



# DAR-UL-ISLAM

دار الإسلام



Mark Sykes.





**ASIATIC TURKEY**

Scale of English Miles  
 0 50 100 150 200

Author's route in 1902-3  
 " " " previous years

Published by E. S. King, London

دار الإسلام

# DAR - UL - ISLAM

A RECORD OF A JOURNEY  
THROUGH TEN OF THE  
ASIATIC PROVINCES OF TURKEY

BY

MARK SYKES

AUTHOR OF 'THROUGH FIVE TURKISH PROVINCES'  
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WITH APPENDIX BY JOHN HUGH SMITH

AND

INTRODUCTION

BY

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*WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS*

LONDON  
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1904

DAR-  
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Mark  
Sykes

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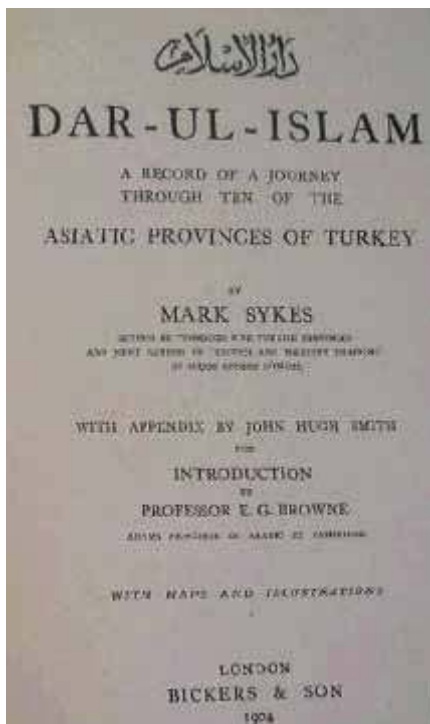
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## **DAR-UL-ISLAM.**

### **A RECORD OF A JOURNEY THROUGH TEN OF THE ASIATIC PROVINCES OF TURKEY**

London: Bickers & Son, 1904 - By Sir Mark Sykes

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The title, DAR-UL-ISLAM means "the Home of Islam", at this time comprising parts of the Turkish Empire. This is a fine classic travel book covering journeys from Damascus to Aleppo, through the Diyarbekir area to Mosul and thence to Van and Tiflis. The appendix by John Hugh Smith is his diary of a journey from Aleppo by way of Deir Zor and the Khabor, to Urfa where he rejoined Sykes. Often interesting illustrations showing people, views, countryside, buildings, ruins, etc. Mark Sykes was the co-creator of the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 which more or less created modern Iraq out of Mesopotamia and the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

## **TO ZEITUN CITY**

THE longer one stays in the Taurus, the more one pines for some district where the population is not composed solely of Osmanlis and Armenians. It is too depressing to find a country inhabited solely by dullards and sneaks: the dullards so dull that if the angel Gabriel walked into one of their villages trumpet in band and announced that the end of the world had taken place three weeks previously, the only answer he would receive would be 'Evvat Effendim.' The sneaks are so cowed that they are hardly

noticeable.

In every other part of Turkey, life is lightened by the presence of some other race, Kurds, Circassians, Arabs, &c. In the company of these, Turks \* are cheerful and amusing, their character shows itself, and one can judge them better; but when their only neighbours are sworn enemies, the Armenians living in deadly and hopeless fear of them, they become so sulky and empty-headed that one grows hysterical with impatience.

One curious point about Turks is the difficulty they appear to experience in pronouncing the consonants of

\* Since writing the above I have travelled in Anatolia, where the Turks live alone. I found them the most delightful people I have ever met, besides being very intelligent.

proper names; there is nothing so exasperating as extracting the names of villages from the Zaptiehs or inhabitants.

Q. What is that village over there? A. Awarot-loo-oj.

A. What?

Q. Awany ouroo loo-oj-oh!

A. What?

Q. Awarngourouloo-oh- oh!

A. What?

Q. Awarnunginjoolooroh oh la ho!

Q. Now one syllable at a time while I write it down.

A. Ha-jin-ogh-loo.

Q. Hajin Oghloo?

A. Yes.

They suffer the same disadvantage in either writing or pronouncing English proper names.

After five days' stay we left Marash for Zeitun, stopping the first night at Batsh Khan.

The scenery between Marash and Zeitun is of the 'terribly' impressive order in winter, the ground bare, the trees leafless, and the mountains shining with frosted snow; stunted oak, swart dwarfish pines and an

occasional noble cedar form the whole desolate vegetation. This extends over immense vistas of rocky mountain land, and although not beautiful has an effect which 1leases more than one would expect.

At Paj the bridge which spans the river is guarded by a small detachment of soldiers, whose general aspect of forlornness and boredom reminded me painfully of the many weary months spent in a similar position in South Africa. They were well guarded by some fine dogs, who bayed loudly on the approach of any strangers.

On my arrival at Zeitun I was received with great kindness and ceremony by the Commandant of the Castle, who, besides being a very efficient soldier, was a pleasant host. I was led up to his sitting-room, where we discussed every topic under the sun—the South African war, Crete, German railways, etc. While the conversation was in progress three Orderly men marched in, the first bearing an immense caldron of soup, the second a hillock of rice and meat, and the third a basket of loaves. These were brought before the Commandant, who proceeded to taste them, and proffered them for my inspection. I can certainly answer for the rations being of 'sufficient quantity and proper quality' on that day, the bread being especially excellent, though I am afraid my friend Thomas would have turned up his nose at it.



Sir Mark Sykes, with Halil Sian.  
(See group shot below)

I subsequently learned that the Commandant was a very remarkable man.

He took over the command three years ago, apparently a very unassuming, dignified individual, by no means energetic. The Circassians who lived in the vicinity, and the more thievish of the Zeitunlis, thought the moment favourable for a little cattle-lifting and caravan plundering; this venture was by no means a success, for lo! the thieves were laid speedily by the heels, and instead of going to the country gaol, where they usually bought their liberty, the quiet grey-bearded colonel ordered them to be flogged. This was a most unpleasant surprise, for hitherto Circassians had been somewhat favoured, and thefts on their part were treated as little childish vagaries, owing to high spirits; but in Takhsin Bey they met a master both severe and just. He pointed out to them that in gaol they

wasted their own time and devoured the food of the State, while a flogging did them no harm and cost nothing. Fearful threats of revolution and massacre were muttered by these gentlemen as they returned home rubbing their aching backs; but when their friends saw those portions of their anatomy which had been subjected to the lash, they perceived that the cultivation of their lands and the pursuits of peace were more profitable than the amusing but dangerous speculations I have referred to.

**What the end of the revolution would be these (Armenian) desperadoes recked little, so long as the attention of Europe was drawn to their cause and their collection-boxes. (1895)**

The result of this excellent policy has been to secure for the district of Zeitun a tranquillity hitherto unknown, which shows that a just and stern government is all that is required to reduce the most turbulent and truculent orientals to order.

The Commandant is wonderfully popular with all the surrounding people, who are, for the first time in their knowledge, reaping the benefit of a sure and straightforward rule. He favours no one and is beloved by all; the battalions under his command are well clothed, smart, and efficient; the officers are kept up to the mark; and, while very respectful to their chief, are on excellent terms with him and loud in his praises. It is providential that such a competent officer has been given the command, as Zeitun has always been a centre of disaffection and unrest.

The last insurrection was an excellent demonstration of what a pass an incapable officer may bring about, and serves as an illustration of the methods of the revolutionists. The following is as accurate a history as I could gather from various sources on the spot.

Some Revolutionary Society, not being satisfied with the general state of affairs in Turkey and scenting collections and relief funds in the future, judged it expedient in the year of grace 1895 to despatch certain emissaries to Armenia. On the warlike population of Zeitun they pinned their hopes of raising a semi-successful revolution, and six of their boldest agents were accorded to that district. What the end of the revolution would be these desperadoes recked little, so long as the attention of Europe was drawn to their cause and their collection-boxes. These individuals, however, found their people by no means ripe for insurrection, and their influence was but small. True, there were certain persons ready to talk sentimentally and foolishly, possibly treasonably, but in no way prepared to rise actually in arms. However, an opportunity of embroiling their countrymen unexpectedly presented itself, by taking advantage of which they succeeded in forcing the hand of the Government.

It happened that a number of Furnus and Zeitunli Armenians were in the habit of going to Adana for the purpose of earning money as farmers and handicraftsmen; for some reason, the Government at that time issued an order that all strangers should return to their own towns and districts. The Furnus and Zeitunli Armenians were enraged at this action, saying that they were not permitted by the Padishah to earn sufficient to pay their taxes, which they considered exorbitant; consequently they were foolish enough to pillage some Turkomans on their way home.

The Turkomans addressed themselves in complaint to the Mutessarif of Marash, who decided to investigate the affair by a commission consisting of a Turkish Bimbashi (field officer) and an Armenian resident, escorted by five Zaptiehs. The agents saw in this move a chance of bringing matters to a crisis, and either attacked, or persuaded the villagers to attack, the commission, killing the Bimbashi and three of the guard, and carrying off the Christian commissioner with them. The surrounding Armenians, knowing themselves to have been originally in the wrong, and seeing themselves hopelessly compromised, accepted the inevitable and joined the revolutionaries.

The Government of Marash, having been informed of this affair, despatched a company of infantry to reinforce the garrison at Bertiz. The rebel leaders and their followers intercepted this party, and an undecided action resulted, owing to the assistance given by the Moslems of Bertiz. The next day the revolutionists decided to attack the garrison at Zeitun in order to force that town (whose inhabitants had but little inclination) to join a jihad against the Osmanli. After a brief resistance the Castle surrendered, through the incapacity of its besotted commander.

Having gained a victory of some importance, the Armenian force proceeded to the Kurtul district, where they plundered and sacked several Turkish villages, eventually seizing Anderim, where they burnt the konak. On their way back to Zeitun they committed some most disgraceful murders at Chukarhissar \* in commemoration of the decease of the late Armenian kingdom, which was finally ended at that place.

\* I was told some ghastly details, but I doubt the veracity of them, as they were related to me by a town Armenian, who recounted them with honest pride.

**...although certain 'outrages' \* were committed by his (Ali Pasha's) troops during the march, I do not think that he is in any way to blame for the conduct of the campaign.**

After this anarchy supervened. The Moslems and Kurds, infuriated by

exaggerated reports, lusting for treasure of the wealthy but feeble bazaar Armenians, massacred and overwhelmed them at Marash and elsewhere. The Turkish Government, now thoroughly alarmed, had concentrated two divisions, one at Marash, under Ferik Pasha, who showed an extraordinary incapacity during the massacre; the other under a reliable soldier, Ali Pasha, at Adana. The latter with considerable promptitude swept forward towards Zeitun, driving before him the Armenian population, and although certain 'outrages' \* were committed by his troops during the march, I do not think that he is in any way to blame for the conduct of the campaign. It would have been a grave military fault to have left a hostile population in his rear; and the Armenians he called upon to surrender were already too overcome by panic to accept terms, and either awaited destruction in their villages, resisting to the last, or fled to the town of Zeitun, where the revolutionary agents, in order to maintain their prestige, were cramming the population with absurd falsehoods of a British relief column landed at Alexandretta.

One of them even sent out messengers, who returned with hopeful letters which he himself had written. But this impostor and his colleagues were not satisfied with the general disloyalty of the inhabitants, and felt that some deed should be committed which would absolutely debar the people from any hope of mercy from the Government. Accordingly, they assembled the

\* These would not be so called if committed by any other troops than those of the Turkish Army.



Yussuf Shamali (Cook).  
 Mustapha Kurdi.  
 Jacob-el-Arab (Mr. Sykes Servant).  
 Yussuf Haddad (Dragoman).  
 Mr. Sykes.  
 Yussuf Hadad (Dragoman)  
 Halil Siam.  
 Nikola.  
 Mr. Smith.  
 Halil K. Taifeh.  
 Hero.  
 Chello, the Dog  
 Mohammad Ali.  
 Mohammad the Persian.

N.B. - The Child is no relation of any person in the picture, but one put in by the Muleteers to bring good luck.

refugees driven in by Ali Pasha, and repaired with them to the konak, where the imprisoned garrison was quartered. and proceeded to murder them with bestial cruelty. It must be remembered that this piece of villainy can in no way be imputed to the population of Zeitun, but to the disgraceful ruffianism of the revolutionaries and the crazy fanaticism of

the exasperated and hopeless villagers. It must also be recorded to the credit of the Zeitunlis themselves that after this abominable butchery several crept into the yard and rescued some seventy soldiers who survived beneath the corpses of their comrades; fifty-seven of these were handed over at the end of the war, it is a relief to find in all these bloody tales of Armenia such noble deeds of kindness on the part of Christians to Moslems, and Moslems to Christians, and that nearly every massacre can bring similar cases to light.

