this would fulfil the prophecy.

Outside the mosque the beggars and shoe-blacks lie in wait for one. In Stamboul the shoe-black reduces his work to a fine art. He first of all scrapes every piece of dirt off one's boot, and washes it with soap and water. After that he rubs the polish well into the leather, and there ensues a period of hard rubbing and polishing, until your boot shines like a mirror. He finishes up by rubbing a mixture of oil and wax over the boot, giving it a glossy appearance. The whole thing lasts about

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

twenty minutes, and costs only a piastre (about twopence). I think that a Stamboul boot-black would make anything shine. I tried him one day with a pair of army ammunition boots caked in mud, which defied anyone to clean them; and he actually succeeded in getting a polish on them.

On Thursday, 23rd January, the contingents from Ali Bey and Beikos sailed for home under command of Captain Horton. Lyon and I were staying on until Saturday, as we had leave to travel home overland.

That afternoon history was made in Stamboul when one man, practically single-handed, overthrew authority with the paralysing suddenness so peculiar to the East. At 3.15 on Thursday afternoon Enver Bey, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Turkish army, rode up the street leading to the Babbalia at the head of a rabble of Arab troops numbering in all two hundred. They carried banners on which were pictures of Enver Bey, and inscriptions hailing him as the friend of liberty, the hero of the constitution. They made a great noise as they came along, uttering

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

loud threats against the Government, and yelling, "Long live the Empire!" They broke through the guards round the Porte, who, it was said, were bribed, though this was not certain. Two officers who tried to oppose them were instantly killed. At the door they were met by Napiz, the aide-de-camp of Nazim Pasha, who tried to prevent them entering, but was shot dead. Hearing the shot, Nazim Pasha, who was seated in council with the other ministers, rushed to the door, revolver in hand, and was immediately shot dead. Such was the tragic end of Nazim Pasha, the so-called Kitchener of Turkey, who had begun the campaign with such great hopes and had lost gradually his battles, armies, reputation, and now, as he was trying to regain by diplomacy what had been lost in battle, his life. It was not clear at the time who actually was the murderer, and the new Government tried to pass it off as an accident, until they found that no one would believe them, when they changed round and said that the former Government were traitors who were planning to betray the country.

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

After the murder, Enver Bey entered the Porte and, revolver in hand, forced the Government to resign. He was very nervous, and hurried off to the palace in a motor-car, returning with an irade nominating Mahmoud Shevket Vizier.

Thus was the old Government overthrown and the Young Turks back in power. The extraordinary part about it was the ease with which it was done. In no country except Turkey, or perhaps some of the South American Republics, could a junior officer overthrow a Government of which the commander-in-chief was a member, and do it with such astonishing suddenness and ease. Outside the Porte orators wildly harangued the crowd, who were in a dangerous temper, and Yanni afterwards told me that though he was wearing the fez he was frightened for his life, and made for his home. Mobs of loose Arab soldiers started to loot the shops in the bazaars, terrifying the shopkeepers, and mob law was let loose. Lyon and I dined on board the *Weymouth* that night, and had a great time. About midnight four refugees arrived asking for protection. They were Admiral

Said, the son of Kiamil Pasha, and three friends.

We spent the night on board, and it was a splendid feeling to sleep between sheets again.

We were awakened next morning by two marines talking together outside, and their conversation goes to prove that the spirit of Captain Marryat's days, the old candid spirit of criticism, is still alive in the British Navy.

Said the first "Jolly" to his mate, "No, I can't understand it nohow. It ain't right. These 'ere Red Cross chaps they comes aboard our ship in their dirty gear, and blimme if they don't sit down to table along of our ossifers."

We were taken over the ship after breakfast and shown the engine-rooms by the engineer lieutenant, who explained to us why the fore and aft funnels were narrower than the two middle ones. The reason for this was that the narrow funnels had only two boilers connected to each of them, while the two broader funnels had four boilers each. The captain had a favourite little joke about these funnels

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

with which he used to catch his fair visitors, asking them if their eyes were good to judge which of the funnels were the farthest apart. Some would answer the first and second, others the second and third, when he would chuckle and say, "You are quite wrong. The first and fourth are the farthest apart."

