

MASSACRE BY TURKS

Thousands of Christian Armenians Put to the Sword.

AWFUL FATE OF WOMEN.

Babes Impaled Upon the Bosoms of Their Dead Mothers.

WOMEN TORTURED BY HUNDREDS.

6,000 to 10,000 Innocent People the Victims of Atrocities Worthy of Nero.

EVERY SOLDIER HAD ONE HUNDRED.

Sixty Beautiful Girls, Some of Them Brides, Thrust Into a Church and Made a Double Sacrifice.

LONDON, Nov. 16.—The Chairman of the Armenian Patriotic Association, G. Hagopian, has sent to the Earl of Kimberley, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a letter received from an Armenian whose name is not given because it would jeopardize his life. The letter is accompanied by one from Hagopian in which he writes:

"I have no reason to doubt the authenticity of the details. They will be borne out by fuller official reports which have been or which will soon be received from the British agents in Armenia.

"The events reported are the re-enactment of the Bulgarian atrocities with all their most sickening details of fiendish lust and cruelty on unarmed Christians and defenseless, innocent women and children, deliberately planned and ruthlessly executed under orders received from headquarters at Constantinople."

Hagopian concludes with the suggestion that the time has come to abolish the existing administration of Armenian affairs and to replace it by one to be approved by Great Britain and the other signatories of the treaty of Berlin and to be conducted under their supervision.

The letter from the Armenian is dated Bitlis, Oct. 9. After noting that the Chief Magnate appears to be a second Nero, it says:

"The so-called rebellion of the Armenians in 1893 was a got-up affair, for the repression of which the Chief Magnate got a decoration.

"This year the Kurds carried off Armenian oxen and the Armenians' appeal for their restoration was refused. A fight ensued, and two Kurds were killed and three were wounded.

"The Kurds immediately carried their dead before the Governor, declaring that Armenian soldiers had overrun the land, killing and plundering the Kurds.

"This furnished a pretext for massing the troops from far and near. The troops were commanded by a Pasha and a Marshal and were hurried to the district.

"The Pasha is said to have hung from his breast, after reading it to his soldiers, an order from Constantinople to cut the Armenians up root and branch, and adjuring them to do so if they loved their sovereign and Government.

"Nearly all these things were related here and there by soldiers who took part in the horrible carnage. Some of them, weeping, claim that the Kurds did more, and declare that they only obeyed the orders of others.

"It is said that 100 fell to each of them to dispose of. No compassion was shown to age or sex, even by the regular soldiery, not even when the victims fell suppliant at their feet.

"Six to ten thousand persons met such a fate as even the darkest ages of darkened Africa hardly witnessed, for there women and tender babes might have had at least the chance of a life of slavery, while here womanhood and innocence were mocked at by the cruel lust that ended its debauch by stabbing women to death with the bayonet, while tender babes were impaled upon the same weapon on their dead mothers' breasts, or perhaps seized by the hair to have their heads lopped off with the sword.

"In one place three or four hundred women, after being forced to serve vile purposes by the merciless soldiery, were hacked to pieces with sword and bayonet in the valley below.

"In another place some two hundred weeping and wailing women begged for compassion, falling at the commander's feet. But the blood-thirsty wretch, after ordering their violation, directed the soldiers to despatch them in a similar way.

"In another place, some sixty young brides and the more attractive girls were crowded into a church and after violation were slaughtered. Human gore was seen flowing from the church door.

"At another place still a large company under the lead of their priest fell down before them, begging for compassion and averring that they had nothing to do with the culprits. But all to no purpose. All were called to another place, and the proposal was made to several of the more attractive women to change their faith, in which case their lives were to be spared. They said:

"Why should we deny Christ? We are no more than these," pointing to the mangled forms of their husbands and brothers. "Kill us, too!" and they did so.

"A great effort was made to save one beauty, but three or four quarrelled over her, and she sank down like her sisters.

"But why prolong the sickening tale? There must be a God in Heaven who will do right in all these matters, or some of us would lose faith.

"One or more Consuls have been ordered that way to investigate the matter. If the Christians instead of the Turks reported these things in the city of Bitlis and the region where I have been touring the case would be different. But now we are compelled to believe most of it. The magnates are having papers circulated and are trying to compel Christians to sign them, expressing satisfaction that justice has been dealt to the rebels, and thanking the sovereign and the chief magnate himself. The Christians of Bitlis will not sign, though it is said that in some of the outlying districts some Christians have signed.

"The circulars have not yet been offered to Protestants, and as yet Protestants have not been thrust into chains or blackmailed very much, though lately things are beginning to look that way."

Another letter says some of the regular soldiers themselves admit that they killed 100 persons each in a fiendish manner, and that fiendish maltreatment was followed by the bayonet.

Twenty or thirty Armenian villages, it would seem, have been wholly destroyed, and some persons were burned to death with kerosene in their own houses.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Nov. 16.—The following official account of the Armenian troubles was issued to-day:

"Some Armenian brigands provided with arms of foreign origin joined an insurgent Kurd tribe for the purpose of committing excesses. They burned and devastated several Mussulman villages.

"As an instance of the ferocity of the Armenians, it is reported that they burned alive a Mussulman notable.

"Regular troops were sent to the scene to protect peaceable inhabitants against these depredations.

"The Ottoman troops not only protected and respected the submissive portion of the population and the women and children but they re-established order and tranquillity.

"It is not true that the Kurds seized the furniture, effects and cattle of fugitive Armenians. The latter took their effects to the mountains before revolting.

"The Armenian women at present with the Kurds belong to the families of the brigands, and went of their own accord with their husbands to the insurgent Kurds.

