
The New York Times

March 16, 1895

PERSECUTION OF ARMENIANS.

Turks Torture the Survivors of Their Massacres in Sassoun.

LONDON, March 15. ? The Daily Telegraph has a dispatch sent from Moosh at a date not given, and forwarded from Kars yesterday.

It says:

"The Commissioners have learned that the Armenian priest, Hatchadoor, and his son were ordered by gendarmes to sign a document ascribing the massacre to the Kurds and clearing the Turks of all blame. The Hatchadoors refused to do so. The gendarmes then placed heated triangles round their necks. The commission desire to examine the two victims, but the latter are too ill.

The Turkish Government tried every means to compel the survivors of the massacres to return to their respective villages and rebuild the huts. They promised money, seed corn, exemption from taxes, and the restitution of property. Nearly all refused and consequently were terribly treated. Some returned and now are literally starving, if not dead. Many who were wealthy and respected are now in abject poverty.

The correspondent quotes an instance of villagers virtually naked and subsisting on milletseed. The stock of this seed, he says, must have given out a fortnight ago. These people had no hope of help, he says, and probably are dying or dead. "If assistance be sent through the delegates in Moosh or the American missionaries in Bitlis," continues the correspondent, "some lives may be saved." He writes of girls of fourteen, six daughters of victims of the massacre, who returned to Semal half naked and died without food or fire in a hut at night during a snowstorm. He names six villages where the few survivors of the massacre are starving.

March 19, 1895

KURDISH FIENDISH CRUELTY.

Horrible Tales of Witnesses Before Armenian Inquiry Committee.

LONDON, March 18. ? The Daily Telegraph has a Moosh dispatch, sub-dated from Kars yesterday. The dispatch says:

"The difficulties placed in the way of witnesses coming to testify before the Commission of Inquiry are almost insuperable. Every road is patrolled by bands of gendarmes, who put intending witnesses out of the way. Persons from villages in the Sassoun district and survivors of the massacre are treated as criminals.

"The Armenians who feed or shelter them are imprisoned and beaten. The testimony of several witnesses piles horror on horror. For instance, a witness hiding in the oak scrub saw soldiers gouge out the eyes of two priests, who in horrible agony implored their tormentors to kill them. But the soldiers compelled them to dance while screaming with pain, and presently bayoneted them.

"The number of witnesses is increasing. The stories are essentially identical. The mass of evidence is so overwhelming that the Government may soon admit that the massacre has been proved, and relieve the commission of further inquiry. When the weather shall permit the members will go to Sassoun to inspect the four pits filled with mutilated bodies."

Sir Edward Grey announced that, in consequence of the Government's having received information alleging that as a result of mock trials, or without trial at all, 2,500 Armenians had been sentenced to imprisonment and were still confined, representations had been made to the Porte for the purpose of ascertaining the truth and the attending circumstances.

