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FREELAND, DECEMBER 31, 1896.

Those "Official" Figures.

The "official" figures furnished by some of the states which went for McKinley at the recent election afford many surprises. The growth of the voting population seems so tremendous that the increase can be accounted for in no other way except that the election officers in doubtful states did the counting irrespective of the number of ballots which has been polled.

Cleveland carried California in 1892 by 147 and Bryan received 22,000 more votes than Cleveland received, and yet McKinley carried California.

Cleveland carried Illinois in 1892 by 26,993 and Bryan received 33,476 more votes than Cleveland received—yet McKinley carried Illinois.

Cleveland carried Indiana in 1892 by 7,125 and Bryan received 42,000 more than Cleveland received—yet McKinley carried Indiana.

Harrison carried Iowa in 1892 by 23,729 and Bryan received 4,541 more votes than Harrison received—yet McKinley carried Iowa.

Cleveland carried Kentucky in 1892 by 40,020 and Bryan received 42,336 more votes than Cleveland received—yet McKinley gets twelve of the thirteen Kentucky electors.

Harrison carried Michigan in 1892 by 20,412 and Bryan received 41,000 more votes than Harrison received—yet McKinley carried Michigan.

Harrison carried Minnesota in 1892 by 21,903 and Bryan received 16,714 more votes than Harrison received—yet McKinley carried Minnesota.

Harrison carried Ohio in 1892 by 1,072 and Bryan received 69,009 more votes than Harrison received—yet McKinley carried Ohio.

Harrison carried Oregon in 1892, and Bryan received 9,000 more votes than Harrison received—yet McKinley carried Oregon.

The vote of Delaware, North Dakota, Maryland, West Virginia and other states is equally as startling, and would seem to indicate an increase of voters of nearly one million in four years—an increase beyond the bounds of probability, and which can be accounted for only by wholesale ballot corruption.

McKinley goes into office with his certificate of election stamped with an indelible stain of fraud which even the White House cannot hide.

The fake reports that were sent broadcast through the country after McKinley's election, telling of mills reopening, factories starting and thousands of men being employed in industrial centres, have petered out. There were none who did not wish this news was true, but many had their misgivings and a few weeks time has proven that those who doubted these reports were correct in their conclusions. There is a promise of prosperity has not yet arrived, despite the booms which gold bug papers have conceived in their sanctuaries. The news of business revivals was part of the gold bug's campaign of deception, and was as false as the arguments, threats and promises made before the election. Business and trade is just as dull today the country over as when the money question was undecided, and the great victory which was won by plutocracy and monopoly can now be seen in its true light. The duped merchants and laborers who voted against their personal interests will have many idle days during the next four years to meditate upon the sleek style in which they were lured last November.

When Baby was sick, we gave her Castoria.
When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria.
When she became Miss, she clung to Castoria.
When she had Children, she gave them Castoria.

Wear Well shoes are warranted to be precisely as represented. You make no mistake in that store.

Bargains in furniture at Sweeney & Herron's removal sale.

TWO CHRISTMAS EVES.

An Armenian Maiden's Escape and Its Happy Sequel.

Christmas amid the mountains of Armenia. The scene of our story is a little oriental village, in 189—, nestled amid the rugged cliffs at the head of a smiling valley. The site of the hamlet was a ravine running up the mountain side into a rocky pass, as though the great valley opening beyond had been whittled to a narrow point that it might penetrate the hills. Great precipices yawned on either side, and towering cliffs which seemed to have grown gray with age, even as the snow on the higher peaks of the mountains seemed the hoary locks of those ancients, which there had for centuries watched over the old world. Near by Mount Ararat, where rested the ark after the flood. It was here Noah tilted his vineyards and the human race be-



SHE LEAPED FROM THE PRECIPICE.

gun anew after the floods subsided, for Armenia is one of the oldest lands and its people trace their lineage direct to that Biblical emigrant ship which colonized it when the world was young. From many a quaint, flat-roofed dwelling arose Christmas carols to which soft-voiced echoes sang responsive choruses among the cliffs, and at least one church bell tried bravely, singly and alone, to supply an imitation of Christmas chimes. It was a peaceful picture, upon which the stars twinkled approvingly as they bespangled the slopes with frost-diamonds and coated countless sparkles from the pallid snow. The Armenians are a devout people, and make much of the Christmas festival. This little hamlet was in many respects not unlike Bethlehem, and near it were many shepherds who guarded their flocks by night, as did those of Judea when the angels sang of peace on earth, good will to men.

