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Our Little Armenian Cousin



“ARTIN PATTED THE SHEEP”

(See page 7)

Our Little
Armenian Cousin

By
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Illustrated by
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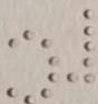
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Preface



IN the schoolroom or playground you may possibly have met your Armenian cousin, — a child with dark hair and sad eyes, who is quiet and shy, and who seems almost fearful of accepting your proffered friendship.

Poor little Armenian cousin! Have you heard your parents speak of the cruel manner in which the people of his country have been treated and of the hardships they suffer in their own home?

It can scarcely be called a home, for it is ruled over by the Sultan of Turkey, who allows little happiness or freedom to the people he has conquered.

“There is no such country as Armenia,” says the Turk. “That which *was* Armenia is now a province of Turkey, governed by Turkish laws and ruled by officers appointed by the Sultan.”

Its people are not even allowed to come and go as they choose. Nothing can be done without the ruler's permission. The smallest offence is punished in the severest manner, and many massacres of innocent people have taken place.

It is no wonder our Armenian cousins are glad to leave their native land when a chance is offered, and that many of them come to America in search of a happier and more peaceful home.

Their faces tell us they have suffered much. We must help them to forget their troubles. Our love and friendship must be strong enough to bring smiles to their faces and trust to their hearts.

The world is great and good. Here in America, if not in their native land, our Armenian cousins may yet find a real home and lasting happiness.

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CHAPTER I.

A HIGHLAND WINTER

“Look! look! See the shower of snow,” cried Artin.

“There is enough snow outside, without having any more in the house,” said his mother. But she stopped her work and came out into the hall to see the strange sight.

It was early morning and Artin had just opened the door leading into the yard. The weather was bitter cold, and as the door swung open the freezing air rushed into the big building. It gave the warm air of the inside a most loving greeting. Then lo! a cloud of snow-

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fairies appeared and came fluttering down upon the rough floor. Artin stood watching them as if he had never seen snow before in his life.

“The world is full of wonders. But come, Artin, and help your father with his cattle. Breakfast will soon be ready.”

The mother went back to her work and Artin went out into the big stable, where his father and the other men were milking.

It was a queer home, where this little black-haired boy had lived ever since he was born. The stable and the house were all together. You could hardly say, “This is where the cattle are kept, and the family live in that part.”

A large part of the building was used as a stable, while small rooms for housekeeping opened out from it. And yet, the family spent a good deal of their time in the stable itself.

Artin's father received his friends here.

They smoked and told stories, and talked over their business, while the oxen chewed their cud and lazily nodded their heads.

The boy's mother often brought her sewing or knitting out here and sat with her husband.

At first, this custom of living in a stable with the cattle seems strange, but so do all fashions which are unlike ours.

Artin's father is quite a rich man. Before his little son was born, he used to live in a smaller home. But his flocks of sheep grew larger, and his herds of cattle also. He said :

“ I do not have room enough here.”

He hired some workmen, who began to dig out the soil on a gentle slope of land which he owned. They dug out a large space of ground. It was like a cellar about five feet deep. It was a long time before the work was done.

But this was only the beginning of the home.

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“You must get some stout trunks of trees and saw them into pieces ten or twelve feet long,” said the farmer. “We will set them up in rows inside of the cellar. They will make strong pillars.”

You can see now that Artin's home would be largely underground, but would be very strong.

When the pillars had been set up, stone walls were built around the sides of the cellar. Next came the making of the roof. The branches of the trees, whose trunks had already been used, were laid across from pillar to pillar. The twigs were tied up in bunches and spread over the branches.

Of course, the roof was not yet so close but that rain would fall through into the rooms beneath. The building of it, however, had only commenced. The men now took the earth they had dug out of the ground when they made the cellar, and spread it over the

framework of twigs and branches. They trod it down as hard as possible.

Then came another layer of earth, and more pounding and treading. Now that this was done, there would be no possible leaking for years to come.

When warm days of summer came, seeds began to sprout, and blades of grass shot up out of this earth-roof. It was soon like a fine field of grass. The children played here, and the sheep got many a delicious supper over the heads of the people below.

It wasn't a bad way of building a home, was it? Yet it does seem queer to us.

But how could the sheep get up on the roof? At first, that would seem to puzzle you.

You must remember the building was put up on sloping land. It was also partly underground. Besides this, as the loose earth was thrown up on the roof, it was left in a sort of

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banking from the ground to the roof on three sides of the building.

The sheep, as well as the children, could scamper up and down the banking, to and from the roof, as much as they pleased.

“But, dear me! how could the people inside of that big building see to do the work?” you exclaim. “There were no windows on the sides of the house.”

Indeed, there were only three or four small openings in the roof. And these were covered with oiled paper, so they let in very little light.

If we should look closely, we should see one place in which a piece of *real glass* was set. It would be a sad day for the boy who broke that glass. It was very precious and cost a good deal of money in the part of the world where Artin lives.

His home was dark, to be sure, and he stayed in the stable a great deal of the time during the long, cold winter. But he got used

to it and it did not trouble him. Indeed, after he had been outdoors for a long time, he was glad to get away from the dazzling light of the sun on the snow.

As Artin stepped into the stable, a big fat sheep ran to meet him. It rubbed its woolly side against the boy, as much as to say, —

“Good morning, good morning, little master.”

Artin patted the sheep and scratched its back. It was his pet out of all the flock. When it was a baby lamb, he picked it out from all the others. He taught it to follow him, and often fed it with tender grass or bits of bread.

It was an old sheep now, but was as much of a pet as ever. It often left the rest of the flock to follow Artin or his father from place to place. In the winter-time, when the animals had to spend month after month in the stable, it chose the company of the horses.

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“They are wise creatures, and I like them,” it seemed to think. “We are very good friends.”

As soon as Artin had petted the sheep, he turned to the dogs who came jumping about him.

“Bow-wow! bow-wow! How glad we are to see you, little master,” they seemed to say. They barked and waved their tails in great delight.

They made such a fuss that the chickens, who had already begun to scratch about for their breakfast, fled right and left. They were in a hurry to get out of the reach of the dogs' feet.

The big stable was dark, of course. But it was quite comfortable, although only a small fire was kept in the family part. There were so many cows and oxen and sheep and horses that their warm bodies gave a great deal of heat.

As soon as the dogs became quiet and went back to their places, Artin felt something soft rubbing against his legs. It was a sober old cat that had come down from the platform at the end of the stable. She wished to greet Artin, too. She had left a new family of kittens, but she now hurried back to see that no harm came to them.

Artin followed her up on to the platform to her hiding-place in one corner.

“Oh, how lovely!” he cried, as he knelt down on the floor where two of the most beautiful white kittens were cuddled. They were snowy white, without a coloured hair on them. Their fur was long and fine. Their eyes were not yet open.

“What beauties they are!” cried Artin, as he tenderly held them in his arms. Their mother looked up at him and cried.

“No, no, I won’t hurt them. And the dogs sha’n’t trouble them, either,” said the

little boy. He put them back in the corner and turned softly away.

“I believe they are even prettier than my Angora kittens,” he said to himself. “They are as white as snow. The Angora kittens have long hair, too, but it is brownish. And they are not as gentle as these will be. They are fierce and ready for a battle with the dogs at almost any time.”

The platform where the cats spent most of their time was the place where Artin's father received his friends. There were fine carpets on the floor and soft couches along the sides. There was a rail around it so the cattle and sheep were kept off.

The dogs had their dens beneath. The cats were the only animals that were allowed to come there.

“You are late. You ought to have been helping us half an hour ago,” said his father, as the boy appeared at last among the milkers.

The farmer did not often need to find fault with his little son.

Artin was strong and healthy. He liked to work, and was seldom behindhand.

“Breakfast! breakfast!” Artin’s sister, Mariam, called a little while afterward.

The milking had been finished by this time. Every one dropped work and followed the little girl to the room where the morning meal was smoking on the low table.