"Respecting the villages alleged to have been destroyed, it was the Armenians who carried off all their belongings before becoming brigands."

LONDON, Nov. 17—4 A. M.—Commenting this morning upon the letter of the Armenian Patriotic Association, the Times says:

"It is only too probable that something of the kind has occurred, though no details as to time or place are given. We repudiate any acquiescence in the statement that the alleged atrocities were executed under direct orders from Constantinople. It is not consistent with reason to assert that the Porte has gone out of its way to organize a persecution of Armenians, although it may not have exerted itself as it ought to have done to control the savage violence of the Kurds.

"It requires a robust faculty of belief to accept the Turkish official version of the affair as a complete explanation. At the same time the political objects of the Armenian Association should be remembered. We may warn the Armenians that it is idle to imagine that a new atrocities agitation can for a second time be made an excuse for reopening the Eastern question and disturbing the world's peace."

A despatch to the Standard from Varna, Bulgaria, says:

"Despite the Turkish Government's silence, facts have oozed out which leave no doubt that a massacre of Christians has occurred on as important a scale as the butchery at Batak, Bulgaria, which sent a thrill of horror through the civilized world.

"The troubles began with the Armenians' refusal to pay taxes on the plea, probably well founded, that the frequent Kurdish raids had impoverished them. A few troops sent to collect the taxes were beaten.

"Meantime the Governor of Bitlis, Asiatic Turkey, reported to the Porte that a serious revolt had broken out and obtained permission to send all obtainable troops to the scene. Marshal Zeki Pasha, commander of the Fourth Army Corps, stationed at Erzerum, was ordered to proceed thither and direct operations. Before this imposing array of regulars the Armenians quietly submitted.

"Now comes the horrible part of the story. The Governor of Bitlis resolved to make an example in order to prevent a repetition of the revolt. He ordered the troops to fire upon the defenseless people. The order was executed with alacrity.

"The soldiers only rested from their labors when twenty-five villages were destroyed and thousands of their inhabitants killed.

"Mr. Hallward, the British Consul at Van, proceeded to the scene and later reported to the British Ambassador at Constantinople, who protested to the Porte. The Sultan expressed horror at the crime, and ordered an immediate report from Marshal Zeki, which appears to have seriously involved the Governor of Bitlis.

"The latter in self-defense, and as a means of obtaining revenge, has formulated the grave charge against Mr. Hallward of having incited the Armenians to revolt. This matter is being investigated by British officials on the spot."

A St. Petersburg despatch to the Standard says that advices received there from Tiflis are that Turkey is now avenging its defeats around Sassun on the peasants of the Shatak district.

Marshal Zeki, it is said, has raided eleven villages and sent 150 inhabitants of both sexes, loaded with chains, to prison at Moosh.

Mr. Hallward, the British Consul at Van, has arrived to investigate, but the police prevented the peasantry having access to him.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 16.—Secretary Gresham told The World correspondent to-night that he has not had the slightest intimation of any such occurrences as are related in a letter laid before Lord Kimberley. State Department officials seem to think that if such a condition of affairs existed it is more than probable our Consuls in that country would have cabled the facts promptly to this Government.

A leader in the Armenian colony in New York, the Secretary of the Armenian Union of America, was seen last night by a World reporter. When told of the reported massacre he said:

"I am unable to confirm the news, but I am sure it is too true. Recent advices received here indicated that unusual acts of ferocity and violence were being perpetrated. That news of a horrible massacre should come is not in the least surprising.

"It is very difficult to get information from the interior. The outgoing mails are scrutinized by the authorities and every one is afraid to tell the truth by letter lest it call down the vengeance of the police. My old mother, now in her seventieth year, writes much more guardedly now than formerly, and for safety's sake puts in some phrase of loyalty to the Sultan which she is far from feeling, for my brother lies in prison in Sivas for no real cause.

"If the news is true, this makes the tenth massacre of Armenians have suffered during the present century. It is awful. I know not how many of my friends have gone down.

"A sentence in a letter from my mother, written last July comes to me now. I will read it to you:

"One calamity after another falls upon our desolated country. May the good Lord have mercy on us all.

"Please do not use my name, for I am trying to liberate my brother, and can do nothing to prejudice his cause or place my mother in jeopardy. The word will be read in Turkey, you know."

BARBARITIES IN BULGARIA.

Perhaps 30,000 Killed and 100 Villages Destroyed—People of Chios or Scio Exterminated in 1822.

The Bulgarian atrocities referred to in the cable despatches concerning the frightful massacre of Armenians shocked the whole of Europe in 1876, and was followed by the Russo-Turkish war.

The powers were trying to settle the difficulties between the Sultan of Turkey and his rebellious subjects in Herzegovina and elsewhere. The three imperial Chancellors, Bismarck, Gortschakoff and Andrassy, representing Germany, Russia and Austria, had held an informal conference in Berlin, and had invited the English, French and Italian Ambassadors to meet him (May 18, 1876). But, in the language of Chronicle Larned:

"While the three Chancellors were forging their diplomatic thunderbolt a catastrophe of such a terrible nature had occurred in the interior of Turkey that all talk of armistice and mixed commissions had become stale and unprofitable. The Berlin memorandum was not even presented to the Porte, for a rumor, though carefully suppressed by Turkish officials, was beginning to leak out that there had been an insurrection of the Christian population of Bulgaria, and that the most horrible atrocities had been committed by the Turkish irregular troops in its suppression."

From eighteen thousand to thirty thousand Bulgarians were slain and about a hundred villages destroyed, according to the Constantinople correspondent of a London newspaper.

J. A. MacGahan, an American, was sent by the London Daily News as a special commissioner to make an investigation. In one of his letters he thus described the appearance of the mountain village of Batak: