

# **TURKEY AND THE ARMENIAN ATROCITIES.**

**A graphic and thrilling.**

**By Rev. Edwin M. Bliss**

**With an Introduction**

**By Miss Frances E. Willard.**

**1896**

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The book written and published in 1896 is a response to the Armenian massacres conducted in different parts of the Ottoman empire. Its purpose is defined by the author: "The object of this book is not merely to set forth the situation in Turkey as it is to-day, but to trace the influences that have produced it. Those influences are very complex. They include the social characteristics of the peoples of Turkey, the religious beliefs and ecclesiastical customs that have grown up in the empire during the past centuries, the political ambitions and jealousies of the European Powers, and the personal qualities of the different men who have been prominent in the control of affairs".

The extracted chapters which describe the details of the massacres of 1896 in Sassun, Constantinople, Trebizond and Erzerum are based on the reports of eyewitnesses, both Armenian and non-Armenian.

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## **CHAPTER XX.**

### **THE SASSUN MASSACRE.**

A Deliberate Plan of The Turkish Government-Kurdish Raids-Armenians Defend Themselves-Kurds Reinforced by Regular Troops-Terrible Scenes of Slaughter- Stories of Survivors.

In view of the situation set forth in the preceding chapter the European powers emphasized more earnestly than before their demand for reforms, and the Turkish Government became convinced that another step was necessary in order to avert what they feared would be the complete destruction of their power. What that step was it is the object of this chapter to describe, leaving the inference as to the plan to come later.

Among the different plains of Eastern Turkey there is none more fertile than the plain of Mush, about forty miles west of Lake Van. From the earliest times it has been noted for its harvests and for the general prosperity of its people, who partook, to a greater degree than was true of many other sections, of the vigor of the mountaineers. Bordered with high mountains on every side it was always an object of envy to the Kurdish tribes. Incursions had been repeatedly made and some result was manifest in the increase of Moslem villages here and there over the plain. Still, however, it was the center of Armenian influence in that section; even Bitlis and Van were scarcely more

intensely Armenian than Mush.

It was natural also that some of the revolutionists should turn their eyes to this section. Here if anywhere must be the center of the new Armenia, and an effort was undoubtedly made to stir some of the people to a revolution in opposition to the Turkish Government. The plain villagers, however, furnished very little encouragement for anything of this kind. They realized perhaps even more clearly than the mountaineers did that opposition to the combined force of the Turkish Government and the Kurdish tribes was worse than useless, and the agitators found themselves turned aside after accomplishing but very little. They then turned their attention to the mountain villages where the spirit of independence was more strongly manifest. In the summer of 1893 one of these men was captured near the city of Mush, and the government had suspicion that friends of his were gathering in the mountains on the east. They accordingly sent word to certain Kurdish chiefs whose men had been enrolled in the Hamidieh cavalry to make a raid. Knowing the character of the mountaineers, these chiefs made their preparations somewhat carefully. They gathered their men from every side, and it became evident to the Armenians that there was to be trouble. For a time there were simply ordinary raids; animals were carried off, occasionally a man was killed-sometimes Armenian, sometimes Kurd. Ordinarily when a Kurd was slain his body was secured for burial before his people could come to claim it.

At last there was a pitched battle in which the villagers were able to do considerable execution without heavy loss of life to themselves. The Kurdish chiefs finding themselves worsted withdrew, and no sufficient pressure could be brought to bear upon them to make them renew the contest. The Governor-General of the province, however, with troops and field pieces, infested the mountains but made no attack, preferring apparently to come into parley with the Armenians. He asked them why they did not submit to the government and pay taxes. Their reply was that they were not at all disloyal to the government, but could not pay taxes twice, to Kurds and to the government. If the Turkish authorities would give protection, they were perfectly willing to pay the taxes. During the winter several of their leaders were invited to Mush but declined to accept.

With the advent of the spring of 1894, the situation became worse. The government decided to make the advance and reiterated its instructions to the Kurdish chiefs to attack the whole section, west of the Mush plain and known now as Sassun, which included about forty villages. They came on every side and practically besieged the whole province. They stole animals, and the result was occasional contests in which one or more on either side fell. On one occasion the Kurds succeeded in securing the bodies of two of their comrades who had been killed, and carried them to the government at the city of Mush, reporting that the whole region was filled with armed men, who were defying the power of the government. Then followed a general attack upon the different villages. The Armenians had the better situation, and defended themselves with considerable success. The Kurds appeared to be unequal to the task of

subduing them. The government reinforced them with soldiers, regular troops, but generally in disguise so as to retain as far as possible the appearance of the ordinary contests that had been going on for years between the villagers and the Kurdish chiefs. Reinforced by these men, the Kurdish chiefs spread on every hand. They were assisted by the Turkish troops, not only in positive attack, but in stratagems the most outrageous. Companies of troops would enter a village, telling the Armenians that they had come for their protection. They were received and quartered in the different houses; then in the night they rose and slew the villagers, men, women, and children. Realizing now the evident intent, the Armenians resolved to fight and sell their lives as dearly as possible. The result was that for nearly three weeks from the latter part of August there was a general campaign of butchery. So bitter was the contest, that the Governor of Mush, fearing that he had not sufficient force at hand, sent word to the general commander of the Turkish forces in Eastern Turkey, whose headquarters were at Erzingan, west of Erzurum, to gather what troops he could, to join with the troops already there, and the Kurds, in the fight.

Word meanwhile had been sent to Constantinople, that all Eastern Turkey was in rebellion, and the Sultan had issued a firman, calling upon his loyal subjects to put down the rebellion at all hazards. This firman was in the hands of the commander Marshal Zekki Pasha as he came to Mush. He read it before the troops, then placed it upon his breast, and exhorted the men to do their duty. Especially on the last day of August, which was the anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the throne, was this exhortation read, and by every means in his power he roused the troops to the bitterest attack. At this time all pretense of complaint of revolution was thrown aside. Villages against which no charge of disloyalty had ever been made, where there had been no trouble of any sort, suffered equally with those where there had been contests. The receipt of taxes amounted to absolutely nothing. On every hand it was proclaimed that there must be a clean sweep; that the whole population of the Armenian district must be exterminated. In one village the priest, and some of the leading men, went out to meet the Turkish officer, declaring their loyalty, and begging for mercy. It was all to no avail. The village was surrounded and every man put to death. The stories of individual outrages were such as scarcely can be believed. Private letters, from persons well qualified to know the truth, many of which are quoted in full in "The Armenian Crisis in Turkey," by the Rev. F.D. Greene, give instances almost too terrible for belief. We quote a few:

"A number of able-bodied young Armenians were captured, bound, covered with brushwood and burned alive. A number of Armenians, variously estimated, but less than a hundred, surrendered themselves and pled for mercy. Many of them were shot down on the spot and the remainder were dispatched with sword and bayonet.

"A lot of women, variously estimated from 60 to 160 in number, were shut up in a church, and the soldiers were" let loose" among them. Many of them were outraged to death and the remainder dispatched with sword and bayonet. A lot of young women were collected as spoils of war. Two stories are told. 1. That they were carried off to the

harems of their. Moslem captors. 2. That they were offered Islam and the harems of their Moslem captors; refusing, they were slaughtered. Children were placed in a row, one behind another, and a bullet fired down the line, apparently to see how many could be despatched with one bullet. Infants and small children were piled one on the other and their heads struck off. Houses were surrounded by soldiers, set on fire, and the inmates forced back into the flames at the point of the bayonet as they tried to escape.

"At Geligozan many young men were tied hand and foot, laid in a row, covered with brushwood and burned alive. Others were seized and hacked to death piecemeal. At another village a priest and several leading men were captured, and promised release if they would tell where others had fled, but, after telling, all but the priest were killed. A chain was put around the priest's neck, and pulled from opposite sides till he was several times choked and revived, after which several bayonets were planted upright, and he raised in the air and let fall upon them.

"The men of one village, when fleeing, took the women and children, some 500 in number, and placed them in a sort of grotto in a ravine. After several days the soldiers found them, and butchered those who had not died of hunger.

"Sixty young women and girls were selected from one village, and placed in a church, when the soldiers were ordered to do with them as they liked, after which they were butchered. "In another village fifty choice women were set aside and urged to change their faith and become *hanums* in Turkish harems: but they indignantly refused to deny Christ, preferring the fate of their fathers and husbands. People were crowded into houses which were then set on fire. In one instance a little boy ran out of the flames, but was caught on a bayonet and thrown back."