There was hot mutton in a metal dish, and curdled milk, and a plentiful amount of “losh,” as Artin calls the favourite bread of his people.

His mother had made it in thin cakes. They were scarcely thicker than the blade of a knife, but were at least a yard long. The table was fairly covered with these cakes, which took the place of napkins.

While Artin sat eating, he wiped his mouth with a bit of losh. When he wished some of

the curdled milk, he broke off a piece of losh and folded it up so as to make a spoon with which he fed himself. When he helped himself to some mutton, he rolled it up in a strip of losh and made an odd little sandwich.

Artin was very fond of this queer bread, and ate large quantities of it, while he made it useful in eating the other food to which he was helped.

Artin's grandmother lived with the family. So, also, did his great-grandmother, who was a bright-looking woman a hundred years old! She was almost as spry as her daughter. She had helped to get the breakfast ready on this cold winter's morning.

"There is nothing like the fine air of our country," she often said. "How can a person help keeping well and strong if he lives here?"

Then she would sigh as she thought of those of her people who had left Armenia to live in other lands.

“It is not because they wished to go away,” she had told Artin. “Oh, no, no! It was because of the rule of the cruel Turks.”

She always spoke in a whisper when she mentioned the Turks. It seemed as though she feared that one of them were listening in some corner, or that he would suddenly appear in the doorway.

CHAPTER II.

THE SACRED LAND

“MOTHER, why can't I talk about Armenia as much as I wish? It is the name of our country, and it sounds like music when I say it to myself.”

“Sh! sh! my child!” Artin's mother looked frightened. She always had a sad expression in her dark eyes, but now they seemed sadder than ever.

“I have tried to make you understand the reason,” she said, speaking slowly and softly. “You know the Sultan of Turkey has us in his power. He rules over us as he wishes, and we are not strong enough to free ourselves.

“It is the Sultan's command that we shall not speak of Armenia. ‘There is no such

place,' he says. 'The land that was called by that name belongs to me. It is a province of my empire. Its people are now my people.'"

The tears fell from the woman's eyes as she said these words. "Oh, Artin, my child, I hope we shall live to see the time when other countries will come to help us. It is the only way to save our Fatherland from the Sultan's wicked power."

"But, mother, our people were not always like this, were they?" asked Artin.

"No, indeed. We once had kings of our own and we were free and happy. Just think, Artin, the first Christian king in the whole world was an Armenian.

"But our home lies here in southwestern Asia, with enemies on every hand. The Persians are on one side of us, the Turks on the other. Then, if we go north, the great country of Russia lies just across the Black Sea.

"The armies of these different peoples have

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met and fought their battles here in our own dear land. It has been conquered first by one of them, then by another. Our courage is gone. Our spirit is quite broken.”

“Do not cry, mother. Let us ask father to go away. I should like to cross the ocean and go to the wonderful country of America. Some of our friends are living there, you know. They write letters about their happy new home.”

“I know it, Artin, I know it. But this land is the only home I can imagine. I love it with all my heart. I cannot bear to think of leaving it.

“Always remember, my dear child, this land was the cradle of all the peoples of the earth.”

“You are thinking of the Garden of Eden, aren't you, mother?”

“Yes, Artin. We are only a few miles from the very spot where Adam and Eve had their first home. That is what we have been

told. Our first parents lived in perfect happiness in that paradise of birds and flowers until the tempter led them into sin. They tasted the wondrous apples that were not meant for them to eat.

“Then, alas! the sorrow of the world began. Adam and Eve were driven out from the garden. They now had to work among the thorns and thistles of Armenia for their daily living.”

“I don’t wonder you would rather live here than anywhere else. Who knows but what the Garden of Eden will be given back to us! I would like to be as near it as possible, at any rate,” said Artin.

As his mother talked, it seemed as though he could see it all, — the beautiful paradise of fruits and flowers, the birds singing happily overhead, the bright, clear sunshine all around. And in the midst of all this loveliness were two people, a man and a woman. Their faces

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were calm and gentle. They walked gaily, as though they knew no care. They sang merrily in company with the birds. There was no cloud in the sky. There was no shadow on the earth.

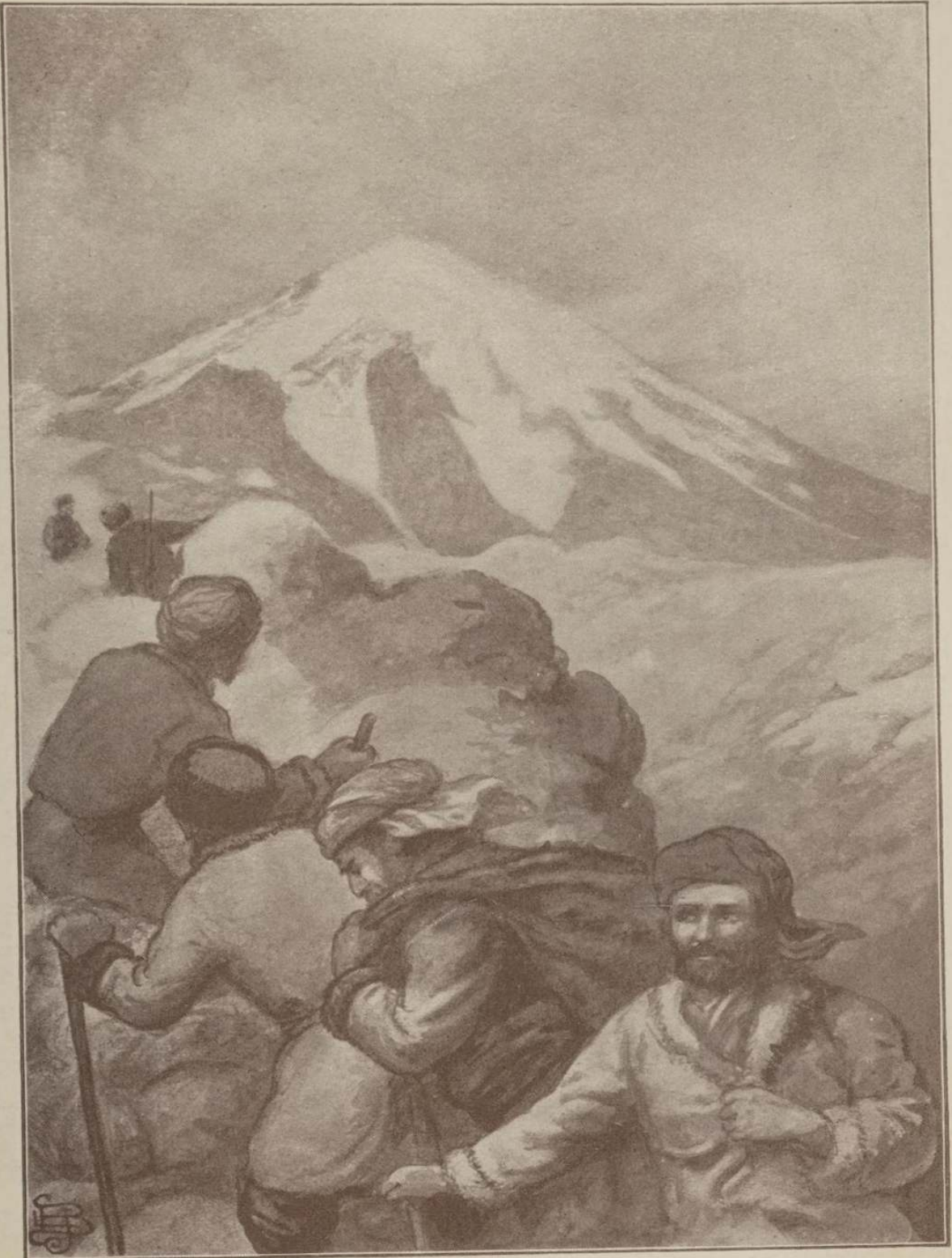
Then came the change, and sorrow entered the world because of disobedience.

