

ERNEST STUHT FINE EXAMPLE OF OLD GERMAN THRIFT

Grandson of a German Shepherd Becomes Man of Wealth and Influence in a Country Whose Wonders and Possibilities for Energetic Men Were Never Dreamed of by His Ancestors

THE shepherd who watched his flocks among the green hills and vales of northern Germany in the early years of the last century little thought that one of his grandsons would become a man of wealth and influence in a great city then unthought of, in a country then unexplored, on the other side of the world. The shepherd's name was Stuht and his grandson's name is Ernest Stuht, pioneer citizen of Omaha. The shepherd kept the flocks of a feudal lord in Mecklenburg, Strehlitz, Germany. His father and grandfather and his ancestors for many generations had watched the progenitors of those same sheep which had been the possessions of the ancestors of that same lord. Thus, quietly, the world had been drifting along the placid stream of time, a stream as placid and peaceful as Nature herself. One generation followed another, grew up, flourished and died as regularly as the trees grew, dropped their seeds and decayed. The grandfather of Ernest Stuht was a man of the same mental and physical development as his ancestor who had probably watched flocks in time of peace or carried his master's spear and armor in time of war half a thousand years before.

The race of men was still in infancy and clung close to the protecting skirts of its good mother, Nature. That mother protected her children and they were contented with what they had. Health and strength and virtue flourished. While the meek sheep cropped the verdant grass, the shepherds reclining in some shady nook by the side of a purling stream or in a fountain sprinkled grotto, played upon their pipes; shepherdesses danced and when tired lay down in a healthy sleep upon nature's grass beneath nature's canopy. The world indeed was in its infancy.

Then came strident ambition into the world and brought with it an era which men proudly call the industrial era. The human race left its mother and bulid itself cities. It dug into the earth for coal which it burned, spreading a pall of smoke over the walled cities. The bucolic peace was violated by the roar of machinery; the pastures were cut by railroad lines; men sailed the sea in ships to discover new lands. In this era wagons were needed, because people were no longer contented to stop at home, but must go abroad through the world. The son of the shepherd of Mecklenburg-Strehlitz was the father of Ernest Stuht, and at the age of 16 years he was bound out to learn the trade of a wheelwright in the city of Tregtze. After serving in apprenticeship he traveled through parts of Switzerland, Germany and Denmark. But his mother grieved at his absence and he returned home, where he was ever afterward regarded as a most prodigious traveler. He worked at his trade for the same lord for whom his father was still shepherd.

Where Ernest Was Born.

Naturally a man of such parts found favor in the eyes of the fair sex and the young wheelwright and traveler wooed and won the head housekeeper of the lord's household. They were married and moved to the town of Ramalow, where, on June 30, 1843, their son, Ernest, was born. Two years later the family moved to Revelien, in the province of Prussia, where the father built up a comparatively large business and became a leader in that tiny community. The bucolic blood of many generations awoke in his veins, however, and six years later he sold out his business and took his family to southern Germany, where he bought a farm of sixty acres near the village of Schloffeldorf. A year and a half afforded a quiet of agricultural life and the family, which now numbered six sons and a daughter, proceeded north again to the city of Spandau, near Berlin. It was one of the most interesting places in which this migratory family resided. It was ancient and had not yet abandoned its feudal garb of high wall and deep moat for the styles of the modern age. Indeed, it was an aristocrat among the cities of Germany. Located near the capital, it had been a favorite resort of the reigning families. No city could boast greater age, for it had received town rights in the year 1232, which was 360 years before Columbus discovered America. It was at that time and is today the strong box in which much of the German imperial treasure is kept. Beside very valuable jewels, large sums in gold are stored there to be ready immediately in a national emergency.

Two years the industrious father worked at his trade in this historic city. By that time, with the aid of his thrifty wife, he had saved sufficient money to buy an inn on the highway between the small cities of Anklam and Demmen, in the extreme northern part of Germany, almost on the shores of the Baltic sea. There Ernest began active life as the assistant of his mother in conducting the inn. His father continued to work at his trade.