The following stories from survivors of the massacre will give a more vivid picture than any general description:

### **STORY OF A SURVIVOR. OF THE SASSUN MASSACRE.**

"My name is Asdadur Giragosian. My home was on the sunny side of a high mountain, in the central village of the beautiful valley of Geligozan. This valley presents a charming scene when viewed from the top of one of the surrounding mountains, with many villages scattered here and there, and clumps of huge walnut trees between, giving the valley its name, 'Valley of Walnuts.'

"Up to 1894 my family was a prosperous one, as were most of the families of Sassun. The Kurds who lived about us were, on the whole, friendly, though they frequently practiced their habitual business of stealing cattle and sheep, but we were generally able to re-take our own, or others in their place. Our family consisted of twelve members, and we had many cattle and sheep. In the whole village were two hundred families, who possessed in the aggregate more than 15,000 sheep. Of course each of the sixty Armenian villages in the Sassun district (of which 42 are now ruined) had many cattle and sheep.

"In the spring of 1894 the Kurds began to drive away our sheep more boldly than

usual. At the same time the government, suspecting that there were many armed revolutionists in Sassun, sent to search for them, but failed to find them. They then wished to arrest some of our notables and take them to Mush as revolutionists, saying, 'You have revolutionary societies here.' We resisted and prevented their taking our men. As I said, the Kurds made several attacks that spring, carrying off our animals, and we pursued them and rescued the animals, killing one or two men, whom we buried so they could not find them. Twice they attacked with this result, but the third time we were not able to bury the two Kurds we killed, and they carried them to Mush and showed them to the government. A great tumult resulted, and it was reported, 'The Armenians of Sassun have rebelled and massacred the Moslem inhabitants.' Also, 'They are armed with rifles and cannon.' The Turkish Government availed itself of the excuse, and instigated the Kurds to attack the Armenian villagers and massacre them. This they attempted to do, a large number attacking us, aided by many soldiers in disguise. But though the Kurds had been well armed by the government, we were able, owing to our superior position, to withstand them successfully for fifteen days. The Kurds were constantly repulsed, leaving many dead and wounded. During this time the Turkish soldiers were being rapidly collected in Merge-mozan. About twenty-five battalions of soldiers were gathered there. In these fights with the Kurds we lost only seven persons, but three Armenian villages were burned.

"The assembled soldiers now began to attack. One day we heard the sound of their bugles, and for a whole day they continued to advance with great tumult and besieged Geligozan on the sides. The road to a very high mountain named Andok was left open, and we were able to carry our families and animals there, but this in a hasty manner, while fighting with Turkish soldiers. Then the army divided, one part going toward Andok, the other coming toward us. We had already left the village and taken refuge among the rocks above it. Our position enabled us to withstand them all day, but we could see that they had burned the village of Husentsik, near our own. Toward evening they made a fiercer attack and got nearer us. Our ammunition was nearly exhausted, and we began to retreat. They now set fire to our village too, and from a distance, in the dark, we could see it burning.

We fled to Andok, where our families and animals had been carried, but seeing that it was not a safe place to stay, we left it, and after a day's journey over rocks and mountains; towards evening reached a ruined church. Here we passed the night, but in the morning soldiers appeared and we hastened our flight. All our goods and most of our animals we left there. Near evening we reached a mountain named Gala-rash (Black Castle). We were very tired and hungry, but had nothing to eat, so we killed a sheep and ate it. But few of the villagers were to be found, the greater part having fled to other places. From this place we fled in the dark to the neighboring Kurdish village, where our Aghas (chiefs) lived. Before morning we learned that Aghpig was also burned. Our Kurdish Aghas came out from the village to defend us against the soldiers, but did not succeed, and returned to the village, and we were obliged to continue our

journey, though tired and thirsty.

"When it was possible to stop, our first care was to find water and kill a sheep for food. The following day we learned that Hedink also was burned. Hearing this we fled to Heghgat, and then to a near mountain. The next morning we heard that Heghgat was burned. We descended from the mountain into a valley up which we slowly retreated, changing our position every day. But on the third day our pursuers appeared, and we left all our sheep, and fled with our cattle. Soon we left the cattle too. One of my brothers, Atam, fled with the family, while my other brother, his fifteen-year-old daughter, and I, lagged behind and entered a forest, but when they saw my brother, two soldiers fired and he fell dead. Hearing the noise, the girl cried out and they saw her and shot her dead also. Me they did not find, and towards evening I came out of the forest, and hurrying forward, reached the family and told them of my brother's and his daughter's death. We wept aloud and spent the night disheartened, tired and hungry. In the morning, thinking the soldiers had turned back, we returned to a village to obtain food. I found my brother's body and buried it, but before I had time to bury the girl, the soldiers appeared. My remaining brother fled with the family, but I entered the forest. In the morning I found another refugee in the forest, who was seeking his family. He told me he had killed an ox, but had been obliged to leave it because the soldiers appeared. We were so hungry and faint that we could hardly walk, but we sought the ox and were about cooking some meat when soldiers again appeared.

"So we left the fire, climbed up the mountain, and hid behind some rocks. The soldiers saw us and two of them came to find us. We waited there for a few moments all trembling with terror. Suddenly a soldier appeared, aimed his gun at me and fired, the bullet piercing my leg. The other soldier also fired and pierced my thigh. Then they came up and severely wounded me with their short swords, in the shoulder and thigh. I shut my eyes and they thought me dead, and were about to depart when they saw my companion behind a rock; they fired at him with true aim, and I heard his horrible cry as he fell. Before leaving us, one of the soldiers suspecting I was still living, proposed to cut my body to pieces, but his companion rejected the proposition, objecting that there was no water to wash the swords. So they merely threw some large stones at me, which fortunately did no special harm. When the soldiers were far enough away I spoke to my companion to see if he was living, and he answered very feebly saying he could neither walk nor move, and I was in the same condition. Oh! our distress then! Tired, hungry, thirsty, severely wounded, we should die in torture, or be the prey of wild beasts. I cried to the soldiers, 'We are still alive, come and put an end to our misery.' I cried but they did not hear me.

"After a while two Armenian fugitives passed by and saw us, and we besought them to carry us to a ruined sheep-cote nearby. They were so hungry and weak they could hardly walk, and said they were not able to carry us, but yielding to our entreaties, they made a great effort and carried us there, gave us some water and fresh cheese and departed. We remained there three days, these friends coming to us at night and

going away in the morning. We soon saw that this was too dangerous a place to stay, as we constantly heard the sound of guns and bullets passing over our heads. So they transferred us to another ruin, where we were tortured by the heat by day and the cold by night, naked and wounded. Our friends did not do much for us, not believing we could live. After three days my companion's mother came, bringing some millet to cook for us, but going out to get some water, she heard the sound of bugles and fled, but soon returned and cooked it. The next day our brothers came with the woman and tried to cook some wheat, but were again frightened by the sound of the bugles and fled, my brother wishing to carry me with him, but I said, 'It is better for you and the family to escape. I must die.' Toward evening they came back and carried us on their shoulders to another place, where some other families had already taken refuge. Soon they were obliged to leave this place also, fleeing in haste, and left me there. I remained in this dreary place eight days alone with my suffering save that they sometimes brought me a little food. After the eight days we heard that a firman had come ordering the massacre to cease. The soldiers then drove any fugitives they met, wounded or not, to the ruined villages. I remained thus among the ruins for two months, till my wounds were healed. As soon as I was strong enough I left the ruins and slowly made my way to Vartenis (an Armenian village on the Mush plain). There I found my wife, but of the rest of the family I know nothing."

With the man whose story is told above was a lad of seventeen years, named Serope Asdadurian, from the village of Mushakhshen, not far from Mush city. His statement shows the state of the region before the date of the massacre.

### **STORY OF SEROPE ASDADURIAN.**

"Our family consisted of fifteen members, of whom four are now living, the others having died by the hands of the Kurds and Turks.

"Before the year 1893 the brother of the celebrated robber chief, Mousa Bey, had abducted the daughter of the head man of our village. After a while the girl was rescued from his hands and married to a young man of Vartenis. In the spring of 1893 she visited her father's house, after which her father wished to send her, under safe escort, to her husband at Vartenis. He besought my father to carry her, and he accepted the charge. On the way fifteen Kurds attacked the party and attempted to carry off the woman, but my father and his companions resisted, and delivered the woman safely to her husband, two of the Kurds being killed in the affray. My father fled to Russia, but soon returned, and for a month or so remained so concealed that no one saw him. After a while, however, it became known that he had returned, and suddenly one day the Mudir (Turkish petty governor) of the neighboring village surrounded our house with a band of zabtiehs (gendarmes) to seize my father. He knew that to be taken was probably to be killed with tortures, and determined to sell his life as dearly as possible. So when the zabtiehs burst open the door and came in my father killed one of them and

rushed out with his rifle. But in his haste he struck his head violently against the frame of the door and fell, nearly dead. One of the zabtiehs fired and killed him. They then killed my mother, my two sisters, my uncle and four cousins. They carried away our cattle and sheep, robbed the house and burned it."