“It has stayed here ever since. I wonder if the Golden Age will ever come again,” thought Artin.

“There is something else for us to be proud of,” his mother went on. “If you climb to the top of yonder mountain, what can you see beyond?”

“Mount Ararat,” quickly replied the boy. “I’d rather be near that mountain than any other in the world.”

“Of course you would, Artin. It is impossible to think of it without also thinking of Noah, who descended on the mountain of Ararat in the Ark when the great flood began



CLIMBING MOUNT ARARAT

to go down. When the world was overtaken by the deluge, every one was destroyed except Noah and his family and the creatures he had taken with him into the Ark."

"Why was there a deluge, mother?"

"Because the people of the earth had grown very wicked. But Noah was good and wise, and the Lord loved him. So He directed Noah to build the Ark and save himself at the time of the rising of the waters."

"What a dreadful time it must have been! I wonder if Noah wasn't frightened. And I should think so many animals in the Ark would have made a fearful noise. Just think of it! The Bible says the flood lasted forty days and forty nights!"

"It seems a long time, doesn't it? But at last the waters began to go down and the Ark rested on the mountain of Ararat. More and more land was laid bare, and Noah left the Ark and went down the mountainside. He

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planted a vineyard and settled there. But first, he built an altar and made sacrifices to God, who had kept him safe.”

“ I know, mother. There is a village on the side of Ararat, and the little church stands where the altar was built. Father has been to the place.”

“ Yes, dear. I have visited the village myself. I have heard there are people in the world who don't believe there ever was a deluge. They even think Noah was not a real man. They say the story is a myth.

“ Some of those who travel through our country talk like that. But we people of Armenia believe it as I have told you this morning.”

At this moment the door opened and Artin's father came staggering into the room.

“ Dear me! What is the matter? ” cried his wife as she hurried to his side.

“ I cannot see, ” he answered. “ I am snow-

blind. The sunlight was very strong as it fell upon the snow. I have been three hours on the road. The way was so rough, I had to use my eyes constantly.

“At last, when I had almost reached home, my sight failed me entirely. I had to let the horse take his own course.

“Oh, how good it feels to be out of the glaring light, although I can hardly see yet.”

“Your face is all blistered, father,” cried Artin. “It must be very cold outside.”

His father’s cheeks were a sorry sight. The skin was raised in blisters, as the boy had said. The strong glare of the sun, together with the biting wind, had caused this.

“I shall soon be better. But you must not stay here, Artin,” said his father. “Run out and attend to the horse.”

Artin’s home was high up on the table-land. Down below him on the seashore, the weather was much warmer, and snow and ice were

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seldom seen. But up on the high plain the winters were long and cold and the summers were short.

Artin was never sick. He had never had a doctor.

“I wonder if I shall live to be as old as my great-grandmother,” he sometimes thought. “Ever so many of my people live to be a hundred years old. Father says it is because this is the healthiest place in the world. It is the nicest and best place, anyway.”

After he had gone out into the stable to take care of the horse, his sister soon followed him.

“Grandma just told me a story, Artin, and I thought you would like to hear it,” she said to her brother.

She was very fond of Artin, and the boy and girl played together most of the time.

“Don’t you know we were talking about geese the other day?” she went on. “You

said you wondered what made the difference between wild geese and tame ones. Well, this is what the Persians say about them :

“ Once upon a time there were two geese who were going to take a journey together. The evening before they started, one of them said to the other :

“ ‘ Look out, dear friend, and be ready. If God is willing, I will start in the morning.’

“ ‘ So will I,’ answered the other goose, ‘ whether God is willing or not.’

“ Early the next morning the pious goose ate his breakfast and went to a stream near by for a drink. Then he spread his wings and flew far away.

“ The goose who had talked so wickedly got ready to follow him. But, strange to say, he found he could not rise from the ground.

“ He hopped and he fluttered, and he made a great deal of fuss. It was all in vain. His wings were useless.

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“He looked around in despair. He saw a hunter not far away, but he could not move enough to get out of his reach.

“The hunter soon caught him and carried him away. He kept him in a yard and tamed him. But that goose never got back the power to use his wings. He became the father of all the tame geese in the world.”

“Poor fellow,” said Artin. “I pity him, even if he did talk wickedly. But your story makes me think of a crane I saw last summer in a neighbour’s yard.

“A hunter had shot him, but it did no harm to the bird except to break a wing. He was easily caught after that. Then the hunter brought him to our neighbour’s farmyard.

“He stalked about very proudly, as much as to say: ‘What business have you to make me stay here with common fowls? A lordly crane like me! Shame upon you!’

“But after awhile he became quiet, and

ate corn with the rest of the fowls. Of course, he had a deep jug of water to drink from, on account of his long bill. He did not have to share that with the other creatures of the barnyard, at any rate.

“I was over there one day when a flock of cranes flew by overhead. They wheeled round and round as they caught sight of their brother below, and called to him to join them. He stretched up his long neck and answered them in the most mournful way. I think he was telling them that he was a prisoner.”

“I wonder if they understood him,” said Mariam.

“It seemed as though they did. They flew away, and the poor prisoner was left alone. I felt sorry for him, I can tell you.”

CHAPTER III.

THE EARTHQUAKE

ARTIN and Mariam were sitting by the big fireplace of a small sitting-room. They were reading. It was not very late in the afternoon, but the iron lamp hanging from the chimney-piece was already lighted.

The tiny windows covered with oiled paper let in so little light that the children could not read without the help of the lamp. Mariam looked up from her book.

“I was just reading such a funny story, Artin,” she said. “It was about a little girl who lived in a house like ours. She was all alone in the kitchen one evening. Her mother had told her to watch the supper, for

she had some work to do in another part of the house.

“The little girl was sitting by the fireplace and singing. The kettle was boiling away at a great rate.

“Suddenly the girl heard a sound overhead. Somebody was on the roof! It was winter-time, and dark, too. She said: ‘That cannot be the sheep or dogs.’

“A moment afterward she felt sure that the flat stone on top of the chimney had been lifted off, for she felt a gust of cold air.

“She began to be frightened, for there was no one else in the part of the house where she was.

“But she was a good deal more scared when she saw a crooked stick come slowly down the chimney. It fished around till it caught hold of the handle of the kettle and slowly lifted it up out of sight.

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“When it was entirely gone the child began to scream with all her might. Her mother came hurrying into the room, exclaiming, ‘What is the matter with the child!’ At the same time she looked at the fireplace and saw that the kettle was missing.

“As soon as the little girl could speak she told what had happened.

“‘Ah, ha!’ exclaimed her mother. ‘Some hungry thief has stolen my nice supper. It was easy enough, too. The chimney is so low, he did not have to reach very far. If I had been here, though, he shouldn’t have had it. But stop your crying, my child. No one is hurt. And now we must hurry to get another supper ready.’”

Artin laughed. “I hope the thief didn’t burn his mouth eating the stolen stew. Didn’t the people ever catch him?”

“No one tried. The little girl’s mother said it wasn’t worth while. And when the

second supper had been cooked, and the family sat down to enjoy it, everybody laughed over what had happened."

"Do you remember what I found on our chimney last spring, Mariam?"

"I don't think I'll forget it very soon, Artin. It was a stork's nest. The funniest part of it was that sparrows had built their own little nests among the sticks that formed the big nest of the storks. You know you showed it to me."

"I'd like to know what sparrows were made for, Mariam. They are such fussy, noisy little things. They scold and scold about everything."

"Yes, and they are such bold birds. They are always ready to steal the grain, as well as every other good thing they can seize in their bills. I do not wonder they dare to build their homes around the storks' nests. They dare almost anything."

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Just then the children's great-grandmother entered the room.

"Won't you tell us a story? We love to hear about long ago," said Artin, as the old lady sat down.

"Dear me! What can I say that would interest you children?"

"Tell about the earthquake," said Mariam. "You said once that you remembered it as if it happened yesterday."