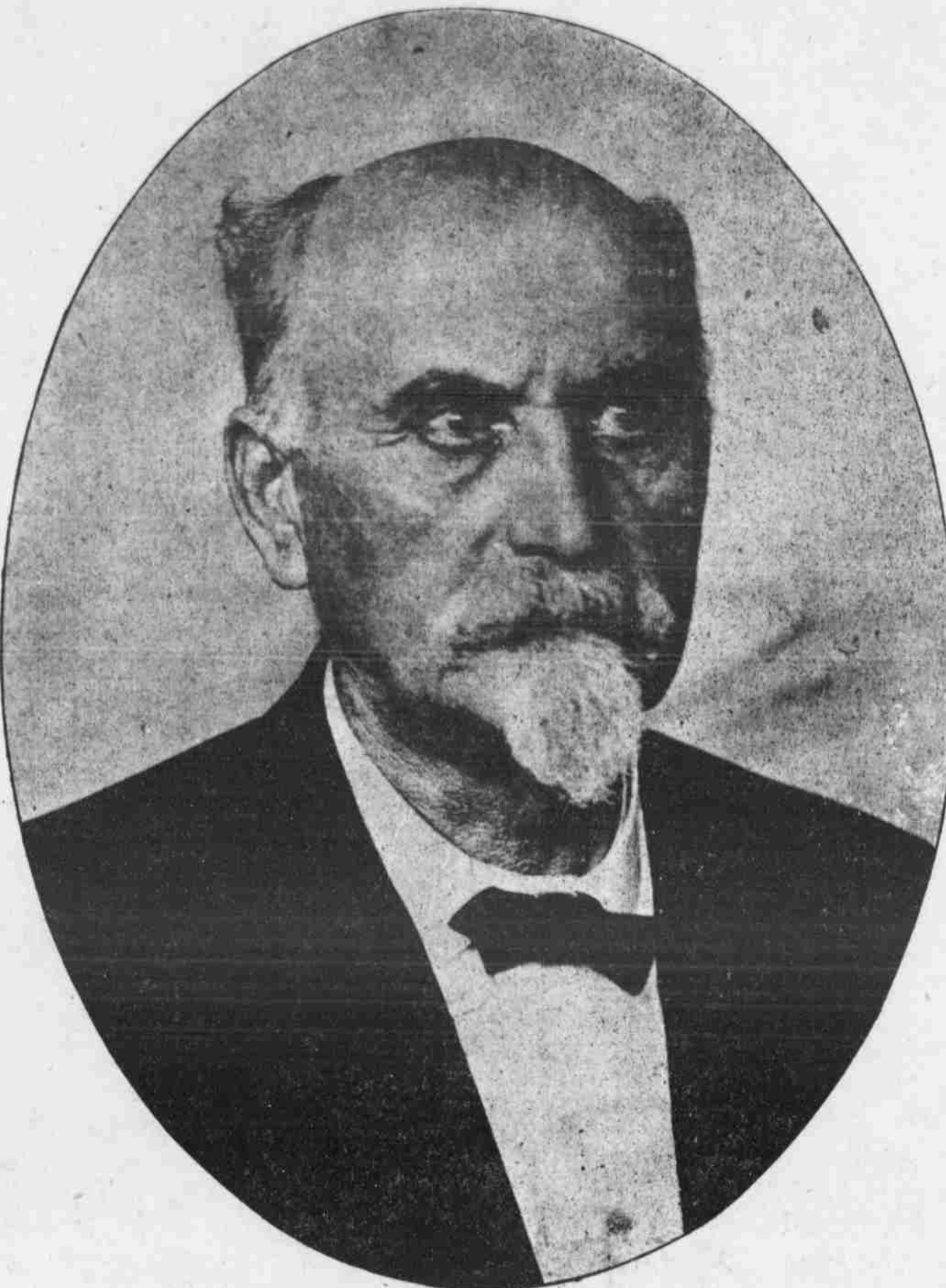
Early Training of the Boy

Ernest received the strict religious training and the Spartan discipline characteristic of the day. Between the ages of 6 and 12 years he attended school daily and upon attaining the latter age he was confirmed in the Lutheran church. Solid religious grounding was considered of first importance in that day, and a large part of the daily program consisted of prayers, hymns and Bible history. On Sunday the entire family drove four miles to church in the morning and in the afternoon spent a few hours in recreation and conversation at the beer garden. Industry, thrift and right thinking grew as naturally into a man brought up under this regime as strength into his bones and muscles. When he had attained the age of 14 years he entered his father's shop to learn carriage and wagon building. "All the work was done by hand then," says Mr. Stuht. "From the tree standing in the forest to the completed vehicle, the carriage builder had to be able to do everything. Germany then, as now, protected her forests. Each fall the forest master marked the trees which were ready to be cut down and they were then sold at auction. Trees were cut only in the fall and winter when the sap was out of the wood, and the wagons which we made then would outlast any made today. There was no eight-hour regulation for workmen, either. Our work day contained nearer fourteen hours, though we took things easy and didn't hurry so fast as they do at present. At 6 o'clock every day we were at the bench; at 7 we had breakfast; at 9:30 lunch was brought in, and at noon we had a big dinner; at 4:30 in the afternoon we ate another lunch, and at 7:30 we had our supper."

America Lures Them Away

By the time his apprenticeship was completed that spectre of every young man in soldier-ridden Europe stared him in the face—his period of military duty. The pay of a soldier in the army under the peace establishment was equivalent to 5 cents a day. Ernest had been reading about America, and he thought he could do better. He broached the subject to his elder brother, Charles. His father, however, in spite of his wide travels in his youth, was appalled at the thought of venturing across the ocean into an unknown land. He pointed out that probably they would have to be soldiers in America anyway, as a great civil war had just broken out there. Ernest answered this by the argument that they would get good pay for being soldiers at any rate. In the end a letter was written to William