So the crimson storm of carnage rolled on, until not less than thirty villages had been laid waste, so completely destroyed that even the names had been erased from the official records. As to the number of killed it is almost impossible to give accurate estimate. It must have been not less than five or six thousand, many put it much higher. Some soldiers said that a hundred fell to each one of them to dispose of, while others wept because the Kurds did more execution than they. Some, however, claimed to have been unwilling actors in the scene and suffered great mental torments. The wife of one noticed that he failed to pray, as had been his invariable custom. She spoke of it to him and he answered, "God will not hear me. If there is God he will take vengeance for these awful deeds. Is there any use to pray?" It is also told of other soldiers that on reaching their homes they inquired of Armenian acquaintances, "Who is this Jesus of Nazareth? The Sassun women were constantly calling out to Him."

At last the carnage stopped. The commander-in-chief of the fourth army corps at Erzingan reached the field in time to save a few prisoners alive and to prevent the extermination of four more villages that were on the list to be destroyed. He then sent a telegram to Constantinople that rebellion had been overcome and that order had been restored in the province. For this he received a medal and the thanks of the Sultan.



## CHAPTER XXI.

**POLITICS AND MASSACRE AT CONSTANTINOPLE.**

Investigation at Sassun-Mr. Gladstone on the Situation-Disturbances in Constantinople- Joint Notes by the Embassies-Plan of Reforms-New English Government-Massacre in Constantinople-Decisive Action of the Embassies-Signing of the Reforms-Subsequent Acts of Defiance-Breach Between England and Russia-Collapse of English Influence.

THE report of the massacres in Sassun aroused a storm of indignation throughout Europe. The British Consul at Van made investigation, confirmed the report of the massacres, which was again confirmed by the local military commander. The British Ambassador at Constantinople sent special officials to make public inquiries, with the result finally that the Turkish Government was informed that at prompt, efficient steps must be taken to secure better government in Eastern Turkey, or she would join with European Powers in such intervention as would secure peace and justice for the Armenians. Meanwhile Czar Nicholas had come to the throne, and just what course would be taken by him was not yet evident. There were indications that he would pursue a different policy from his father, more in the line of general liberty and toleration, and there was a widespread feeling that the English demand was practically supported by Russia. A Turkish investigating commission was appointed, but its personnel was such as to make it open to grave suspicion, and the British Consuls at Erzurum and Van were instructed to watch its course carefully. This suspicion was increased by the fact that the Turkish commander was decorated, and notwithstanding the repeated efforts of the Turkish Government to prevent the spread of news, the worst reports as to the massacres were confirmed all over the empire. At the same time the Turkish Government invited an American representative to attend the commission. President Cleveland declined to do this, but after negotiations with England decided to send, as an independent investigator, Consul Jewett, of Sivas. To this, however, the Turkish Government objected, and refused to give him the traveling papers.

As matters became more clearly understood, reports were spread of a separate commission to represent England, Russia, Austria, France and probably Germany, entirely apart from the commission appointed by the Turkish Government. This general intensity of feeling on the part of Europe aroused considerable anxiety among the Turks, and the result was that a commission was at last appointed with regular representatives of the different European Powers to attend it and insure that its investigations were carried on in an impartial and thorough manner. The anxiety, however, was by no means confined to the government. Throughout the empire word had been spread among the Moslems that the Christians, backed by the European Governments, were planning the overthrow of the Sultan. At the same time the Hunkhaaists redoubled their efforts. They evidently felt that a point had been reached at

which they might make a strike. The result was that disturbances were reported from the whole region of Western Turkey, especially in the vicinity of Zeitun, Marash and Adana. Destructive fires were started in several cities. The Moslems charged it upon the Armenians, the Armenians retorted the charge upon the Moslems, and the situation rapidly grew more intense even than it had been before. The next step of the Turkish Government was to announce that a new plan of government had been adopted for the districts of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis and Mush. These four were to be made a single province with a Mussulman governor appointed for five years, to be succeeded by Christians, who, however, were not to be Armenians. The gendarmerie were to be recruited from the district and commanded by a general named by the Sultan; local revenues were to be retained by the provinces except one annual contribution to the Porte; judges were to be elected and local ministries of education and public works were to be formed. This was largely as the result of the intense feeling roused in England, which was expressed by Mr. Gladstone in response to a deputation of Armenians from Paris and London on his eighty-fifth birthday, December 29, 1894.

The history of Turkey has been a sad and painful history. That race has not been without remarkable, and even in some cases, fine qualities, but from too many points of view it has been a scourge to the world, made use of, no doubt, by a wise Providence for the sins of the world. If these tales of murder, violation and outrage be true, then it will follow that they cannot be overlooked, and they cannot be made light of. I have lived to see the Empire of Turkey in Europe reduced to less than one-half of what it was when I was born, and why? Simply because of its misdeeds—a great record written by the hand of Almighty God, in whom the Turk, as a Mohammedan, believes, and believes firmly—written by the hand of Almighty God against injustice, against lust, against the most abominable cruelty; and if—and I hope, and I feel sure, that the government of the Queen will do everything that can be done to pierce to the bottom of this mystery, and to make the facts known to the world—if, happily—I speak hoping against hope—if the reports we have read are to be disproved or to be mitigated, then let us thank God; but if, on the other hand, they be established, then I say it will more than ever stand before the world that there is no lesson, however severe, that can teach certain people the duty, the prudence, the necessity of observing in some degree the laws of decency, and of humanity, and of justice, and that if allegations such as these are established, it will stand as if it were written with letters of iron on the records of the world, that such a government as that which can countenance and cover the perpetration of such outrages is a disgrace in the first place to Mohammed, the Prophet whom it professes to follow, that it is a disgrace to civilization at large, and that it is a curse to mankind. Now, that is strong language.

"Strong language ought to be used when facts are strong, and ought not to be used without strength of facts. I have counselled you still to retain and to keep your judgment in suspense, but as the evidence grows and the case darkens, my hopes

dwindle and decline; and as long as I have a voice, I hope that voice, upon occasion, will be uttered on behalf of humanity and truth."

Soon after came the formation of a commission, which was, however, so constituted as not to inspire the greatest confidence, the foreign representatives not being of high rank. However, it was better than nothing, and the general feeling was that its report would be awaited with interest. Meanwhile there came notices of disturbance elsewhere. There was a rising of the Christians in Albania, and considerable trouble in Bulgaria, where the Russian power was made manifest by the appearance upon the scene of Mr. Zankoff, who had been practically an exile for some time. The commission had started, and by the middle of February was thoroughly established in its work in Mush. On its way to that place it made some interesting discoveries. At the village of Bulanik some of the Armenian villagers came to the European members and reported that Turkish soldiers were at that time engaged in extorting money from villagers by threats of reporting them as rebels. The commission sent a polite invitation to the commander, asking him to come and answer a few questions. Instantly the whole body fled in every direction, evidently supposing that they would not be interfered with. This was a fair illustration of the kind of extortion carried on through the whole of Eastern Turkey. Those who made any difficulty were imprisoned, until it was said that there was scarcely a single Armenian of prominence in the city of Bitlis who was not in prison, while Armenian ecclesiastics of every grade were arrested. This fact also illustrates the nature of the charges of the government with regard to insurrection among the Armenians. At Khnus the commission found some genuine refugees whom they took along with them to Mush.

At the same time attention was diverted to the region of Marash, so far as appears, there was no special charge of insurrection, but a general uprising. The houses of the American missionaries were entered by force and searched for arms, which naturally they did not find. Complaint was sent to Constantinople and demands were made through the American Legation for protection. Similarly at Nicomedia a French Catholic complained that his domicile had been violated and that he himself had been arrested by the Turks. The French ambassador, standing firm upon the capitulations accorded to his government, demanded the removal of the governor, the punishment of the officers and a public apology to the priest. The Turks objected, but finally yielded. Even Constantinople was not safe. An American citizen passing through the streets, only a short distance from the Sultan's palace, was stabbed and killed by a Turkish soldier, who had also seriously wounded sixteen others. A day or two later another Turk in a theatre got into a quarrel with an Englishman and endeavored to kill him. The Englishman escaped, but a student friend who rose to defend him, was struck down with a single blow of the Turk's knife. The chief value of these incidents was that the government made every effort to excuse the criminals, and would give no punishment except under pressure. The official statement as to the man who murdered the American was, that the soldier had got into a quarrel with one of his comrades and

merely stabbed the sixteen Christians on the supposition that they were trying to catch him. The absurdity of this is evident from the fact that one of them was an Armenian girl, standing on the steps of her own home; another was a milkman, whom the soldier asked, "Are you a Christian or a Moslem?" and on being told that he was a Moslem let him go.