"And it was more than sixty years ago. What a long time that is!" exclaimed Artin.

"Yet when it happened, I was a grown woman with a family of little children," said the old lady.

"Everything seemed as usual on the morning of the earthquake. I went about my work and the children played as happily as could be. But when the afternoon came, I began to feel strange. I could not understand why.

"The air became still and gloomy. The

children came to my side with sober little faces. They felt something, too. But what was it?

“All at once I heard a low, rumbling noise. It grew louder every moment. The house trembled and shook. Dust from the plastered walls filled the air about me. I choked and coughed. The children began to cry and sob.

“‘The earth is moving, mamma,’ they cried. ‘Aren’t you afraid?’

“I could hardly speak from fear, myself, but I managed to say, ‘God is everywhere, my darlings.’

“Just then there was a crash. A part of the house had fallen in.

“And now the room where we were shook and rocked to and fro, and the air was filled with a fearful rumbling and roaring. The strangest thing about it was that there was no wind outside. It seemed as though the world were stifling.

“Then came another crash, and another.

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It was the sound of houses falling around us. We were living in the city of Erzeroum at that time, as I once told you.

“Should we be spared? Every moment I wondered if that part of the house where we were would fall next.

“Every moment seemed like an hour. But at last the awful noise stopped, the earth grew quiet, and we dared to move about the room and look outside.

“A terrible sight met our gaze. Houses lay in ruins on the ground all about us. All of our own house was destroyed, except the room in which we had been and the one next to it.

“Your great-grandfather came home soon after. He had been outdoors during the whole dreadful time. His life had been saved in some wonderful way.

“‘What has happened?’ I asked.

“‘It was an earthquake,’ he told me.

“‘May we never see another,’ I cried.



“THE OLD LADY WENT ON, SPEAKING QUITE SLOWLY”

And, children, we never have. And I hope you will not live to know what an earthquake is like."

"It must have been dreadful," said Mariam, tenderly patting the old lady's cheek. "Don't let's talk about it any more, but tell us about something pleasanter, if you are not too tired."

"Would you like to hear about Armenia in Bible days? It was a free and happy country then."

"Yes, indeed," answered Artin. "Mother often tells us what she has read of those times, too."

"I think you, Artin, would like to hear about the strange boats on which the cargoes were carried down the Euphrates River to Babylon. You never saw anything like them."

"I'd like to hear, too. I know I would," cried Mariam.

The old lady went on, speaking quite slowly.

"The frames were made of willow and were

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quite round, like a bowl. Skins of wild animals were stretched over them. They were then filled with straw, and the cargoes were taken on board."

"What kind of cargoes did the merchants of those days carry?" asked Artin.

"Chiefly wine."

"And how did the people move the boat?" was the next question.

"Two men had charge of each boat. They stood at their work. They rowed and pushed it along with their oars.

"No boat went on a trip without carrying a live ass. The larger boats carried more than one of these animals."

"Why in the world was the ass carried?" asked Mariam, laughing.

"This was the reason," answered the old lady. "When the merchants arrived in Babylon, they sold their cargoes and broke up their boats. Then they loaded their asses with the

skins that had covered the boats, and started again for their homes in Armenia.”

“But why didn’t they go back in their boats, grandma?” asked Artin, with surprise.

“The current of the river is too strong for a boat to go up the stream with any ease. So that was the reason for making the boats of skins instead of wood. A great writer who lived at that time said these Armenian boats were more wonderful than anything else he ever saw, except the city of Babylon itself. And of course your mother has told you that was the greatest city in the world at the time.

“But come, children, I hear your mother calling us to supper. We are to have something we are all very fond of, and we must not keep her waiting.”

“I know what it is, — mutton stewed with quinces. It makes me hungry to think of it,” cried Artin, as he led the way to the supper-table.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VISITORS

“MAY we rest here for a short time? We have just come from Erzeroum. Our friends there told us you would be most kind to us.”

It was a stranger who said these words to Artin's father. Another gentleman was with him. It was plainly to be seen that both of them were Americans, and that they were very tired.

“Welcome, welcome,” was the answer in their own language.

Artin's father was only a farmer, but he could speak two languages besides his own, and he spoke them readily. One of them was English.

“England is a great country,” he often told

his friends. "Some day she will help our poor nation and save us from our enemies. But America is great, too. If I should be obliged to leave Armenia, I should rather make a new home in America than in any other part of the world. It is the land of brave, free people."

It is no wonder, then, that when he saw his visitors were Americans, he smiled pleasantly, and gladly led the way to the platform in the big stable. You will remember this was the place where he received his friends.

"We are very tired," said the visitor who had spoken first, and who had introduced himself as Mr. Brown. "We came on horseback to Erzeroum all the way from the northern coast. It was a rough journey, and a dangerous one."

"Yes, at this time of the year it is certainly not an easy one," answered the farmer. "But I am used to mountain climbing, and I made

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the journey many times when I was a young man. Do tell me how are my people on the seacoast? Are our Turkish masters as cruel as ever?"

"I fear so. There have been fresh massacres, and hundreds of Armenians have been killed. They were not to blame, either. A few of your people have been working secretly, trying to stir up a revolution. The Turks discovered this and killed everybody, right and left. They were just as cruel to those who had done no harm, and who had never spoken a word against them, as they were to the others.

"They did not stop to find out who were innocent and who were guilty. I am sorry with all my heart for you Armenians."

Artin was helping his father when the visitors arrived. He heard every word that was said. The word "massacre" made him tremble from head to foot. Yet, although he

was so frightened himself, he kept thinking, "I hope Mariam won't hear this. Poor little Mariam! I don't want her to feel badly."

His father noticed that the boy was trembling. "Run off to your pets, Artin, while I talk with these gentlemen," he said. And Artin heard no more about the sad things that had happened in his country.

The visitors stayed to supper, but they were talking now about their journey from the seacoast.

"Up, up, up, we climbed," said Mr. Brown. "And each new mile of the road seemed harder than the one before it."

"Indeed, my hair stood on end most of the time," said Mr. Miller, the other visitor. "The road in some places was cut out of the solid rock, and it was so narrow that a misstep would have made us fall hundreds of feet over a steep precipice.

"But the views! I never saw anything so

beautiful as the mountain scenery of Armenia in all my life. There we were with mountains all around us. Some seemed like babies resting beside their giant mothers.