Walbrand, an old-time neighbor who had gone out to the United States. An answer came in due time giving such a glowing account of opportunities in the new world that the whole family determined to go. All their possessions were converted into money and one day they jogged away in a big wagon down the high road to the west. At the end of ten, rattling, bumping, exciting days full of wonders they arrived at the port of Hamburg and realized that they were nearly 200 miles from their peaceful home.

Great adventures awaited them on the ocean. Scarcely had they put to sea in their sailing vessel when a terrific gale came out of the southeast, driving them many hundreds of miles out of their course. The storm continued for days; the steerage passengers became frightened and had to be confined under battened hatches. Ernest Stuht made himself useful as an assistant to the ship's carpenter. Then one day the old bulk sprang a leak; she settled rapidly and all hands were called to man the pumps. Day and night the strongest of the men and women fought the battle against the sea. Some refused to work, but spent all their time in frantic prayers.



ERNEST STUHT.

After eight weeks and three days in this watery inferno the adventurers reached New York. Three days later the Stuht family went by an emigrant train to Milwaukee, Wis., where they hired a man to transport them in a wagon to the town of West Troy. Ernest's worldly possessions amounted to exactly 25 cents at that time. But he possessed a goodly heritage of strength, health, industry and ambition. A Scotchman hired him to work on the farm at the surprising salary of \$5 a month. At the end of a month the Scotchman was so pleased with the sample of industry which the German boy showed him that he made a contract with him to work a year at \$10 a month. Of course, the work wasn't hard—just milking eight cows, caring for six horses, feeding forty hogs and 300 sheep before break-

fast and then putting in the rest of the day until sunset splitting rails and chopping cordwood in the woods. After he had chopped a couple of cords of wood or cut down a dozen trees and split 100 rails he could have the rest of the day to himself. In the spring he and the Scotchman ploughed 140 acres of land and sowed it by hand. When the grain was ripe Mr. Stuht cut it all by "cradle" and his employer bound it by hand. When it is remembered that a city block contains about two acres across, the Herculean labor of cutting 140 acres by the back-breaking cradle method is appreciated.