They were cheery souls on board, and we shall always have the pleasantest recollections of their hospitality to us. Indeed, the kindness and attention shown to their compatriots was a feature of the British Colony in Constantinople.

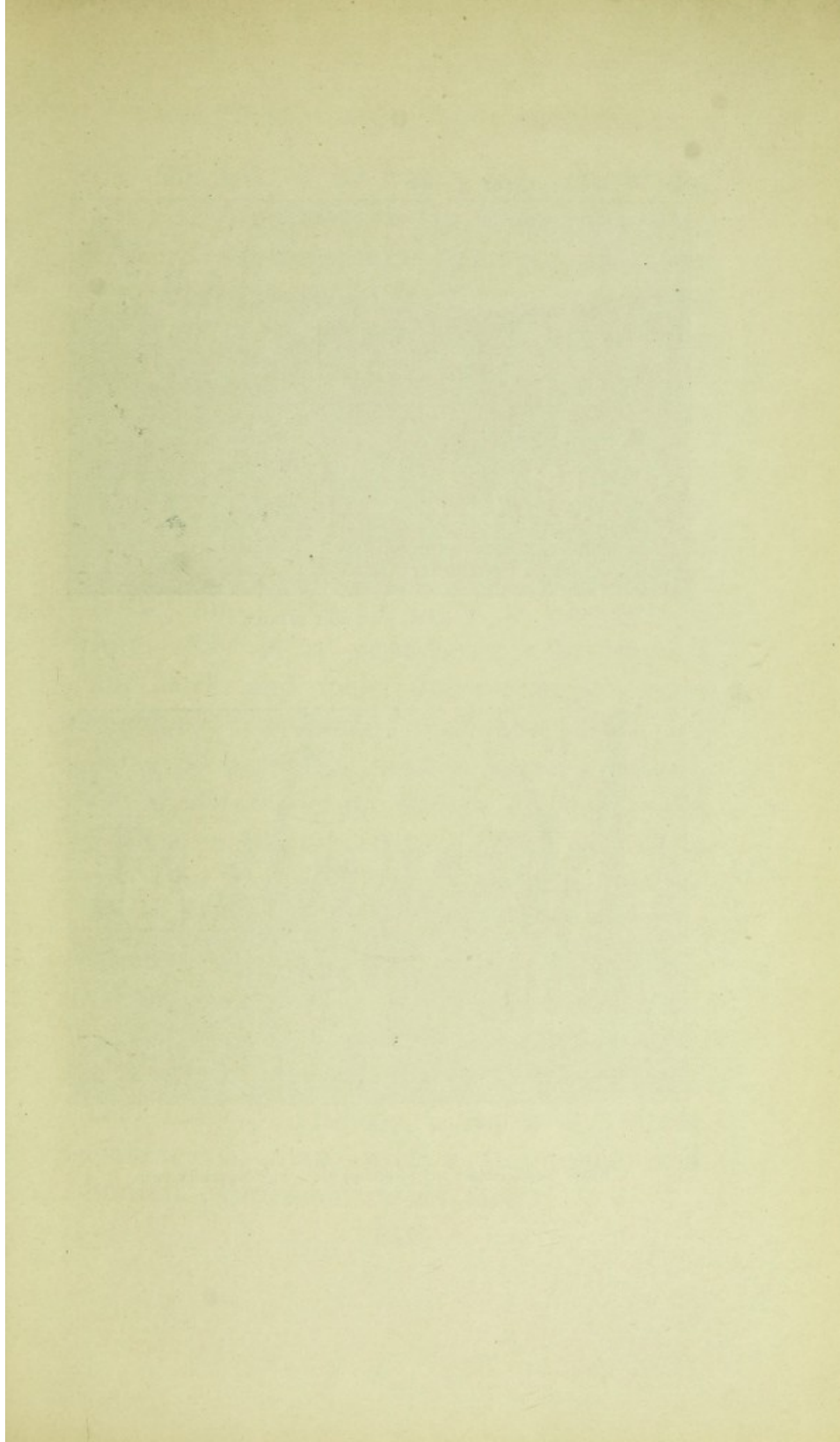
We went ashore in the middle of the morning, and drove up to the hospital. Here we discovered that Major Doughty-Wylie had been rather anxious at our non-return the night before, and had sent a message to the Embassy, who had flashed a wireless message to the *Weymouth* about us. We found that all leave was stopped after eight o'clock at night until the city had quieted down, though it seemed to be quite normal on the surface, and a stranger would not have detected anything unusual, much less a revolution.