For some weeks there was no special change in the situation, though the relations between Turks and Christians were constantly more serious, so that the council of the Armenian Patriarchate at Constantinople presented a memorial to the Sultan, urging him to cease the constant ill treatment which the Armenians suffered at the hands of the Turkish officers. It was not surprising that the memorial was returned with a request that it be modified in form. How needful it was, however, was manifest from the following facts reported from a city a short distance from Constantinople. An Armenian pastor and teacher were arrested and imprisoned on the charge of having seditious letters, which letters, when read, were shown to be simply private correspondence. One man was imprisoned for two weeks because his name suggested a similarity to an address to which a telegram was sent saying, 'Come at once.' An Armenian was forced to sell his house at only a trifle over half value, because a pasha wanted it for one of his wives. A traveler happening to meet an official on the road was turned back and imprisoned for a week on no charge whatever, and released only on the payment of three Turkish pounds. These are but illustrations of what was going on near Constantinople. In the region of Dersim, north of Sivas and Harput, the Kurds seemed to have made special effort to search for proofs of sedition. In two villages papers were found stating that a certain order for arms had been filled and forwarded. No weapons were discovered, however, and subsequently a Turk confessed that he had himself forged the papers. Notwithstanding this, fifty people, thirty from one village, were imprisoned, of whom a number died. Everywhere throughout Asia Minor the Christians were in constant fear of the Turks, who were stirred by their priests to provide themselves with arms in order to be ready for any emergency, which the priests assured them would come as the result of the efforts of the Christians, supported by European powers, to overthrow the Turkish Government. For a time there seemed to be hope of better things. The Turkish Government revoked some of its appointments of notoriously unfit men, and the commission at Mush were making increasing reports of the situation, which aroused repeated and indignant protests throughout Europe. It became apparent that the moral sense of the Christian Powers was awake, and the Porte understood very well that that could not be ignored. The British Government had definitely announced its intention to secure protection for Christians throughout the empire. At the same time United States cruisers arrived on the coast, and in interviews with the Turkish governors made it very apparent that protection to Americans must be secured. The immediate result of this was the release of a large number of ecclesiastics who had been confined in various fortresses, and who, though for some time under surveillance in Constantinople, were practically at liberty. The summer thus passed by with a generally better condition and there were strong hopes that reforms would actually be

instituted, especially as reports came that Great Britain, France and Russia had united in a joint note to the Porte, stating the reforms which they insisted upon for the better conduct of the government in the interior. A complete statement of these reforms is hardly necessary here. In the main they followed the line of the different promises that had been made previously. Among the most important provisions were the following:

"A High Commissioner, appointed with the assent of the Powers, is to have general supervision over the whole empire, with the assistance of a commission sitting in Constantinople; the provinces of Eastern Turkey are to have Mohammedan or Christian governors, according to the preponderance of population, the vice-governor to be of different faith from the governor; taxes are to be collected by local and municipal agents instead of by soldiers or treasury agents, and the provinces are to retain enough funds for their own administration, and send the balance to Constantinople; there is to be a general amnesty for crimes and offences other than those against the common law; pending political trials are to stop and the prisoners are to be released; imprisonment without special warrant is forbidden and speedy trial assured, together with release in case of acquittal; the number of Christian judges is to be increased in proportion to the Christian population; Christians are to serve equally with Moslems in the gendarmerie; conversion to Islam by force is forbidden, and general freedom of religious confession is to be secured; the powers of magistrates are to be extended, and the local courts are to be under the supervision of a delegation from the Court of Appeals."

The position taken by the Ottoman Government with regard to these reforms was not such as to inspire much of hope. Answer was long delayed; furthermore, there was a change of ministry, the new Grand Vizier being one well known as anti-English in his policy and warmly supporting Russia. The one selected as Minister of Foreign Affairs was also president of the commission to investigate the Sassun massacre.

Meanwhile trouble had arisen in Arabia, there being attacks upon the English, French and Russian Consuls at Jeddah. The whole Moslem world seemed to be on the verge of an outbreak. The British Government was strengthening its garrisons in the Mediterranean and in Egypt, and there was a very general belief that it was ready to take extreme steps, even to the extent of occupying the Dardanelles, and perhaps the Bosphorus in case of necessity. At last the reply of the Turkish Government came, acceding to the general principle of control by the Powers of the plan of reforms, but asking that the period be limited to three years. As if, however, to complicate matters still more, reports came of an uprising in Macedonia. Bulgarian emissaries had apparently been at work among their brethren under Turkish rule, exciting revolt and urging annexation. The result was manifest in incursions across the mountains, and notice was given by the Bulgarian Government that it might be compelled to take decisive action with regard to the disturbances. Underneath all this there was generally recognized to be Russian, and perhaps Austrian influence, so that the general situation was uncertain in the extreme.

Just at this time, in July, came the overthrow of the liberal government in England,

and the return of the conservatives to power. Hitherto the conservative policy toward Turkey had always been aggressive, and everyone expected that tradition would be respected. In anticipation of this, the Sultan's Government sent conciliatory answers in regard to reforms, stating that they proposed to apply them to the entire empire; appoint Christian assessors to assist provincial governors; make the selection of under-officials from both Mussulmans and Christians, improve prisons, check the excesses of Kurds, etc. In Tarsus a mob attacked the building of St. Paul's Institute, and in other portions of the country there was manifest a great deal of tension of feeling. The Huntchagists again stirred themselves, and in Marsovan murdered two prominent Armenians, one a Protestant, the other a Gregorian. They also committed various murders in Constantinople, and threatened the life of the Patriarch because he refused to endorse their scheme for absolute independence. About this time also became increasingly manifest the bitter feeling on the part of the Turks themselves against their own government. Reports spread for the past year by the Moslem priests that the Sultan's rule was in danger, and that the Christians were planning to overcome the Moslem power, combined with the increasing taxation and the great injustice from which in many sections of the empire Moslems suffered not less than Christians, stirred the Young Turkey Party to an increasing degree of bitterness. Just to what extent this party was organized it has never been possible to learn; that remains for the future historian. It is, however, a fact that everywhere throughout the empire there was hostility not merely against the Christians, but against the Turkish Government for its failure to do justice to the Moslems even at the expense of Christians. Just at this time came Mr. Gladstone's famous address at Chester, in which he summed up very clearly the situation; under the treaty of 1856 the Powers of Europe had a right, clear and indisputable, to march into the country and take the government of it out of the hands of the Turks; England had a special right under the treaty of 1878 (the Cyprus Convention) and a special duty, from the fact that the making of promises in treaties carries with it the obligation to compel the keeping of the promises; the whole situation, therefore, he summed up in the three words: *coercion*, *must* and *ought*. The last he claimed had absolutely no meaning; *must*, he said, is fairly understood, but the first is the one that is thoroughly appreciated.

One of the first manifestations of spirit of the new English Government was the sending of an English fleet to the vicinity of the Dardanelles and there was a general feeling that aggressive action would be taken. Here, however, appeared a new phase. Having practically accepted the principle of European control, the Sultan now denounced it, saying that it was derogatory to his dignity and that it would endanger his own control over his empire. In this connection also he made complaint to France and Russia of the position taken by England. They indeed did not give him encouragement, but from this time it became questionable whether the concert of the three Powers which had been supposed to be firm was really so. Meanwhile relief work had been going on and a special commission had been sent into Eastern Turkey to manage the question of relief. This will be referred to later, but reference must be made to it here to show the peculiar situation in which England was placed. She was manifesting her

deepest sympathy with the Armenians, was apparently taking steps to coerce the Sultan and had made, or was on the point of making, propositions for his deposition. So far as appears, she was doing all that could possibly be expected. The next step was equally strong. It was asserted that, in an interview with the Turkish ambassador at London, Lord Salisbury had announced that the refusal on the part of the Turkish Government to execute Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin would be the signal of the dismemberment of the empire. This was indeed denied the next day, but it was generally believed to be virtually true, and the immediate issuing by the Sultan of a note stating the concessions he was willing to make with regard to the administration of the eastern provinces of his empire indicated that some extra pressure had been brought to bear upon him. Those concessions were not of remarkable character, merely in the line of what had repeatedly been said and repeatedly promised. It was evident, however, that there was increasing uneasiness throughout the empire. Next came reports that Russia and France had intimated their acceptance of the Sultan's proposals, while Great Britain insisted that they were incomplete. Fresh outrages were said to have started up throughout the empire. Despatches from the region of Erzingan spoke of a band of brigands attacking a company of Turkish soldiers, whereupon the authorities decided that the assailants were Armenian revolutionaries, and sent a force of 1,000 Turks to the Armenian village of Kemakh, the result being that five villages were pillaged, several thousand persons rendered homeless, men tortured, women and children assaulted and four monasteries attacked. There were also reports of an organization among the Turkish minor officials to attack the Christians on every hand if the government should definitely accept the scheme of reforms. For a couple of weeks there was apparent quiet, when the civilized world was astounded by the report of a massacre in Constantinople itself.

