



Rev. HARRY H. SERIAN

INTRODUCTION

I would like to mention here, that some of the experiences referred to in this biography, have appeared in Franz Werfel's best-seller, «The Forty Days of Musadagh». Some of the events portrayed in the novel are not correct, and I hope that the following pages will clear up any misunderstandings in the book. Apparently, Mr. Werfel got the information concerning my person from someone who told him that I was dead. Had he been better informed, I am sure there would have been a better presentation of the truth.

MY FIRST 12 YEARS IN ZEYTOON, TURKEY

I was born in Zeytoun, on April 12, 1883. My father died three months before I was born. My mother married twice after that. I moved with her every time. She was a very religious woman and she used to go to Church every week-day in addition to Sundays. Every morning she would offer a prayer. She would wake me in the morning, so I could pray also. She told me, «You are an innocent boy and God loves you and hears your prayers.»

When I was five years old I went to school in the parish of Bozbayer. After I entered the primary school, my mother sent me to the Central School, where the Principal of the school did not put me in the regular class, because I was not prepared. He gave me and his son, the late Dr. Arshag Aharonian special lessons and prepared us to go with the regular class. The school had eight classes and the teachers were able and efficient men. They taught us the Armenian language and History. There were other courses in French, Turkish, and Biblical Studies. The graduates of this school were employed by the Turkish government and the Armenian Churches selected their priests from among the graduates.

When I was eight years old my mother died. As she was dying, I started to cry, because I knew she was dying. My aunt, said to her, «Sister, your son is crying, have you anything to say to him?» She replied, «I am not thinking about him right now, I am thinking about the life to come, whether my Heavenly Father is willing to accept me into eternal life? As for my son, I have entrusted him to Him; I am sure He will take care of him.»

My step-father was a poor man and we were six persons in the family. He was working hard to try to support the family. He went to Adana, which was the business center and worked for three or four months, saved his earnings and came back. In summertime we used to go to a garden which was not far from our house, and I would pick mulberries and give them to the rich families in return for flour, bread and cheese. This helped to keep us fed for some time.

About a year after my mother died, I left my step-father's house, and went to live with my uncle. His wife was very kind to me and took care of me just like a real mother. After I had been there for about one year, I gave away some secrets about our neighbors and my uncle was furious with me and he drove me out of the house.

Now I was a real orphan: no place to sleep, no food to eat, and all my relatives turned their backs on me; I was left all to myself. I found an abandoned house and lived there for about two years. In winter there was no heat and I had no cover or blanket to keep me warm. I had to find some way to make a living, so I used to gather dog manure and sell it to shoemakers who used it for the ox hides. With the money I earned, I bought bread and halvah and in this way I managed to keep from starving.

One day somebody told me that a man by the name of Panos Kayaian was looking for me. I went to his shop and he told me that his daughter was going to be married in a few weeks, and he and his wife would be left alone, so he had decided to adopt a boy. He asked me if I would be willing to be adopted by him. Since I was alone and my relatives did not care for me, and since he was a shoemaker by trade, I thought it could be a good chance for me

to learn a trade, so I accepted his offer. He told me that my duties would be to take care of his donkeys and goats. I was to take them to the fields in the springtime and graze them.

Later that evening I went to his shop and he took me home with him. When we entered in, his wife looked at me with a long face, no hello, no smile. Her husband turned to her and told her with a cheerful smile, «My dear, this boy is going to be our son. I adopted him because he is a nice boy and he will be a help and joy to us.» His wife became angry and she cursed both of us. Her husband was furious. He slapped her. She began to cry and kept cursing us.

Every morning I would get up early for breakfast. Then I would take the cattle to the fields. The lady never thought to give me any lunch, so I had to pick up some grape leaves from the vines and eat them. Having grazed the cattle, I went to the shop to work.

Five months later, business failed and Mr. Kayaian lost everything he had, so he told me that he was awfully sorry, that he could not afford to take care of me any longer, that I had to find someone to help me. I told him that I appreciated what he had done for me and took leave of him.

A short time later, the late Vartivar Kesalalikian who was a partner of Mr. Kayaian, told me his father wanted to see me. So one morning I went to see him. He said to me, «We know you are a good boy and we are pleased with your work in the shop and my son recommends you very highly; so I have decided to take you to live with us. We need someone to help us and if you are willing we would like to have you very much.» I agreed to go and

live with them. They gave me room and board and bought my clothes. Every morning I would get up early, take their donkey and go to the forest ten miles away, load the donkey with firewood and come back. Later I would go to the spring to bring water for drinking and to the river for water for washing. I had to make four trips to bring enough water and then I would go to the shop and work there. They were very pleased with me because I did my work faithfully and diligently. They liked me so much that they gave me a nickname of «Artin Pasha», which means Prince Artin.

In 1895 a great war broke out between the inhabitants of Zeytoun and the Turkish Government. After the war was over, there were many orphans left behind. Charitable organizations started to pick up the orphans and take them to orphanages to care for them. I decided I wanted to go to the orphanage, so I went to my uncle, Baba Nokhoudian and asked him to help me to get into the orphanage. He took me to Avedis Shanlian who was a representative of the Orphanage in Marash. Mr. Shanlian sent me to Ebenezer Orphanage in Marash. It was the first day of Lent in 1896.

The Ebenezer Orphanage was run by missionaries. Miss A. C. Salmond was the Director. The house-mother was Teshghon Der Mugurditchian, an educated and capable woman. She took very good care of us, gave us a religious upbringing. Those of us who are still living, owe a great deal to her.

While I was in the orphanage, they sent me back to elementary school in Marash. I did not really understand the Turkish language and one day I had a pain in my stomach, so I said in Turkish, «Zamirim agriyor» (I have a

pain in my conscience.) They all laughed at me. I asked them why they were laughing and they said, «Show us where the pain is». I pointed to my stomach. They then explained to me the blunder I had made. The Turkish word for stomach is «meadem.»

Since I was doing very well in my studies, Mrs. Mugurditchian started a summer class for five of us and taught us Mathematics and Geography in Turkish. Although I did not understand Turkish very well, I learned every word by heart. When the school started in September they sent me to Junior High School where I graduated after two years.

MY SCHOOL LIFE IN MARASH ACADEMY

After I graduated from Junior High School I went to Marash Academy. During my four years there I received the highest marks in my class and was twice first in a Speaking Contest. When I graduated from the Academy, I was sent to the village of Nurpet to teach in the school.

MY EXPERIENCES IN NURPET VILLAGE

The village at Nurpet was composed of 60 families equally divided between Christian Armenians and Turks. The village was very poor materially and spiritually. I decided to start a Sunday worship service, although I was not prepared to preach. I only had the christian experience in my heart and I had the desire to share it with others. I announced that I was going to hold services the following Sunday, so on that day a few people came to hear me preach. I told them of my christian experience and the change that happened in my life. I offered a prayer and sang some songs. After the service was over the people all expressed their thanks to me for the service.

The following Sunday, as I was preaching the sermon, I noticed the Chief of the Mohammedans' village was a-

mong the congregation. He was a very rich and influential man. His daughter-in-law was the daughter of the ruler of Anderoon District. When I saw him among the people, I was kind of worried as I thought he had come to cause trouble. I said to myself, whatever happens I will go ahead with the service. After the service was over he came and shook my hand and expressed his thanks for the service and asked if I was going to hold services again next Sunday. I told him I was, and he said he would come again. Seven days later, he was present in the church. During the following week, he came to visit me. I saw him coming and he was carrying a pail in his hand. When he came in he said, «Hoja, (which means minister) I brought this yoghurt to you. I could have sent it with one of my servants, but to show you my respect, I brought it myself. You know there is a custom in the orient, if a man is going to show his love and respect to his friend, he takes the present himself, so that is why I brought the yoghurt myself.» We sat down and started to talk. He told me that he was no longer a moslem, he was converted to christianity and believed in «Isa-ul Mesih» (Jesus Christ). He continued, «However, I cannot confess openly, for my people will kill me, so I am going to keep it a secret in my heart. Will you kindly pray God to forgive me for doing so?»

MY EXPERIENCES AMONG THE MOSLEM POPULACE

Ajer Hagop of Nurpet had a dry good store in Nurpet. On Saturdays he used to visit his customers and leave the store in my care. This way I came into contact with the Moslem people and many of them became my close friends. When they came to the store to buy some dry goods, they used to bring some meat and we would make shish kebab and sit down and eat it together.

One morning I was in my room reading my Bible when a Mohammedan by the name of Solasi Fakhur stopped at my door and was watching me. He said to me, «Hoja, why don't you read it aloud so I may hear it too?» I explained that I did not wish to disturb my private worship. I opened the Bible to the New Testament to the Sermon on the Mount and read to him the fifth chapter of the gospel of Matthew. He listened attentively, and when I had finished he explained, «Really what wonderful words they are, I have not heard such words before in my life. I know my Koran by heart, but there are no such words as those in it.» One day as he was among a crowd of moslems he mentioned the same thing; the crowd said, «Nous Allah (God forbid it). You are denying the true God.» He told them, «You may say anything you like, but the words I have spoken are true.»

When he returned to Chocak, his home, about 75 miles from Nurpet, he told his two married sons about it and told them to come and see me in Nurpet. They came to my house and told me who they were, and that they had

come especially to see me and hear the words their father had told them about. I read to them from the same passage and I could see the impression on their faces. I was so happy that God had given me a chance to have contact with the Moslem people and to testify for my faith to them. For it is written: «Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father which is in Heaven.»

MY COLLEGE LIFE IN AINTAB, TURKEY

The following year I went to Central Turkey College in Aintab, where I enrolled for the Freshman Class. I passed all my examinations, so in the summer I decided to stay at the college and work during my vacation to earn a few dollars. I went to see Hovhanes Levonian who had just built a new house for his family and asked him for a job. He gave me one: to carry water from a nearby brook to the house. It was a hard job, but I didn't mind, because it gave me a chance to save a few dollars for college. Dr. Sarkis Keshishian was working with me and we used to eat our lunch together and spend many happy times during vacation.

In September the college reopened and I was in the Sophomore class, but I was not happy in my studies. Even though I passed all my examinations, I was unhappy because I was not at the top of my class as I was in Marash Academy.

A week before school vacation was to start, Dr. John Merrill, the President of our College called me to his office. When I went to his office, he told me that there were no funds left for me to continue in college. I was so disappointed as I was now in my twenties and had already lost one year from my studies. I felt that as I grew older the harder it would be for me to study. I had no choice though, so I went to Fartusli which is about nine miles from the village of Iskenderoon, to be a preacher and a teacher.

MY LIFE WITH THE PEOPLE OF FARTUSLI

My village of Fartusli consisted of about 50 Protestant Armenian families. There was no house for me to live in, so I lived in the church, and held Sunday services there as well. I felt ashamed that they had been living like that for 25 years. Every time a new preacher came and took pledges to build a school building, but the pledges were never kept.

One Sunday, I announced from the pulpit for the congregation to remain seated because I wanted to speak to them. I told them that it was a shame that for 25 years they had not built a parsonage for their teacher and minister, but used the church building for everything. I wanted every one of them to pledge enough money for a two-storey building to be used for the teacher. One storey as living quarters, the other as school. Everyone of them made pledges and I marked it in the book.

On Monday morning, I went around the houses to collect the pledges. The first place I went to was the house of Artin Agha, the church deacon. He had pledged 10 turkish golden pounds. He looked at me with surprise on his face and said, «For 25 years, every preacher had asked for pledges and nothing happened; I thought this was just another formality, I cannot pay it.» I said, «If you, being the deacon of the church do not pay, how will I collect from the other members? I am sure you have the money to pay and you must pay it. I am not going to leave your house until you do.» Finally he agreed to pay and he gave me the money. The same thing happened at all of

the other houses, but I managed to collect all the pledges, in about a week's time. The total amount collected was about 2000 turkish golden pounds (which at the time was equal to about \$ 14,000). I bought the materials and sent a man to Beylan to get a bricklayer. The bricklayer came and started to build the building, but by that time I had to leave. Before I left I called a meeting of the council and made them promise me that they would finish the building. They promised that they would, but they found that they would need some more money to finish it. I promised to send them some money from Aintab. Miss Frearson gave me some money and with that money they were able to finish the building and a porch. When you sat on the porch, the Mediterranean was before you. A wonderful scenery! You could see all the ships passing by.

I RETURN TO AINTAB TO FINISH COLLEGE

Since the school building was finished, I had to return to Aintab to finish my schooling. When the next semester started, I entered Junior Class. I found the studies very hard for me, but I made up my mind that I had to do it, and so with God's help I was able to finish the year.

The following semester I entered the Senior Class and I decided that I would prepare myself to enter the Public Speaking Contest and win. I prepared myself in four languages: Armenian, Turkish, English and French. I received very good marks in all four languages. When the time came for the speaking contest, they cast lots and I was elected to speak in French. For my entry I chose a piece written by Mirabeau during the French Revolution. There were three contestants and I did my best, but I came in second.

When the time came for final examinations, I successfully passed all of them and received my diploma.

After graduation, I received several offers to be a teacher, but preferred really to go to my own home village of Zeytoon and teach in the Protestant School there. Dr. Levon Melidonian urged me to accept the invitation of the Zeytoon School and I happily did so.