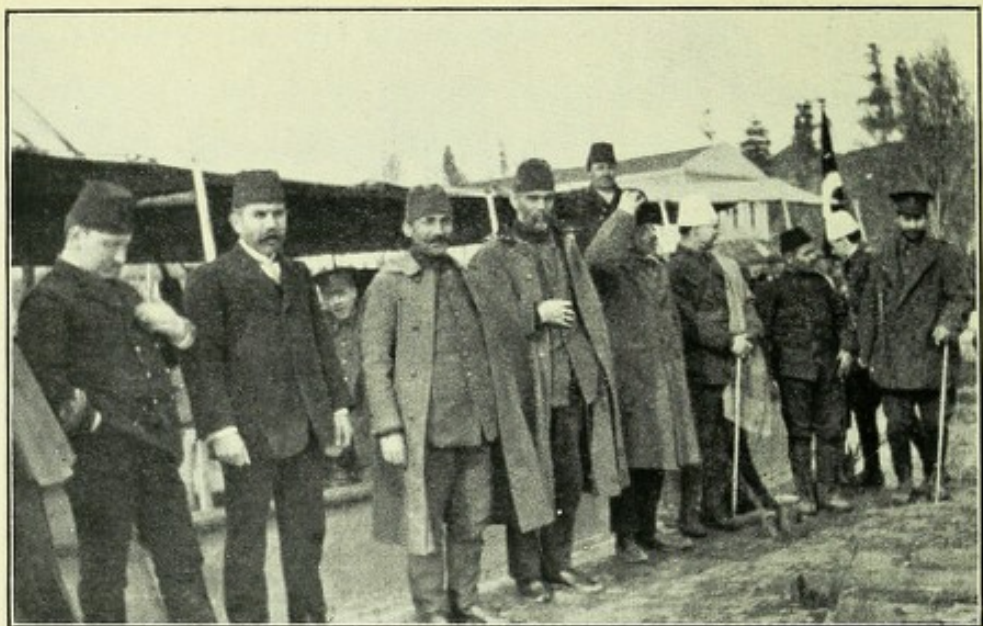
WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

I noticed, however, that the usual patrols of pompiers, or military firemen, had been replaced by Arab and Kurdish pickets, who were in favour of war, and therefore of the new régime.

Four of us, accompanied by Yanni, attended the Selamlik on that historic occasion, and our uniforms passed us readily through the cordon of troops. We got a splendid place to stand opposite the mosque where the Sultan alights from his carriage, and alongside of us were members of the German Red Cross and Egyptian Red Moon expeditions.

The Selamlik, or the Sultan's progress to the mosque every Friday, is usually a splendid sight, but on this occasion, owing to the war, it was rather uninteresting from a spectacular point of view, although from an historical point of view it teemed with interest. Drawn up in two lines outside the palace gate and keeping the crowd back was a regiment of Kurdish cavalry—wild, ragged-looking men mounted on small ungroomed ponies. They would have looked more at home on the field of battle, and seemed out of place as a royal bodyguard.





OUR DEPARTURE FROM BEIKOS.



THE MORNING AFTER THE COUP D'ÉTAT.

Enver Bey (extreme left of group) receiving congratulations.

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

To the left of us was a company of the Turkish Gendarmerie in their new blue uniforms, and opposite them was the royal bodyguard, resplendent in red and gold tunics, white breeches, and white fur kalpaks. The united escort appeared to be under the control of a police officer who gave all the commands.

