

The Horrors of Armenia as Seen by The World's Special Commissioner, the Only Correspondent Who Passed the Sultan's Guards and Penetrated Into the Heart of Persecuted Armenia.

Fifteen newspaper correspondents left London last January to investigate the Armenian outrages in Eastern Turkey. Not one of these men succeeded in passing the Sultan's guards except myself.

I am the only correspondent who has penetrated into the heart of Armenia. I am the only one who has seen the frightful persecutions of the Armenians with his own eyes and heard the tales of horror with his own ears.

The first reports of Turkish atrocities which reached the civilized world early in the year seemed beyond belief. To positively ascertain the exact truth I was sent by The World to make my way into the villages and homes of the Armenians and personally investigate every reported outrage.

I have seen the wounds made by the bayonets and the swords of the Turkish soldiers. I have seen the graves of the endless list of victims who have fallen under the rifles of the Sultan's army.

I have seen thousands of weak, fainting, hopeless beggars dying of starvation near the smoking ruins of their little farms. And I have listened to the shamefaced whispered tales of young girls who had been torn from their homes to satisfy the Kurds and Turkish soldiers.

THE STORIES WERE TRUE.

The stories of the Turkish atrocities are true!

The horrors of the present hour in Armenia have not yet been told even in a thousandth part.

The Turkish Government has determined upon the obliteration of the Armenian race by the most frightful campaign of murder, wholesale massacre, forced starvation and unspeakable tortures ever conceived in the history of the world.

I have seen the cunning and cruel machinery of the Sultan at work. And besides my own evidence of my eyes and ears I have brought back to civilization a signed statement by the American missionaries in Armenia and an official document from the Catholicos, at Akhtamar, the spiritual head of the Armenian Church.

Read them!

And then ask yourselves if the Christian world is to sit idly by and witness this crusade of persecution which will not end until 2,000,000 Armenian Christians have been wiped out—wiped out because they will not abandon Christianity and worship in the Moslem mosques of the Turks.

ARMENIA'S ONLY HOPE.

The only hope, the never-ending prayer of Armenia now is that Lord Salisbury will stay the Sultan's hand. He has threatened and warned the Sultan. But if the British Government neglects or delays its duty not one Armenian will be spared.

In all the length and breadth of Armenia there is not one village girl whose virtue has not been taken from her by force.

There is not one husband, brother, father or lover who dare lift a hand in protest against the daily dishonor of those whom he cherishes most on earth.

No village bride in all Armenia can count upon a safe return from the altar, and no bridegroom can be certain that he will live to carry his bride to his home.

No family, high or low, rich or poor, is secure against the dishonor of its women, the torture of its men and the abduction of its children.

DRIVEN TO STARVATION.

Of the 145,000 Armenians in the province of Van alone, with the af-

fairs of which I am familiar, fully 100,000 are in want of food. More than half of the foodless ones live on roots and herbs and a sort of bread made of clover seed, linseed or flax mixed with edible sprouts and grass.

In the one district of Moks, in the province which I visited, only one-fourth of the people are left in their village homes, the others having been driven out by Kurds and Turks to beg their bread or die of starvation in the mountains.

In the district of Shadakh only one-third of the people cling starving to their ruined homes. The rest are homeless wanderers, dropping dead of hunger and despair.

Three thousand beggars, as I have witnessed, walk the streets of the city of Van from day to day pleading for food of people little better off than themselves.

BEGGING AT THE AMERICAN MISSION.

The gates of the American mission at Van, where I lived for several weeks, are thronged from sunrise until sunset with wretched beings asking in Christ's name for a bit of bread for their starving children.

People are dying of starvation. Before I came away sixty-five had died of hunger in a few days in one district.

The Kurds, who pastured their buffalos and their cattle in the Armenians' growing wheat fields, all spring and summer, are now harvesting what is left of the grain, leaving nothing to the owners of the fields but starvation and death.

An inhuman Government is collecting a year's taxes in advance, as I know from personal observation, from a people already impoverished to the last degree by the exactions of taxes and the depredations of the Kurds. For inability to pay men are beaten and left for dead, women are outraged and children violated by the officers of the Turkish Government.

INNOCENT MEN TORTURED.

In prison innocent men are tortured

in fiendishly ingenious ways until a merciful death ends their agony.

Churches are being defiled, monasteries are being confiscated and turned into stables for sheep and goats, and priests are being banished into the mountains to starve.

I know from personal experience that spies are everywhere, bringing charges of treason and conspiracy against men whom they desire to put into prison.

Men of means are cast into prison that they may enrich their jailers by buying their way out. Property is so insecure that it has ceased to have any value, and men often mortgage their houses for a few dollars with which to buy food.

Relentless persecution, past and present, has brought the Armenian to a point where outrage and death seem to be his only release.

The common Kurds are being told that when the British scheme of reform is enforced they will change places with their Armenian slaves, and to prevent that they are planning to exterminate the Armenians once and for all.

UNDOUBTED FACTS.

Such in part is the condition of Armenia, the details of which I have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears. I have suffered from no optical illusion, and I have accepted no tale as true until I put it to the test. Refugees with wounds to show, village headmen with scarred backs to exhibit and reluctant women confessing unspeakable outrages have alike submitted to the test. What I herein assert is unalterable fact.

My first actual contact with the horrors of Armenia was on the road to Van, a few miles beyond the village of Archak, as I was entering the forbidden country.

Three hours out from Arabak we stopped at a wayside spring for breakfast. As I lay at full length on the ground a detachment of the notorious Hamidieh cavalry passed, in charge of a smart-looking officer. The Hamidieh are Kurds who have been armed by the Sultan and turned loose upon the defenseless Armenians. The officer apparently mistook me for Vice-Consul Hallward, of Van, for he saluted and went his way without a word.