

though they had been to the village they had not carried out his Excellency's instructions.

*Peroustitza*.—District of Philippopolis, 350 houses. Perhaps more has been written and said about the destruction of this village than about that of all the other Bulgarian villages put together, and the evidence respecting what led to the destruction, how far the inhabitants really revolted, and the manner in which they addressed their demands to Philippopolis for aid, is most extremely conflicting.

Under the circumstances the best thing I can do is to transcribe the evidence of an Armenian woman and her daughter, which was given before me at Philippopolis.

Before Easter some of the people of *Peroustitza* began to dig holes to bury their valuables. When this became known and questions were asked in the village it was mooted about that some day the "Committee" would come, burn the place, and force the people to rise. One Vasily, a doctor, or perhaps rather a chemist (who was hung while I was at Philippopolis), was the person who chiefly made it his business to tell the people they must be prepared to revolt, or it would go hard with them. Two of the priests refused to act with Vasily, and even read a paper in the church exhorting the people to be quiet. One of these priests was killed and the other imprisoned.

Some neighbours advised the Armenians, as strangers, to leave the village, but the *Tchorbadji Wrangel*, one of the influential men of the place, objected, and said they must stay. Soon after this some villages were seen burning in the neighbourhood, and some said the "Committee" were coming, while others said the Turks were upon them, and they must defend themselves. The consequence of this alarm was a general arming.

Wrangel then goes to Philippopolis, and asks Aziz Pasha, then Mutessarif, for assistance, which the Pasha promises to send, adding that *Tumbrushli Achmet Agha*, "Kir Meemouri" of the district, who had been ordered to *Bazardjik*, had better return to *Peroustitza*. Accordingly Achmet Agha sends more of his men to *Peroustitza*, to say he will send 400 men to protect the village. This the inhabitants decline, and detain the Turks all that day, Sunday, 7th May, and towards evening take them out and kill them.

The next day the *Bashi-Bazouks* advanced towards the village, and Wrangel, going again to Philippopolis, returned with two *zaptiehs*, who, however, seeing the Bulgarians armed, left immediately. Wrangel then left again the same evening for Philippopolis, taking with him his daughter, whom he placed in the house of the Russian Vice-Consul. He was then arrested.

Wrangel's disappearance created excitement and alarm, and a good many people, including the Armenian woman, fled to *Yustina*, where they were protected. The daughter remained behind, and the place being attacked by *Bashi-Bazouks*, she and a number of others took refuge in the church, in the upper part of the village. Here they stayed from Tuesday till late on Thursday, when they fled to another church lower down. Here they remained till Saturday; fourteen cannon shots being fired by the troops, many of which, going in at the windows, killed a considerable number of people.

On Saturday morning the troops surrounded the church, and the girl wished to surrender, and, though the Bulgarians threatened her with guns, she managed to slip out and give herself up to a *zaptieh*. She then returned to the door, and advised others to do as she had done, and a few who followed her advice were unharmed; those, however, who remained, were, she supposes, all killed. She saw one man in the church kill his wife and two children, and then blow his own brains out. She declares that from the upper church the people could see the regular troops attacking them.

The villagers' story, as told me by them on the spot, is that the Turks of *Yustina* had been threatening them for some time past, that they sent to Aziz Pasha for troops, and were told by him that they must defend themselves, sending a note, which was said to be in the hands of a "tchorbadji" in prison at Philippopolis, enjoining on them the necessity of killing any rogue ("tchapken") who should come to annoy them; and on the strength of this paper they say they killed Achmet Agha's men. They say they surrendered as soon as they knew they had to do with the regular troops.

Now it is clearly established that the people shut themselves up in the upper church on Tuesday, May 9th, and remained there till Thursday, 11th May, late in the afternoon, on which day also the troops under Reschid Pasha arrived, but it was not till Saturday, the 13th, that all resistance was at an end. According to the