

HOLY WAR IS ON IN TURKEY

Turks and Kurds Determined to Exterminate All Armenians.

Sixteen Missionaries Return With Stories of Great Atrocities.

New York, Oct. 5.—The Turks and Kurds are waging a holy war of extermination on the Armenians, according to sixteen members of the American board of foreign missions, who arrived from Van, Turkey, on the Swedish steamer Hellig Olav today. Ernest Yarrow, one of the missionaries, told how the Armenian population of Van, numbering 1,500 held out against 5,000 Kurds and a Turkish company commanded by a German officer, from April 20 to May 17, when Russians arrived and relieved the town.

"We had six American and two Red Cross flags," said Mr. Yarrow, "and we flew these over the mission, but they were not respected by either of the combatants. The Turkish company arrived three or four days before the Russian relief came, and the shrapnel from the Turk guns tore down all of our flags.

"We sheltered a large number of
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Armenian women and children, but as soon as the Turks and Kurds had been driven away from the town, virtually all of the Armenians turned out to loot the Turkish houses and duplicate the atrocities they had previously been practicing upon the Armenians. It was with great difficulty that they were restrained."

Vows of Extermination.

"The Turks and Kurds have declared a holy war against the Armenians and vowed to exterminate them. The population of Van was poorly armed and was forced to use brass and copper trinkets to make bullets. Three small cannon were made of scrap metal. The supplies of ammunition were running short, and the Russians arrived just in time to save the Armenians from being wiped out."

Mr. Yarrow said many Armenians were suffering from typhus and other diseases, and when he left, conditions almost everywhere in Armenia were terrible. Half of the missionaries were taken ill during the siege and six of them died.

According to Mr. Yarrow, many of the atrocities practiced by the Kurds on the Armenians were indescribable. He confirmed all of the reports of outrages which have reached the United States, and said only a portion of the real story had been told.