MY YEAR OF TEACHING IN ZEYTOON

The time I spent teaching in Zeytoon was more like a vacation for me. I was very fond of hunting and Zeytoon was well known for the wonderful hunting in the mountains. Every week-end after school I would go hunting in the mountains. Every time I went, I chose a different section of the mountain and in that way I was able to go to every part of the mountain. I enjoyed the wonderful weather and scenery very much and it was very good for my health also. Too soon my term in Zeytoon had come to an end.

I ENTER THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN MARASH

In 1911 I enrolled in the Theological Seminary in Marash to complete my studies for the ministry. I used to enjoy hunting on the week-ends in Marash also. After I had been in the Seminary for two years, the Chairman of the Y.M.C.A. in Marash, Mr. F. F. Goodsell came to me and asked me to take 29 members of the Y.M.C.A. and organize a Junior-Class organization. I started with those 29 members and at the end of two years there were 300. We would have our meetings on Sunday afternoons. From the members I organized a choir, an orchestra with violins, mandolins, flutes and the organ. During the week we would hold rehearsals, and on Sundays they used to sing in the best spirits. I would tell them stories about King Arthur's heroes and Shakespeare's plays. We used to have social gatherings once a month and we would go out for dinner. Many times we would take trips to the mountain where I would tell them about the local animals; moreover, I would give instructions in the proper and safe methods of hunting. At this time there was another organization which was in competition with us. This organization was the Tashnag Political Organization and they would hold their meetings at the same time in order to try and lure some of our members away from us, because some of our members were Tashnag-inclined. The parents of these boys came to me and begged me to persuade the boys not to go to those Tashnag meetings. I never said one word to any of them, instead I tried to make our meetings so at-

tractive that they would prefer to attend our meetings rather than the Tashnag meetings. I was successful in my efforts and the parents were very grateful.

When I was beginning my final year at the Seminary, I received an invitation from the Protestant Church in Bitias at Musadagh to be their minister. I delayed my answer about three months. They repeated their invitation and asked for a definite answer. I wrote to them and told them I was willing to accept their invitation. When the people heard this, the «Ladies' Aid» of three churches joined together and went to Mr. Goodsell. They asked him to influence me to change my mind. They wanted me to stay and continue the Junior organization because it had been so helpful for their boys. Mr. Goodsell brought the matter to the attention of the executive committee of the Y.M.C.A. . They unanimously decided to offer me the Presidency of the Y.M.C.A. and arrange for me to teach half a day at the Marash Academy. They presented their offer to me, but I told them that I had already accepted the invitation of the Bitias Church. They offered to write to the Church and make some arrangement to cancel the invitation, but I refused because I thought it would not be right to go back on my word. They continued to urge me to change my mind, but I would not.

MY EXPERIENCES IN BITIAS, MUSADAGH

(As a prelude to this section of my autobiography, I would like to mention that Franz Werfel has written a novel entitled «The Forty Days of Musadagh», which was a best-seller about thirty-five years ago. The book describes the fighting between the Turks and Armenians. The original book was written in German. The Viking Press Company bought the book and translated it into English. The English translation was very successful and profitable.)

When I started my ministry in Bitias, it was my plan to make Bitias School the educational center for the seven villages of Musadagh. I went to see Dr. John Merrill to ask for his help in carrying out my plan. The faculty of Aintab College decided to help us and for the first year they sent two teachers to help us. One of the teachers was a man by the name of Hagop Harmandarian. Our school organized classes to prepare the students for attending Aintab College. Shortly thereafter the First World War broke out and our plan did not succeed. My ministry in Bitias continued. I would hold services every Sunday and visit the families of the congregation. At that time, the Armenian Apostolic Church had no priest, so the people would come to our Church on Sundays. The Church was small and could not accomodate all the people, so that some of them had to stand outside and listen to the sermons. The council of our Church decided that something had to be done so that all the people could attend the services. We decided to build a balcony inside the Church so

that we might have enough room for all the people. We wanted to build a new school building also because the old one was not safe any longer. I was willing to give money from my own pocket to build the school, but the political situation worsened and we were forced to abandon our plans.

In the nearby village of Haji Habibli there lived a family of six brothers and their father, by the name of Mardigian. They were members of the Apostolic Church. When they saw that our Church was growing and that many of the Apostolic congregation were attending our services they became very jealous. Their father was a very sick man. As he was dying he told his sons that his last wish to them was to drive out all the Protestants from Haji Habibli and not allow them to return.

The six brothers trying to be faithful to the wishes of their father, came one Saturday night to our church and stole our church bell which was located high in the tower. The following morning when our sexton tried to ring the bell he found that it was stolen. The young men of our church were very angry and wanted to do something about it. I told them to be quiet and forget about it, because the political situation was very dangerous. We should not cause any trouble. The following week the Mardigians brought the bell back and hung it in its place.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION WORSENS AND UNEXPECTED EVENTS HAPPEN

My fiancée was attending Marash Girls' College and I was worried about her because I felt it was not safe for her to remain there. I sent her a telegram to leave Marash immediately and come to Aintab. She came to Aintab with her sister. I was unable to go and meet her because of the political situation. Moses Agha Renjillian had a daughter in Aintab College, so I asked him if he would go to Aintab to get his daughter and bring my fiancée back with him. He was kind enough to oblige me, so I gave him enough money to pay for a round trip ticket.

It happened that when my fiancée arrived in Antioch on her way to Bitias, I was in my house when a young man, a neighbor of ours in Zeytoon, who was serving in the Turkish Army in Ber-Sheba, deserted the army and took refuge in my house. Everybody in the neighborhood saw him enter my house. At that time it was very dangerous to shelter a deserter. It was a crime under the Turkish Law. But I could not refuse to take him in. It was dangerous to keep him in my house during the daytime, so I sent him to the mountains during the day with enough food and water and at night he would come back and stay at my house.

After a while he began to get restless and was very worried about his wife and son in Zeytoon. He begged me to send him to Zeytoon. At that time the Turks had deported most of the Armenians from Zeytoon to Konia. The only Armenians left in Zeytoon were the guerilla

bands. When I told my friend this he did not believe me. He repeatedly begged me and kept crying, so finally I could not stand it any more. I wrote a letter to a friend in Fartusli to find a way to help this young man to go to Atuck and from there he could make his way to find his family. I found a man to take this letter by hand to Fartusli and paid him some money for his work. I told him to be very careful on the way, and that if he was arrested by the Turkish guards, he should destroy the letter before they had a chance to get it. The two of them left, but I was worried about them. I waited for an answer, but no answer came. One day a man from the town of Beylan near Iskenderoon came to me and told me that he had word of my friend and the man who went with him. He had heard that they had been arrested by the Turkish soldiers who had got the letter I had written. When I heard this, I was afraid the Turks would come and arrest me, so I immediately went to the mountains to hide. The only man who knew where I was, was the sexton of our church who owned some land in the mountains where I was hiding.

After three weeks had passed, my fiancée who was in Antioch staying with a friend, Mrs. Victoria Hanum Kara Yousef, began to worry when she did not hear from me. So our friends, Mr. Moses Agha Renjillian, Apraham Renjillian, and the late Dr. Soghomon Apelian and his son-in-law, Hetoom, met together to decide what to do about finding out what had happened to me. They thought that perhaps the Mardigian brothers had kidnapped me and killed me. Apraham Renjillian decided to come to Bitias to make an investigation and find out what happened to me. When he arrived in Bitias, he came to my house,

where the village teacher was staying. He asked him what happened to me. The teacher said he didn't know anything about it. Apraham did not believe him and finally persuaded him to tell him whether I was alive. The teacher told him I was alive and that the sexton of the church knew where I was. Apraham went to the sexton, asked him to come after me and tell me that he was looking for me, that there was no trouble, that the government was not after me, that I should come down from the mountain. The sexton came to where I was hiding. I was asleep, but I heard someone calling me. When I woke up I saw that the sexton was there. He delivered the message that Apraham had given to him. As soon as I heard this news, we began to climb down the mountain. We lighted some torches in order to be able to see our way on the mountain path.

When we arrived in Bitias, Apraham saw me and fell on my neck and kissed me. He said, «Thank God we found you alive, we thought you had been killed.» Apraham left the next morning to go back to Antioch, to let everyone know I was alive and well. When he came back to Bitias, he brought my fiancée with him. At the time, I was wearing a very long beard, so I shaved my beard and got ready to meet my fiancée.

When I met my fiancée, we sat down and started to discuss our wedding plans. I wrote a letter to Rev. Dikran Koundakjian in Kessab to come and perform our wedding ceremony. He was kind enough to come from Kessab.

Our church was full to capacity. The atmosphere was full of cheerfulness and everybody was happy for us. They came to congratulate us and wish us health and happiness. After the ceremony all the people were invited to dinner

which had been prepared by the ladies. There were all kinds of delicious food on the tables. As we were sitting down to eat, a telegram came from the government in Antioch, that within eight days everybody had to be ready to be deported from Antioch. This news came as a great shock to everyone of us. Nobody could touch the food. The news quickly spread around the seven villages. The leaders of each village had a meeting in the village of Yoghonolook to decide what to do. They all decided to revolt against the government. Everybody started to carry his necessary belongings to the mountain, 9 or 10 miles from the village. The government was aware of what was going on.

After a short time three thousand Turkish troops came to Haji Habibli and camped outside the village, near Bitias. The following morning a dozen soldiers armed with guns came to my house and told me that the Army Commandant wanted to see me and the leaders of the village. We were terrified, we thought this was the end. I kissed my wife goodbye. Tears were running down our faces.

When we arrived at the Commandant's office, we had to wait. He was sleeping. When he woke up, he called me in and started to ask me a great many questions: how a handful of villagers had dared to revolt against the government? I told him that the Armenian nation was struggling for its life and did not have time to ask anyone for help; that Allies were too busy with their own troubles to be bothered with us. The reason for the revolt was that a group of Armenian soldiers who had run away from the Turkish Army came back to the villages and spread the news that the government was going to deport all of us. They had urged us not to obey the government, because

on the road they would separate the men and women and children, kill the men, and then kill all the women and children except those women who were good looking; that they would take those girls and rape them. They had told us it was more honorable to go to the mountains and be killed fighting on our native soil; and that the people were very much excited and terrified; that they took refuge in the mountains. There were many families of men who were serving in the Turkish army. They went to the mountains because of their fear. The Commandant interrupted me and said, «Don't those people know that there is a government order that the families of those who are serving in the Turkish army are exempt from deportation?» I answered, «No one told the people of this order: they would have never gone to the mountains to join the rebels.» Then I offered to make a suggestion. He gave his permission. I suggested that he send for the religious head of the Armenian people, the Catholicos, because the people would listen to him and obey him. He would talk to them and tell them not to take such foolish action, but rather obey the government orders. In this way the government would save lots of troubles and save many lives on both sides. The Commandant agreed to think it over and we were allowed to return to our homes.

Later, we sent a special message to the mountain explaining that the families of soldiers in the Turkish army would not be deported and asking the people to come down from the mountain. They refused to pay attention to our message.

At 8.00 a. m. the following morning the Turkish army began to bombard the mountains and started to advance up the mountain. They were superior in numbers to the

Armenians, so the Armenians were forced to retreat. The next day a company of Turkish soldiers came into Bitias. Those soldiers were the same group which had massacred the people of Ourfa. We were terrified that they had come to kill us also. I had to think of some way to prevent this. Since I was newly married, I had some wedding candy and pastries left. I took a tray, put the candies and the pastries on it and covered it with a silk towel. I called a little girl of five who was very attractive and looked like an angel. I told her to take the tray to the captain of the army and tell him that it was a gift of welcome from the minister. She went and found the captain and told him as I had instructed her. The captain was very pleased. He took the tray, kissed the girl expressing his thanks. He told the girl to ask me to go and see him. The girl returned and gave the captain's message to me; so I went to meet him.

When I arrived at his camp, he told me, «What a wonderful job of strategy you thought of. My mind was on the war, where both sides were fiercely fighting and killing each other. This lovely angelic girl came to me with an innocent smile and gave me your present and changed my thoughts completely. Thank you very much. Is there anything I can do for you?» I told him that I had come to beg him to protect us from his soldiers as we were faithful to our government and refused to join the rebels. He agreed to do it and he called his bugler to assemble his men. When the soldiers were all assembled, the captain spoke to his men and said to them, «This is the minister of Bitias. I give you strict orders not to give him or his people any trouble, as it is our duty to protect the obedient citizens of our government in wartime. Keep this in mind

and don't forget what I have told you.» So, for awhile we were safe in our houses.

Four days later, the ruler of the District came to Bitias and told us that the government had ordered all civilians away from the military areas. He was going to send us to Antioch. I asked him for permission to hire a mule to carry my wife and our belongings. He found us a mule. We paid ten dollars for hiring it.