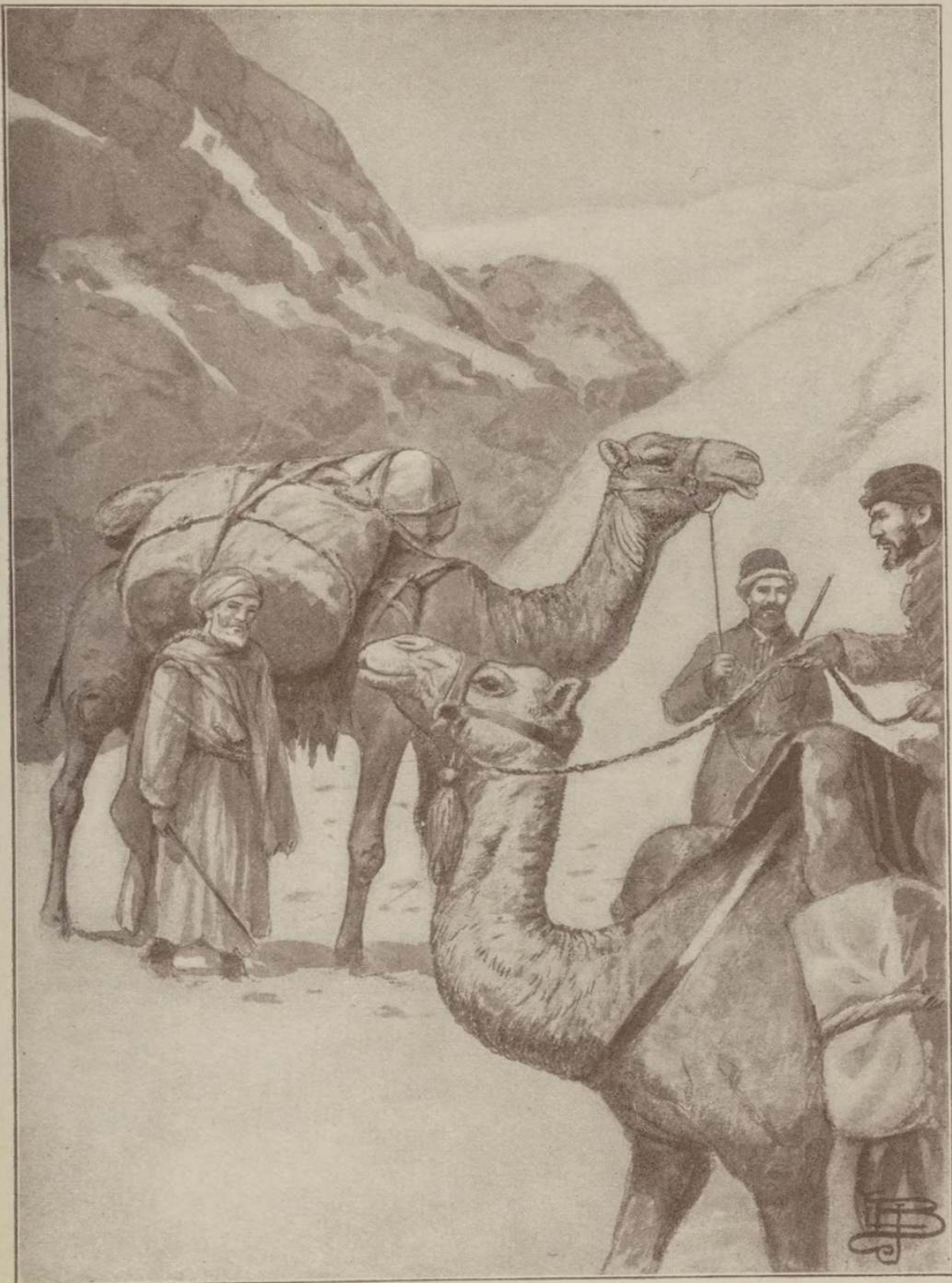
“Yet they were all grand. As we climbed higher and higher we could look down on the peaks and slopes of some of them, while ahead and beyond us there were other and more lofty ones.”

“It was a wonderful journey,” said his companion. “I was filled with fear and delight at almost the same time.”

Artin listened eagerly to the talk of the travellers. He had never left his home on the plateau to visit the seacoast, but he loved to hear about the journey.

“I suppose you spent the nights in the inns at the different villages on the way,” said Artin’s father.

“Yes, and we found plenty of company. The houses were well-filled with drivers of



“MANY CARAVANS PASS THROUGH ARMENIA”

camels and pack-horses who were resting on their way."

"Many caravans pass through Armenia on their way to the north. They carry goods from Asia to Europe," answered their host.

"Yes, I know. Steam-cars would seem strange in this part of the country. Even if the people wished for them, they could not build them through the dangerous passes over which we travelled."

"Sometimes we had hard work to keep warm at the inns where we rested. One night it was bitter cold. Our room was on the second floor. The lower part of the building was used for the horses and camels. We had no fireplace where we could warm ourselves. The innkeeper said:

" ' I will bring a mangal. ' "

"We wondered what a mangal could be. Pretty soon the landlord came back into the

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room with a large brazen vessel. It was full of red-hot charcoal.

“He set the mangal in the middle of the room. We were glad to gather around it and feel its warmth.”

“I’ll tell you what seemed to me the queerest sight of the whole trip,” said Mr. Miller. “It was the camels moving along over snow and ice. I had always thought of those animals as travelling over the hot sands of the desert. They did not seem to belong to cold places and mountain passes.”

“I will tell you of what once happened to me,” said Artin’s father.

“I was passing over the same road by which you came. We had reached the middle of the most dangerous pass between the seashore and our plateau. The way was almost blocked with snow and ice. Our horses were sharpshod, but they had to pick their way with the greatest care. I did not dare to look sideways

over the steep cliff for fear of growing dizzy. Then came a turn in the road. Away ahead of us we could just see a long, moving line. It came nearer and nearer.

“It was a caravan. How were we ever to pass that procession of camels? They were heavily laden, too, and their burdens were hanging down over their sides.

“There was only one thing to do. We must keep our horses' heads to the inside of the track and hug the rocky side of the mountain. Do you understand?

“The caravan was now close upon us. We plunged our horses into the snow-drift. As I did so, my hand grazed the sharp rocks. My glove was torn and the flesh of one hand laid bare and bleeding.

“If nothing worse happened, I should be thankful indeed. Suppose my horse should take fright and make a sudden dash, I should be thrown headlong over the snow-drift. Or

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perhaps the heavy load of one of the camels might knock against me as he passed by. Some of my bones would certainly be broken.

“ I held my breath. There! one camel had passed. Then two, three, four, five! The minutes seemed like hours, but at last we were alone and safe.

“ Although the rest of the pass was almost as steep as the side of a house, we did not complain.”

“ Yes, I know, I know,” said Mr. Brown, “ but it was the grandest part of the journey, wasn't it? ”

“ I should say it was. When I looked up into the deep blue sky, it seemed as though heaven could not be far away. And when I turned my eyes toward the mountain peaks around us, and saw the snow sparkling like millions of diamonds upon their sides, I could not speak. It was so very, very beautiful ! ”

“Gentlemen, there is no land in the world like Armenia. Tell me, is it not so?”

Both of his visitors agreed with him, and Artin's father looked much pleased.

“You have not seen Mount Ararat yet,” he went on. “You have a great treat in store. It reaches up toward the sky like a mighty giant.

“It is more than three miles high. The Persians call it ‘Noah's Mountain,’ but we speak of it as the ‘Painful Mountain.’”

“We shall not leave Armenia till we have looked at it,” the visitors promised.

But it was growing late and every one was tired. Artin showed the Americans to their room, and was soon fast asleep in his own little bed.

What do you think he saw in his dreams that night? It was himself riding on the back of a camel. And where was he going? He was climbing up the side of Mount Ararat.

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And as he climbed, he saw that the sides were covered with diamonds. He tried to lean far enough over the side of the camel to reach them, but, alas! he tumbled off. Then he waked up only to find he had tumbled out of his own bed at home.

CHAPTER V.

HUNTING WILD SHEEP

“THE spring has come! The spring has come!” shouted Artin, as he came hurrying into the house.

“Mariam, I saw a flock of birds flying northward. It was such a big flock, too. And mother, the snow is beginning to melt and is running off in streams everywhere.”

“I felt it in the air this morning,” said the children’s mother. “The weather is certainly much warmer.”

She and Mariam followed Artin to the door and looked out. Yes, the snow was melting fast, and everything seemed to say: “Spring is here! Spring is here!”

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The village had been very quiet for months. All winter long the women and children had stayed indoors, and had scarcely ventured outside. The cattle and sheep had been kept shut up in the big dark stables.

But now everybody was stirring. Look! there was a man driving out a long line of cows to get the fresh air. How they winked and blinked in the bright sunlight.

And listen! there was the sound of running water, as a stream, which had been frozen all winter, was beginning to rush down the hillside. Smaller streams made by the melting snow ran to join it.

“Look out for accidents to-day,” said Artin’s mother, as she stood watching. “Many a child has been carried off by the mountain streams at the opening of spring.”

“Now, Mariam, do take care of yourself,” she went on, as the little girl started off with Artin to go to a neighbour’s. “Look out, my

child, and do not lose your foothold. Artin, take good care of your sister.”

In an hour the two children came hurrying home as fast as the bad going would let them.

