

MASSACRE OF ARMENIANS

Equals the Bulgarian Butcheries Which
Led to War.

OVER SIX THOUSAND MURDERED

Women Outraged and Babies Impaled
—The Sultan Shocked by the
Horrible Story—England
Investigating.

LONDON, Nov. 16.—The Standard's correspondent in Varna describes the recent massacre of Armenian Christians as of equal importance with the Bulgarian butcheries which led to the Russo-Turkish war. He says:

"The trouble began with the refusal of the Armenians to pay taxes, on the ground that the Kurdish raids had so impoverished them as to render it impossible. This probably was true. Troops were sent to enforce the payments, but were beaten off. The Governor of Bitlis then arrived with an imposing force of regulars.

"The people, seeing that the struggle was hopeless, yielded, but the Governor resolved to make an example of them. He ordered the troops to fire on the defenseless populace, and they obeyed with alacrity. They only ceased when the residents of twenty-five villages, numbering some thousands, had been killed. Some reports say 6,000 were slain.

"Great Britain sent her Consul in Van, Mr. Hallward, to report on the slaughter. The British Ambassador in Constantinople, upon receiving the report, communicated it to the Porte. The Sultan was horrified, and he ordered the local military commander, Zeki Pasha, to make his report on the matter at once.

"Zeki had been originally instructed to proceed to the scene after the repulse of the troops, but the Governor of Bitlis arrived there ahead of him. It seems that Zeki's report confirmed Mr. Hallward's, whereupon the Governor formulated the grave charge that the latter was inciting the Armenians to revolt, thus causing the whole original disturbance. This was submitted to Sir Philip Currie, who has sent out British officials to make inquiries."

Mr. Hagopian, Chairman of the Armenian Patriotic Association in London, has sent Lord Kimberley, Foreign Secretary, a letter sent from Bitlis on Oct. 9. Mr. Ha-

gopian, after declaring his belief in the reports of the massacre, submits that, in view of the horrible tortures and persecutions of the Armenians, the time has come to abolish the administration of the Porte, and substitute a régime approved by the signatories of the Berlin treaty.

The letter from Bitlis gives details of the origin of the disturbance. There was a Kurdish raid on Armenian cattle, resulting in a fight, in which two Kurds were killed. The friends of the Kurds took the corpses to Moush, and declared that the Armenians had overrun the land, and were killing and plundering right and left. This furnished the pretext for the massing of the troops.

The letter then describes the horrors of the massacre. It says that on the admissions of the Turkish soldiers, some of whom tearfully protested that they merely obeyed orders, no compassion was shown to age or sex. In one place, 300 or 400 women, after having been forced repeatedly to submit to the soldiery were hacked to pieces with swords and bayonets. In another place 200 weeping women begged at the commander's feet for mercy. The commander, after ordering that they be outraged, had them all dispatched with the sword.

Similar scenes were enacted in other places. In one case sixty young brides and maidens were driven into a church and were violated and butchered until their blood flowed from the doors. A large company, headed by a priest, knelt near the church, begging for compassion, averring that they had nothing to do with the culprits who killed the Kurds. It was in vain; all were killed.

Several attractive women were told they might live if they would recant their faith. They replied: "Why should we deny Christ? We have no more reason to do so than had these," pointing to the mangled bodies of their husbands and brothers, "kill us, too." This was done.

The letter says that between 6,000 and 10,000 were killed. Babies were impaled on the same weapon with their mothers. Several soldiers admitted that they had disposed of a hundred victims each. Nearly thirty villages were destroyed. Some families were burned with kerosene in their own houses.

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