After that foolish slaughter the revolutionary agents may have plumed themselves on a striking piece of policy. Zeitun was compromised beyond recall, and the town prepared to withstand the siege to the last; but here the chapter of Zeitun closes, for within three weeks Edhem Pasha, a noble example of what a cultivated Turk can be, arrived on the scene, and with the assistance of the European Consuls concluded an honourable peace with the town; containing, alas! a clause by which the miserable causes of all this unhappiness and bloodshed were allowed to return unmolested to Europe, where they probably eke out an existence as distinguished as their military adventures.

It would appear a grave fault on the part of the Powers to have allowed the revolutionary agents to escape, for had these wretched bungling intriguers been hanged, as they richly deserved, it would have strengthened the hand of the Ambassadors at Constantinople. It would also have completely dashed the hopes of the Armenian secret societies, who, no longer misled by the sentimental gush of certain journals, would have perceived once and for all that, though the Powers prepared to stop massacres, they were in no way ready to assist those who wantonly provoked them for their own ends.

As to how far the Turks were in the wrong, who can judge?

They have a side which should be considered, as it is impossible for them to allow a revolution to be impending in the heart of their country when threatening enemies appear on every frontier. They have their own homes to consider, and if they had allowed the revolutionaries to continue their intrigues, there is little doubt that a formidable insurrection would have broken out whenever the moment was favourable. Also it must be borne in mind that in the event of an Armenian rebellion it was the intention of the conspirators

to have perpetrated similar massacres; and while no excuse can be made for the conduct of the Turks in slaughtering Armenians, it should be remembered that massacre is still a recognised method of policy throughout the East, and until lately in the West. Why, indeed, should one say lately, when the behaviour of the allied troops at Peking is a matter of to-day?

**(Armenian) revolutionists from abroad were always prepared to provoke a massacre in order to induce the Powers to assist them...**

**these wretches actually schemed to murder American missionaries, hoping America would declare war...**

The necessary killing in India after the Mutiny, although carried out more formally, was just as merciless; and from all one can gather the gentle Skobelev pacified Central Asia much as the Turks aborted the Armenian revolution.

It is also a fact that the Armenians have an extraordinary habit of running into danger without possessing the courage to face it, and the revolutionists from abroad were always prepared to provoke a massacre in order to induce the Powers to assist them. I have good reason to know that these wretches actually schemed to murder American missionaries, hoping America would declare war on the supposition that the Turks were the criminals. Therefore, with such sordid intrigue and ruthless policy running side by side, it is hard to judge. I have known one man of Turcophil views eventually reject his opinions in horror; again, many others almost fanatically in favour of the Armenians, became so disgusted by the baseness of their nature as to abandon them with satisfaction to their fate.

Personally I think that the public moral sense of Europeans is practically wanting in orientals, and unless this is assumed one cannot attempt to comprehend them meaning that an oriental is capable of all personal goodness, such as acts of personal friendliness, personal devotion, personal self-sacrifice, and brotherly love to those of his own creed—such virtue as is exemplified in the highest type of pro-Boer; \* mercy to one's enemies and mercy in public matters are absolutely lacking. Whether this is a defect, and, if it is a defect, whether it can be remedied by education, or whether it is caused by race or religion, are questions which must be left to philosophers and men of science.

In the evening I took a turn round the Castle walls,

\* I am not one myself.

**An Ottoman-Armenian Zaptieh (Policeman):  
"I have killed many (Turks)."**

and had the satisfaction of seeing a splendid sunset over the valley, the river winding like a silver ribbon down the immense avenue of snow until it was lost in a blue haze, above which the huge tumbled peaks stood silhouetted against a golden, cloudless sky.

The next morning I visited the city of Zeitun, and I think I never saw or smelt a more squalid, filthy, disgusting sink; although inured to the ten thousand putrescent odours of the East, I was miserably defeated at Zeitun; so appalling was the stench that I was unable to stay in the town for more than fifteen minutes, therefore I cannot give any description of its buildings, parks, squares, and palaces. The inhabitants, some eight thousand in number, deserve mention on account of their courage, in which they happily differ from the rest of their brethren. They once had the reputation of being fine brigands, but that side of their character seems to have evaporated.

I was able to get on easy terms with one Zeitunli, and he was a Zaptieh in the Government service. His tale was as follows :—

'Seven times have I fought the Turks, and now I am in their service to keep the peace; I have killed many in war—so many I pray God will forgive me! And the Turks killed many of us—our women, never! Never did we touch any of theirs, or they any of ours; but for men there was no quarter, either for us or for them. But what care I? In battle I forget where I am, and kill and kill, and may the Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me, whether I die in bed or in battle!'

He was as unlike the town Armenian as it is possible for any man to be: six feet two inches high, broad in proportion, with merry, twinkling eyes, which reminded me so forcibly of certain islanders I have met in the British Army, that I could not but think of one private who had been a noted Fenian, and on being asked what his political opinions were, retorted, 'As long as I've this \* red coat on I'm for the Queen, God bless her! an' when I haven't — well—' (with an irresistible smile), 'begod I don't know what I am!'

At present everything appears very quiet, and there need be no reason to expect further troubles, unless the garrison is lessened or the Commandant superseded by a less competent one, such as the colonel who surrendered during the last insurrection.

At Zeitun I attained the rank of a Brigadier General; sentries presented

arms with hoarse cries wherever I passed, soldiers shuffled uneasily if I looked at them, and a clay-and-night sentry was placed over my luggage. However, an Arab sergeant did not approve of this, and indulged in the following soliloquy towards the world in general while looking at my luggage; and the following dialogue ensued between him and my servant:

#### JACOB AND THE DISCONTENTED SERGEANT.

Sergeant: Ha! ha! many salaams, many compliments, for a stranger who travels in a strange land Who pays for this? Himself? Nay, his Government! Who would travel in this accursed frost-bitten country in winter unless to seek out secrets? He learns the road; he is a sure guide for invading armies. The English are coming, Mashallah! They make maps of the roads ere they strike, t find we, forsooth, must salaarn

I find it impossible to render phonetically the subtle dental th.

· · t Indeed Mashallah! and again Mashaliah!!!

· and give assistance. It was not so under Sultan Abdul Aziz!

Jacob: 'What say you, O brave one?'

Sergeant: 'I say what I say! a word—who pays for thee and for this stuff? List to his answer, men !'

Jacob: 'Who pays me ?—my master Wallahi! a fool's question!'

Sergeant: 'He pays thee perchance, but who pays him?'

Jacob: 'God hath granted him money, which I Alhamdolillah, share! No one payeth him.'

Sergeant: 'Ah! that is thy tale; mine is different. I say he cometh here to work as a scout, a forerunner a path-finder, and I say his Government payeth him!'