After having worked in this temple of toil with the hardy Scot for a year and having turned over his \$120 dutifully to his father, Ernest secured employment at his trade in a shop in West Troy. He

spent several years working in the shop, in winter and in the woods or on farms in the summer. He bought an interest in a threshing machine and later traded it for a yoke of oxen with which he hauled cordwood to town. In 1855 two of his shipmates persuaded him to go with them further west. They came to Moingona, Boone county, Ia., a railroad camp, and opened a blacksmith and wagon shop.

On the Way to Omaha

After a year there, that strange destiny which seems to draw men on through life caused him to leave a prospering business and push westward. California and the gold fields were his intended destination, when in May, 1856, accompanied by Peter Gopferd, a boy he knew in Wisconsin, he took the train for Council Bluffs, then the western railway terminus. In that day when one took train in the west the chances were about even as to arriving or not arriving at one's destination. Heavy rains had soaked the newly-made roadbed and the train on which were the two young men jumped from the rails into the ditch near Marshalltown, Ia. They walked into the town and, seeing a freight train headed west, stowed themselves snugly in a car of bridge timbers. While they slept someone closed and locked the door. They became hungry and finally used a heavy timber as a battering ram on one of the end doors. After several other adventures they arrived in Council Bluffs. There the two young men parted. Gopferd became wealthy in the Stillwater mines and Mr. Stuht attained pecuniary success no less great in Omaha.

After weathering a severe stage of fever, Mr. Stuht secured work as a carpenter at the government corral. One day it became necessary to mend a pair of shafts. An unskilled workman had made a bad job of it when Stuht was given a tryout. He did the work with "neatness and dispatch" and his instant reward was a promotion to the position of head wheelwright, a place which he continued to hold for eighteen years.

Soon after he arrived in Omaha he went to a dance in the Old Capitol building. There he met a pretty girl who had recently come from Denmark, bringing with her the many good qualities of the sturdy, God-fearing people of the northern isle. She was Miss Maria Matson, and became Mrs. Ernest Stuht February 13, 1859. They have four children, as follows: Mrs. Edith Kneale, Pocastello, Ia.; Dr. Albert E. Stuht, Colfax, Wash.; Clinton Stuht, private secretary to J. J. Brown, leading banker and financier of Spokane, Wash., and Miss Mabel Stuht of Omaha.

Active Quarter of Century

Mr. Stuht left the government employ in 1853 to devote all his time to his private interests. The following year he formed a partnership with Gus Hummel under the firm name of Stuht & Hummel to engage in the grading business. They graded parts of West Farnam street, West Cuming street, Eleventh street from Mason to Bancroft, Fourteenth street from Mason to Castellar, and Twentieth street from Mason to Castellar. During seven months in 1857 the firm paid out as wages \$158,000. Mr. Stuht erected the Union hotel, Eleventh and Mason streets, in 1890, and conducted it until 1901, when he sold out the business and leased the building. He has been active in public work for the upbuilding of Omaha. In the legislative sessions of 1882 and 1884 he collaborated with Judge Clinton Briggs in securing the passage of the bills which enabled the city to construct viaducts over the railroad tracks. He was a leader in the fight to enjoin the state auditor from delivering the \$150,000 bonds voted by the city for constructing a union station. The bonds had been voted on the understanding that the building erected would be 230x447 feet in size, and the injunction was applied for and secured when the railroad company reduced the size of the proposed building to 140x160 feet. Mr. Stuht was elected in 1896 to the city council, where he was active and made a good record. He has filed for the race for state representative this fall.