“Mother! mother! What do you suppose has happened?” exclaimed Artin. “Little Sophia was carried off by the stream before her mother could reach her. She toddled out into the street when no one was looking.”

“Dear me! dear me!” cried Artin’s mother. “Was she drowned?”

“No, her father got her just in time. But she lost her senses, and it was a long time before she knew anything. Poor little thing, she had a narrow escape.”

“Have you learned whether any wolves have been seen near the village, Artin? They are pretty daring at this time of the year. They are so hungry they will venture almost anywhere in the hope of getting food.”

“Yes, I heard one man say he saw two

wolves skulking behind his house. And where there are two wolves there may be a dozen."

While they were talking they heard the two American visitors come into the next room. The gentlemen had expected to stay only one night, but Mr. Brown was taken ill. He was not a strong man, and the journey had been too much for him.

Artin's father grew very fond of him and his friend. He found they knew a cousin of his who had gone to America years ago. Even when Mr. Brown was quite well again and able to go on with his travels, the farmer said :

"You had better stay with us another week. You are fond of hunting and you can find plenty of wild sheep among our mountains. There are foxes and gray beavers, too."

The gentlemen were much pleased. They were in no hurry to leave. They had come to Armenia to see the country and were glad

to have a chance to go hunting. Now the spring had opened, they were eager for an adventure.

“The gentlemen seem quite excited,” said the farmer’s wife. “I wonder what is the matter.”

“I think I know. They are getting ready for hunting,” said Artin. “They have been down in the village to find some men to go with them. You know father doesn’t care for hunting.”

Artin had guessed aright. Early the next morning the party of hunters started out.

“We will bring home a wild sheep for your mother to roast,” Mr. Miller promised Mariam, as he patted the little girl’s cheek.

The wild sheep of Armenia are very different from tame ones. They look more like deer than sheep. They have short horns bending backward. They are very strong. They climb nimbly about in the highest and most slippery

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places. They are shy and are easily frightened.

“Do you really suppose we can get within shot of them?” asked Mr. Miller of his friend.

“I hardly dare to hope so, but it will be great sport and it is worth trying. The head of the animal would be a curiosity in America. I should like to take one home very much.”

Their guides led the way to the top of the nearest mountain. It was rough climbing, but the place was reached at last.

“Now we must be careful,” said one of the hunters in his own language. He was not an Armenian, but was a Laz. His country is just beyond Armenia.

The Americans could not understand him very well, so he made signs to them to creep along the edges of the cliff and look down over the slopes.

Mr. Brown had brought his telescope. It



LAZ HUNTERS

would help him in discovering any signs of the wild sheep.

These timid creatures jump and frisk about on the most dangerous ledges. They seem to fear nothing in the whole world but men.

The hunters crept carefully and quietly about from place to place, looking in every direction.

“Do you see anything moving below us?” whispered Mr. Miller, after a search of fifteen minutes.

“There is not the smallest sign of a living creature,” replied his friend.

Just then one of the Laz hunters pointed to a cleft in the rocks far below. Yes, there were two sheep sporting together. It almost seemed as if they were having a game of hide-and-seek.

“But it is too far off. Our shot couldn't reach them,” said Mr. Brown.

The guide pointed again. He showed that the ledge below where they stood jutted out

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and made a little shelf. It was quite a distance down to this place, but no one was afraid.

There would not be room for all of them, however. Only two could venture at a time.

“You may go,” said Mr. Miller to his friend. “I will take the next chance.”

One of the Laz guides was let down by a rope. Then Mr. Brown followed him in the same way. The others leaned over the edge of the cliff and watched.

The two men who had gone down found they were still too far away from the sheep. But they discovered still another foothold below them. They swung themselves down to this with the help of the roots of a stunted tree. They were now barely within gunshot of the sheep.

Bang! bang! went the guns. But, alas! both shots missed the marks. The sheep darted out of sight like the wind and were never seen again.

There was a new trouble for the hunters now. They could not be seen by their friends above them on account of a bend in the cliff. And when they turned to climb to the next foothold, they found the roots beyond their reach.

What was to be done now? The Laz guide made signs to the American to brace himself against the side of the cliff so he could climb up on his shoulders.

Mr. Brown understood at once. With all his might, he pressed himself against the side of the rock. He even stuck his rifle into a crevice to make himself more steady.

The guide sprang to his shoulders, caught hold of the roots, and was soon safe on the rocky shelf overhead. Then it was an easy matter for the guide to stretch a rope down to Mr. Brown and bring him up to his own foothold.

The friends who were waiting at the top of

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the cliff could now see and help them. In a few minutes, all were together once more.

But what of the wild sheep the Americans hoped to bring home with them? They spent the day in vain, for they did not even catch sight of any others.

Artin and Mariam were watching for them when they reached the farm at nightfall.

“We don’t deserve any supper, for we haven’t brought back any game,” Mr. Miller said, laughingly. “Next time, Artin, we must take you with us. How would you like to be let down with ropes over the sides of the cliffs? Would you care enough for wild sheep to do such things?”

Artin was quite sure he would be satisfied with mutton from his father’s own sheep. He was not like some boys, for he did not care very much for exciting adventures.

CHAPTER VI.

QUEER ANIMALS

“Look, Mariam, look! that’s a lemming, I do believe.”

It was a bright spring morning and Artin and his sister were playing on the hillside.

“Sh, sh! I don’t want it to see us. It might spring up and snap at our hands,” whispered Mariam.

“Nonsense, it will let us alone, if we do not worry it. See! it is sitting up on its hind legs now and is wiping its eyes with its fore paws. Don’t move or it will see us and run back into its hole.”

“There is another coming out to join the first one. They like to feel the warm sunshine

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after the quiet of a long, cold winter. I don't blame them, Artin, do you?"

"No, indeed. They are cross little things, though, if you annoy them. I surprised a family of them last spring.

"The dogs were with me and they set upon the lemmings. Would you believe it! One of the little creatures did not try to run. He sat up in the path and bit the nose of one of the dogs that tried to seize him. It was a hard bite, I tell you, and the dog didn't enjoy it. He turned tail and ran off as fast as his legs would carry him."

"Father told me a little about their queer ways," said Mariam.

By this time the lemmings had discovered the children and run back into their hole.

"What was it?" asked Artin.

"He said that the lemmings sometimes take long journeys. A large number of them go together on their travels."

“What makes them take the journey?”

“It is probably because their food grows scarce. At any rate, when they once start out they travel in a straight line. They don't even turn aside when they reach a lake or river, but swim across it.”

“Is that so? Some of them must get killed on the way, for a good-sized fish could easily kill a lemming.”

“Yes, that is what father said. Oh, but I forgot. He told me that they do turn aside for a solid rock or a stone wall, for, of course, they could not make their way through that.”

“We must be on the lookout now for the cara guz and jerboas,” said Artin. “They keep quiet all winter, but they begin to get lively as the days grow warmer.”

“I think the cara guz is a cunning little thing. Do you remember bringing one home last year, Artin? It was so fat it could scarcely walk. It didn't seem a bit afraid of

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us. And how it did like almonds and raisins! It would not eat anything else so long as we fed it with those."

"It's ever so much more fun watching jerboas," answered Artin. "They are so lively and they get over the ground so fast.

"At first you would think a jerboa had only two legs. The front ones are very short, and, besides, while the little fellow is making his long leaps, he holds them close against his breast."

"I don't see how he can leap with his hind legs alone," said Mariam, thoughtfully.

"His tail helps him, I suppose. It is very long, and he holds it out straight behind him.

"I learned at school about the kangaroos that live in Australia. They are ever so much larger than jerboas, but their fore legs are very short, and they move with long leaps just like them. I think they must belong to the same family of animals."

"Yes, I suppose so. There is another

queer thing about a jerboa that I don't believe you know, Mariam. It gets its meals in the night-time, although it comes outdoors to bask in the sunlight in the daytime."