Jacob: 'And I say thou art a windy fool!'

Sergeant: ' I a fool!'

Jacob: 'Truly a fool, son of a fool, and a father of witless fools !'

Sergeant': 'You are bold, my fair youth!'

Jacob: 'Yes, I am bold!'

Sergeant': 'I am a soldier of Abdul Hamid; would you have me tell these Moslems that the soldiers of the Sultan are fools?'

Jacob: 'Would you have me tell the Bimbashi how much weight you gave me as seventeen rottals of barley this morning?' (collapse of Me Sergeant.)

Sportsmen who read this book should note that splendid ibex, lynx, panthers and partridges are to be obtained near Zeitun, while the route from Ekbes to Marash is stocked with boar, teal, snipe, wild duck, and panthers in great quantity.

\* Sultan Aziz is dragged in, in and out of season, to compare with the present régime.

## **A Gallery of Images from "Dar-ul-Islam"**



Battery overlooking Zeitun City



Bridge at Zeitun



Kurd Feast at Marash





Officers of the garrison at Zeitun



Zeitun City



Zeitun woman

(With thanks to reader M. Mersinoglu.)

### A Chapter on Mark Sykes

The following bits are from Syke's biography, *Mark Sykes: His Life and Letters*, by Shane Leslie, 1923.

pp. 90-93:

“...The convert deludes his American pastor. The American missions demolish and destroy what is most precious.” At Homs he was glad to find that the Jesuits, who train the Uniates, “give no encouragement to that brawling spirit of vendetta so dear to the heart of the native Christian.” The Uniates, “while following most of their Oriental ritual, abandon the fundamental points of controversy.” They congratulated the Greeks on their feasts and even called the Moslems in Bairam. Imagine Orangemen and Hibernians complimenting each other on St. Patrick’s Day and the Twelfth

peasantry before the Famine : “Good, gentle people, cultivating the land excessively ill, squeezed most cruelly for taxes. Owing to their ignorance of sanitation, they fall heavily before cholera. Naturally a peace-loving people, they have been forced by circumstances into a state of semi-war which has rendered them hardy, tough, frugal. Though moral, They are coarse in their similes, loving wonderful fairy-tales of poor men who become incredibly rich by the aid of talismans.” He took down stories showing the family likeness between Irish fairies and Eastern jinns. “Every Syrian has something of a poet, a philosopher and a rhetorician in his composition,” he wrote in his “Five Mansions of the House of Othman.” He wished them immunity from a designing Imperial boss who might reduce them to serfdom for the purpose of filling his pockets and gaining the name of Empire maker.” He contrasted the deserts of South Africa, “where man is an uninteresting cipher, but in Syria every stone has an interest, every hill has been trodden into paths. Man has left his marks on every rock, and every stage of early society is to be seen: the cave-dweller, the nomad, the semi—nomad the villager, the townsman.”

Amongst the inscriptions he found was one on the tomb of a pessimistic poet (Abu'l-Ala al-Ma'arri): “ Here lies the crime of my father uncommitted by me” ! He began to make unusual comparisons between the Turks and Armenians. In the Armenian church “the books are tattered and torn, the altar is foul and filthy, the pictures are vile daubs; the congregation is numerous, but of prayers or outward piety you see or hear little. They go to hear their language, to hear their native songs, to see that which is in their opinion the last sign of what they imagine was their great all-conquering Empire.” (“The Five Mansions.”) He found there was something to be said for the Turks in spite of the fact that Murray’s guide says that they are hated by every race and creed.” Turkish rule had freed Syria from Bedouin attack. “The average Turk is as honourable as the average Englishman when he receives his pay, and as dishonest when he does not.” As for the massacres, “ while no excuse can be made for the conduct of the Turks in slaughtering Armenians, it should he remembered that massacre is still a recognized method of policy throughout the East and until lately in the West. Why, indeed, should one say lately when the behaviour of the allied troops at Pekin is a matter of to-day?” At Malatia he learnt the usual tale of Armenians preparing a revolution and being massacred themselves. They even fired on the Fransiscans escaping from their convent “in hopes of killing a European and so forcing the hand of the Powers.” They seemed without hope. The Armenian revolutionaries prefer to plunder their co-religionists. The revolutionary societies are leagued one against the other; the priests connive at the murder of a bishop; the national church is divided at its foundations.” (“The Five Mansions.”)

He made sketches to replace the useless maps, Essengeli, imagined with a query, he realized. At Shaykli he found twenty Trappists (“French

dervishes”), who supplied him with the local Topography. Near Derendeh he visited the Hittite lions, which he described as “fine examples of early impressionistic work. These lions have every advantage of the early Rodin school: they are repulsively ugly, hopelessly misshapen, their mouths are growing in the middle of their chests, and, further, they bear no more resemblance to lions than the bandy-legged, sinewy, simian, green gentleman at South Kensington does to St. John the Baptist.”

The fortitude of the Turkish soldier won his respect and almost his reverence. “The Turk has something in his nature which may astound the world yet.” He described the old school of Turkish official: “Ignorant, uneducated, corrupt as one of ‘Queen Anne’s statesmen, half Falstaff, half old woman; courteous, nervous, conceited, ready to sell his soul for a little money, fond of children, dull and obstinate as a mule yet rather lovable withal.”

Another type whom he described in his first book is worth reading, the Gendarme, or *Zaptieh*. “He rides, jobs, carries the post, fights, and occasionally makes an arrest. He is one of the chief features of the Turkish Empire; but to the greater number of untravelled Englishmen he is unknown. If he is seen he is taken for a soldier, which he is certainly not. A Quaker would not be more shocked than he would if you asked him if he were one. And yet what is he? If you talk of fighting his eyes blaze, He tells you how he alone would fight twenty Bedouins, and so I believe he would.”

At Zakho he saw a British Lee-Metford in a shepherd’s hands, and was carried into reverie. “What a history it could tell! Probably stolen near Peshawar, sneaked to Cabul, drifted to Suleimanieh, sold, stolen, smuggled and hugged over three thousand miles of the most wonderful country in the world.”

He found himself “dodging war parties all day long” and making up maps all night.” He was mistaken for an English pasha, a spy, or the King of England’s daughter in disguise! He realized that the Oriental was unfathomable to one like himself “If a ring-tailed baboon talking English, riding on a white elephant, accompanied by two policemen, were to enter a Yorkshire village and quarter himself in one of the houses, what impression would he get of...