Industry, frugality and an abiding faith in Omaha's future are qualities which have worked for Mr. Stuht's success in Omaha. As early as 1873 he had acquired property which in later years proved the excellence of his judgment. Recently he moved to a handsome home at 1325 South Thirteenth avenue, where he lives in that comfort which invariably comes to those who live wisely.

"I always knew that Omaha was going to be a large city," says Mr. Stuht, in looking back upon the quick development of a city out of a desert. "I invested my money and allowed time to take its course. When depression came I did not lose my faith, but held on through it, and the present development of Omaha has justified me. I must confess that the city is exceeding my expectations even. I did not expect to live to see it so large as it is today. But now, judging its future by its past, I feel assured that in twenty-five years from now Omaha will have 500,000 people."

Patience of the Turk Seems at Point of Exhaustion

THE Turkish soldier is generally considered by those fitted to judge as being among the most patient, obedient and sober of any in the world, and, considering the limited opportunity that he has to learn his trade, one of the most efficient. He has been denounced by all Europe for massacres in Bulgaria, Macedonia and Armenia; has gone without pay, clothes and proper rations; has been poorly housed badly drilled and generally mistreated—yet through it all he has been accomplishing.

The hopeless mismanagement and corruption of the administrative branch of the Turkish army during the war with Greece and Russia are well remembered, but not more vividly than the cheerfulness of the rank and file. An American who was in Turkey at the time of the last war cites as an instance of patient discipline a body of troops that he found guarding a government house near the Grecian border.

They had been rushed overland from somewhere in Asia Minor and it had been raining in torrents for days. The soldiers were obliged to remain day and night drenched to the skin and without food or shelter, for the commissariat had broken down; their uniforms were in rags and the soles of their shoes were worn through, but not a murmur escaped their lips and no discontent was visible on their impassive countenances. They were ready not only to die in battle, but to continue standing in the rain until they should die at their posts.

So loyal to the sultan has the Turkish soldier been that for him to rise in mutinous revolt as he has been doing recently indicates some new and unusual development. His grievances must indeed be great if they exceed what he has put up with in the past. If he is a part of the young Turk movement, which has for its purpose the forced abdication of Sultan Abdul Hamid and the formation of a new government with a constitution, it is the first time in his history that he has ever mutinied from political motives.

Opinions regarding the Turkish army vary and depend much upon the part of the country in which they are formed. The soldier is seen at his best in Constantinople, where are found the greatest numbers of strangers to Turkey.

There is always a brilliant and inspiring military display when the sultan goes to the mosque.

Regiments of Sudanese, Nubians, Albanians, Georgians, Circassians, Kurds, Arabs and many others of the picturesque Oriental races line the roadway along which the sultan passes and surround the mosque in which he worships. It is a brilliant show that they make in their red fezes, white turbans, gold lace, and green banners and glitter of arms.

But out along the borders, where the stranger is seldom permitted, it is quite another story. There are the ragged regiments, officers and men who have perhaps never received any pay, and a review, should one be held, would be an exhibition of military poverty such as no other country could produce.

If the bare numbers that Turkey could muster for war were alone considered there would be a formidable array. It would not be short of a round million. As far back as the time of the Russian war in 1877 the army had a peace footing of 100,000 men, capable of increase to 237,000. When these numbers proved insufficient a fresh effort was made, and despite the wretched communications of that day the Turkish army from first to last managed to embody not fewer than 750,000 men.

But in the present available force of a million there would be about 15 per cent that would possess an insignificant military value, being composed of irregulars like the Circassian and Kurdish cavalry. For an encounter with a modern civilized foe Turkey would have to rely upon the Turkish contingent. The best material for such an army would be supplied by the Turks proper, found in their purest in the central province of Anatolia and as a more or less mixed race throughout Asiatic and European Turkey; then the Lazos of Greek descent living on the southern shores of the Black sea and the Syrians. The military value of the last is perhaps the lowest of the three, while the Lazos would not be animated by the blind devotion to the sultan that makes the Turkish soldier ever ready to devote his life to the performance of any duty for the Holy Prophet.