WE REACH ANTIOCH

When we reached Antioch, the Turkish soldiers put us under guard. We were about five hundred people altogether. I had no money with me, but I had a check for ten dollars from the Aintab Mission. My wife said to me, «What a foolish man you are. We have to travel we don't know how far, or how long without any money.» I said to her, «I am a man of faith, God will provide.» I tried to get permission from the guard to go and see my friend Dr. Solomon Apelian so I could cash the check, but they refused to let me go. Just at that moment, our good friend Mrs. Victoria Kara Yousef, a great lady, a highly educated christian woman, came to see us. She asked the guard for permission to visit us, but the guard refused to let her enter. She became angry and pushed the guard to one side and came in to see us. She started to cry, «How happy I am to see you; but I am so sorry you are going to be deported. I felt that you had no money, and I came to help you; here is ten dollars which should be enough for your travel. My husband is sick in bed with typhus fever, but when he gets well I will send you more money to help you.» I expressed my thanks to her for her generous help to us and told her we would pray for her husband to get well. I said to my wife, «Didn't I tell you, God would provide for us?»

After Mrs. Victoria had left, I asked the guard for permission to go and speak to the Mayor, Zekey Bey. This time he granted me permission. When I went to the Mayor's office, I asked him to allow us to go to Aleppo,

because we had friends there who would help us. He answered that it was not safe for us to go to Aleppo, that it was safer to go to Hama in Syria. The government in Syria would show us sympathy and protect us to go to Aleppo, because Aleppo was the place from where the government was going to send all the refugees to Der El Zor and massacre them. The Mayor knew that this was the plan of the government and I am so grateful to him, that he took pity on us and did not allow us to go to Aleppo. It was at Der El-Zor that the Turks massacred over one and a half million Armenian refugees.

When I returned to the guard house, I found that the guard had given our mule to a policeman. Of course he had received a bribe for this. I went back to the Mayor's office and reported what happened. He told me to go and get my mule back from the policeman, so I went and took the mule from the policeman. He turned to me and said, «How dare you do this to me?» I told him that the Mayor had given me permission; he could not open his mouth.

The following day the Mayor called all the people and the guards who were with us and told them he was appointing me to be in charge of them on the way to Hama. He turned to me and said, «Minister, anyone who does not obey your order, go to the nearest station and call me on the phone, and I will give the order to have him hanged. Now go in peace.» This act of the Mayor was very unusual. To put an Armenian minister in charge of Turkish guards had never happened in any part of the country. During the deportations in Anatoly and in the interior of Turkey, the Turkish government massacred and forced the Armenian refugees who were hungry, tired and thirsty to

walk: and anyone who could not walk was killed or buried alive. There were no exceptions, even small children, old people and sick women were treated in this manner. We were very fortunate not to be under such circumstances.

OUR LONG JOURNEY TO HAMA BEGINS

When we were on the way to Hama, one of my group named Ali, whose mule I had hired, unloaded the mule and started to run away. I called after him and asked where he was going. He replied that the load was too heavy for his mule and he was not going to kill his mule under the load. I reminded him what the Mayor had told me and said I was going to call the Mayor to tell him that he was running away. When he heard that, he came back running and put the load back on the mule and we continued our journey.

Later that evening, we made camp near Muduck Kalla. At midnight we heard gunfire. About twenty Arab brigands had opened fire on us. They shouted, «You damn Armenian foreigners, get the hell out, or we are going to kill everyone of you.» Our guards fired back because they had strict orders from the government to protect us. They did not dare to leave us. The firing from both sides continued for about one hour. At the time the people from the village attacked us and tried to rob us, I gathered the women and children, and put them in the center of a circle. Then I got all the young men and adults and told them, «Be courageous, don't be afraid; attack them with sticks and stones, and drive them back.» The enemy tried to attack from all four sides, but they could not get in. The brigands and the villagers were held off and were forced to withdraw, so we were safe and we continued our journey.

The next day it was very hot. The women and children were fainting. We rushed to get some water for them. Finally, after six days of traveling we reached Hama.

OUR EXPERIENCES IN HAMA

When we reached Hama, the police came and took us to a concentration camp where about 40,000 Armenian refugees were kept. We had no tent to cover us or protect us. It was so hot, that the sun was actually burning our skin.

I don't know how it happened, but the Arab Protestant Minister, Rev. Abdullah Mesouh heard that we were in the refugee camp, and he came to visit us. He brought with him a donkey and he began to load our belongings on it. He asked us to go with him. As we were leaving, a policeman shouted in Arabic, «Where do you think you are going?» Rev. Abdullah answered, «I have permission to take these people with me,» and he pulled out a Beshlic from his pocket (a beshlic was worth about 25 cents) and gave it to the policeman. He took the coin, kissed it, put it in his pocket and allowed us to pass.

We reached the house of Rev. Abdullah. He invited us to stay with him; but we refused, saying, «Thank you, but it is better for us to find a house for rent; we do not want to cause you any trouble.»

We found a house for rent, and since I was tired from the long journey, I became ill with a fever and had to remain in bed for a few days. Rev. Dikran Koundakjian and his mother took care of us for two weeks. It was a hard job for an old woman to take care of so many people, but she did it willingly.

Rev. Koundakjian's wife had died a long time before. So he had devoted all his time to serve the refugees in the

camp. He was preaching every Sunday morning and visiting the sick, getting medicine and water for them without receiving one penny in return for his services.

He came to me and asked me to help him with his work. I agreed to help him. So, on Sundays, he would preach in the morning and I would preach in the afternoons. We were allowed to go to the camp to visit the sick and needy, and help them.

Sanitary conditions in the camp were very bad, and every evening when we came home, we had to change our clothes, because they were full of lice.

There were many people in the camp who had relatives in America. They were quite anxious to contact them and ask them for help. But they had no paper or pencil to write letters and they were not allowed to leave the camp to buy stationery or to mail any letters. So I used to collect the addresses and sit down every night after midnight and write letters to ask help for them.

One day, I remember Rev. Koundakjian heard that a group of people from Kessab where he had been serving as minister, were passing by on the road. He had no money in his pocket, so he borrowed some from me. He went to a bakery, bought some bread, got some water, and hurried to meet them on the road. Another time he went to visit Rev. Kaspar Haydostian who was living in the village of Jejiyé which was about 10 or 12 miles away. The weather was cold and rainy, and he stayed with him for about two or three hours. The houses in the village were cone-shaped and built of mud, with no ventilation from any side. His shoes had holes in them and he did not have the time to have them repaired. When he came back home he was soaking wet from the rain. He caught cold and be-

came sick with a very high fever. I called the doctor, who came and examined him. He told me that the Reverend had typhus fever. He gave me some medicine for him and left. Later that night, I could hear the patient in his bed. He was suffering so much, I decided to go and get the doctor. I went after a Greek doctor called Gemil.

When I reached the doctor's house, I knocked at the door, and even though the lights were on, there was no answer. I waited for a while, and when nobody answered my knock, I started to go back home. As I was drawing near my house, the night-watchman saw me and asked me what the trouble was. I told him that there was a very sick man nearby, and I went to look for Dr. Gemil, but I could not find him. He told me that there was a military doctor living right next door to my house. I went there and knocked on the door. A servant opened the door, and asked, «What do you want?» I explained the circumstances, but he said, «The doctor just came in, and he is very tired. He has gone to bed; you can't see him.» I pushed him aside, and went to the doctor's room and knocked. He answered, «Who is it?» I explained to him why I had come, and told him we needed his services very much. He agreed to come with me, so he put on his clothes and we went to Rev. Koundakjian's house.

When the doctor was examining the pastor, he encouraged him and gave him hope, telling him not to worry, «I will take care of you.»

The following day, the minister's condition worsened, and I went after the doctor. When the doctor came in and looked at him, he said, «I am sorry, but I do not think there is much hope for him.» At that moment, the minister's mother came in, and asked the doctor about her

son's condition. The doctor answered her, «Mother, God knows. We doctors are just His instruments. We do the best we can as human beings, the rest is in His hands.» A short time later, the minister passed away.

I remember that when we were working together in the camp, there were many orphan boys and girls there. I made a special effort to try and save them. They were wandering around hungry, half naked, no mother or father to protect and care for them, they were left absolutely helpless. At night they used to sleep on the hard cold concrete floor, with no covers to keep them warm. Sometimes in the morning when one passed by, one would find out that some of them had died during the night.

We tried desperately to save as many as possible, but it was very difficult, because we had no means. We would pick some of them from the streets and bring them to the caves outside the city and give them some bread and milk; but it was not enough. Most of them were suffering from dysentery and needed special care.

I appealed to the city military Commandant, Osman Nouri Bey, to grant me an interview to speak with him. He gave me permission to come and see him. I took Rev. Abdullah Mesouh with me when I went. When I met the Commandant, I had in my mind to try and persuade him to help us. I told him, «My Commandant, I know you are a very busy man, working day and night to provide soldiers for the army. Soon if God wills, we will win the war, and the Government will appreciate your efforts, and give you a medal. But, when you die, you cannot take the medal with you. We came here to ask you to be the father of the orphan boys and girls. If you do this, it will go with you before God, who will say as

He says in our Bible: Inasmuch you have done it to one of the least of these my brethren you have done it unto me.»

I waited for a few moments, to see the effect I had made on him, and I asked, «Well Sir, what is your answer?» He replied favorably: I was so happy and grateful for being able to persuade him to help us.

The next day, he called me to his office and told me that he had called the governor and explained that he wanted to start an orphanage for the orphan boys and girls to keep them off the streets. The governor told him that he could not give his official permission, but asked him to go ahead and he would help him. So the Commandant found a big house at the edge of town that belonged to Mohammed Alvan Barram. It was very near his own home. I wrote a letter to Miss Roner who was in Aleppo. She was the head of the Near East Relief office there. I asked her for money to help us support the orphanage. She sent money every month. This was not an easy thing to do, because the government would not allow us to get large sums of money through the mail. We had to use illegal means to get the money. Miss Roner would give the money to a partner of our friend, Aisa Elbawi, in Hama and Homs, and Aisa Elbawi would get it from his partner in Aleppo and then give it to us. She also used to send us medicine and Aspirin tablets, which helped us very much.

One time I needed some flour for the orphanage. Since it was wartime, everything was rationed, and you needed tickets to get flour. I sent one of the boys to get some flour. When he went to the place to get it, he showed his ticket, but the officer in charge refused to give him

any flour, so he had to come back emptyhanded. When I learned what had happened, I immediately went to the house of the governor. His wife answered my knock. I explained to her that I would like to see the governor. He was asleep, but she went to wake him. He came in and asked me what the trouble was? I explained to him that the boys had gone to get some flour with their tickets, but the officer-in-charge refused to give them any flour. He went to his desk and wrote a note in red ink (in those days, important letters were always written in red ink) to the city President Gaylani Arif Bey. I took the note myself, and when Arif Bey read it, he called the officer-in-charge and severely reprimanded him. We got the flour and came back home. We did not have any more trouble after that.

Some time later, a retired military captain went to see the city officials. He told them that near my house there was an Armenian orphanage, that the people were very dirty and sick, that if something was not done, they would spread all sorts of disease in the city. The officials called me and began to question me about the complaint they had received. I told them, «I am here before you; please come and visit us and have some coffee. If you find the conditions as reported to you, arrest me and put me in jail to be hanged.» They told me that they did not need to come and see, that they believed me. Then they allowed me to go in peace. On the way home, I decided to stop at Osman Bey's house and report this incident to him. When he heard the report, he became very angry and said, «Come with me. We will go to your house and we will take this captain with us.» I told him not to bother about it, but he insisted. So we went to the captain's house;

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Osman Bey went in and got him. Then the three of us went to the orphanage. Osman Bey said to the captain, «You reported to the city officials that this orphanage was a dirty place and full of disease, so now please show me.» (I must explain here that every day we used to clean the house and the bathrooms thoroughly. We even spread lime in the outside yard, so that every place was spotless.) The captain said, «I did not mean inside, I meant outside.» Osman Bey went outside and saw that it was very clean there also. When he asked the captain, «Where is the dirt?» the captain replied that he meant in the street. Osman Bey replied, «These people are not responsible for the conditions of the streets, that is the responsibility of the city. You could not show me any dirty places so your report was absolutely false. You should be ashamed that you gave a false report and tried to bring harm to 175 orphan boys and girls. Look at me. I am the commandant of this city, and I have many servants under my command, and my house, I confess, is not as clean as this. I bet you the residence of the governor is not as clean as this place. This man is a good man, highly educated and serving our people and government. It is a shame for you to give a false report to the city officials about him.»

During the year we had only one sick boy who was suffering from dysentery when he came to us. The doctor gave us some medicine to take care of him, but we could not stop him from going outside and eating harmful food, and he died. In the downtown area there was a typhus epidemic, in which 200 people were dying almost every day, but because our place was kept so clean, we had only one case.

One day, some boys of the orphanage came running to me to tell me that there was a moslem girl at the gate asking for water to give to some horses. I told them to let her have the water. Later on we found out that she was not moslem, but an Armenian who had been kidnapped by a group of traveling people called *basna herseks*. These people traveled around the countryside selling and repairing sieves. They were thieves and used to cheat the people. The girl's name was Mary and when I found out that she was an Armenian, I asked her if she would not like to come and live here with her own people, and I would take care of her and protect her. She refused, because she was afraid, after seeing all the massacres; she was told by the *basna herseks* that all the Armenians had been killed. I had a hard time trying to convince her, but I finally succeeded. In order to protect her from the *basna herseks*, I went to their camp and pretending to be an official of the government, I took a notebook from my pocket and asked their names, where they lived, and what they did for a living. They were very scared as they thought I was going to give them some trouble. Later on, I noticed that they had broken camp and run away.