Sir Mark Sykes

**"(Turks) were at least as good as many Christian gentlemen that one knows." — Rudyard Kipling**

pp. 98-99:

DIARBEKIR. I have had a fearful time in the snows, temperature 12 degrees below zero. Two English girls passed through here about four months ago, which seems odd. Their baggage consisted of one tent, one revolver and a saucepan. I roared with laughter at the idea of the vote of thanks for Lord Middleton. Well, I wish them joy. I wish I could go to Parliament. I would if I knew what I was, but I will content myself with writing for a time, and then if people think me a Conservative from my writing, I'll be one, or vice versa.

Meantime, Mark's new book was written. When "Dar-ul-Islam" appeared, Arnold White wrote in the *Sunday Sun*: "Since Mary Kingsley no writer of travel has blended a strong personality with so much of the appetizing salt of humour. The true state of the Turkish Empire is revealed in this book of infinite jest. Freedom from prejudice, however, and knowledge of the world do not change our Yorkshire captain into a cosmopolitan Englishman." The *Spectator* wrote: "Books of travel are of three kinds. There are the learned books and the ignorant books and the books written by Captain Mark Sykes. These last it is impossible to describe except in French; they are *étourdissants*. But they are also the East, the surface of the East." The *Athenaeum* regretted that in a footnote "he goes on to casually describe what will be taken by many to have been a murder of a Russian consul as a mere instance of a European receiving his reward." *Vanity Fair* compared his footnotes to Gibbon's as the "unobtrusive resting-places of some of the most delightful remarks."

Rudyard Kipling wrote (May 6, 1904): "Having formally to acknowledge 'Dar-ul-Islam,' I sat down to read it and stayed there for the rest of the evening. Thank you very much indeed for it. I don't know Turkey, but I can see the chit and the delay and the confusion at the wayside *serais* as I can smell the smell (much like ours in India, I take it) of the towns. What you said about the cold in 'warm' countries went to my bones. Nothing is colder than the East when she chooses. I am very glad you like the Turk. I've met a few uncontaminated ones, and they were at least as good as many Christian gentlemen that one knows. Altogether I found it a delightful book, for which I thank you once again. You ought to have been born in the East."

H. G. Wells wrote (May 7, 1904): "I've just been looking through 'Dar-ul-Islam,' and I perceive it's going to be a great lark to read and that I'm going to learn things. I like your 'down' on civilization and suchlike."

On one point Mark was sensitive: as to whether he had covered new ground or not. When the *Express* denied it he wrote:

The route between Qal'a Sharqat and Altun Kopri has never been traversed before to my knowledge. Layard, it is true, went somewhere near it. The district between 'Amadiya, 'Agra, Zibar and Ruwaadiz is very little known. I naturally did not make sketch maps of country already carefully explored. I am almost certain that no one has passed over the road from Qasr-es-Slib to Basin Vira and Kondik.

**"...beware of anyone who has been educated by American missionaries. They always rub officials up the wrong way."**

pp. 192-93:

... Erzerum and elsewhere, and the Kurdish cavalry of Ibrahim bear no resemblance to the Haideranli Hamidieh of Hamid Pasha of Van." He certainly gave a new conception of the Turk. "Both the Unspeakable Turk and the Dear Old Turk are phantoms of the imagination. Mr. Gladstone and the missionaries made one, Mr. Creasy and the Crimean officers the other." His definition of the Turk was "a Moslem whose native language is Turkish." On the country itself he advised Englishmen briefly: "Turkey is no good except for a financier or a canal engineer of remarkable capacity. The country is overstocked with incompetent, underpaid officials. Englishmen would be well advised not to go unless they are prepared to be chucked at a moment's notice, to have their salaries six months in arrear, and to bow their necks to Oriental masters. Turks are delightful hosts, but I should not fancy them as employers."

Hints for travelling in the East appeared in a letter to Mr. H. P. Gordon, of the British School at Athens:

*December 10, 1907.*

I used to make no secret of what I was doing and used to photograph everybody and everything, sketch the roads on a cavalry sketching-case, take altitudes and bearings, use Turkish soldiers to mark base lines, and never was prevented, though I believe the Sublime Porte once said I was mapping the whole country. However, there are things to avoid. Never sketch metalled roads, never approach any building where Government property is kept, such as ammunition, tents, guns, or rifles. Never ask permission to enter these places. Never sketch near the coast. Never sketch on Crown lands, called "Chiftlik." Never let your sketching materials or implements be seen at the Custom House Always stop sketching when approaching a large city. Never mention your business, or ask permission to sketch from the governor of a province or any of his satellites. Never go anywhere without a policeman (zaptieh). Those are the things not to do. Now here are the things to observe: Always make a visit to the Mudir, Kaimakan, Mutesaril, or chief official of the place in which you happen to be, then call on the commander of the military, then go to your tent and await their return visit (note, always send a messenger "Khaba" before calling), give your visitors coffee, take their photographs, talk about international politics, talk about local agriculture, show them your picture-book if you have any, ask for a local policeman to show you round. They will then report that an English spy travelled in their district and that they kept him under close

observation. Always tip your policeman handsomely; two francs a day for one is not excessive, for he will do a great deal of work for you. Avoid the local Christian priest unless accompanied by an officer of the Government. This saves a great deal of trouble unless you are engaged on political work. If you ask the local priest to dinner, ask a Government official as well. This is in the priest's interest. The farther you go East, the more complacent the authorities become. Now as to your business, you will find more difficulty in Syria than in Mesopotamia, so I should advise you to go to the Euphrates first. When you get to Syria, if you are interfered with you can say: "But I did all this in Mesopotamia, how ridiculous to prevent me here!" And from what I know of Turkish officials this has an effect, because someone else is committed, and then it doesn't matter. An intelligent and reliable servant is essential; beware of anyone who has been educated by American missionaries. They always rub officials up the wrong way. If you have the choice between a rather dull and heavy man and a chattering and loquacious one, select the former. A talkative and insolent Syrian Dragoman may wreck the fairest prospects. Greeks always get on very ill with Arabs owing to their boastfulness and superior ways. Jerusalem men are the best, and above all insist on Moslem muleteers.



Yusef Shamahi  
(Cavalry)  
Mustapha Kurdli

Jacob-el-Arabi  
(Mr. Sykes' Servant)

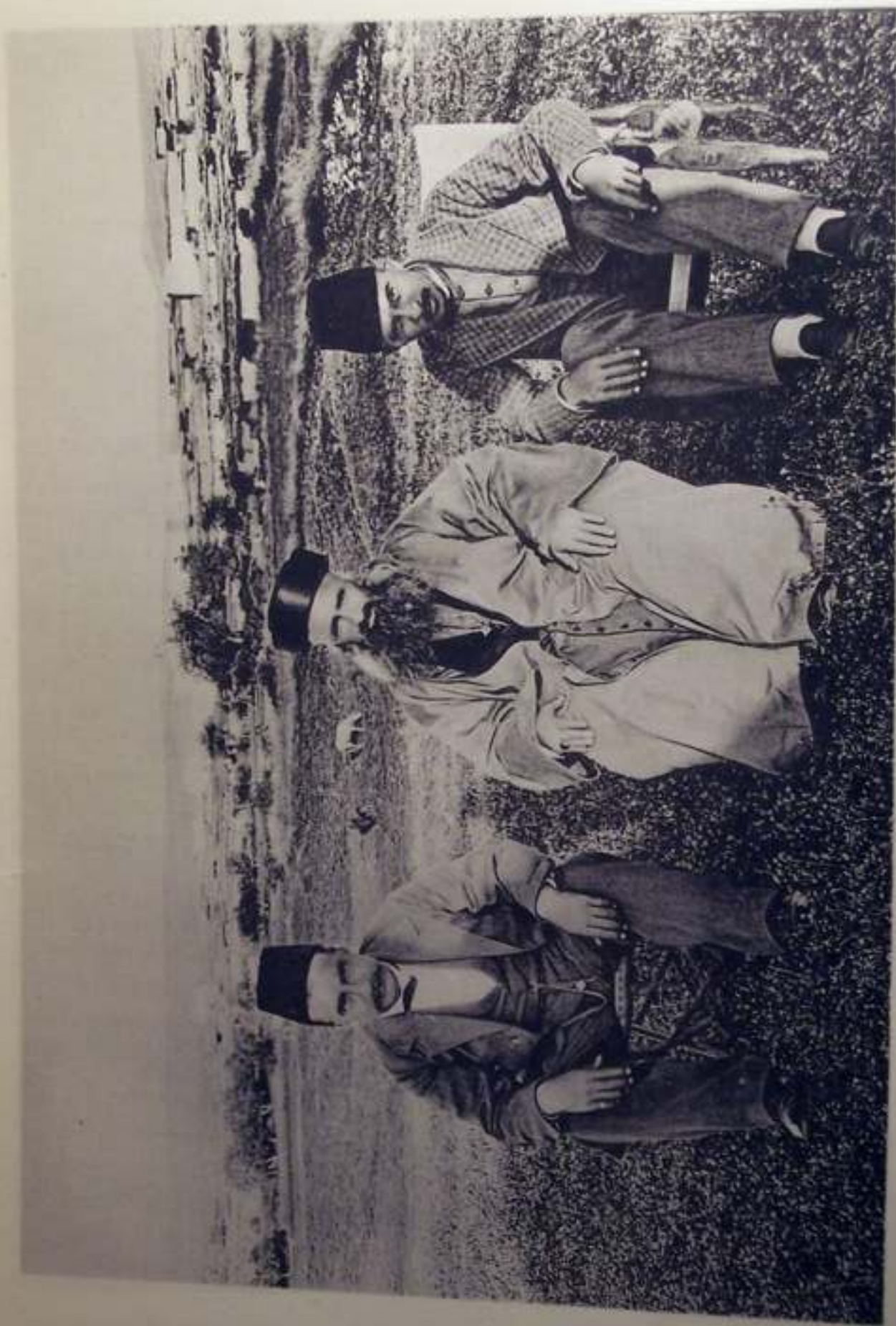
Yusef Haddad  
(Dragoman)  
Haji Khan

Nikola  
Mr. Smith

Haji K. Talib  
Barn  
Charles the Dog

Mohammad Ali

Mohammad Ali Persian



AGHA OF ZAKHO.

BISHOP OF ZAKHO.

AGHA'S SECRETARY.



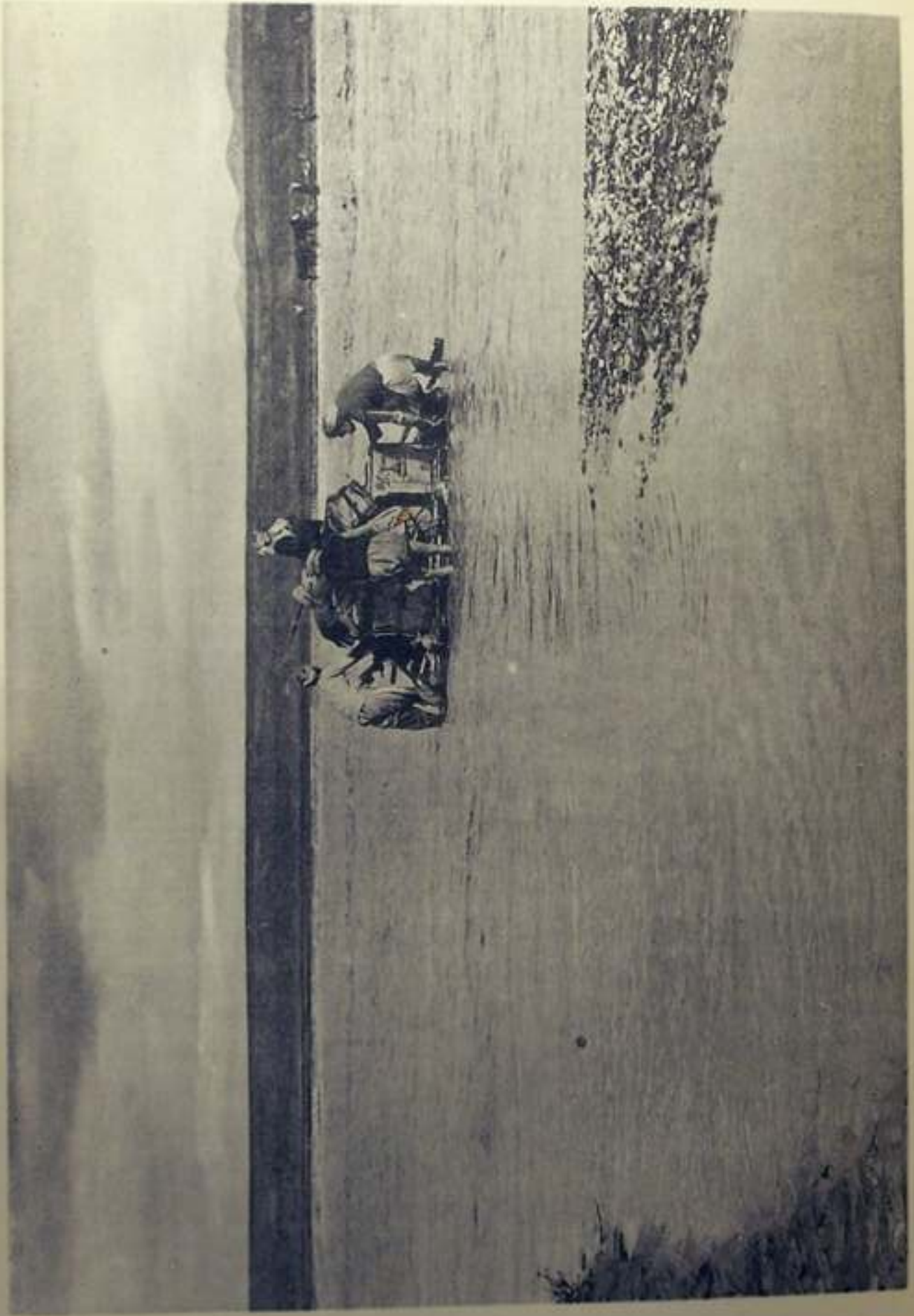
AKU KURDS.