Military service is compulsory in Turkey, but only for the Mohammedan population. For reasons that are both political and social the Christian subjects of the sultan are excluded from the army. Conscription is in force all over the empire, but among some of the wilder remote people the rule is indifferently enforced.

The method of organization now followed was introduced by the Germans. Colonel Kohler, with three captains of various branches of the service, undertook the work in 1882, and when Kohler died the reorganization was taken up by General von der Goltz, one of the best officers in the German army. What modern methods of warfare and organization now exist in the army are due largely to the unceasing efforts of these men.

The Germans all acknowledged the superior material that they had to work on and that they did not make one of the greatest armies in the world was due to other reasons than mere organization. The Turk is a born soldier.

"The moment that a rifle or sword is put in his hand," said someone who knew him, "he instinctively knows how to use it with effect, and he is at home in the ranks or on a horse." He may be good-humored, patient, kind to children and animals, but let there be some fighting, if nothing more than a riot, and he shows a surprising power of organization, and if he keeps at it long enough, surprising ferocity and heartlessness, killing, burning, ravaging without mercy, neither asking nor giving quarter.

His bravery no one has ever questioned. Religious inspiration is not, as is generally thought the chief cause of it. Islam only adds to his warlike enthusiasm. He is just as fearless when he is waging war against his coreligionists, the Arabs or the Albanians, as he is when fighting the infidel.

He is especially eager in battle with the infidel, because death in such cases secures him the reward of martyrdom. His bravery is in its blindness almost animallike and its nature is revealed by the attention that he can give in battle to the trivial details of life. One of his officers illustrates this by telling of the unconcern with which in the heat of battle he will watch the flight of a bird overhead, the unconcern with which he will sit down and tie his shoestrings, or the zest with which he will follow a joke or any humorous incident.

But all his admirable fighting qualities have been sacrificed and rendered of little avail by the very ruler he is willing to die serving. He is not allowed to have any system of military training beyond a little elementary drill in the barracks grounds, consisting mostly of marching back and forward, because the sultan is afraid that any

evolution of military efficiency would mean a movement against his palace. As a result military maneuvers are forbidden.

Rifle practice of any kind, more especially sharpshooting, is prohibited. A soldier who reaches any great degree of proficiency as a marksman is hustled off as far as possible from the neighborhood of the Yildiz Kiosk.

The officers in the great majority of the cases are illiterate or received their training at the military academy at Constantinople. The principal qualification of the director of this institution is that for twelve years he has been one of the most efficient of spies upon his brother officers. Another gauge of the worth of the school is the fact that chemistry is not taught there, because four years ago someone who knew something of that science made a bomb that came near blowing off the imperial head at the Selamluk.

"Affairs are undergoing a much greater change in Turkey than people outside of the country have any idea," he continued. "As has always been the case, every reform movement is belittled by official reports. From the information given out by the sultan's officers you would think that all is as serene as a summer day, yet everyone familiar with the situation knows that the sultan is liable to be overthrown any day and the whole wretched government changed."

"At Beirut recently a body of some 2,000 troops that had served eight or nine years and were being sent home without their pay forced the captain of the transport to take them into port in defiance of express orders to the contrary. They landed in detachments, seized the military commandant, the treasurer and the vali and held them as hostage until their pay, about \$200,000, was turned over to them. Then they went back to their ship and, being landed at another port, dispersed and went to their homes."

"Another regiment at Uskub, which had been forced to serve double the time of their legal service, insisted upon going home. When permission was refused the men abandoned their duties, seized the postoffice and held it for three days."

"Their arrears and discharges were sent to them and they disbanded and started for home. These are only two of many incidents of which the world knows nothing, but they clearly indicate the change that has come in affairs."