

TO PROVOKE MASSACRE.

Armenians Would Rather Die
by the Sword than by
Slow Torture.

20,000 MAY GO TO THE SACRIFICE.

Turkish Wrath Will Be Tempted, It Is
Declared, Unless Europe Shall
Control Reforms.

500 YOUNG MEN SWORN TO BE VICTIMS.

They Want to Deeply Impress Upon
Christendom Their Coun-
try's Woes.

(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)

VAN, Armenia, June 5.—There will be a massacre of 20,000 Christians in Van within three months unless Europe controls the reforms in Armenia.

It will be brought about by the Armenians themselves in preference to being cast adrift by their fellow Christians of the West. They feel that it will be better to die by the sword, with some chance that their death will advance the cause of their countrymen, than to die by torture or starvation.

There are 500 young men in Van sworn to give themselves as a sacrifice to Turkish butchery, in the hope that England's attention may be the more forcibly called to the desperate situation of the people.

The Armenians cannot accept any scheme of reform not based on absolute control by European powers. The moment it becomes clear that the execution of the reforms is to be left to the Turk the Armenians will arise in despair and fling themselves to destruction.

There are no words adequate to describe the real condition of Armenia today. Men are beaten, robbed and murdered, women are maltreated by Kurds and Turks, property is stolen or destroyed, crops are trampled and eaten by herds of cattle, churches and monasteries are desecrated, used as stables and bath-houses, business is ruined. There is no wheat for bread, many villages are deserted by their starving inhabitants, and thousands of villagers are crowding into the cities begging from door to door of people little better off than themselves. Want and woe, despair and death stalk abroad in this beautiful land, once a part of the Garden of Eden.

A representative of a fourth revolutionary party, which has agents in Russia, England and America, is here. The headquarters seem to be in America, where a newspaper is published and revolutionary funds are collected. This agent, a Russian-Armenian, called on Mr. Hallward, the British Vice-Consul, to inquire if there was any encouraging news for the Armenian people. Incidentally he told Mr. Hallward that the Armenians have made up their minds that it is better to be killed fighting for their country than be outraged, butchered and exterminated by slow degrees.

The fourth revolutionary party has brought no guns to Armenia, nor does the agent say he has any arms hidden in the mountains. The party's principles, however, are of the most radical and advanced sort.

The Sasun massacre, the evidence collected seems to prove, was most care-

fully planned. During June, July and August beforehand the Kurdish chiefs in the surrounding country were unusually busy gathering together the scattered warriors. In July and August enormous quantities of Russian petroleum were shipped from Erzeroum to Moush. That petroleum was used to burn houses and bodies of victims. In many cases bodies were placed between layers of wood and built up into a sort of funeral pile, which was saturated with petroleum and set on fire. It is even charged that some persons were burned alive.

A few weeks before the massacre there was an unusual demand for army horses. Horses owned by Armenians were taken without pretense of paying for them. The horses, it is claimed, were used by the Turkish troops engaged in the massacre.

The massing of troops near the Sasun region, particularly at Moush, was carried on for some time before, according to the programme said to have been made at Constantinople.

Several weeks afterward, it is asserted, orders were sent from Constantinople for a massacre in Modikan, a district southeast of Sasun, but when it was found that the Sasun affair would be investigated the order was withdrawn.

At about the same time, it is declared,

the Turkish Government tried to the Kurds to massacre the Armenians in the Nourdouz region, south of Lake Van, but the Kurds refused. It is more likely that they regarded such a massacre as killing the goose that lays the egg, for if their Armenian vassals killed off they themselves would be reduced to the dreadful necessity of living for a living.

An attempt was made by the Turkish Government to exterminate the Armenians in 1893, but the Kurds emigrated for the purpose got decidedly the better of it.

CONSTANTINOPLE, July 14.—The States Minister Terrell dined at the Palace yesterday and afterward had an audience with the Sultan.