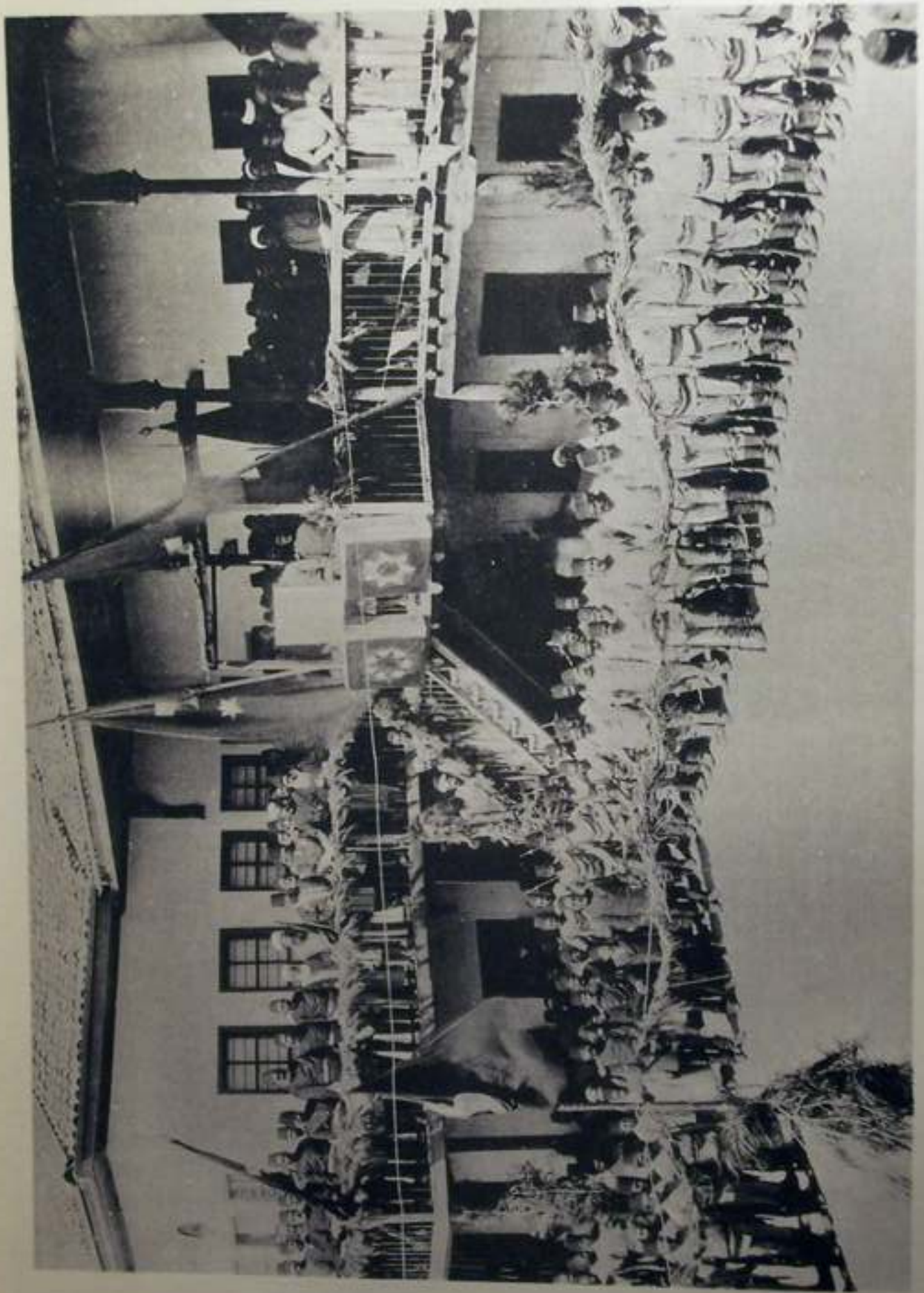
ANCIENT CUTTING AT SUK WADI BARADA, NEAR DAMASCUS.



