

MASSACRE OF ARMENIANS

Responsibility for the Crime
Fixed Upon Turkish
Commander.

Arrival of Russians at Van
Caused Turks to
Retreat.

Correspondence of the Associated Press.

London, Sept. 20.—Details of the siege of Van and the massacre of Armenians by the Turks are given in the current issue of the Near East, which fixes the responsibility for the crime on Jevded Pasha. It was on Jevded Pasha also that the refugee American missionaries, in the story of their sufferings recounted to the Associated Press correspondent at Petrograd this week, laid the guilt. Jevded is the supreme commander of the Turkish army operating in this province.

Van, the ancient capital of the Armenian Ardzruni dynasty, was occupied by the Russian army in its advance in the Caucasus during the first week of last May. The Russian commander, Gen. Oganesov, who is an Armenian, was assisted by six Armenian volunteer regiments under the Armenian revolutionary, Andranig, who had fought with the Bulgarians against the Turks in the first Balkan war. But long before Van fell to the Russians, Jevded Pasha started the work of massacring the Armenian population.

Few Men Spared.

The massacre began at Shadokh, a large and isolated village, where not a man was spared except those over 60 years of age. Of the women, the more comely were carried away by Jevded's soldiers and Kurd tribesmen. The massacre was carried out systematically in the entire province of Van beginning with the outlying village. Great care was taken to prevent rumors of this from reaching the capital.

There was living in Van city at that time Prince Ishkham, an Armenian who had formerly been useful to the government in settling troubles between the Turks and the Armenians. He was asked by Jevded to go to the village and try to reconcile the contending parties. Jevded addressed the prince in a letter as his "dear friend." The prince, unaware of the plot, started out with a number of advisers. The entire party was slaughtered by a party of Jevded's horsemen while taking lunch at a coffee house.

Thrown Into a Lake.

At this time also there was in Van an Armenian member of the Turkish parliament by the name of Vramian, who was invited by Jevded to call on him at headquarters. On arrival at headquarters Vramian was arrested, a large stone was tied to his feet and he was thrown into a lake and drowned.

The Russians were now reported on the advance. Talaat Bey published a warning against the Armenians participating on a penalty of dire punishment. But the story of the massacre in the isolated parts was carried by survivors, and the Armenians prepared to sell themselves as dearly as possible, the peaceful element as well as the revolutionaries. Jevded then called on the Armenian bishop to visit him. The bishop refused. Thereupon Jevded descended upon the "rebellious" city of Van with an army of 8,000 Turks and Kurds and called on the people to lay down their arms, surrender without conditions and trust to the clemency of the sultan. This offer was made through the Italian consul.

Russians to the Rescue.

Of the 50,000 Armenians in Van, only 450 were armed—250 with rifles and the rest with revolvers. For twenty-nine days this handful defended the city. On the thirtieth day Gen. Oganesov arrived with his Armenian volunteers and Russian regulars and the Turks retreated.

Conditions were at that time frightful, as the only doctor in the city to look after the sick and wounded had been Dr. Allen, an American missionary. But with the Russians came help and doctors and nurses soon arrived from Tiflis. Committees were appointed to aid the sufferers, and the peasants started in to till the fields and rebuild their homes.