The long delay in effecting any result favorable to good order in Turkey from the negotiations respecting reform gave opportunity for the Huntchagists. At the same time the Turks were exasperated by the long continuance of the English fleet near the Dardanelles. The Armenians said that England and Russia had quarrelled. The Turks were inclined to believe also that there was weakness and fear on the part of the English, else the passage of the Dardanelles would be risked. Then came reports of all sorts. The Huntchagists circulated a story that the English Ambassador desired to have a few Armenians killed in the streets of Constantinople in order to have an excuse for bringing in the fleet. On Monday, October 1st, a procession of Armenians was formed, including perhaps 200, some armed with revolvers, but the greater part entirely peaceable men, and even those who were armed were for the most part ignorant of the use of their weapons. They started to the offices of the Sublime Porte to present their petition for relief from the terrible oppression under which their nation was suffering. Such petition was entirely in accord with the time-honored customs of Turkey. It was, however, not difficult to give it an illegal appearance, and taken in connection with various threats, it is scarcely surprising that the Turkish Government was alarmed. The police were drawn up hastily and the Armenians were ordered to disperse. In some way or other firing commenced, the Turks say by the Armenians, the Armenians charge it

upon the Turks. There was an attack upon the men by the police and a number of persons were killed before the procession was broken up. Once started, however, the disturbance was not easily stopped. It spread through different parts of the city. The Softas gathered from their Mosques and started on a riot through the streets armed with clubs. They attacked any Armenians they could find, knocking them down, wounding them severely and sometimes killing them; even attacking those who were already prisoners in the hands of the police. Through all that day and night and the next day this situation continued. During Tuesday night a number of attacks on Armenians in their lodging-places were made and from 70 to 80 were thus killed in cold blood. The whole number of killed is estimated at about 200 and most of them absolutely innocent of any action hostile to the government. The Turks, however, were thirsting for Christian blood and the Armenians were in a panic. The government sent for the Armenian Patriarch, but told him that none of his followers would be permitted to accompany him. He therefore declined the invitation and remained at his palace, where he was practically imprisoned, together with a large number of Armenians. In the main streets for two or three days there was apparently no difficulty, but on a side street it was not safe for an Armenian to be seen. The panic spread into the European quarter and 21 Armenian laborers at the glass works in Pera were killed. Multitudes took refuge in the churches, and in one case an effort was made to break through the walls, apparently to allow the Moslems free entrance to the church. Under the lead of the British Ambassador the foreign representatives acted promptly. The Dragoman of the English Embassy, under orders from Sir Philip Currie, visited the patriarchate to express sympathy with the Armenians. Sir Philip insisted upon the prompt acceptance of the scheme of reforms and demanded that every effort be made to restore order. For several days, however, it was impossible to persuade the terror-stricken Armenians to leave the churches where they were taking refuge, and it was not until the ambassadors sent their own officials to the churches, giving their personal pledges for safety, that the churches were cleared and quiet was reestablished in the city. Just at this time there came a change in the government and Said Pasha gave place to Kiamil Pasha, one of the ablest statesmen Turkey has ever known, and who was identified with the best interests of the empire. This, however, was attended by the sending to the Softas from the Sultan's palace of several hundred sheep and a quantity of delicacies as a reward for their loyalty. The flame once started in Constantinople, spread rapidly throughout the empire. The record of the massacres is contained in the following chapters. We confine ourselves here to a general survey of the political events following, until March, 1896.

The immediate result of the disturbance at Constantinople politically was the approval and signing by the Sultan of the scheme approved by the embassies for reforms in Turkey by the Sultan. This aroused great opposition among the Moslems in Constantinople and corresponding delight throughout the empire. It was not certain, however, what the general result would be. The Sultan claimed that it was done under compulsion and evidently cared very little about the reforms being carried out. At the same time came threats of the assassination of the Sultan on the part of the Albanian



guards in the palace, and the general situation in the capital being serious, the embassies made a demand for additional guardships for their own protection and the protection of the foreign residents. Further than this there was no indication of positive action on the part of the European Powers, and the conviction grew rapidly that a breach had formed between Russia and England and that nothing practical would be done. With the constantly repeated reports of massacres throughout the empire and the increased demands of the foreign Powers came another change in the ministry. Kiamil Pasha was summarily and very harshly dismissed and ordered to Aleppo. He appealed for protection to the ambassadors and receiving some support was sent to Aldin, a more favorable post.

The most significant item in the early part of November was a speech by Lord Salisbury, at the Lord Mayor's banquet, in which he expressed the hope that the Sultan would grant justice to the Armenians and secure their prosperity, peace and safety, but intimated very clearly that if he did not, it would be the ruin of his empire. The fact that this was coincident with the sending of the French Mediterranean squadron to the Levant and the massing of the Russian troops through the Caucasus, gave an impression that positive intervention was nearer than at any time before. It was asserted in the English papers that a joint ultimatum would be presented to the Sultan transferring the internal government to persons trusted by the Powers, and that in case of refusal the combined squadrons would advance on Constantinople. On the other hand, the Sultan was reported as terrified at the increasing bitterness against him on the part of the Turks; as improving every opportunity to decorate and advance men who had been identified with the outrages, and in general as holding an attitude of defiance. The time passed by, however, with no positive action. News came of massacres at Harput, Marash, Aintab and elsewhere, with increasing proofs of the complicity, to say the least, of the Turkish authorities. The man who was more than any other identified with the worst oppression in the province of Van was made governor of Aleppo, and there seemed to be on every side a condition of chaos. Some defended the Sultan, claiming that while he would be glad to stop the disturbances, he was powerless, the movement having become a popular movement and having gone clear beyond any ability of his to check it. The next phase was the discussion in regard to the admission of the guardships. The demand was entirely within the rights of the embassies, but the Sultan hesitated on the ground that it would exasperate the Moslem communities, and the European Governments hesitated to press the point. The result was, that more and more it became evident that there was on the one hand no cordial, united action between the European Governments, and on the other that the disturbances throughout the empire were under the direct orders of the Turkish Government. A significant event was the fleeing of the ex-Grand Vizier, Said Pasha, to the British Embassy for protection, on the ground that his life was in danger. He was kept there for some time and only left on specific assurance from the Sultan himself. Meanwhile on every hand reports of the situation in the interior increased in seriousness, but the government persistently denied them and spread the most atrocious lies with regard to the whole

state of the country; declared that in every case the Armenians had risen in defiance of the Turkish Government, and that where massacre had been reported there was simply a little disturbance.

The close of the year 1895 found everything in the empire in a state of uncertainty. The fleets had withdrawn, and there seemed to be no plan of action on the part of the various Powers, while the Turkish Government was doing its best by repeated falsehoods to arouse the Moslem populace to a high pitch of exasperation. At the same time the Turkish army was suffering from lack of pay, soldiers not receiving their wages and having no clothing or adequate food. A revolt of the Druzes in Syria called a large number of troops to the south, but it was difficult to secure military discipline among them. Meanwhile the widespread destitution resulting upon the massacres had called the earnest attention of Europe and of America, and appeals were made for assistance. This was at first refused by the Turkish Government, which would not even permit the Red Cross to enter the country, claiming that there was no war and no necessity; that the story of sufferings had been greatly exaggerated, and that the whole thing was the direct result of Armenian revolution. The month of January passed without any special change. The guardships were admitted, but the long delay had deprived the matter of any great significance. Then came reports of the secret treaty between Russia and Turkey, by which Russia would guarantee the Sultan's Government and in turn receive free passage for her fleets through the straits, which would be closed by Turkey to other nations. These reports were officially denied, but it was generally believed that there was basis for them. Early in February the report of the commission investigating the massacre at Sassun were issued. The actual statements confirmed the story of the outrages, showed that no steps were taken by troops to stop the Kurds, that in fact the soldiers and Kurds alike were the authors of the burning of entire villages; they also showed that there was no proof of revolt on the part of the Armenians. In the middle of February, Parliament assembled, and in the speech from the throne, which sets forth the general policy of the government, was the following clause in reference to Turkey:

"The Sultan of Turkey has sanctioned the principal reforms in the government of the Armenian provinces, for which, jointly with the Emperor of Russia and the President of the French Republic, I have felt it to be my duty to press. I deeply regret the fanatical outbreak on the part of a section of the Turkish population which has resulted in a series of massacres which have caused the deepest indignation in this country."