The next day however, one of their women came to me and begged me to return the girl to them. She offered me a bribe of 20 turkish golden pounds. I refused it, and told her, «If I see you here again, you will open your eyes to find yourself in jail.» The reason they wanted the girl back, is that when they were traveling, they were afraid that if they were arrested, the police would take all their money; so they used to give it to her to hide it in her clothing, so that the police would not get it.

AN ARMENIAN IS ANXIOUS TO FIND HIS RELATIVES

A man by the name of Meguerditch Bozakian, wrote a letter to Dr. Clark in Sivaz from America. He explained that he had some relatives, two boys and a girl whom he was anxious to find. Dr. Clark wrote a letter to me, and asked me to find them, and let him know, when I found them. I discovered that they were in the concentration camp in Hama. I went to the camp and inquired the guard about them and asked to visit them. The guard told me I could visit them, but I would have to come back at evening time. So, that evening I returned to the camp, and the guard let me in to see them. The place in which they were kept was filthy and I am sure that it was full of disease. When I saw the three of them, I could not hold back my tears. They looked like human skeletons and were covered with dirt. I told the guard that I wanted to take them with me, and I offered him a *baksheesh* (tip). He agreed, so I gave him about five dollars and took the children with me.

I took them to the hot baths so they could wash themselves. While they were in the baths, I went to the marketplace and bought some new clothes for them. When I got back to the bathhouse, they were through with their bath; I gave them the new clothes to put on, and they said, «We feel as if we have been born again in a different world.» Then I took them to a restaurant, where they had a good meal, and then to a room I had rented for them.

The following day they came to me and told me they

were afraid to stay alone in that room, and that they wanted to go to the orphanage, because they would feel safe there. I explained to them that they needed special nourishment and diet, that the orphanage could not really supply what they needed. They told me they didn't mind that, so I took them to the orphanage to stay. They enjoyed it very much, because they had many companions and were no longer alone.

THE ARMENIANS ARE FORCED TO MAKE

A DIFFICULT DECISION

During the First World War, Turkey was divided into four sections. Each section had its own governor. The fourth section was ruled by Jemal Pasha. His residence was in the capital city of Damascus in Syria.

The Turkish Central Committee had a secret meeting in Istanbul. In this meeting, they decided that they were going to massacre and annihilate all the Armenians. Jemal Pasha was against this. He thought that since the Armenian nation was made up of some very smart, efficient, and educated people who were trained in business and commerce, to annihilate them would be a great loss to the country. Instead, his plan was to convert them into moslems, and the Turks would greatly benefit. The intention of Jemal Pasha with this plan, was: first, to save the Armenians, and second, the moslems would benefit by such measures.

The members of the Committee were suspicious of Jemal Pasha's motives, but they agreed to try his plan. Jemal Pasha issued an order that every Armenian had to appear in court before a judge, and sign a petition that by his own free will, he is accepting the Moslem religion. Those who refused would be severely punished. Most of the Armenians, thinking this was just a political maneuver to save them, appeared in court and signed the petition. Those who refused to sign the petition, were exiled to the desert.

When I heard of this, I made up my mind to refuse

the order. In order to have strength to overcome this temptation, I used to go to the nearby hills everyday and pray to God to grant me the strength and faith to resist.

At the time, the chairman of the committee for refugees, Shefket Bey, received a telegram from Jemal Pasha to exile all the Armenian ministers, so that they would not be able to persuade the people not to accept the Moslem religion. He refused to exile me. The new plan was moving very slowly, and the Central Government became suspicious of Shefket Bey. They ordered him to resign and appointed in his place a man by the name of Ibrahim Bey.

When Ibrahim Bey came to execute the order of the government, Osman Bey, the military commandant, defended me and took me to him and introduced me. He said, «This man is an Armenian minister, born in the Christian religion and I brought him to you to ask you to leave him in my custody and I will teach him our religion to accept it as his own. He is a good man and serves the people without any discrimination.» Ibrahim Bey did not answer for a moment. I could not wait any longer, so I said to him, «Honorable Sir, I cannot accept the Moslem religion and deny my own. I am convinced that my Christian religion is the right and the best one; please make me an exception to this order.» He became very angry, and replied, «You will be forced by time to accept our religion. You are a treacherous man, how dare you rebel against the order of our government?» I said, «Sir, excuse me, I am not a treacherous man, but just the opposite. I am a loyal citizen of our Turkish Government. I showed my loyalty in not joining the rebels to fight against my government. When I came to Hama, the local government

appreciated my loyalty and showed sympathy to me and to my people, and allowed me to stay in Hama.» He could not understand these statements, and he called the guards to come and arrest me. There were no guards around, so my friend Osman Bey said, «My soldier Ali is outside, he can take him to the police station.» When we were outside, I asked Ali, who knew me, to let me go, but he refused, saying, «It is very dangerous for you to leave; for me also. Please come with me.»

When we arrived at the police station, there was a policeman by the name of Suleyman Bey, who knew me and he asked me what I was doing there. I told him that I did not come of my own free will, that they had sent me. He said, «I know you and your house, go home and when we need you, we will send for you.» So I thanked him and went home.

After a week, the order was given to take me to the railroad station and exile me to Tafilé, which is the place where all people who refused to obey the order of the government were exiled. All the Armenian priests were exiled there also.

On Thursday of that week there was a special train to Damascus, and a policeman came to my house and took me to the railroad station. When I got on the train, my friend Osman Bey came to say goodbye and said to me, «Badveli Effendi, the God you serve and believe in, will save you from this trouble, be courageous.» I expressed my thanks to him for coming to the station to wish me well.

WE ARRIVE AT DAMASCUS

When we arrived at Damascus, the police took me and my friend Rev. Kaspar Haydostian, who was traveling with me, to the Hotel Koods, where the refugees were being held. In the hotel, there were some Arab political prisoners under guard also.

The next day the police came and took us to the police station to talk to the chief of police. As is customary, he asked our names, our business, and where we came from, etc. When we told him we were from Marash, he said, «Oh, we are neighbors, I am from Elbistan, I am glad to see you.» He asked if we belonged to the Tashnag Revolutionary Party, who were against the Turkish Government. I answered, «As Armenian ministers, we are against them, we urged the people not to join them, because they are harmful, not only to the Turkish Government, but to the Armenian people and nation.» He believed us and became friendly with us. He told us the Committee was going to send us to Tafilé, but that he would try and convince them to allow us to stay in Damascus, under his charge. We thanked him and went back to the hotel.

The following day he called us and we went to see him. He said, «I am sorry, I could not persuade the Committee to allow you to stay here, they are going to send you to Tafilé.» After a week a Turkish guard came to the hotel and escorted us to the railroad station.

WE START OUR JOURNEY TO TAFILÉ

Before we boarded the train, I noticed that the guard was holding an envelope in his hand. I asked him to let me see it. I took the envelope from his hand and opened it. The letter read, «To the Mayor of Tafilé: Dear Sir, I am sending you two Armenians who are politically dangerous men. Put them under strict guard and prevent them from escaping.» Until that time we were thinking that they were going to kill us after we got out of the train, because some of our friends, who were officials in the Government in Hama, had told us they were going to kill us. When I read this official letter, I was convinced they were not going to kill us, so I got a card at the station and wrote to my wife to tell her we were safe and would be all right, and that we were being sent to Tafilé.

After that the train started and we were on our way. When we arrived in Dera, which is about 18 miles from Damascus, the guard took us off the train and put us in the local jail.

In jail there were some prisoners who had run away from the Turkish Army and they had been convicted of desertion and were going to be executed. They were a sorry lot, shouting, cursing and crying. They were just like savage men. I could not stand hearing them, and I tried to think of some way to get out of this living hell. I asked the guard to let me see the officer in charge, but he refused. I started to shout and scream. The guard told me to keep quiet, but I continued. Finally the officer in charge came down to see what was the matter. When

he found out what was going on, he called me to him and said, «Are you a crazy man, screaming and disturbing this place?» I said, «If you will be kind enough to listen to me, you will see whether I am crazy or wise.» He said, «All right, let's hear your story.» I explained to him that in Hama, the Armenians were forced to accept the Moslem religion, and we had refused, and we were going to be exiled to Tafilé. I begged him to allow us to pitch a tent outside in the fields and we would stay there until he ordered us to go. He replied, «I have to look over your record first, and then I will decide whether to grant your request.» I thanked him, and settled back to wait for his answer.

The following day he called me to his office and said to me, «Your record is very bad, I can't take a chance on you.» Later, the same day, he called both Rev. Haydostian and myself and said, «You are very lucky, your request is going to be granted. I received a letter from Hasan Bey, the president of the refugee department and he wants me to grant your request. Since he will be responsible for this action, I am free of any responsibility.»

We did not know Hasan Bey and had not asked for his help. We wondered how this had come about. We found out that two other Armenians who had been put in jail for refusing to accept the Moslem religion, had gone to Hasan Bey and appealed to him for release. They were good friends with Hasan Bey, so he granted their request and we were released instead.

For three weeks, we enjoyed a very comfortable and free life, then the order came for us to leave. We went to the railroad station, where two guards were appointed to take charge of us. They told us they would be in the

next car, when it would be time to get out they would call us.

When the train arrived at Jarouf, which was the right station to get off, no one called us, and since we did not know which station to get off at, we stayed on the train. When we got to the next station, the conductor came and said, «Why didn't you get out at Jarouf?» We answered that we did not know that we were supposed to get out, since the guards did not call us. He replied, «You must get out here.» I said, «Please, it is too dangerous for us to stay here alone, let us stay on the train.» He refused. So we were forced to get out.

At the station, there was a stationmaster's office, and he did not pay any attention to us, he locked the door and left us outside. We waited for the next train to go back to Jarouf, which arrived after two days. By this time we did not know where our guards were, we had lost them. When we got on the train, I asked the conductor to let us know when we reach Jarouf.

When we arrived at Jarouf, we began to look for some people from Tafilé, so we could hire their donkies to ride. Fortunately, we found somebody from Tafilé, so we hired his donkies to ride to Tafilé.

OUR EXPERIENCES IN TAFILÉ

When we arrived in Tafilé, we went to the Mayor's office to report what had happened to us. We explained to the Mayor that we were sent to Tafilé because we had refused to become Moslems and the Turkish Government had ordered us to be exiled there. We also explained about the incident on the train and that our records and warrants were with the guards who had been separated from us. He told us we had to wait until he had some official orders from the Central Government, before he decided what to do with us.

Later, he received a telegram from the Central Committee in Damascus, giving the order to send us to Bursara, about 25 miles away from Tafilé. We did not want to go there, because we had heard that the priests were living in caves, because there were no houses for them to live in, and they were unable to go to the market and buy food. They survived on two eggs per day.

There was an Armenian woman who was a servant in the house of the Mayor. We begged her to ask the Mayor to permit us to remain in Tafilé. We gave her fifteen dollars to give to the Mayor. The following morning she came to us and told us the Mayor had agreed to let us stay. We were so happy that we could stay with our Armenian refugee friends.

The weather in Tafilé was very mild, and the water there came from a spring. It was very good cold water. The Armenian refugees planted all kinds of vegetables there in the summer. The native people had never seen

such a variety of abundant vegetables. They were very glad to get them, as they were very cheap to buy. The Mayor said, «Thank God, these Armenians came here, so that we can have such good vegetables to eat.»

After I had been in Tafilé for a short time, I decided I would run away and go back to my home in Hama, if it were at all possible. During this time, Rev. Haydostian and I were boarders in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Levon Poladian, to whom we were very grateful. We lived just like «jucknavors» (hermits). In the morning, after my breakfast, I would go to the outskirts of the city and stay among the olive trees, read my Bible, pray and sing. At noontime I would come back to town, eat my lunch and go back to the same place.

I DECIDE TO LEAVE TAFILÉ

After I had been in Tafilé, a little over a month, I decided it was time for me to go. So, one night I walked to the north east side of town and took the road to a nearby village. There were some Armenian refugees living there, and among them there was a young man who was very friendly to me. I told him that I had run away from Tafilé, and that I would like to go to Kerek, so that I might make my way back to Hama. He said, «There are other people who are going to Kerek, stay here with me tonight, and you can travel with them, it will be safer for you.»

The following day, I joined the group which was going to make the journey to Kerek. We were fortunate that two village chiefs were going with us on horseback, and they had weapons to protect us on the road. At evening time, we were near the village of Kerek, and the two chiefs said to us, «You are near the village of Kerek, there is no danger any more, so you can go on by yourselves.» We thanked them and said goodbye.

I thought it would be safer for me to travel by myself, so I said goodbye to the group and continued a little further to a small village just outside of Kerek. I found an Armenian refugee boy, and gave him a quarter to take a letter I had written to my friend, Harutune Parichanian to come after me and allow me to stay in his house.