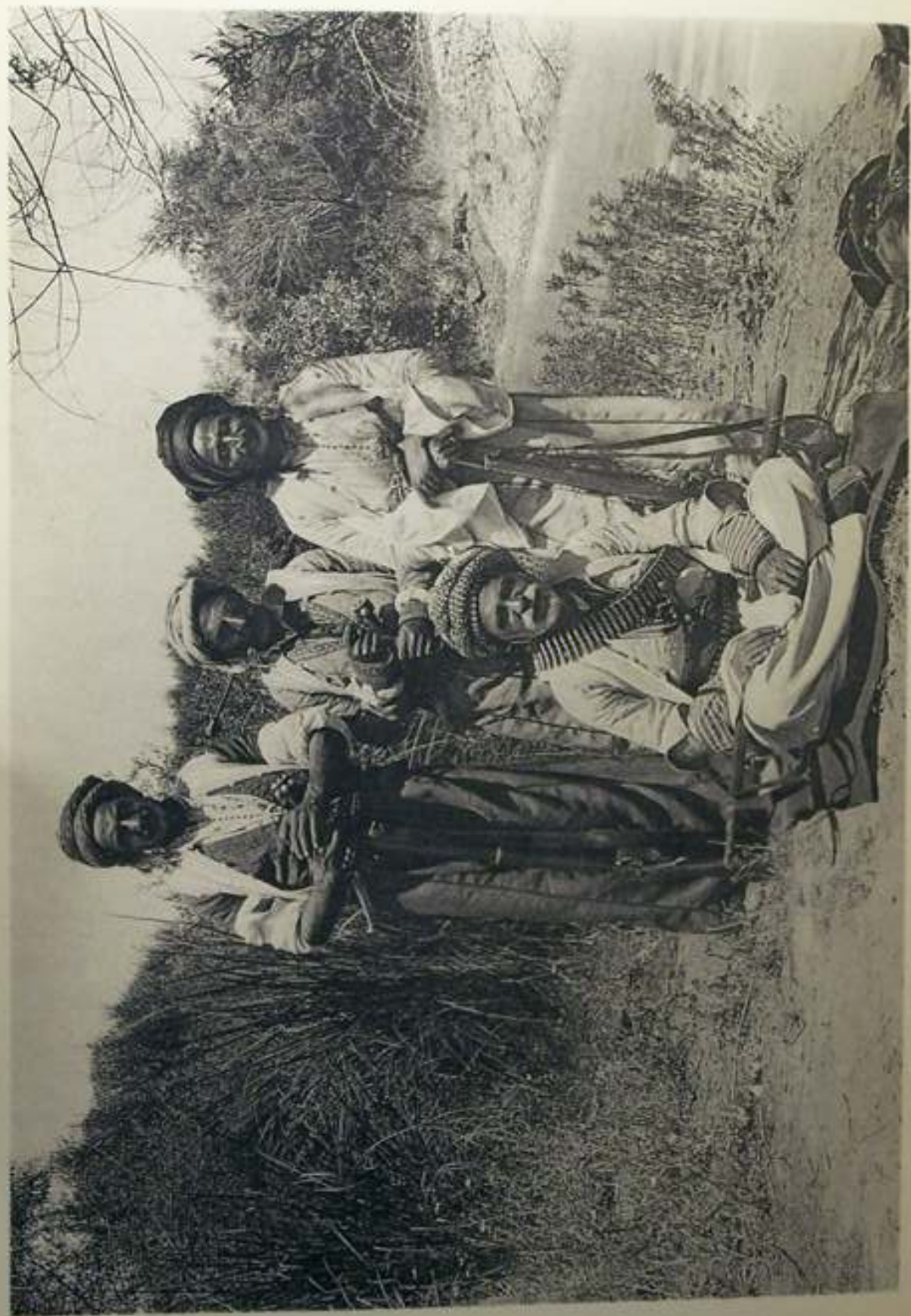
ARABS OF HAMA.



FERRY AT DURNAKH.



GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AT MARASH.



HUSSEIN AGHA AND HIS SONS.



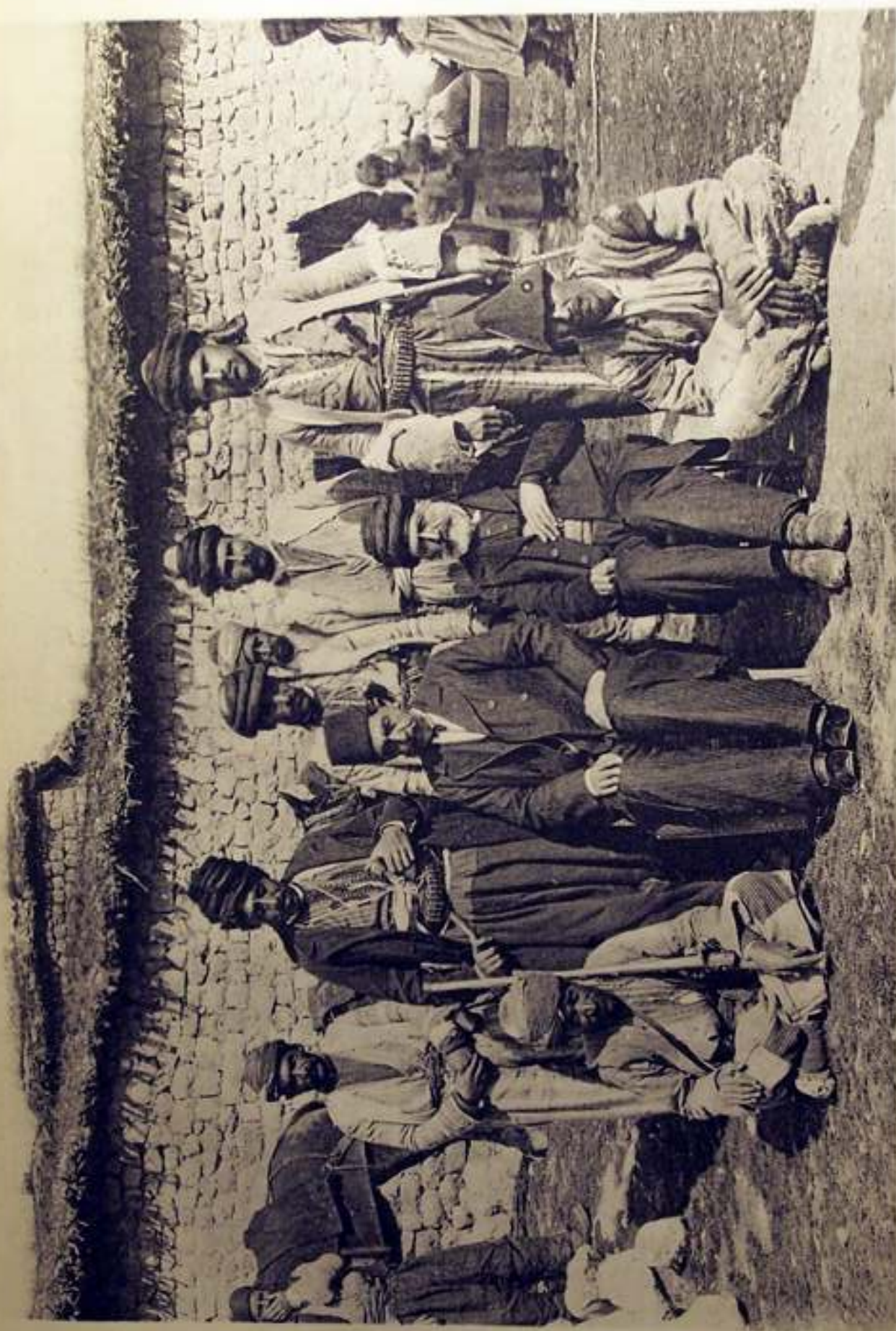
IBRAHIM AGHA, CHIEF OF THE AKU KURDS.



KAIMAKAM AND MEJLIS AT AKRA.



MOUNTED INFANTRY (SIYAKAS)



NIMRUD EFFENDI AND HIS RETAINERS.



NOMAD KURDS.



WOMAN OF ZEITUN.