At the home of Abanazar, the head man of the village, there were quiet festivities, decorations of holly and other evergreens, songs of praise and stories which for generations had handed down cherished traditions and legends of Armenia. There were the aged grandfather and grandmother, Abanazar and his good wife, three little girls ranging from six to twelve years old, and Zillah, the 16-year-old daughter, with her affianced lover Akthar, the stalwart young herdsman. She was a beautiful maiden, with regular features, large eyes aglow with love, the small but symmetrical form characteristic of so many women of her race. In her picturesque costume she was marvellously handsome, and her tones were as musical as the tinkle of silvery bells or the low notes of Akthar's flute, to which she sometimes sang a soft accompaniment. The pleasant scene in this home was duplicated in many others that startle Christmas eve.

Suddenly the scene changed. The church bell rang in sharp, short strokes, a spirited alarm, confusion succeeded calm, and there were excited exclamations and hurrying in hot haste as a rider dashed madly down the one central street, shouting: "Save yourselves, Christians, the Kurds are coming!"

But there was no time. Close upon his tracks came hundreds of swarthy horsemen, turbaned and fierce, with loud Mohammedan maledictions shouted in deep-voiced hate, and eyes which gleamed like live coals from beneath beetling brows. In a moment pandemonium seemed to have broken loose, the guns spoke sharply, scimitars flashed in silver and turned crimson, and soon the flames from burning buildings cast their lurid glare over an earthly hell wherein fiends held high carnival in shedding innocent blood.

Abanazar and his family, with others, gained the church which stood on the edge of a precipice, and there made a brave stand, but it was useless. Breaches were made in the walls, the place carried by storm, and hundreds slain before the altar dedicated to peace and decorated with Christmas symbols in readiness for the morrow. "The floor literally ran in blood, and Zillah, in speechless anguish beheld the men of her family and her lover cut down, and women subjected to tortures which chilled her to the soul. With other women and girls she fought heroically, but finally found herself breathless and disarmed in the embrace of Rustem, the huge leader of the Kurds, who had often in days of peace paid her attentions as often repelled.

Suddenly she drew the steel bodkin from her hair, plunged it with unerring aim and the strength born of desperation into the giant's heart, and as he sank to the floor she bounded to the side of the church, seized a lighted taper, opened a trap door in the floor, hurried the light into a supply of powder stored there, and springing through a side door leaped from the precipice as scores of other women had done within the horrible half hour preceding. There was a flash, a thunderous roar, and the solid church seemed to be heaved high in air, while in the lurid light of the explosion dead bodies of men and women

could be seen among the fragments, and with them scores of live Kurds struggling as they arose, scorched and blackened, toward the sky. The fragments, human and otherwise, came down again and darkness succeeded. The surviving Kurds butchered all who survived, of the villagers, except the women they bore off as captives, but at the foot of the cliff they found but the mangled remains of scores of brave women who had preferred death to slow torture and devilish indignities.

An hour later all was strangely still, burning ruins smoldering with the dull glow of expiring embers marked the graves of hundreds, and the spot on which but a short time before smiled happiness and home. But beautiful Zillah was not dead. She had fallen on the soft bodies of the slain, had much to her surprise found herself but little hurt, and had crawled off into the narrow wooded paths which threaded the mountain fastnesses near, all familiar to her. She sought refuge in a mountain shepherd's cave, who at morn visited the village in search for survivors, but found none. The fierce Kurds had made sure work of their bloody task.