Mr. Parichanian was living in a vacant hospital with some friends. He was the caretaker of the building. They

all welcomed me as a guest. While I was there, I heard that the Greek Church had some relief money for poor people. I appealed to them to send some help to the refugees in Tadmör, especially the priests who were living outside the city in such poor conditions. They were kind enough to meet my request.

After I had stayed in Kerek, about a week, I called an Arab who had donkeys for hire; I employed him and his donkeys and continued the journey towards Hama. When we reached the valley which was usually guarded by Turkish guards to protect the travelers (it was dangerous to travel on this road because of the Arab brigands who used to rob the travelers), we found that the guards had run away. We were afraid to continue and we wondered what to do. The Arab guide began to tremble and started crying. «*Kah nemun!*» (which means we will die). I told him to be quiet and that we had to stay here and spend the night. He replied, «Oh no, it is too dangerous.» Then I decided we would continue our way. He did not agree with this either, but I insisted, so we continued our journey. We were lucky and God was with us; we did not meet any robbers or have any trouble through the valley.

Soon we came to a running brook; I stopped to wash my hands and face and refresh myself. There were two young men who were traveling with us. They came to me and said, «What a timid man this Arab is. Every tree and stump, or rock he sees, he thinks is a thief. He did this many times, during our journey and frightened us.» So finally, I got angry with him and told him, «Take your donkeys and go ahead, we will follow you. He said, «*Intu ketir shatrin!*» (you are very brave).

We came to a watch station along the road, where there were about 50 Turkish guards. We did not dare to pass by, so we went off the road and waited for a while. It was a Friday and it was their holy day. They had a big fire burning, because the weather was chilly at night. They were drinking and singing folk songs. After about three hours, they went to sleep. The guard they had posted to keep watch was drunk, and had fallen asleep, so we found our chance to pass by safely.

Suddenly, we saw a man standing behind a rock. I thought he was a thief, so I shouted, «Who are you, don't move or I will shoot you.» He said, «Don't shoot me. I am a runaway from the Turkish Army.» We allowed him to come with us to protect him.

Early in the next morning we arrived to a place near the town of Medab. We were tired and very hungry; we needed to rest. We sat down to eat something, and I saw a group of armed soldiers coming toward us. The Arab with us started to run away. I grabbed him and told him not to move. The soldiers came to us and the leader spoke to me. «Good morning», he said, «I wonder if you would be willing to do us a favor. We know there is a camp of Armenians nearby, and we are hungry; would you go to them and buy some bread for us? If we go, they will be afraid of us.» I invited him to share what we had, but he refused saying, «There is hardly enough for you, we do not want to make you go hungry too.» So he gave me some money and I went to the Armenian camp and explained to them about the soldiers. They were very kind and they gave me enough bread for the soldiers. I paid them the money, and came back and

gave the soldiers the bread. They thanked us very much, and we continued on our way.

When we reached Medab, we found out that we could not continue, because the roads were very dangerous. There were many bedouin tribes in the area and they were robbing and attacking the travelers. I knew about a family living in Medab, which was from Marash. I went to them and they graciously welcomed all of us to stay with them. While we were staying with this family, a group of twenty-two Armenian soldiers (runaways from the Turkish Army in Bersheba), came to town; they were going to try and join their families in Damascus, Homs and Hama. I met them and we decided we would travel together. They chose me to be their leader on the way. After we had been in Medab nine days, we decided to leave. Before we left, I told them, «In case we are stopped on the road, let me do all the talking.» So we started at night. We traveled all night long and arrived safely in the town of Jaraj early in the morning. In Jaraj, a lawyer friend of mine was glad to see me. He urged me to come and stay with him, but I refused because I was traveling with a group.

We bought some bread and raisins and continued our journey. We traveled all day; some of the men were tired and their feet were all swollen from walking so much. We were about 7 or 8 miles from the town of Dera. We were so tired, we could not continue our journey, so we looked for a place to stay. We found a deserted house and stayed there. It was very cold and we did not have any blankets, but at least we were inside.

In the morning we continued our way and reached Dera. There I met a friend, Levon Papazian, who was a

well-known teacher with the A.G.B.U. (Armenian General Benevolent Union). He urged me to come to his house for dinner, but I refused because we were runaways and if we were caught he would be in trouble. He insisted, so three of us went to his house for dinner. After dinner, I asked him if he would go to the railroad station and see if we could get a free ride, because to travel any further with twenty-two runaways from the army through Turkish villages would be very dangerous. My friend went to the railroad station and came back with good news. There was a train with about 115 Armenian refugee families going to Tripoli. We went to the railroad station and got on the train. I offered my friend a gift, but he would not take it. I insisted, and finally he accepted it and we said goodbye.

When the train arrived in Damascus, we had to get out. The conductor told us that we would have to wait in Damascus for a few days, for a special train to take us further on our journey. The leaders among the refugees decided to go and visit some of their friends and relatives while they were waiting for the train. So, we all rested for a few days.

When the special train came, the officer in charge at the station asked me where the leaders of the refugees were. I told him they were visiting relatives. He decided he could not wait for them and turned to me and said, «I am going to appoint you leader of this people. I cannot write Turkish, so please write a permit for yourself in Turkish.» I realized this was my chance to ensure my safe arrival home, so I wrote in Turkish as follows, «The bearer of this certificate is an Armenian refugee from Marash. I appointed him leader of this group of refugees to take

them to Homs by the order of Jemal Pasha, Governor of Syria. He is permitted to go to his home in Hama without any interference.» The officer looked at me suspiciously, but since he could not read what I had written he signed it.

We boarded the train to leave. Another group of Armenians had come to the station to say goodbye to us, so I asked if there was anybody else who wanted to go with us to come on board the train immediately. A few people came; I had a relative there and I urged him to come with me, but he refused. The train started, and we said goodbye to those who were left behind.

When the train arrived at Rayak, which is the central station between Damascus and Aleppo, we were told we had to get out, because all the available trains were going to be used to transport soldiers and supplies to the battlefield in Palestine to fight against the British. I had to go to the military officer in charge to get my permit stamped and to arrange for food for the refugees. I found him and introduced myself and showed him the permit. I asked him his name. He told me Captain Shefket Bey. (This is not the same Shefket Bey I mentioned previously.) When I heard this, I immediately fell on his neck and kissed him. He said, «What are you doing?» I explained to him I knew him through his friend, Socrat Topalian, who had told me that he was a good man and had saved a good many Armenians from death. He had taken care of the sick people and given them food and shelter. I told him we were infinitely indebted to him, and thanked God we could express our feelings in person. He said, «I was very sorry to see the Armenians suffering so much in the war. I tried to do my best; I couldn't do much, but I hope the little I did was a service to them and helped them.» After

this conversation, I explained to him that I needed to find some food for the refugees who were with me. He took me to the warehouse, where the food was stored and told me to take what I wanted. I found some olives and other things. There was some bread, but it was black and did not taste good because of the shortage of flour. Shefket Bey told me not to take the bread, he was going to have some white bread made from pure flour and give it to us.

After two days of eating olives and bread, the captain decided we needed something hot to eat. He went and brought meat and we made some soup from it. Everybody was so glad to get a hot meal of soup with plenty of meat in it. After we had been there awhile, the people's faces brightened and they began to feel much better because of the good food we were eating.

WE CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY

After we had been in Rayak for fifteen days, a special train arrived from Aleppo, so we had to leave. The next station was the city of Homs. When we arrived there we found that the tracks between Homs and Tripoli had been removed. The only way to continue was on foot. I had to go to the police station and show my permit and get it stamped, in order to continue my way. The chief of the police was not in his office, so I had to see his deputy. I explained the situation to him, but he refused to stamp my permit. I began to worry, because without the stamp on my permit, I could not travel. Then I heard that there was a man by the name of Sarko Agha who was a prominent man from Kessab, and he was a very intimate friend of the chief of police. I went to see Sarko Agha, and asked him to be kind enough to do me a favor to take my certificate to the chief of police and get it stamped. Sarko Agha agreed to take the permit and get it stamped. When he came back and gave me the permit, I was very grateful to him, and I thanked him very much for his kindness to me.

In the meantime, my wife came from Hama to meet me. We were making preparations to return to Hama and I was saying goodbye to the group of people who had traveled with me. When we were getting ready to leave, I became very ill with a high fever. I was afraid that since I had been traveling with a big crowd in dirty trains, I had caught typhoid fever (there was an epidemic at that time).

Later that evening, while I was in bed, the minister of the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Randall Harris, heard about me and came to see me. He offered to help me and take me to a hospital, where I would receive good medical care. I told him I would rather wait a few days and see if I would get better. Then, if I didn't get better, I would call him to come and help me. I told him, «Your willingness to help me is the best medicine for me.»

A few days later, I began to feel better, so my wife and I made preparations to leave for Hama.

I RETURN TO HAMA AND MY WORK

We arrived safely back in Hama, and I went to see my friend Osman Bey, the Military Commandant. He was very happy to see me and asked, «How did you manage to come back?» I told him of how I had run away and all the experiences I had on the road. He said to me, «Badveli Effendi, do you recall when I came to the train to say goodbye, I told you, "the God you serve will save you from this exile?" And now you are here safely back, and I am very happy for you.»

Two days later, I went to see the Governor, the honorable Ali Frizon Bey, and when he saw me he said, «Minister, you are very welcome, I am so glad to see you safely back. Is there anything I can do for you?» I asked him to let me continue my work in the orphanage. He agreed, and I gave him my hearty thanks for his kindness.

For the first time in many months, I felt really free from all my troubles. I returned to my orphanage work, where in my absence Mrs. Salihé Kharajian had taken my place.

After three or four months of peaceful times, a secret order came from the Turkish Minister of War, Anver Pasha, to massacre 100,000 Armenian refugees in Syria. The order was: to arrest all the men under the pretention of enlisting them in the Army, to take them somewhere and kill them. They planned to kill the women and children later on.

A friend of mine who worked in the Governor's office, came to warn me of what was going to happen, and ad-

vised me to run away to the mountain of Druzes and hide. In these mountains, there were about 40,000 Druzes living a semi-independent life. They had fought against the Turks and won their semi-independence. Unfortunately, I did not pay any attention to my friend who had come to warn me, because I was depending on my friend Osman Bey to protect me. This was a mistake, because the Turkish policeman came to my house and arrested me and took me to the military commandant. When Osman Bey saw me, he laughed at me. I had to think of some way to get out of this trouble I was in. I sent word to the orphan boys to come to the Commandant's office and cry loudly, «Osman Bey, our father, please protect us, send our Badveli home to us. We cannot live without him.» When Osman Bey heard their cries, his conscience began to bother him, so he came to me and said, «I will give you a permit to return home for two weeks.» He called his secretary Ali, and told him to prepare the permit.

Fifteen days later, a special train came from Damascus to take the Armenians away. Osman Bey ordered some policeman to come to my house and arrest me to take me to the train. There was an Armenian young man working in the office of my friend. He came to my house to warn me. When I heard this, I immediately left the house and ran away. I did not even tell my wife where I was going.

When the policemen came to my house, they could not find me and they asked my wife where I was. She said, «I do not know, he did not tell me he was going.» They looked all around and could not find me. They went back to the office and reported to Osman Bey. When he heard this he became furious and started to curse. The official

train had already left and he was worried that he would be held accountable for my escape.

Later, I heard that the order of Enver Pasha had been cancelled and that the Military Court in Damascus, had ordered Osman Bey to appear at Court for questioning. Some time later, Osman Bey returned from Damascus, so I felt free to come out of hiding. But trouble kept coming after me.

This time trouble came from the former president of the Armenian refugees. He was a real friend to me at one time. When he had received orders to exile all the Armenian ministers, he had protected me, but now he turned against me. He went to Osman Bey and told him he would cause him trouble if he did not get rid of me.

One evening, Osman Bey invited me to his house and as we were talking, he told me he was going to send me to the army. I said, «You cannot send me to the army, because under Turkish law, since I have a diploma, I should go into Officers' Training School». He laughed, saying, «You are ignorant about Turkish politics. If I send you to Officers' Training School, they will be glad to admit you and will praise you and give you your diploma, then they will send you to a place with a letter instructing the officials to kill you. Take that diploma and hide it, it will cause your death.» He insisted to send me to the Army, saying, «You are an educated man, I am sure you will be able to make friends with the officials and you will be all right.» I was not satisfied with what he had said and made up my mind not to join the Army.

I decided to run away and hide. I found a solitary place to hide and stayed there for about four months. I became tired and disgusted in hiding, so I decided the

best thing to do was to move to Aleppo. At this time, no Armenian was allowed to travel from city to city, so one evening when it was dark, I went to the railroad station and asked a friend of mine who was a guard at the station to help me get on board the train. He agreed to help me, and told me to wait until the train came. When I would hear the second whistle of the train, I should get on board. He had made some arrangements with the conductor of the train to put me in the car with the wounded soldiers who were coming from the battlefields in Palestine.

After I was safely on board, one of the wounded men was asking for help. I went to see if I could help him. He was wounded in his leg and could not walk. He wanted to go to the bathroom, so I helped him and brought him back to his bed. During the journey, I was able to help some other wounded soldiers too. I was glad to do this because I was so happy that I had been able to get away safely. No inspectors came to the car, because only wounded soldiers were in it. When the train was near Aleppo, I jumped from the car and started to walk to the house of Rev. Y. Barsoumian who was living in Aleppo with his family. I arrived safely and they welcomed me.