This clause aroused very strong criticism by the liberals, but Lord Salisbury claimed that it was impossible for the government to have done more, and intimated distinctly that Russia and France had refused to co-operate, and had distinctly said that they would resist any attack on the part of England to bring coercion to bear on the Turkish Empire.

## CHAPTER XXII.

**MASSACRES AT TREBIZOND AND ERZRUM.**

Importance and General Prosperity of Both Cities-Threats by the Turks-Terror Among the Armenians--  
Suddenness of the Attacks-Murder and Pillage by Regular Soldiers, Under the Eye of Foreign Consuls--  
Ferocity of the Turks-Testimony of Eye-Witnesses- Terrible Scenes at the Burial of the Victims.

The city of Trebizond is one of the most beautifully situated in the Turkish Empire. On the eastern end of the Black Sea, occupying the southern slope of a picturesque range of mountains, which extends all the way from Constantinople to the Persian border, it has been since the time of Xenophon one of the most important places of the region. For centuries it was the starting-point of caravans to Persia, and all the Persian trade passed through its harbor, notwithstanding that that scarcely deserved the name, being little more than an open roadstead. The city itself has grown far beyond the original bounds, and there has seemed to be less of that fear which compelled the crowding together of the houses. Up the valleys of the mountains, and along the coast on either side, there extend gardens and vineyards, with many pleasant residences. Its population of about 45,000 is divided between Turks, Armenians and Greeks, the Turks being in a bare majority, and the Armenians somewhat outnumbering the Greeks. There are also consular representatives of the principal European countries, as well as of the United States. Up till within a few years trade has been brisk and the people acquired a reputation throughout the East for shrewdness of dealing. After the treaty of Berlin, and the occupation of Batum by the Russians, considerable trade that had formerly passed through Trebizond was diverted to Batum, and the wagons of the Circassians took the place of the mule and horse caravans of the overland route by way of Erzurum and Van. An effort was made to relieve the situation by the building of a very good carriage road over the mountain, south to Erzurum, a distance of about 180 miles. But the increasing disturbances in the region of Van, and over the mountains to Khoi and Tabriz proved more than an offset for the building of the road, and trade once diverted could to only a limited degree be brought back again into the old channel. Thus Trebizond has lost not a little of its importance. It is still, however, a city of considerable influence and its people are looked upon with more or less suspicion by the Turkish Government. Its proximity to Russia brought it within reach of the Russian Armenian agitators, and although the general tone of the Armenian community was thoroughly conservative there was sufficient noise made to create an impression of disturbance. The events in Constantinople narrated in the previous chapter created excitement all over the empire, and it was natural that in Trebizond the feeling should be quite intense.

About October 2d, two days after the disturbance in Constantinople, an Armenian, supposed to be a revolutionist, made a personal attack upon Bahri Pasha, the former governor of Van, who had been dismissed in consequence of the pressure brought to bear by the English Government after the disturbances at Sassun. It was said that the

attack was purely a personal matter, the man seeking vengeance for injustice done to himself and his family in the city of Van. The Turks, however, took for granted that it was another move in the same line as that at Constantinople and the disturbances early in the year at Marsovan. Coincident with this was the arrival of the news from Constantinople and the excitement on every hand was greatly increased. The Turks seemed to believe that all the Armenians were banded together and in armed rebellion against the government, represented that they were afraid of an attack from the Armenians, and even in some cases took measures to put their families in places of safety.

On Friday night, October 4th, there were extensive movements of armed men on the streets. At about 11 o'clock they seemed to disperse and nothing specially worthy of mention occurred through the night. On Saturday night, Oct. 5th, the excitement in town was very intense. The European Consuls had a consultation and going in a body to the governor, earnestly pressed him to arrest those who were exciting the people to acts of outrage. This he declined to do, but promised in his own way to do the right thing. Until Monday, Oct. 7th, matters seemed to be quieting down when an incident stirred up the excitement anew. On the previous Friday night, the son of a leading Turk of the town was wounded on the street, some say by one of his companions, others that he was shot by an Armenian whom he was trying to arrest. On Monday he died and the funeral revived the excitement in an intensified form, and loud and many were the "threats of massacre that night, and hundreds of the Armenians rushed to places of safety. Nothing occurred, perhaps, on account of rain. The next morning, October 8th, all dispersed in the hope that the danger was past. Men went to their shops, and were encouraged to open them as they had not done for two or three previous days. Suddenly, like a clap of thunder in a clear sky, the blow fell at about 11 A.M., Oct. 8th. Unsuspecting people walking along the streets were shot ruthlessly down. Men standing or sitting quietly at their shop doors were instantly dropped with a bullet through their heads or hearts. Their aim was deadly and there were few, if any, wounded men. Some were slashed with swords until life was extinct. They passed through the quarters where only old men, women and children remained, killing the men and large boys, generally permitting the women and younger children to live. For five hours this horrid work of inhuman butchery went on, the cracking of musketry, sometimes like a volley from a platoon of soldiers, but more often single shots from near and distant points, the crashing in of doors, and the thud, thud, of sword blows sounded on the ear.

Then the sound of musketry died away and the work of looting began. Every shop of an Armenian in the market was gutted, and the victors in this cowardly and brutal war loaded themselves with the spoils. For hours bales of broad-cloth, cotton goods and every conceivable kind of merchandise passed along without molestation to the houses of the spoilers. The intention evidently was to impoverish, and as near as possible to blot out the Armenians of the city. So far as appearances went the police and soldiers distinctly aided in this savage work. They were mingled with the armed men, and so far

as could be seen, made .not the least effort to check them. Apparently they took care to see that the right ones-that is, Armenians, were killed; also that an offer of surrender might be made to all that were found unarmed. To any found with arms no quarter was given, but large numbers were shot down without any proffer of this kind. This talk of surrender would seem to be on the supposition that all were in an attitude of resistance. One poor fellow when called on to surrender, thought he was called on to give up his religion, and when he refused he was hacked to pieces in the presence of his wife and children. The next day the city was in a great stir because news had come that the village Armenians, thoroughly armed, were on their way to attack the town. The real fact, however, seemed to be that the massacre was extending to the villages, though the constant effort was to show that this affair was only the quelling of an insurrection-like Sassun. Not one of the perpetrators of these outrages was arrested or disarmed, but all moved about with the utmost freedom to accomplish their nefarious purposes. On the other hand many of the Armenians were in prison.

The following account of the experience of an agent of the American Bible Society, who had been in the service for many years, and was a most valued man, will give an idea of the situation.

Krikor was at the government building, getting his pass- port to return, when the massacre began. He was with three others, and when the soldiers endeavored to put them out into the street, he refused to go, showing his special passport from Constantinople as a reason why he should not go. Two of his companions were instantly killed; the third was saved by Greeks who hid him two days in a trough of bread. But Krikor was able to delay a little by showing his passport. He then remonstrated with the guard, giving him at the same time a lira (\$4 40). This did not conquer the guard, who still continued to threaten him. But a second lira was more effective, and Krikor remained. He demanded to see the Pasha, but was told he was busy at the telegraph office, where, in fact, he remained in constant communication with Constantinople during the entire massacre. .

Another guard ordered him off, and was bought off like the first, but he took Krikor into the court near the prison. Here were soldiers who were threatening him when a Turk appeared who, though he did not know him, was influenced by mercy and immediately took charge of him. This Turk, an official in the prison, went with him to the "Bekje," a doorkeeper, saying to him, "This man is a friend of mine, a Turk, but he resembles an Armenian so much that he is afraid to go on the street lest he may be killed; you look after him." This the "Bekje did, and although through the afternoon many Turks came and glared at him, he was unmolested. Finally a clerk who knew him came by and said, "This is an infidel; why do you allow him to remain here?" Krikor had presence of mind to say, "No, it is you who are an infidel; get out of here," and the man slunk away. After dusk the friendly Turk came again to him, and took him into the prison, where he found a number of other Armenians, most of them officials in the Government House. Here he guarded them for two days-false alarms of death coming

often, keeping them in constant fear.

Finally, at night, the friendly Turk came in and took him out with him, going by a roundabout way to Mr. Parmelee's house, where he was safe under the American flag. Here he remained with some 150 others, for 10 days. At last his Turkish friend succeeded in getting him a passport to return to Constantinople, and when he first reached home he could not speak a word for joy. Some of the richest Armenians in Trebizond reached Constantinople in rags and poverty-so wretched that even their own friends did not recognize them at first.