"It is very strong, I know that. It sometimes makes a hole through a thin layer of rock with its sharp claws and teeth. But come, Artin, I'm tired of talking about animals. Let us go home and ask grandma to tell us a story."

When they got back, they found grandma was busy helping their mother with the housework. But great-grandma sat knitting by the fireplace. She looked up with a smile as the children bounded into the room, and said:

"Well, little ones, what now?"

"Please tell us a story. We will be very quiet," answered Artin.

"Dear me! dear me! As though I could spin stories at any time out of the material in my poor head."

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“But you always can. I never knew you to fail,” said Mariam, putting her arms around the old lady’s neck.

“Well, let me see. I can’t think of anything just now, except the story of the first Christian king in the world.”

“We’ve heard it before, but we would like it again,” said Artin.

“Very well, then. We must go back to the life of the Lord Jesus and of his wonderful works among men, — of his healing the leper, restoring sight to the blind, of his making the limbs of cripples straight and strong.

“His fame spread through all the country round, and when King Abgar sent envoys into the Roman Empire, they brought back word of Jesus and his works.

“King Abgar was a heathen at that time. He was suffering from a dreadful disease. There did not seem to be any hope of his getting well. When his messengers returned

to Armenia with the news of Jesus' power, he was greatly interested.

“There are legends in some of our books that Abgar wrote a letter to Jesus begging the Saviour to come to Armenia and lay his hands upon him. The legend goes on to say that Jesus directed one of his disciples to write Abgar an answer saying it was impossible for him to come.

“Then the messenger asked Jesus to allow an artist whom he had brought to paint his picture. But when the artist tried to copy the Master's beautiful face, his hand failed him. He could do nothing.

“The Master saw this. He took a towel and pressed it against his face. Then he handed it to the messenger. Lo, and behold! the likeness of Jesus' face was printed on the towel.

“It was carried to Abgar, and as he looked upon it his sickness left him.

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“Of course, this is only a legend, children. We cannot say it is a true story. But our history does tell us that Jesus’ apostles visited Armenia after their Lord’s death. Abgar believed in them, and so did many of his people, who gave up their heathen belief and became Christians.”

“Why aren’t there kings in Armenia any more?” asked Mariam.

“It is more than five hundred years, my child, since the last of our kings ruled over us. He was Levon VI., and his queen’s name was Catherine. Armenia was overrun by fierce enemies. They came from Egypt, and had the same belief as the Turks who now rule over us. They were Mohammedans.

“They came in such numbers that our people could do nothing. They burned the villages and cities. They killed men, women, and children. They spared no person or thing. They made a desert of the country.

“They made prisoners of the king and his family. They carried them to Egypt. After awhile, the ruler of Spain took pity on them. He offered valuable presents to their conquerors to free them. He was successful.

“After that, Levon visited Jerusalem and different countries of Europe. He died in Paris, and was buried with great honour. His body was clothed in royal robes of white. An open crown was laid upon his head, and a golden sceptre was placed in his hand. He was the last king of Armenia.”

The old lady spoke the last words slowly and sadly. But in a moment more she smiled at the children, saying:

“We must take what comes to us with patient hearts, my dears. The Lord’s will must be done. I am tired of talking, though. Run out into the sunshine and play. Watch the birds that have begun to come among us

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after the long winter, and see if you can find me some pretty wild flowers.”

She bent down and kissed the children, and they left her alone with her knitting.

CHAPTER VII.

SIGHTS IN THE GREAT CITY

“YES, you may go,” Artin’s father promised. “I shall be away several days, for I have a good deal of business in the city. But you have been a good boy, and you ought to have a little pleasure. So you may ask your mother to get you ready.”

The next morning the bullocks were hitched to a clumsy cart with two wheels, and Artin and his father started for the city.

The little boy was dressed in much the same way as his father. He wore baggy trousers and a long, loose jacket. It was made of wadded cotton, and was quite thick. The sides were split up, making a sort of apron both in front and behind. He wore slippers

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on his feet, and a close-fitting cap on his head.

“He is the very picture of his father,” the neighbours all said. “He is a bright boy, too, and will do well in business when he grows up.”

“Good-bye, good-bye,” called Mariam, as Artin waved his hand to her, and the bullocks trotted off down the rough road.

The heavy cart was seldom used, except in going about the village, so it was quite a change for the bullocks as well as for the farmer's little son.

As they drove along, the father told Artin about the different parts of the country which the boy had never seen. He told him of the rich vineyards where luscious grapes were raised. He described the gardens where melons grew to be very large.

“Why, Artin, I have seen a camel whose load was made up of only two watermelons.

One family could not use the whole of such a melon as those.

“Then there are parts of our country where the silkworm feeds on the mulberry leaves, and makes its wonderful cocoon.

“We raise the best of wheat and corn, and besides all these things we have cotton and tobacco growing in plenty, without stepping beyond our borders.”

“We could have everything we wish to eat and wear without asking for anything from any other country, couldn't we?” said Artin.

“Yes, indeed. But the Turkish rule is a hard one, and our people are so unhappy they do not take as much interest in their gardens as they once did.”

“Papa, when you have been travelling weren't you ever afraid of brigands? I have heard the people in the village tell stories about brigands taking travellers by surprise. They robbed and killed them.”

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“I never had any such adventures myself, Artin. But, I must say, our mountain passes are not safe from those wicked men.

“Most of them are Kurds or Lazis. When they have nothing else to do, they leave their own homes and cross over into the borders of Armenia. They seek the lonely spots in the mountain passes and lie in wait for travellers. They rob them, torture them, and sometimes even kill them, as I have already said.”

“But the Sultan’s soldiers are all through our country. Why don’t they drive out the brigands?”

“The Sultan doesn’t care what they do, Artin. Besides, he is probably glad if he hears of the brigands killing any Armenians. The Sultan is a bad, bad man. When I was a little boy like you he had a war with Russia.

“Before it began the Sultan called a meeting of his leading men. He asked them what they thought about such a war. They knew

he wished it, so no one dared to speak against it, except one brave, wise man.

“ He told the ruler this story :

“ ‘ Once upon a time there was a miser. The king was displeased with him, and gave him the choice of three things. He must eat five pounds of raw onions at one meal ; and he must eat nothing else with them. Or, he must have five hundred lashes of the whip on his bare back. Or, he must pay the king five hundred dollars.

“ ‘ The miser thought it all over. He could not bear to give up so much money. Neither did he believe he could live through such a terrible flogging. So he said, “ I will eat the onions.”

“ ‘ But after he had eaten a part of them, he became so sick he was not able to swallow any more. Then he made up his mind to take the whipping.

“ ‘ When he had taken about a hundred of

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the lashes, he began to see that the whole of them would kill him. He was forced, at last, to pay the money. So the greedy miser, who had a choice of three evils in the beginning, ended by taking all three of them.'

"Now, my son, what do you suppose the wise man's story meant? It was this:

"If the Sultan went to war with Russia, he would lose many soldiers to begin with. In the next place, he would be sure to lose a part of his empire. He would end by having to pay large sums of money to his conqueror.

"He was very angry with the wise man who had told him this story. He did not take his advice, but began the war. And it all turned out as the honest man had said.

"Did you ever hear what the people in other countries call the Sultan, Artin?" his father went on. "They speak of him as the 'Sick Man of Europe.'"

Artin and his father had now been several hours on the way and they had almost reached the city gates.

“See those children,” said Artin, pointing ahead.

A mule was moving at a slow pace over the road. It was no wonder, for he had a heavy load. A woman was sitting on his back and two little children were hanging in baskets fastened on either side of the saddle.

“The road is so rough that the children cannot be comfortable,” said Artin’s father.

Just then the mule floundered in the mud. The baskets were jostled so roughly that one of the children tumbled out and fell head-foremost into the mud.

Artin jumped from the cart and, running ahead, picked up the screaming child. Its poor little face was black with dirt. Its hair was plastered with mud.