After I had been there four days, my cousin Nishan Noukhoudian, who was a night watchman and assistant to the chief of police, Nouredin Bey, came to see me. We went for a walk together and we were talking when we passed by the chief of police; I was worried he might question me, but he just said «good morning», and we went on our way.

The next Saturday evening, one of my friends, Roupén Markarian, invited me to come to his house for dinner the following day. At first I refused, not wishing

to cause him any trouble because I was a runaway, but he insisted, so I went. After supper, we were talking in the parlor and two detectives from the government came to see Mr. Markarian. I recognized one of them as my childhood friend Aram Hemayag. He did not say hello to me or pay any attention to me. When they had left, I told Mr. Markaraian, «Tomorrow morning the police will come and arrest me. In order to save face, my friend Hemayag will betray me to the government.» Mr. Markarian said, «Do not worry, I don't think they will bother you.» I spent the night with Mr. Markarian and the next morning, after we had finished breakfast, two policemen came and asked me, «Are you Haroutune Noukhoulian?» I answered, «Yes, what can I do for you?» They told me that I was under arrest and that I had to go with them. So they took me to the police station and started searching through my pockets for my identification papers. When they saw that I was a Protestant minister, the chief of police asked me where I came from. I told him from Hama. He said, «How did you get here from Hama? Don't you know that it is absolutely forbidden for Armenians to travel from one city to another?» I explained to him how I had come, but he did not believe me; he thought I had come with false certificates, that I had jumped into the car where wounded soldiers were and had come to Aleppo. There was a guard at the station with whom I had trouble before. Once he had given my mule to somebody for a bribe, and when I had reported him to the Mayor, the Mayor told me to go and get my mule back and this man could not open his mouth. This man recognized me and thought he would have a chance now to take revenge on me, but for some unknown reason,

the chief of police intervened and had me placed in the office of the assistant-chief of police. There was another guard in the office who asked me for money to buy a drink, but I told him I would not give him money for a drink; but if he were hungry, I would give him money for food. He was grateful and told me that the assistant-chief of police would not be in his office that evening, so I could sleep in his bed. I thanked him very much for his kindness to me.

The following morning the chief of police sent word to me that I would have to stay in jail another day or two, after which he would set me free. I thought to give him a gift for his kindness. So I gave some money to my cousin Nishan, told him to buy a plate with a silk towel, and a box of candy. He was to put the candy and a golden ring I had bought in the plate and take it to the chief of police's wife as a present from me because her husband did a great favor to me.

Two days later— the chief sent for me and told me to bring somebody to be responsible for me and he would set me free on condition that I would report to his office once a week. I went to see Rev. Hagop Koumrouian and asked him to be responsible for me, that I might be set free. He agreed and I was set free. So Rev. Hagop Koumrouian and Dr. Altounian both signed to bare me out of jail.

My immediate concern now was to find a way to make a living. I went to see Rev. Aharon Shirajian who was in charge of an orphanage and asked for a job to help him in his work since I had experience; but he did not give me a job. Then I thought I would open a restaurant, but I had no money to start. I asked Rev. Shi-

rajan if he would help me. He went to see Dr. Altoonian and got \$200 for me.

At this time, a friend of mine, Khawaja Aisa Elbawi came from Hama especially to see me. He wanted to help me. He was going to open a big store to sell cotton and thread which was very much in demand at that time. He wanted me to manage the store for him. I had to refuse. He was very much dissappointed, but he wished me success.

I sent for my family and with the money I had received from Dr. Altoonian, I started my restaurant business. Business was very good, but it was still wartime and everything was very expensive, especially meat and groceries.

THE WAR ENDS AND THE BRITISH OCCUPY SYRIA

After I had been in business for a year and a half, the war ended and the British Army occupied Syria. The British government opened a school for boys in Aleppo. The principal, Professor G. Daghlia, invited me to teach in the school for a while. I accepted his invitation and began teaching at the school.

One morning, I had gone for some errands, and on the way back, I stopped at the hotel to get some breakfast. I heard gunfire and I wondered what was happening. Someone came into the hotel and said, «Do not be afraid, they are just killing some Armenians.» When I heard this, I was terrified, and I started to go to my house to protect my family. A friend of mine was there and he tried to stop me. He said, «Are you crazy? If you go out they will surely kill you.» I did not pay any attention to him, I left and started to go home. On the way, I had to pass some guards, but I managed to arrive home safely. I remained at home ready with my gun to shoot anyone who tried to come and harm me or my family.

After a few days, the British Army was able to stop the killing and restore order. I went back to my teaching. A short time later, I received an invitation from the Protestant Church of Kessab to go and be their minister. I wrote to them that I would be willing to go for one year only. They wrote back and said they wanted me for a long term, not just for one year. I told them I was sorry, but I could not accept those terms. (My reasons for not wanting to stay more than one year, were that at that time the Tashnag Political Party was very active in

Kessab; it was against the Protestant Community, and I did not want any trouble from the Tashnag. Future events proved I was right. Three Ministers had gone to Kessab and all of them were forced to leave because of troubles caused by the Tashnags.)

Shortly thereafter I received three other invitations from different churches. At this time after the deportations there was a great need for teachers and ministers, as most of them had been massacred during the deportations. I did not know which invitation to accept. One day Dr. Katchperouni came to Aleppo from Baghdad and told me not to accept any invitations, because the Zeytoon A.G.B.U. was going to build a new Zeytoon and he wanted me to go there and lay the foundation for a new Church. I told him I would be glad to accept his invitation. After several months had gone by, all the charitable organizations decided to merge and become one. All the delegates had a meeting to decide whom to invite for the various places. Dr. Katchperouni offered my name to be the leader of Zeytoon, but Mr. Lyman, a missionary representative, was against it because he felt that a man from Zeytoon could not be as useful as one from outside. Most of the delegates agreed with him, so my name was not chosen.

Since I was not chosen to go to Zeytoon, I decided to accept an invitation from the Protestant Church in Sis. After a month I received a telegram from Dr. Chambers asking me to come to Sis as soon as possible. I answered saying that I would like to go and visit Zeytoon first, after which I would go to Sis. I sent my family to Sooloo Tarla to wait for me until my return from Zeytoon.

When I arrived in Zeytoon, there were some refugees living in a Turkish military barrack, because all the houses

had been burned to the ground and there was no other place to live in. I looked all around the town and vicinity. The once beautiful gardens, orchards, and vineyards that were like a garden of Eden, had all disappeared. It was like a jungle. Flocks of wild pigs, wolves, and bears roamed around both by day and by night. It was very dangerous to roam around. Beautiful Zeytoon was no more.

After spending about ten days in Zeytoon, I decided to leave with a group of people. The last Sunday I was there, I wanted to deliver a sermon for the people, so they came to listen to my sermon. After the sermon was over, I told them goodbye. With tears in their eyes, the people begged me not to leave them. I told them I could not stay, that they would have another minister soon. They said they didn't want an outsider. They would go and ask Mr. Lyman to change his mind and allow me to stay in Zeytoon. I told them I had already promised to go to Sis and I could not go back on my word.

I left Zeytoon with the group of people and we had planned to spend the night at a rest house, but there were many brigands on the road and we were scared to stop, so we resumed our journey. After a short distance we heard signals from the woods and we saw some robber bands in the middle of the road. We decided that everyone should run for his life. I ran to the top of a mountain. It was very cold and I was shivering. I found the road that led me to Sooloo Tarla, where my family was waiting for me.

The time had come for me to go to Sis. My cousin came to me and asked if he could go with us to Sis and live with us there. I agreed to let him come with us. I asked the Near East Relief Office to give us some transportation. They sent a truck to take us safely to Sis.

MY ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES IN SIS

After arriving safely in Sis, we moved into the church parsonage and got settled. My first task was to organize the relief work to help the refugees. We organized a committee and met to decide and make plans for the relief work. There was a great need because Armenian refugee families had just returned from deportation. They did not have anything to eat or to wear. We decided to make a list of all the needy families so we could distribute food and clothing to those who needed it most. I prepared the list, working on it for two weeks. In addition to the needy families, there were about 500 widows who were destitute. We started to provide them jobs of spinning thread. The thread was used to make stockings for the 400 Armenian volunteers who were responsible for the protection of the vilayet, along with about one thousand French troops. We organized soup kitchens and every day at noontime we gave hot soup to the people.

After awhile, the political situation took a turn to the worse. Roads out of the city were full of Turkish brigands. Communications outside the city were impossible. There was no transportation to go to Adana to buy supplies and food. We were cut off from the outside world. At night, the Turkish brigands used to attack our line of defense about three miles from the center of the city. Night after night we managed to turn them back. We were steadily falling into worse conditions. There was not enough food for the people and the soldiers of the French army. Then, as if to make matters worse, a group of

young men from Zeytoon arrived in Sis asking us help for the refugees there. They told us that the Turkish commandant had ordered them to turn in all the weapons they had. They did not know what to do. Finally they split into two groups. One group surrendered to the Turkish commandant and the other decided to fight against the Turks. In retaliation, the Turkish commandant arrested 150 women and children of some of the fighters and ordered his soldiers to kill them. The Turks plundered and burned everything that was left behind; the 150 persons were massacred. It was only through good fortune and providence that this group managed to escape and arrive safely in Sis. They had a letter written by their committee explaining their terrible conditions and begged us to send them immediate help. I gave them some shoes and blankets which was all we had to give. The conditions in Sis as well were very bad. The attacks by the Turkish brigands were increasing every day. Food shortage was terrible. There was not enough to feed the civilian population, the volunteers, and the French army.

Finally, Mr. Tayarda, the French governor of Sis, thought of sending somebody to a nearby Turkish village to buy some supplies and cattle to raise and bring them back to Sis. The delegation that was sent to the village did not return. They were killed by the people of the village. When Mr. Tayarda found out about this, he was very angry. He called for volunteers to go and attack the village to take revenge. Hovsep Medzadourian and a group of volunteers went at night and from the mountain side opened fire on the village. The people of the village were all terrified and ran away. Then the volunteers entered the village and burned it to the ground. Some people from

the neighbouring Turkish villages saw the fires and started to run away. The volunteers decided to go to another village and gather the people together, shoot them and burn their houses. When news of this action by the volunteers reached Mr. Tayarda, he sent a company of French soldiers arrived to the village, Captain Sulphi ordered them and arrest Hovsep Medzadorean because the order was to attack only that one village. When the French soldiers arrived at the village, Captain Subhi ordered Mr. Medzadorean to surrender, but the latter did not obey and was taking positions to fight against the French soldiers. The Captain ordered him to leave the village and return to Sis. Finally, Mr. Medzadorean obeyed and came back to Sis with his group of volunteers. When they entered the village, he was arrested and put in jail. A group of us went to Mr. Tayarda and begged him to release Mr. Medzadorean. After two weeks, he was set free, but he no longer had any confidence or trust in the French government, so he decided to try to go to Adana. Even though the roads were closed and dangerous, he managed to get through at night. It was not safe for him to stay in Adana though, because the French authorities were against him. He finally left Adana and went to the United States.

As the conditions in Sis grew worse, Mr. Tayarda moved from the Turkish quarters to the Christian quarters. My church was in the Turkish quarter also, so I decided it would be safer for us to hold our services in the Christian sector. I found a house in which to hold services.

One Sunday, Knal Dumaz, who was a Protestant, attended our services although he did not understand

Turkish. After the service was over he came to speak with me. He gave me a gift of \$25.00 for the Church and asked why I was not holding services in our Church. I explained the situation to him, and he asked me to go back to our Church. He would see that we would receive protection.

I thanked him for his kindness and he told me to go and see Captain Joli, who was in charge of the Turkish sector and ask him for a personal permit and one for the congregation to hold services in our Church. I went to see Captain Joli and he gave me the permits.

The following Sunday I went to get the key to the Church which was in a neighborhood house. When I was entering the Turkish sector, a French guard stopped me and would not allow me to pass. I showed him the permits which Captain Joli had given me and explained that I had to go to a house in the Turkish sector to get the key to our Church. He still refused to let me pass. In spite of the fact that he was aiming his gun at me, I started to walk by, I was so angry with him that when I got close to him I snatched the gun from his hand. He began to strike me with his sword. A group of French soldiers nearby saw us fighting and came to find out what was the matter. I showed them my permit, then they turned to the guard and rebuked him for his actions against me.

The following morning, I went to see Captain Joli to report the incident. When I told him what happened, he suddenly became very angry and said to me, «You being a minister, are you not ashamed to come to me and complain about a French guard? Do you wish me to call that soldier and punish him in order to give satis-

faction to your own ego. You Armenians never deserve any favor, your nation are all outlaws, criminals and thieves.» I answered, «Captain Joli, I did not come to you to ask you to punish that man, but he threatened me with his gun, and hit me with his sword. I have come to you to report these illegal actions, that is all; any action you take is up to you, not to me. As for your statements about the Armenian nation, while it is true that some Armenians may be criminals, it is not fair to judge the whole nation by the standard of some individuals. Now that you have revealed your true feelings to me, I am going to be very frank with you, I cannot trust you anymore. Here is the key to our Church, we will never come back here again.» I threw the key on the floor and walked out. He called me back, but I did not heed.