From Trebizond the wave of excitement spread southward, following the line of the road to Erzurum. The first place reached was the city of Gumushkhane, famous for the silver mines from which it received its name, and which furnished the ore for the silversmiths of Trebizond and Constantinople. As in most mining districts the population was turbulent, and easily aroused. Details of the strife are wanting, at least such as furnish the basis of a reliable statement, but in general it is known that the Christian quarter of the city was practically destroyed.

From Gumushkhane the tide swept on to Baiburt, a thriving city of perhaps 15,000 inhabitants, Turks and Armenians. At Baiburt the road to Erzingan, the military headquarters for the whole region, branches off from that to Erzurum, and another gathers the trade of the Valley of Chorok. The Baiburt Armenians were noted for their intense national feeling and a vigor of character that frequently held the Turks in check. They were also regarded as among the shrewdest and most unscrupulous of their race. It was therefore to be expected that the Turks should take advantage of the general excitement to put down the men whom they hated and feared. The outbreak at Gumushkhane had occurred three days after the massacre at Trebizond, and two days later still the blow fell upon Baiburt. Here again there are few details available, but the Constantinople correspondent of the London *Times*, who had the best sources of information, estimated the number of killed at 1,000.

After the disturbances at Trebizond and these two places, all eyes turned to Erzurum, about eighty miles southeast of Baiburt. The city of Erzurum has been throughout the rule of the Turks the most important and influential city of Eastern Turkey. It has been a trade center, being the meeting-place of the various routes from the eastern end of the Black Sea to Persia, Bagdad and Central Asia Minor. It has also been the seat of the Governor-General of the Province, though the largest military force is at Erzingan, about ninety miles west, largely on account of the necessity of keeping the mountainous section occupied by the Dersim Kurds in order. It was thus the seat of consulates of the different European Powers interested in Eastern Turkey, chiefly England, Russia and France. Situated on a high plateau about 6,000 feet above the sea and surrounded by high mountains, the climate is very severe and the winters' cold and summers' heat are intense. Its proximity to the Russian border has made it the object of attack in the different Russo-Turkish wars and twice, in 1829 and 1878, it fell into Russian hands, being released only by special treaty stipulations. In the Crimean war it

was saved by General Williams's heroic defense of Kars. Of its population, estimated at 40,000, the Turks formed the great majority, though the Armenian community was strong, both in numbers, wealth and character.

Next to Van, Erzurum has been looked upon by the Armenians as belonging peculiarly to them, and as was natural the revolutionary party sought to exert their influence in it. That they so signally failed is but another proof of the inherent weakness of the movement and the general conservatism of the nation in regard to aggressive action against the Turkish Government. There was, however, much anxiety, and the tension of feeling between the two races had increased greatly. Only a spark was needed to start the Turks, while some Armenians were doubtless ready to begin, though in a city where they number 10,000 and the Mussulmans 30,000, including a large number of soldiers, it was sure to turn against the 10,000, who were, besides, almost all unarmed. For some days the Turks had been threatening to kill the Christians. Heroes from the Trebizond massacre, from the pillaging at Baiburt, from Erzingan and Kemakh, and from other places had come to Erzurum as the most likely place for another similar game. These men had boasted how much they had got, and all had the gold fever.

The time had been set several times, but nothing had been done and the Armenians had been induced to think that much of the threatening was mere words. The police patrol was very strong and apparently every means was used to preserve peace. Consequently the Armenians were all in their places when suddenly, shortly after noon on Wednesday, October 30th, the cry was raised, "They have commenced firing in the market."

A mob of Turks including many soldiers was seen running towards the market, firing right and left into the houses, from a few of which the fire was returned. The resident American missionary, Mr. Chambers, had been to the post-office to send a telegram to Bitlis to the Americans to say that all was right in Erzurum, and to inquire - how they were. On his way back through the long, straggling market he noticed a general uneasiness. Then he passed an Armenian who was running from one shop to the other telling his brethren to close their shops and run, for the firing would soon commence. But he had heard such words as these so many times that he paid no particular attention to them. Farther down in the markets he saw some shops already closed and some being locked up as he passed. But this had been done before, and several merchants had moved a large part of their best goods up to the mission building to be stored, until every corner was full. He passed on, walking rapidly, and before the Archbishop's house he saw a certain Murad having some trouble with a young and excited Turk. Evidently Murad had just taken away a dagger from him and given it back after some words. Mr. Chambers overheard an Armenian say, "He's given it back to him." This Murad, it was said on very good authority, had killed a number of Christians in the riots of 1890 in Erzurum. He was a police officer who watched every stranger that came to Erzurum; but on this occasion he behaved well, for in his quarter, which was thronged with Armenian shops, the mob was unable to commit any violence.

Mr. Chambers walked on for five minutes from the spot where he had seen Murad, when he heard shots behind him. The people began to run, and he followed suit. Some friends told him afterward that the Turks had fired at him, but he did not know whether it was the mob or the soldiers. He met one of the patrols of 20 soldiers, under command of an officer, who were supposed to keep the peace. These men had drawn their revolvers and were shooting right and left down the street and into the windows. The bullets whistled unpleasantly near to Mr. Chambers, who walked on until he was safe at his home in the mission building. All this time a perfect fusilade was going on, mostly in the direction of the bazaar. In the extreme western part of the city a large fire had broken out, the smoke of which drifted across the large barracks that are situated in that part of the city. There seven Armenians resisted the attack of the soldiers, who fired on them, riddled the house with bullets, and then set fire to it, and it continued to burn for 20 hours.

The attack was simultaneous on different sections of the city where Armenians resided. Whenever an Armenian appeared and the soldiers (who did by far the most of the killing, as well as plundering) could get a shot at him or cut him down with sword or dagger, they did so. The doors of the houses were broken open by force and the contents of the houses carried off. Everything that could not be carried off was destroyed. Boxes and furniture were broken to pieces. Pepper and pickles were mixed with flour that could not be removed, and the bread, often the provision for a week, was thrown on the floor and stamped to dust. As if to be sure that it would not be eaten by the hungry, a jar of pickled cabbage, or something of that kind, would be broken over it and trampled into it. As if the soldiers could not carry off all they wanted, a number of women attended them and carried off the plunder. An eye-witness reports that in one street he saw some officers lead a detachment of soldiers to two Armenian houses; the commanding officers themselves broke open the doors, entered and looted the whole house, stripping it completely. All through the afternoon and evening the suspense was intense. In the beautiful moonlight the Turks could be seen carrying away the plunder, while occasionally a volley of shots rang out on the night air.

All day Thursday the disturbance continued, though in somewhat less degree. An Armenian, speaking of his experience on that day, said that in the morning the soldiers entered his house. He and his family were driven out. The soldiers rifled the old man's pockets, took his watch and chain, but did not harm him. A soldier on the roof told the son to stand still or he would shoot him. But he dodged quickly under the lee of the wall and ran for the British Consulate, which he succeeded in reaching. Later he saw the same soldier, who had threatened to shoot him if he moved, acting as a special guard at the Italian Consulate. One of the guard before the English Consulate asked him sarcastically, "Which Consulate is this?" "The British," was the reply. "And this?" "The Italian." "Well, where's the Armenian Consulate? You were going to have a kingdom (beylik); you got a 'bey yesterday.'" In rifling the village of Purnagaban, a prominent Armenian, after being seized by the soldiers, with the naked sword at his breast, was



asked, "You wanted a' beylik;' here's your 'beylik.' " Another Armenian told how the soldiers on Thursday morning had taken his watch and rifled his pockets. The "dragoman" of the British Consulate, who had gone up to the Government House just before the massacre began, told his experience. He was with one of the "cavasses." On their way he heard an officer speak roughly to an unruly Turk as follows:- " Can't you keep quiet now; wait until it begins and then you can do what you like." In many places on the long way up he saw the soldiers all drawn up ready for the massacre. At the Serai he found not an official, which was very remarkable as this was a very busy time. All the lower officials were away. Both he and the "cavass" saw the storm brewing and hastened to return. They were about half-way, near an open market where fruit and grain and wood are sold, when the soldiers began to fire on the defenseless people. He relates that he saw one Armenian run up to a Turkish officer, throw his arms round him and beseech him to save him, but the officer pushed him away from him with both hands, drew his revolver, and shot him. Another, a blacksmith, they beat over the head with clubs as he ran until he fell, and then three soldiers standing within a few feet of him fired three bullets into him. One of them who looked at the body a moment saw the convulsive movements, and said to his companions, "Look, the dog isn't dead yet; look, look." For two hours the dragoman saw this from a safe place. The soldiers did the work, shooting every Christian they could see.