A few weeks later Zillah, through many hardships, found her way to the seaside, and thence to America, coming to a great western metropolis with other Armenian refugees, where she found shelter with the Armenian colony, which did what it could for these unfortunates, human remnants saved from the furnaces of affliction which consumed so many noble lives in darkened Armenia. Mourning for those she loved, almost despairing, she struggled bravely with her lot, and the sweet-faced girl found friends and favor among the free people who pitied her woes and appreciated her faithful work. Patiently she toiled, but her pillow

with aching voids in so many stricken hearts and the Moslems still oppressing the Christians among the far-off Armenian hills. They sang, however, Christmas carols strangely sweet which recalled pictures of unforgotten homes, and hymns in which sad minor chords seemed to vibrate with unshed tears. What wonder that real tears welled up from tortured hearts, and that they sparkled in pretty Zillah's mournful eyes? Good will to men these exiles could know and feel, but peace on earth was not for them, even at Christmas, while Turkish scimitars still flashed forth the lightnings of fanatic hates, and innocent blood reddened the soil of far Armenia. There was to be a new arrival of Armenians to-night, and they were to recite at this gathering of their compatriots the story of their adventures and their wrongs. Similar tales had been often repeated by similar refugees, but the stories had a tingle interest ever new, while they recounted renewed horrors and the constantly recurring tragedies which added to the list of the lost, and the grand army of the visitors was announced the music ceased and all arose to receive them, the hum of the great city without faintly heard in the hush of expectancy within, and the Christmas chimes from an American church near by ringing cheerily, though soft and subdued, through the frosty air.

The door opened and there marched in the little band who came from the valley of the shadow of death, and first among them Abanazar and Akthar, his father and lover so long listed among the dead. You should have seen Zillah's beautiful face, transfixed, and heard the musically glad little cry with which she sprang into their arms, snuggling close at last with her plump arms about Akthar's neck and his stalwart



THE SUMMER GIRL WHO STAYED UNTIL CHRISTMAS TIME.

was wet with the tears of sorrow and her heart bled under the stabs of piercing grief. Brave and noble girl! How many like her, pieces of driftwood from the wrecks wrought by Turkish cruelty and fanaticism, have been stranded upon our kinder shores. Zillah turned in prayer toward the God of her fathers, and sought at His feet the consolation earth denied. Even prayer cannot heal a broken heart; it can but console and slightly assuage such grief as hers.

Christmas eve in the little Armenian colony occupying a corner of a foreign



THE REUNION IN AMERICA.

section of the great western city. The hall was decorated for the occasion with the usual evergreens, and oriental hangings served to recall in this modern land the familiar belongings of lost homes among the Armenian mountains. There was a subdued cheerfulness among the people present, a tribute to Christmas, but they could not rejoice loudly

arm encircling her shapely waist. What is ordinary Christmas happiness to such joy as hers, measureless as infinity deep as the sea? Does not love fill even the vast spaces of Heaven? And the men were as deeply moved as the maid, for they had been as certain of her death as she of theirs. Precious indeed are these gifts which fate, stern and unrelenting at times, seems to snatch from the dead to reward the love of the living. Never since angels sang at Bethlehem had Christmas seemed gladder to any human soul, than was this memorable Christmas eve to the beautiful Armenian maiden. After the storm the calm. Akthar and Zillah were wed soon after, and Abanazar became an inmate of their happy home. Under the starry flag which, thank God, tolerates no religious persecution, they live in security, doing their duty as Christian citizens, loving their adopted land with passionate oriental fervor, and contributing as they can toward the needs of those still suffering in the beloved home country. They are loyal to the core, but hope the land of their adoption may do something to stay the hate which crimsoned the land of their birth. God grant that their hope be not in vain.

A simple story, the annals of lives touched with sorrows deeper than those most of us in these happier lands have known. Remembering our mercies at Christmas time, let us not forget the griefs which have burdened and oppressed such as these, but apply to them in fullest measure all that is meant by "good will to men." To quote from the good old book, which was theirs even before it became ours: "These are they 'who came out of great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of the water of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.'"

L. EDGAR JONES.

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