The mother thanked him, and, after tucking

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the little one into its basket, went on her journey. She was a pretty woman, with large black eyes and rosy cheeks. But her face was almost hidden by the veil which Armenian women wear when they are outdoors.

Her bright red cloak, reaching almost to her ankles, was wrapped closely around her body. Her large baggy trousers could hardly be seen. She was dressed in the same manner as Artin's mother and all the other women he knew.

His people do not change their fashions from year to year, like their American cousins. They resemble many other Eastern people in their clothing. The style of their grandmothers and great-grandmothers is good enough for them.

By this time, the farmer and his son were entering the city.

Erzeroum was at one time a fortress, and even now it is surrounded by walls. There



IN ERZEROUM

were numbers of people moving along the streets. They belonged to different races, for many of them had come here from Persia, Turkey, and other countries, to live among the Armenians.

Most of them were dressed very gaily, and Artin was kept busy admiring the bright scarlet robes, the jackets embroidered with gold, and the robes of brilliant green and white.

A procession of camels with their drivers came along with slow and swaying tread. The beasts seemed very patient under their heavy burdens.

“Did you ever ride on a camel, father?” asked Artin.

“When I was a little boy about your age, Artin, I tried it. I shall never forget how sick I was after five minutes on the creature’s back. Of course, you have noticed how the camel walks. He first throws forward both legs on one side of his body, then those on the

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other side. This makes a swinging, sideways motion which at first is unpleasant.

“The second time I tried to ride one, I did not mind it as much as at first.”

“You had to be careful when you took your seat on its back. I know that,” said Artin. “I have often watched camels get up from the ground. They raise their hind legs first, and they do it in such a sudden, jerky way that the rider will be thrown off unless he is used to it and on the lookout.”

“Artin, I wish you to look at that beautiful church ahead of us. Our people are very proud of it. Do you see the fine stone slabs on the roof and around the doorways?

“Cut stone is very expensive, and there are few good masons who prepare it. So it happened that our priests thought of a new way to get it. They said to the people, ‘The tombstones of your dead friends do them no good. But they would be of great help in

building the church. It would be a fine thing if each one of you should give us one of those tombstones.'

"The people were delighted with the idea. Many of them brought the stones on their own backs."

"It is a beautiful church," said Artin. "I think it is the finest thing I have seen in the city. I hate the sight of those Turkish mosques. I suppose the Turks think all those little towers and spires are very pretty, but I don't like them."

"There is a street writer," said the father. He pointed to a man sitting on a carpet in the shade of a house. His legs were crossed under him. He was writing a letter for a Turkish woman who stood beside him.

"I like to watch him," said Artin. "He keeps the paper flat on the palm of his hand and writes with that pointed stick. I am glad I know how to do my own letter-writing, though."

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“Yes, Artin. Our people think more of learning than the lazy Turks. I do not wish you to be ignorant when you grow up. You must study your lessons well and be faithful to them.”

“I should like to be a trader when I grow up,” said Artin, as he looked curiously at the storekeepers sitting by their goods.

The stores were quite different from those in America. Many of them had no fronts at all. Can you imagine the lower story of a house with no wall facing the street? Then you can picture the store where Artin and his father stopped to trade.

The shopkeeper sat on a mat with his goods all around him. If the day had been stormy he would have been wrapped up in a blanket. But the sun was shining brightly, and the weather was warm. He was quite comfortable without any extra covering.

He was slowly sipping a cup of tea. He

acted for all the world as though he had nothing to do but enjoy himself.

As Artin's father got out of the cart and came up to him, the storekeeper scarcely lifted his eyes. He did not seem to care whether he sold his goods or not.

"Another of those lazy Turks," whispered the father to his son. Then he stepped up to the trader and asked to see his wares.

The Armenian did not act hurried or anxious. Oh, no, that would not have done at all. It would have made the Turk charge too great a price for the goods. As it was, the man asked far more than the things were worth. Yes, twice as much.

Artin's father curled up his lip and turned to go. At the same time he said, "I will pay you half the sum. But I don't care very much for the cloth, anyway."

He left the store, and Artin followed close

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behind. When they were about to step into the cart, the trader called out :

“ Well, well, it is too little. It is too little. It will ruin me to sell my goods so cheap. But you may have the cloth at your own price.”

The farmer went back and made his purchase. When they were once more on their way down the street, he said :

“ That is the only way to trade, Artin. If the storekeepers think you don't care, they will sell their goods at fair prices. But if you are eager, they will make you pay too much. Yes, yes, too much altogether.”

“ Look, father ! Isn't that a beautiful bracelet ? ” Artin pointed to a different-looking store from the one where they had bought the cloth. The front was closed up, and the tiny windows were covered with oiled paper.

One of the windows, however, was open, and Artin could just see a hand holding up a deli-

cate silver bracelet in the opening. The store-keeper inside hoped to tempt the passers-by.

“I would like to take that home to mother,” said Artin. “How finely it is worked.”

“Not to-day, my son. We must be saving of our money. No one knows what may happen. Cruel things are being done in our country. We may yet be forced to leave it and join our friends in America. It is not the time to buy bracelets.”

After he had bought whatever he needed, the farmer drove on till he came to an inn. Artin called the building a khan.

“We will put up the oxen and spend the night here,” the boy’s father told him. “I wish to see some of my friends in the city.”

Just as they were entering the inn, they heard a strange noise a little way down the road.

“It is a caravan and it is coming in this direction,” said Artin. “Camels cry in such a strange way it always startles me.”

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“The poor creatures are tired and thirsty. They have caught sight of a drinking-trough and are longing for water,” answered his father.

The camels drew near with their driver. He was a Persian. He was very dirty and his clothes were in rags.

As the caravan drew up in front of the khan, the driver turned and said something to the camels. They went down on their knees with a grunt. Then down came their hind legs. They had been trained to obey their master's voice instantly, and, although he spoke few words to them, they seemed to understand exactly what he wished them to do.

“They have come all the way from Bagdad,” the innkeeper told Artin. “And they are going to carry their loads to the seacoast on the north. Then their burdens will be lifted from their backs and placed on board the ships that sail across the sea to Europe.”

“Poor camels! They look old and tired.

Their lives are hard. How wise they seem!" said the little boy, as he threw himself down on a couch and was soon fast asleep.

And what was Artin's father doing all this evening? He was going from place to place among his friends and trying to find some one who would buy his farm.

Can you guess the reason?

Ever since the visit of the Americans, the farmer and his wife had been talking together about a new home across the ocean.

Sad things were happening in Armenia. Many men and women lost their lives through no fault of their own. And the Turkish ruler had power to do with the people as he pleased.

It was hard, very hard, indeed. Yet the more the farmer thought about it, the wiser it seemed to take his family to America.

"Artin and Mariam are so young they will not be homesick. But it will not be easy for my good wife," thought the farmer. "As for

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my mother and my dear old grandmother, I do not know what to do. I fear the change would kill them."

When he spoke to them about it, both of the old women said, "No, no, we cannot leave our country. No matter what comes, we will stay in Armenia. But you must go and take your wife and children. America is great and good. You will all be happy there."

Artin had an uncle who lived in Erzeroum, and it was settled that the old women should now make their home with him.

All this time the children knew nothing of the new plans.

But when the business was done and the farmer started home with his little boy, he told him that the farm was sold and that he would soon leave beautiful Armenia and sail far away on a great steamer.

"It is a secret," said his father. "You must not speak of it to any one. We must get

away as quietly as possible, or our rulers may prevent it."

Artin was both glad and sorry. It would be great fun to sail on the ocean which he had never yet even seen. There would be many new things in the strange country of America.

When Mariam heard the news she went up on the housetop with her brother, and both children began to cry.

"Our pretty sheep!" said the little girl.
"We must say good-bye to them all!"

"And the dogs and cats," said Artin.
"Father says we must leave them behind."

"But we will make new friends in that beautiful America, and I hope mother will stop looking sad and frightened there," said Mariam, drying her tears.

THE END.



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