Sometime later, the French Governor came to my house and told me that there was a column of soldiers going to Adana, and that he wanted me to go with them with my family. I thanked him very much, but had to refuse because I felt it would not be right for me to go and leave my people and the congregation behind. However, it did not make much difference whether I left or not, because later on the orders came from the French government to withdraw from Sis, so now everyone was going to get ready to leave for Adana. There was a column of five thousand French soldiers to protect the people on the road from the attacks of the Turkish brigands. Most of the people were walking, but my wife and son rode in the car. It took us six days and nights to arrive in Adana.

OUR LIFE IN ADANA

After we arrived in Adana, the Near East Relief Office heard that we had arrived and sent a representative to offer some help to us, for which we were very grateful. They put me in contact with Mr. Lee, who was the First Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. He offered me a position as assistant to the second secretary, Rev. Kamoghiel Davidian, who was in charge of a summer camp outside the city near the Turkish border. Among other things, my duties included buying food and vegetables for all the boys and teachers, and preparing the daily menus. I really did not care for this job, since I would have rather been minister and teacher. I wanted to be among the boys to talk with them and teach them to live a Christian life. So I submitted my resignation and found another job as director of a refugee camp. We used to show movies twice a week, once for the men and once for the women and children. I stood by the stage to explain the pictures.

Meanwhile the French government was at war with the Turks, and there were continuous bombardments all around us. I dug an underground shelter, so that when the shells fell too close to us, we could get in the shelter and have some protection. During one of the attacks a shrapnel landed near the camp and killed one of the Armenian war veterans. My wife was pregnant at this time and she was afraid to go to the hospital, so I called a nurse to come and take care of her in our house. The situation was so bad at times, that enemy bullets were coming in

through the windows. I began to worry: some of the bullets might hit my wife or myself; so I went out to look for some bricks to put against the windows to protect us. One day my wife had labor pains, so I went after a nurse to come and take care of her and the baby after it was born. The bombardment of the city was still going on and we were in danger every minute.

Shortly after the birth of our child, I received a message that an official from the Y.M.C.A. would like to see me. I went to his house and he told me that the people of Adana had collected one thousand banknote pounds for the refugees of Sis. He asked me to make a list of the needy people and to distribute the money according to that list. I did as he asked and went back to my job.

The Y.M.C.A. decided to open a branch office in Deort-yole which was at that time in French territory. They applied to the French government for a permit to open the office and send me there. Before the permit was received, the Y.M.C.A. officials told me to go to Deort-yole and start my work. When I arrived there, my personal belongings were confiscated. I went to see the military authorities to try and get my property back. When I reached the office, I found that the man in charge was Captain Joli, whom I had known in Sis. I explained what had happened and he told me as soon as the official permit was received, I would get my property back. About one week later, the official permit arrived and I was given my property.

I began to look for a place to set up our camp, and I found a nice piece of land upon which we pitched our tent and started our work. We used to prepare hot soup and tea every morning for the Armenian refugees. We

had a program of games. The young men especially enjoyed playing football. After we had been there a while, Mr. Lee began to receive many complaints that by paying higher salaries the Y.M.C.A. was getting all the available ministers and teachers, and as a result the Protestant Churches and schools were suffering from the lack of them. Mr. Lee asked me to resign and go and serve the Church. I resigned and shortly thereafter received an invitation to go to Jehan and serve the Protestant Church there as a minister and teacher.

OUR EXPERIENCE IN JEHAN

After I started my work in Jehan, the treasurer of the Turkish Government, Ahmed Agha, came to my house to welcome me. We got acquainted and became good friends. He would come to our Church every Sunday. One Sunday he asked me to hold the congregation after services were over, because he wanted to speak to them. He told them that he was glad that I was there and that he was sure that I was going to be very useful not only to the Protestants but to all the Armenian community and to the city as well.

While I was teaching in the school, I decided to teach French. I had no textbooks, so I went to see the French Governor, Lt. Wegri to ask for some elementary French books so that I might teach French in the school. He was very pleased that I wanted to teach French and he promised to order some books for us. I expressed my thanks to him and started to leave. But he called me and said, «Please, what is your hurry? Stay and talk for a while.» He asked me what was going on among the people, and what they were talking about. I answered, «Sir, I am a very busy man with my religious duties and teaching, I do not have time to mix with the people and talk with them. However, I heard that the people are saying that the French government is going to evacuate from Turkey and that any news to the contrary from the French is false, because we have heard these things from Mustafa Kemal and we believe him. Moreover, they have heard that the Turks are very fond of you and that when the

French leave, you will stay and be friends with them.» He was very sorry to hear what I said, and he replied, «Please, go and speak from your pulpit and correct these false rumors. We are going to go back to Sis even though the political situation is very bad.» Then he changed the subject and asked me how I felt about the French rule in the country. I answered, «I am not a politician, but let me be very frank with you. The French military government is acting like a guest government, not like they are going to stay in Turkey. This country needs a courteous government, and Providence chose the French Government to come to this place of massacres and injustice. We thought that your government would be a just government and fair to all the people because of your own history of fighting against injustice and pressure, and because yours was a government founded on righteousness and justice, freedom and equality. Instead, you came here and when you found the leaders of the massacres, instead of punishing them, you paid them high salaries and gave them important jobs, which made the situation worse. In the long run, no Christian will be allowed to live in this country.» Although he did not agree with what I had said, he thanked me for being frank in my opinions, and I left his office to go back to my work.

Shortly afterwards, I heard news that there were about two or three thousand Armenian refugees from Zeytoon in desperate conditions and under constant attack from the Turks. I was very anxious to get official reports about them, but there was no way to get it since all communications from Zeytoon were cut off. I decided to appeal to the French government and ask help. I wrote a letter to Professor Haig Aram explaining the situation

of the people in Zeytoon and asked him to appeal to the French government to give immediate help to the people of Zeytoon and to send some French troops to march to Zeytoon, in order to help bring the people to French occupied territory. If this were not possible, diplomatic means were to be used to appeal to Mustafa Attaturk to make some arrangements to save the people. This could be done through a neutral country such as Switzerland. Professor Haig Aram took my letter and delivered it to Boghos Noubar Pasha. He was sorry to hear this news. He translated my letter into French and delivered it to the French Foreign Minister to wait for an answer. The next day Boghos Noubar Pasha received the answer which read, «The French government regrets that the remnants of the Zeytoon people are in such a deplorable condition, but is unable to order any French troops to march against Zeytoon because it is a military war zone and it is impossible to get through. As for using diplomatic measures through a neutral government, we will think it over and advise you of our decision when it is reached.» Boghos Pasha translated the answer into Armenian and sent it to me. When I received it, I decided that I would have to find another way to help the Zeytoon people, so I wrote a letter to the Armenian Catholics, the Honorable Der Sahag Khabaian to give me one thousand pounds to send to the people of Zeytoon to buy food and supplies so they that might move to French occupied territory. When I got the money, I went to the marketplace to see if I could find someone to take the money and a letter to the people of Zeytoon. One day I saw two Cherkez villagers. I introduced myself to them. Their names were Koodys and Ibrahim. I invited them to

my house for dinner and while we were eating, I explained the situation to them. Since the relations between the Cherkez villages and the Zeytoon people were very good in the past, I asked them if they would be willing to take my letter and the money to the people in Zeytoon. They agreed to do it. I wrote a letter to the Zeytoon people as follows, «Do not expect any help from outside. I am afraid you are left by yourselves. I have enclosed some money in this letter for you to buy food and supplies. Try to get to French occupied territory.» I gave the letter to Koods and Ibrahim and they left.

In the meantime, the people in Zeytoon divided into two groups. The first group tried to get through to Osmania. They fought desperately all the way. The Turkish military forces and all the civilian people attacked them. Finally, they reached the banks of the Jehan river and managed to swim to the other side, but the Turks were waiting for them. The Turks captured Dikran Kuzul Alikian and his son. They butchered the son before his father's eyes and then killed the father. The rest of the group managed to escape and when the Turks left after killing the two captives, they made their way safely to Osmania which was under French occupation.

The other group fought against the Turks until all their ammunition was gone. The leader of the group was finally killed and the remainder was forced to turn back to Zeytoon leaving behind 150 comrades who had been killed in the fighting.

By this time Koods and Ibrahim had reached home and had sent word to the people of Zeytoon in secret to meet at some spot in the mountains to deliver the letter and the money. They waited, but no one came. (What had

happened, was that the leader of the group, Aram Bey Cholakian had in his mind to attack a Turkish village called Hajiler first to get supplies and take revenge on the Turks for their actions in the war of 1895. Furthermore, a man from Zeytoon by the name of Kurbakian had gone to Hajiler to buy some goats. When he had picked out the goats he wanted to buy and had paid for them, some Turks attacked him and killed him. When news reached his family, they were very upset and cried all the time. This family was a neighbor to us and my cousin Mavi could not endure their crying any longer. So he went and got his gun early one morning and called some other volunteers to follow him to go to the government building and demand justice against those who had killed Kurbakian. They did not get any satisfaction, so they decided to go to Hajiler and take revenge themselves. Baba Agha Soorenian, who was the foremost leader of Zeytoon heard about it and hurried to go to speak to the Mayor and after speaking with the Mayor ran after my cousin and his group to catch up with them. He found them at Alapungar and begged them to turn back, promising to find the killers and punish them, so they turned back. The next day the Mayor, an Albanian courageous man got a group of gendarmes and went to Hajiler and surrounded the village and demanded the head of the village to deliver the killers to him for punishment. When the Turkish leader saw that his village was surrounded, he was compelled to deliver the killer into the hands of the Mayor, who brought him back to Zeytoon and put him in jail.) Now Aram Bey Cholakian was going to take revenge on this village for its hostility against the Zeytoon people. So they began to march on Hajiler, but unfortunately on

the way to the mountains, they met a group of Turkish brigands who opened fire on them. They fought all day long, but they could not drive the Turks back. During the fighting, Aram Bey was killed by one of his own relatives, Hovsep Paplikegian, whose friend had been killed by Aram Bey. Hovsep had avenged his friend. (At the time of Aram Bey's death, everyone believed that he had been killed by the enemy. Years later the truth became known, and Hovsep even proudly boasted that he had killed Aram Bey.) The people were very sad over the death of Aram Bey and they seemed to lose any enthusiasm or fervor that they had to escape, so they turned back to Zeytoon and made arrangements to go to a meeting place with the Cherkez and get the money I had sent.

Later on, the people again made an attempt to get to French occupied territory. A Turkish convoy was passing by way of Zeytoon; so they attacked the convoy and managed to get some supplies and ammunition. This was a great help to them. The leader of the band at this time was Hovhannes Simonian. His plan was to follow the road leading to Kilis. He did not mention his plans to anyone because in case they were caught, they would be unable to force them to give the secret plan to the enemy.

On the road to Kilis, they had to fight very hard to get through. As they were going through a swampy forest, the Turkish villagers set fire to the forest hoping they would be burned alive. Fortunately, they were able to control the fire and attack the villagers and drive them back so that they could continue their way to Kilis. As they were nearing Kilis, they came upon a group of Turkish brigands. When they saw the brigands, they thought these were Armenians because they were speak-

ing Armenian. They continued to go towards the group, but as they drew near to the group, the Turks opened fire on them killing several of them including the leader, Simonian. Out of the two or three thousand Armenians who had started from Zeytoon, only 300 reached safely French occupied territory.

After those events, the trouble between the French Government and the Turks started. Naturally, the Armenians took the side of the French. The Turkish Commandant, Mustafa Attaturk was trying to urge all the civilian villagers to fight against the French Army, saying, «Drive out the French, so that we may have our own independent government.» The French Army was scattered here and there in different spots in small groups with Armenian civil volunteers. The small groups of French and Armenians were no match for the welltrained and equipped Turkish troops. Whenever the Turks saw their chance to attack a weak and lonely encampment, they would attack it and massacre all the Armenians and burn their houses to the ground. The French tried to repel the attacks of the Turks, but the Turks were successful in beating them.

After this happened, I decided it was no longer safe to stay in Jehan. I planned to go to Beirut and find a place to live and then return for my family. I went to the police station to get my passport. The next day, as I was preparing to leave, I saw an announcement in the morning paper that the French Government was evacuating the country. When I read this, I immediately went back to the police station and had my family's names put in the passport so we could all leave together.

I called a carriage to take us to the station to catch

a train to Iskenderoon which is the Mediterranean port to board the boat to go to Beirut. We got on board the boat safely and started our journey to Beirut.

After we arrived in Beirut, I had to take my son Souren to the University hospital, because he had caught a cold on the boat. After the doctor had examined him, he told us the boy would have to stay in the hospital under his care for the necessary treatment. Fortunately, after a week's time, the boy was well and we were able to bring him home.