In the afternoon Mr. Chambers, with the English and Italian Consuls, and Tewfik Bey, of Shakir Pasha's suite, made a tour of the Armenian quarter between Gümrük street and the limits of the city on the east. What they saw there beggars description. A long large barracks with a parade ground in front is situated on the eastern side of the street. Then the massacre began these soldiers fired volley after volley into the houses, and then looted them. Those who had not escaped were murdered in their houses by the soldiers. In one house they saw two young brides brutally murdered lying on carpets bespattered with blood, disfigured, and almost naked. In another house were two men butchered in a barbarous way, splinters of broken boxes and doors, windows shattered to pieces, the plastering torn and broken, everything in ruin.

In very many cases Armenians came to the guard-houses for protection, and almost invariably they were first examined, and then shot down in cold blood. Sometimes this was done to single individuals, sometimes they were shot down in groups. During that awful four hours, the military gave no quarter to men found in the shops and streets, and in very many cases not even to men found in the houses. The wounds of the dead bodies were awful beyond description. Even the wounded had awful wounds. Mr. Chambers helped to dress the wounds, which included the amputation of the right hand and left thumb, of a man who had sixteen. Ten of them were on his head, all of them horrible gashes. Another he helped to dress, had three horrible gashes on his head, two dagger wounds in his back, and a bullet through his left hand. Coal oil had been poured on him preparatory to burning. A little nine-year old boy had his arm amputated. But this is enough to give an idea of the determined

onslaught. One soldier declared that he used ten packages of ammunition, each package containing twelve rounds, making in all 120 rounds of ammunition shot away by one man in four hours.

There was one redeeming feature. Many Turks (civilians) rescued Armenians who appealed to them. They kept them in their houses or in their shops, till it was safe to send them home. In one instance a Turk hid an Armenian under a pile of wool in the Armenian's own shop. When the shop was attacked, the Turk went in and helped to distribute the goods, trying in the meantime to turn the attention of the soldiers from the wool. However, they demanded the wool, which he was forced to give. Soon the Armenian began to appear. The soldiers were for shooting him at once. The Turk protested and prevented that. Then they insisted on searching his person and taking his purse and watch. Then the Turk said, "I am a Moslem. I have had no share in this plunder; the purse and watch must fall to me." The soldiers again demanded to kill him. The Turk whispered something to the officer in command, and they said that as the man was such a bad Armenian, he should be kept for hanging. After much persuasion the soldiers consented to this, so the Turk marched off the Armenian as if to the Government House, to be kept for hanging. However he got him to a place of safety, and later, restoring his purse and watch, sent him home. A large number of Armenians were saved by the good will of Turkish friends. This is all the more remarkable as the threats of slaughter against the Armenians seemed to be quite universal on the part of the Turks, and generally Turks joined with the soldiers in plundering the shops of their Christian neighbors.

By noon on Thursday, all was quiet again. The soldiers were bringing Armenians, who had managed to escape the slaughter by hiding in all sorts of places, to their homes. Many were brought to the Mission House first, where they again saw their kinsfolk. One was a sick and poor woman whose house had been entered by the soldiers. She fell at their feet and besought them to leave the few things she had in her home. One of the soldiers seized a "kalian" and struck her on the forehead, knocking her senseless. Quiet continued all day long, but the people could not be induced to return to their homes. Some went there to find everything cleaned out.

Thursday night passed much as the previous night had, and Friday morning came. This was the Moslem Sunday, and the terror of the Armenians was renewed. They had no confidence in the soldiers at all, and the Turks, as well as the soldiers, told them that the killing would begin again. Especially were the Bishop's house and the Sanassarian school threatened. The women with babies, girls, and more men flocked to the mission building until the building and enclosed garden held little short of 500 frightened people, who could not be induced to return to their homes. But gradually they ventured to go to their homes, and night found the crowd reduced to 200. The Turks made preposterous statements about the number of revolutionists, and arms and ammunition hidden in the Armenian church and Sanassarian school. Apparently they had been too cowardly to attack the place with their rifles, and now they threatened to bombard it from the forts.

The English Consul here lent his good services as mediator. The places were searched quietly by the Turkish officials, and, of course, not a weapon or a revolutionist was found, for there are no more law-abiding citizens in the Ottoman Empire than the gentlemen in charge of the Sanassarian school. They are fine, cultured men, who desire nothing more than peace to conduct their educational enterprise. In 1890, at the time of the riot, this same charge, equally unfounded, was made against them. But the affair in that year was really a riot, for a mob and not soldiers paraded the streets, looting and spoiling. In that year the English Consul lived in the mission building, where every glass was smashed in with stones.

It was natural that there should be the wildest statements as to the number of killed. Some put it at 2,000. The best estimate available makes it 800 to 1,000. Nearly all were men. Not a single dead Turk was reported or seen. A dragoman of one of the Consulates, who saw the firing for two hours in the bazaars, said that all the soldiers were out, fully armed, to the number of 3,000. They were not content with shooting a man once, but they fired at each one three and four times. He boldly declared that the government officials had ordered the soldiers to begin to kill. The patrol who held the foot of the street occupied by the American Mission House and several Consulates, deliberately squatted behind a pile of newly-chopped wood in front of the French Consulate and put the entrance to the Health Office under fire to prevent the Armenians from seeking refuge there. The English Consul stopped this, threatening to fire on them if they continued. Both the English and French Consuls, whose houses adjoin each other, were on their housetops when the attack began, and found the bullets whistling so unpleasantly near that they deemed it advisable to go below.

An eye-witness describes the scene on Friday afternoon as most horrible. He went with one of the cavasses of the English Legation, a soldier, his interpreter, and a photographer (Armenian) to the Armenian Gregorian Cemetery. The municipality had sent down a number of bodies, friends had brought more, and a horrible sight met his eyes. Along the wall on the north, in a row 20 feet wide and 150 feet long, lay 321 dead bodies of the massacred Armenians. Many were fearfully mangled and mutilated. He saw one with his face completely smashed in with a blow of some heavy weapon after he was killed: some with their necks almost severed by a sword cut; one whose whole chest had been skinned and his forearms cut off, while the upper arm was skinned of flesh. He asked if the dogs had done this. "No, the Turks did it with their knives." A dozen bodies were half burned. All the corpses had been rifled of all their clothes except a cotton under-garment or two. These white under-clothes were stained with the blood of the dead, presenting a fearful sight. The faces of many were disfigured beyond recognition, and all had been thrown down, face foremost, in the dust of the streets and mud of the gutters, so that all were black with clotted blood and dust. Some were stark naked, and everybody seemed to have at least two wounds, and some a dozen. In this list of dead there were only three women, two babies, a number of young children, and about thirty young men of 15 to 20.

A crowd of a thousand people, mostly Armenians, watched him taking photographs of their dead. Many were weeping beside their dead fathers or husbands. The Armenian photographer saw two children, relatives of his, among the dead. Some Armenian workmen were engaged excavating a deep trench twenty feet square, close by, to bury the corpses. Here, too, was a peculiar scene. The space of this trench contained many graves, and on one side were a number of skulls, perhaps twenty in all, and a pile of bones found in the excavating. He left the sad sight sick at heart. Apart from the rest was the horribly mutilated corpse of an Armenian priest, with whom a story is connected. He came from a village in the plain, Tevnik, where he had been attacked a few days before and his house looted. At the same time, to save his life, he signed a paper promising to pay the robbers 100 liras. As soon as he was free, he made for Erzurum to make complaint. This man, it was said, was the first Armenian killed. He was in the Serai, on his business, when he was shot dead in the premises with several other defenseless Armenians. This is the way it began at the deserted Serai, and is the other side of the story.

The news of the massacre at Erzurum created a great shock everywhere. That in such a city, in the very presence of English, French and Russian Consuls, with high dignitaries of the Turkish Government in command, such scenes should occur was in itself a matter of great moment. That the killing and pillaging should be carried on by the soldiers under the direct command of their officers, showed conclusively that it was no mere mob outbreak. Of course, there were various stories told. Among them was one to the effect that seven Armenians had run into the Government House and made directly for the audience rooms of Raouf Pasha. These had fired their revolvers right in the faces of those they met; but two of them were killed and five taken prisoners before they had done any harm. This was pretty hard to believe, for at the outside entrance of the Serai were always stationed at least two soldiers, and generally a dozen or more were strolling about fully armed.

More than that assurance upon assurance had been given that if the Armenians would be quiet there would be no trouble. The commanding officers claimed to be very indignant that the soldiers had been guilty of looting and it was said that they had done their best to stem the torrent. To those, however, who know Turkish officers and soldiers, this statement will carry little weight. Nine days after the massacre there was still great anxiety. Then commenced an outbreak of sickness, the result of the terrible nervous strain, of insufficient food and the general privation. Then, too, stragglers came in from the villages on the Passen, Khanus and Alashgerd plains, with their own stories of horrors, until it seemed as if the cup of suffering was more than full.