While we were waiting for the Sultan, Enver Bey strolled up, and while talking to his friends, who crowded round congratulating him, Lyon managed to photograph him. He is a good-looking fellow, tall and dark, and looks every inch a soldier. Suddenly a command rang out, the troops came to attention, and a band stationed opposite the mosque struck up. Then the Sultan appeared driving in a two-horse carriage, preceded by an outrider in the old Turkish national costume. As he drove along there was hardly any sound from the crowd, which stood and watched apathetically. We came to the salute as he passed, and I had a good view of him, dressed in a field-marshal's uniform, a feeble and tired-looking old man, with a frightened and hunted expression on his face.

He was received by a number of officials and priests, and disappeared inside the mosque. He emerged later dressed in civilian clothes, and drove off in a closed carriage. The last to go was Mahmoud Shevket Pasha, the new Prime Minister, who drove off in a Ford car.

He is a soldier pure and simple and not a statesman, the leader of a party who appear to be mere political adventurers, and have pledged themselves to war. And now after the horrors of the campaign, the tremendous suffering and mortality of the troops was to be set at naught, and the war resumed to justify the action of a few unscrupulous politicians posing as patriots. Truly the Turks are a long-suffering people. In no other country would the same disorder and misrule be tolerated as it is in Turkey, where even a revolution seemed hardly able to rouse the people from their indifference.

On the afternoon of Friday, 24th January, Nazim Pasha was quietly buried. Hardly anyone was present at the funeral, as his friends were afraid to come. His coffin was carried by two private soldiers, and there

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

was a complete absence of military pomp or honour. Thus ended the last scene of the dastardly crime, which will remain a blot in the chequered annals of Turkish political history. The Sick Man of Europe now seems very near his end.

We left next day on the mail boat *Romania* for Constanza. We were entrusted with special telegrams for the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Herald*, Paris, which we were to despatch from Constanza. It was the first uncensored and genuine news of the *coup d'état* to get through. It was a lovely afternoon as we left Constantinople, which looks its very best from the water. As I watched the towers and minarets of Stamboul growing dim in the distance, I mused over the happenings and adventures of the past eventful three months. I wondered what the Turks really thought of us, if they appreciated our work, and whether it had been of any real and lasting value.

As regards ourselves, experience teaches us that there should be more stringent regulations regarding the selection of men for such expeditions.

WITH THE BRITISH RED CROSS IN TURKEY

Although aware of the difficulties in which the authorities are placed in having to select men at very short notice, yet it should not be hard to distinguish the genuine article. The fact that a man produces a good character is not enough. He may have been all right when it was granted, but it cannot be depended upon, unless his subsequent conduct is verified. The man may have lapsed since. The Committee should also be careful not to recruit men going out for the pay to tide them over a period. There are always a number of rolling stones who spend their time looking out for jobs of this kind, going from one to another, never sticking to anything.

Only afterwards, away from the control centre, are the characters of the men really put to the test, and to control and prevent lapses of discipline, stringent powers should be given to the officers in command.

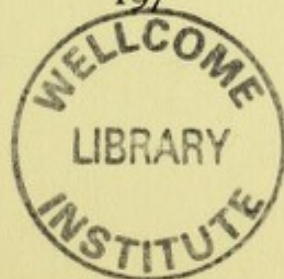
These remarks are not made in any carping spirit, but as a help to any future selection committee, and the men chosen should be such as would always punctiliously uphold the honour of their country.

BACK TO STAMBOUL: LAST IMPRESSIONS

We were now steaming rapidly through the Bosphorus, and as we passed Beikos with its smiling shore, I wondered how our friends were getting on, and how the patients liked the change. Already everything seemed like a dream, as if we had never been there, but changed to sad reality again as we caught sight of the cholera camp on the hill, with the rows of freshly dug graves below it. As we rounded the point these last silent witnesses to all the suffering and sadness we had seen faded gradually from our view and from our minds as we headed for the open sea and home.



GALATA TOWER.



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