Now that we had moved into our house and were settled, the next thing to do was for me to find a job to support us. I went to see Abraham Sarafian who was the head of the A.G.B.U. in Beirut. He told me that they had a great need for my services, so he recommended me to Mr. McAfee of the Near East Relief Office, and he was kind enough to give me a job. My duties were: to take care of the Armenian refugees, to help with the replacement of orphaned boys and girls; and to serve as Director of the Armenian Lodging House. It was the rule of the Lodging House that any boy over 16 had to live in the Lodging House. I sent the boys to various places to learn a trade so that they could be self-supporting and pay their room and board at the Lodging House. In addition to these duties, I also acted as supervisor of the girls' orphanage. Any time one of the girls wanted to get married, I had to make an investigation and report my findings to the director so that she would be able to decide whether or not to approve the marriage.

Since I was responsible for the religious affairs of the orphanages, I used to go there on Sundays and speak to the boys and girls. The girls were working in a rug

factory and I would go there and tell them stories while they were busy working. I would also visit the homes where some of the girls had been employed as servants.

While I was doing this work, I had a very sad and dissappointing case history. There was a girl who was in the Sidon Girls' orphanage who got married to an Armenian young man. The girl was very beautiful, but the boy was not so attractive. After a few weeks of marriage, the girl ran away from her husband and began to lead an illegal life. The Near East Relief located her and put her with an Armenian priest's family. She did not want to stay there, and after a few weeks, she ran away from there and went to Antilias, which is near Beirut and lived with some young boys who used to be in the orphanage in Beirut. She became sick and the director of the boys' orphanage heard about it and brought her back to Beirut and put her in the hospital. When she got well, they placed her with a French officer's family and referred her case to me.

I used to go and visit her every so often to make sure that she was behaving herself. I gave her a New Testament and asked her to read it every morning. I told her that it would show her the right way of life. One time she came to me and told me that a young Armenian man was visiting her and causing her some trouble. I inquired his name and told her I would go to see him and make sure that he didn't bother her any more. She gave me his name and I went to the Armenian refugee camp where he was staying. I went to the office of the Director, Bedros Brousalian, and I told him about the boy. He called the boy to his office and began to threaten to punish him for causing such trouble. The boy pulled a letter from his

pocket and showed it to us. In the letter this girl had written to the boy as follows, «What kind of boy you are that you never come to see me. Don't you love me? I love you, and I want to meet you.» I took the letter and put it in my pocket and went back to see the girl. I asked her to repeat her story and she repeated the same story over and over again. Finally, I took the letter from my pocket and showed it to her and asked if that was her handwriting. She said, «Yes, it is.» I said to her, «Why did you lie repeatedly to me? I am trying to make you a good girl.» But she did not pay any attention to me and she finally ran away from this family too. After that she lived openly as a prostitute. I was very sorry it happened, because I had tried very hard praying for her and doing my best to save her life, but it was of no avail. I failed to win her for Christ.

EVENTS AFTER ARMENIA BECAME A SOVIET STATE

The Armenian political party was trying to persuade the people to try and free Armenia from Soviet rule and start an Independent Armenian State with its own churches and ministers and priests. This policy was against the thinking of the majority of the Armenian people. During the years 1920-1926 their paper used to criticize the Near East Relief. The Managing Director of the N.E.R., Mr. Fowler, was very upset over this. He called me to his office one day, and told me he did not like their criticisms and asked me to try and stop them. I told him that they were not the majority of the people and that the Catholicos, the highest religious head had several times expressed his thanks to the N.E.R. in the newspapers for the kind and generous service rendered to the Armenian people, and that he should not worry or pay any attention to such criticisms, because the majority of Armenians did not feel that way. He was not satisfied with my answer and he tried to think of a way to stop their criticism. This political party was against me and against Rev. Y. Hadidian who was the Protestant pastor of the refugee camp. They tried many times to use their influence to have me removed from my job. They tried to find some evidence against me so that they could force Mr. Fowler to remove me from my job, but they failed. After a while, I got the impression that Mr. Fowler felt that if he fired me from my job with the

N.E.R., the criticism would stop, so I submitted my resignation and he accepted it.

I decided to go to the United States with my family. (By this time, my wife and I had four children.) Before going to America, I wanted to visit Jerusalem. I took my wife and my eldest son Barkev, who was ten years old, with me. Since he had not yet been baptized, I took him to the Jordan River where Jesus was baptized. The Nazarene Armenian minister baptised my son. While we were in Jerusalem, we were the guests of Rev. Krikorian, who was the son of Yacoub Krikorian. We went to all the historical places and to the Mount of Olives where Jesus took his disciples. We spent about a month in Jerusalem. We went to see our dear and old friend, Archbishop Par-toghomios who was living there. He was very kind and hospitable to us. He used to bring us a pail of yoghoort every week. (At the time of the First World War, he was living in Aleppo, where I was running a restaurant. I used to give him free meals and he did not forget that. In return, he tried to show his gratitude.)

After a month, we went back to Beirut and I applied to the American Consul, the Honorable Mr. Jackson for a visa to go to the United States of America. I received the visa and on September 23, 1926 boarded a steamer to travel to U.S.A. During the trip, my wife and children got seasick, so I had to go to the dining room and bring their meals to our cabin because they were unable to go to the dining room to eat.

When we reached New York harbor, my brother-in-law and sister-in-law came to see us. They wanted to take us from the boat, but we were not allowed to go with them and we were sent to Ellis Island to see the

Justice of the Peace to get permission to leave. The judge asked my brother-in-law, who was the minister of the Boston Armenian Congregational Church to come and see him. He asked him a great many questions to find out if he was financially able to be responsible for us, but he had a large family to support and his salary was hardly enough to support them. The judge could not give us permission to go with him.

Mr. George Sherbetjian had sponsored us to come to the U.S.A. so the judge sent him a telegram asking him to come to Ellis Island for an interview. He came, and the judge made an investigation and asked how much money he had and found out that everything was satisfactory. So he gave us permission to leave with him.

We first went to Troy, New York, to see my cousin and some friends. We stayed there about a week and then went to Stoneham, Mass., to stay with my brother-in-law and his family. After spending one month there, we went to Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where we began our life in America.

The idea in going to Williamsport was to organize an Armenian Protestant Church, but there were not sufficient Armenians there to organize a Church. I met Rev. Bural who was Presbyterian minister there. I became acquainted with him and I asked him to help me. Since he really did not know me too well, he asked for some reference. I gave him the name of Major Nichol who was the head missionary from the Presbyterian Church in America and who was residing in Utica, New York. Rev. Bural wrote him a letter and asked about me. He replied, «Rev. Harry Serian is the apple of my eye.» Rev. Bural was satisfied and tried to help me find an American

Church, but there were no vacancies. Our financial condition was very poor, so Mr. George Sherbetjian, our sponsor, took care of us for six months. After that I found a job with a florist, where I worked for about three months, but it was not possible at that time to find a steady job, so we were compelled to move and came to Philadelphia. Rev. Bural gave me a very good recommendation to take to the Presbyterian minister in Philadelphia, but he was not interested in me.

There was an Armenian minister, Rev. Apraham Haroutunian, in Philadelphia. For 14 years he was the minister of the Church in our native village of Zeytoon. He tried very hard to find a job for me and he helped me financially too. He took me to a prominent oriental rug dealer, Kamaghiel Davidian, and asked him to take me into his business and teach me how to repair oriental rugs. Mr. Davidian was very kind and took me into his shop and taught me how to repair oriental rugs.

Later on, Mr. Davidian, introduced me to Mr. Silaway, who was a manager of the Near East Relief. When he heard about my experience with the Near East Relief overseas, he offered me the job of going to the Churches in Pennsylvania to speak for the Near East Relief to raise money for the Armenian orphan boys and girls overseas.

After we had been in Philadelphia for a while, my children became ill, especially my daughter Agnes. Her trouble started when she was two years old and we were in France preparing to get on the boat «Majestic» to come to America. The morning we were to board the ship, she became sick. She had a strong fever, so we took her to see a doctor. After a thorough examination, the doctor told us that she had pneumonia. I asked the doctor if

it was possible for us to continue our journey, as our ship was going to sail that morning. He answered, «If you are willing to lose your daughter, you can go.» Certainly we were not willing to lose our daughter, so we put her in the hospital.

For three weeks she struggled between life and death. I used to stay in her room, but I could not sleep, because of seeing her suffer so much. Finally she got better and we were able to resume our trip. Oh, how grateful and thankful to God we were!

Since that time she had been very weak. Now her trouble was her lack of appetite to eat. We had to force her to eat to keep her from starving to death. I took the children from doctor to doctor and finally found that they could not get used to the climate in Philadelphia, so for the sake of their health, we moved to Watertown, Mass.

The children seemed to get well in Watertown and after that we had no more sickness. I wanted to start a rug business there, but I had no money, so I went to see my friend Dr. Brewer Eddy and asked him to help me. He was gracious and kind enough to give me a loan of one thousand dollars. With the money, I went to New York and got some oriental rugs on consignment. It was my plan to sell some dry-goods as well. Business was very good, but after one year, the depression came and my business was cut in half. I was making about \$2000, but after the depression it went down to \$900 and I could not live on that.

After living for one year in Watertown and two or three years in Newtonville, I was in great financial difficulties. I could not pay my rent for the store, so I was

evicted. I could not pay my rent for my house for six months. The landlord, Mr. Scoffield, was a very good christian man. Every time he came to collect the rent he said, «Mr. Serian, if this money is the money to buy food for your children, I cannot take it; please, keep it to feed your children.» What a good christian man he was! However, this situation did not last long. His sister was his partner; she was furious and gave us notice to move immediately. So I was forced to find another place to live. By now, I had five children and everywhere I went to rent a house, when they found out I had five children, they would not lease any rooms. We were left on the street with our furniture. We were fortunate to have a friend, who is now the father-in-law of my eldest daughter, Jack Akullian. He was the owner of five meat markets. He came to Newtonville to see us. We told him our trouble. He said to me, «I tell you, the only thing to do is to move to Troy, New York. I will give you and your son, Barkev, a job in one of my stores, and with the earnings of two persons you should be able to live.» So we moved to Troy. He paid for our transportation and as he promised, gave a job to my son and to me. We were paid \$30 a week for the two of us and things were cheap at that time, so we were able to live comfortably. After being there for a year and a half I left to find some other work. One week all the members of the family were sick and we had no money to spend and no food in the house. I had to get up out of bed and go to the bank and borrow \$100. With this money I went to the market and bought some vegetables and food.

The following morning I went to a woman who was a customer of the market where I had worked. I used to

deliver her meat orders to her. I told her that I had left the market and that my trade was repairing oriental rugs. I asked her if she had any rugs she would like to have repaired, or if she had any friend who would like to have some rugs repaired. She made several calls and finally one woman who lived on Manning Boulevard had some rugs to be repaired and wanted me to come right away. I was so happy to find that work. From that call I got three rugs to repair, so I started to go from house to house soliciting rug repairs. In this way, I was able to make 20-25 dollars a week.

One day I thought to go to the Allen Rug Co. and ask if they needed a repairman. They were not interested. After one week, I went to see them again and I explained to them how there was a lot of profit in oriental rug repairing. After I explained the matter to them, they decided to hire me on a trial basis. They liked me very much and eventually I worked my way up to where I was on a commission basis. I gave them 15% and the rest was my profit. I remember one time there was an Englishman who was a flour merchant in Rensselaer. He had sent a beautiful oriental rug to Allens to be cleaned. When the rug was being returned, the pile got caught on something and the rug was ripped. The delivery men did not tell the wife about it and when she saw what happened to her beautiful rug, she called the rug Company and started to cry. She told them she was going to sue them. The Allen Brothers became very excited about this and they did not want to have any trouble or lose a good customer. They told me what happened and I told them not to worry, I would fix the rug so she would never be able to tell it had been damaged. I went and picked up the rug,

repaired it and brought it back to her. When she looked at it, she was very pleased because she could not tell where the rug had been damaged. Since she was satisfied, I started to leave, but she called after me, saying to me, «You forgot your check in payment for the rug.» I told her the main thing was not the money, but the satisfaction of the customer. But she insisted on paying and she gave me a check for \$95. I went back to the store and told the Allen Brothers there was no more trouble, that the woman was very pleased and she was not going to sue them. They were very happy and grateful to me because I had saved them from trouble. I worked with the Allen Rug Company for almost ten years and at that time the Second World War was going on and I went to work in the Watervliet Arsenal and Behr Manning Company.

After the war ended, I went back to repairing rugs from time to time to keep busy.

One day in 1960, the Frears Department Store in Troy, New York, was having a carpet sale. My wife and I went to look at the carpets. I noticed that they were very busy, so I went to see the manager and told him that I was an expert in rug repairing. I asked him if I could help him and get a job repairing rugs. He told me he would be glad to have me help him and asked how much I charged for the work. I gave him a price with supplying the bindings myself, and he agreed and asked me to start the following day. For three years I worked there until they sold their business and closed their store.

After I left Frears Department Store, I retired to take life easy. On July 25, 1965, my wife and I celebrated our golden wedding anniversary. Our children, our relatives and some of our very dear friends participated in

celebrating the happy occasion. I never thought when I was having so many troubles in the old country that I would enjoy such a long and eventful life. God has truly blessed me. I have no worries about the future. I trust Him to take care of it, as He has done thus far.

THE END